



GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING IN EMERGENCIES IN WASH

WHY DOES GENDER EQUALITY MATTER IN EMERGENCY WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE INTERVENTIONS?

Conflicts and natural disasters affect women, girls, boys and men differently; they have different needs, perceptions and experiences which need to be considered by humanitarian actors in ensuring that appropriate assistance is delivered to all segments of the population without putting any group at risk. Beyond the potential to save lives and prevent disease by meeting basic water and sanitation needs and providing hygiene education, access to adequate and appropriate WASH facilities plays an important role in the protection and dignity of displaced individuals, particularly girls and women. However, providing water and sanitation facilities and services alone will not guarantee their optimal use, nor will it necessarily improve public health. For WASH interventions to have a positive impact on affected individuals, families and communities, a gender-sensitive, participatory approach at all stages of the project cycle is useful to ensure that an adequate and efficient response is provided. WASH assessments and activities that take into consideration the needs, priorities and capacities of women, girls, boys and men are more likely to improve the lives of affected populations.

GEP IN WASH SECTOR NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

A **NEEDS ASSESSMENT** is the essential first step in providing emergency WASH programming that is safe, effective, and restores dignity. A gender analysis is critical to understanding the social and gender dynamics that could help or hinder aid effectiveness.

Here are examples of questions that can enrich the design of WASH projects:

1. What roles do women, girls, boys and men play in collecting, handling, managing, storing and treating water?
2. Do women and men have equal access to decision-making forums, such as community WASH committees?
3. Are water points, toilets and bathing facilities located and designed to ensure privacy and security?
4. Which groups require specific support or arrangements to ensure they have adequate, dignified access to water, sanitation and hygiene? (Ex. the elderly, people with disabilities or living with HIV/AIDS, etc.)
5. Are the physical designs for water points and toilets appropriate to the number and needs of women, girls, boys and men who will use them? (The Sphere Handbook, 2011)
6. What are the protection risks for women, girls, boys and men related to water and sanitation? What is needed to ensure that access to and use of water points, toilets and bathing facilities is safe, especially for women and girls?

Examples of ways to incorporate gender concerns in a WASH project: The gender analysis in the needs assessment will identify gender gaps that need to be addressed. These should be integrated into **ACTIVITIES**.

Gender Analysis in Needs Assessment	Activities
Girls and women do not consider community toilet and bathing facilities to be safe because the blocks are not separated by sex and the doors cannot be locked	<p>Organize single-sex focus group discussions, involving women, girls, boys and men equally, to determine the best location for and design of latrines and bathing facilities.</p> <p>In response to consultations (above), design separate, well lit and lockable (from the inside) latrines and bathing facilities for females and males.</p>

OUTCOMES should capture the change that is expected for female and male beneficiaries. Avoid outcome statements that hide whether or not males and females benefit equally. Examples of gender outcomes include:

- Decision-making and responsibility for water and sanitation are being shared equally by beneficiary women and men.
- Safety of WASH facilities has been enhanced: peer monitors report a decrease in rape, sexual violence and harassment against women/girls, boys/men using or travelling to/from WASH facilities since the launch of the project.
- Evidence of routine hand-washing by women, girls, boys and men.
- [Number] NGO implementing teams have demonstrated greater capacity to integrate gender issues into WASH emergency response and preparedness (% M/F trainees).



THE ADAPT & ACT-C FRAMEWORK: A PRACTIAL TOOL TO DESIGN/REVIEW WASH PROJECTS THROUGH A GENDER EQUALITY LENS

The ADAPT & ACT-C Framework is a tool for use when designing or vetting a project/programme to integrate gender dimensions. While the order of the steps in the framework may vary, as many as possible of the steps - ideally all nine - should be taken into account in the design of humanitarian interventions to ensure that the services and assistance they provide meet the needs and concerns of women, girls, boys and men equally.

A	ANALYSE the impact of the crisis on women, girls, boys and men and what this entails in terms of division of tasks/labour, work load and access to WASH services. Ex. Ensure that a project's targeted beneficiaries are disaggregated by sex and age, and that women, girls, boys and men are consulted at the assessment, monitoring and evaluation stages.
D	DESIGN services to meet the needs of women and men equally. WASH actors should review the way they work to ensure women and men benefit equally from their services. Ex. Latrines should be separate for women and men and well lit; water points should be close enough to dwellings and safe to access.
A	Make sure that women and men can ACCESS WASH services equally. A continuous monitoring of who is using the water points and the sanitation facilities and of who takes part in decision forums will help ensure all are accessing services. In order to allow optimal access, attention should be paid to mitigation of sexual violence risks on the way to or when using the facilities.
P	Ensure women, girls, boys and men PARTICIPATE equally in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the WASH response, and that women are in decision-making positions. If it is problematic to have women participate actively in the committee meetings, put in place mechanisms to ensure their voices are represented in the committees.
T	Ensure that women and men benefit equally from TRAINING or other capacity-building initiatives offered by the project so that all community members have an equal mastery of facilities. Make certain that women and men have equal opportunities for work or employment, including as daily labourers.

and

A	Make sure that the project takes specific ACTIONS to prevent risks of GBV. The <i>IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings</i> includes a chapter for WASH actors and should be used as a tool for planning and coordinating emergency WASH programming.
C	COLLECT, analyse and report sex- and age-disaggregated data; analyze the differences and, subsequently, develop a profile of at-risk populations and how and whether girls' and boys' needs are being met equally by the WASH response. Ex. Present information on members of WASH Committees and participants in capacity-building and work opportunities disaggregated by sex (and age, where appropriate).
T	Based on the gender analysis, make sure that women, girls, boys and men are TARGETED with specific actions when appropriate. Ex. Where one group is more at-risk for sexual violence or abduction than another when travelling to or from or at latrines or water points, special measures should be taken to protect that group.
C	Ensure COORDINATION and gender mainstreaming in all areas of work. In particular, WASH actors should coordinate with Protection partners for effective prevention of sexual violence and other forms of GBV, and with Shelter and Food Security partners about the design of facilities.



MINIMUM COMMITMENTS TO GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING FOR WASH

The Global WASH Cluster partners have agreed on 5 minimum commitments to be respected in all their humanitarian WASH programmes so as to ensure that the distinct assistance and protection needs of the affected population are met. The rationale behind the development of the *WASH Minimum Commitments for the Safety and Dignity of Affected People, with an Integrated Approach that Addresses Gender, Protection, Age & Disability Issues* was to: strengthen accountability to affected population; agree on a minimum package of engagements that all partners would commit to implementing and monitoring regularly, streamline the WASH approach to cross-cutting issues on protection and ultimately improve WASH programming quality.

These commitments, centred on people, aim at improving the quality and efficiency of the WASH response programmes in every context, and at ensuring that key issues are taken into consideration by all partners, such as gender, gender based violence, child protection, disability, and age. They are generic enough to be applied in the various contexts where WASH cluster partners operate. They are in line with the SPHERE standards and constitute a minimum set of core actions and/or approaches to be applied by all partners in the cluster to ensure quality for their WASH programmes. They focus on improvement of current approaches rather than on drastic programme reorientation. This is why they should not be perceived as generating an additional workload.

These commitments are as follows:

NO.	MINIMUM COMMITMENT	OUTPUTS
1	Consult separately girls, boys, women, and men, including older people and those with disabilities, to ensure that WASH programs are designed so as to provide equitable access and reduce risks of violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WASH assessments include identification of specific needs of girls, boys, women, men, including older people and persons with disability in terms of safety, dignity and equitable access.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of WASH facilities and their design are determined through separate consultations of girls, boys, women, men, including older people and persons with disabilities in order to ensure equitable access and minimize risks of violence.
2	Ensure that girls, boys, women, and men, including older people and those with disabilities have access to appropriate and safe WASH services .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WASH facilities are designed to respond to distinct dignity, safety and access needs (i.e. all public latrines and shower blocks are separated by sex, locks on the inside, privacy screens considered, lights, pictograms, specific design for people with disabilities...). This includes WASH facilities in spaces dedicated to children.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Menstrual hygiene needs of girls and women are met.
3	Ensure that girls, boys, women, and men, including older people and those with disabilities, have access to feedback & complaint mechanisms so that corrective actions can address their specific protection and assistance needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WASH users (girls, boys, women, men, including elders and persons with disabilities) are informed of their rights and understand the feedback complaint mechanisms related to WASH programs.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cluster member organisations and coordination platforms set up a feedback mechanism with and for beneficiaries and take timely corrective actions to address safety, dignity and access issues raised by users and/or to redefine their assistance.
4	Monitor and evaluate safe and equitable access and use of WASH services in WASH projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baselines and M&E tools include the collection of sex and age disaggregated data on the access and use of WASH facilities, including on how safe people feel using WASH facilities.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection and analysis of disaggregated data on beneficiaries and information on older people and persons with disability contributes to improving safe and equitable access and use of WASH services for vulnerable population.
5	Give priority to girls (particularly adolescents) and women's participation in the consultation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific focus group discussions are organized for women and girls during the needs assessment phase and across the response.



FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE

- For more information on gender in WASH, see **The Sphere Handbook (2011)** at <http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/>
- For more information about the WASH Cluster's minimum commitments for the safety and dignity of affected people, with an integrated approach that addresses gender, protection, age & disability issues, see <http://washcluster.net/minimum-commitments-safety-dignity-affected-people/>.
- For more information on GEP in the WASH sector, see
 - **IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action** (Dec. 2006) at <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>.
 - **IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence in Emergencies** (Sept. 2005) at <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>.
- For more information on the **Gender Marker** go to www.onereponse.info
- For the e-learning course on **Increasing Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action for Women, Girls, Boys and Men** register at <http://www.iasc-elearning.org> or ask OCHA Myanmar for CD-version.
- For Myanmar-specific support please contact Maria Caterina Ciampi, Senior Inter-Agency Gender Capacity (GenCap) Advisor, IASC Gender Standby Capacity Project, hosted by OCHA in Myanmar, by calling +95 (0) 92 50 15 19 52 or by sending an email to caterina@un.org.