



A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

Short checklist for quick reference

Developed for WASH practitioners working in development, humanitarian and transitional contexts

Principles for reducing vulnerabilities to violence linked to WASH through improved programming and institutional commitment

The principles should be considered in all WASH institutions and programmes, but may be applied differently in each context. The actions are included as examples, but it is not expected that all actions will be undertaken in every WASH programme.

- 1** **Principle 1.** Institutionalise the requirement to analyse and respond to vulnerabilities to violence in WASH-related policies, strategies, plans, budgets and systems (human resource management and M&E) – refer to [BN3](#) for further information
- 2** **Principle 2.** Build the capacity of staff and partners to understand the problem of violence related to WASH and what their responsibilities are in relation to this issue – refer to [BN3](#) for further information
- 3** **Principle 3.** Make links with protection, gender and GBV specialists to assist in improving programmes and responding to challenges faced – refer to [BN4](#) for further information
- 4** **Principle 4.** Consider possible vulnerabilities to violence linked to WASH, integrate responses into all stages of WASH programming/ service delivery
- 5** **Principle 5.** Adapt existing participatory tools and involve women, men, girls and boys in the process of identifying the risks and identifying solutions, allowing women and adolescent girls to express their views separately

- 6** **Principle 6.** Pay particular attention to considering the safety of people who are in vulnerable, marginalised or special circumstances when accessing WASH services
- 7** **Principle 7.** Build the self-esteem and self-worth of all, but with particular attention on women and adolescent girls, linking to existing groups and networks to provide support and also to help respond to backlash
- 8** **Principle 8.** Ensure that community members have adequate information on safety linked to WASH and that community feedback processes are built into programmes
- 9** **Principle 9.** Ensure that WASH facilities are designed, constructed and managed in ways that reduce vulnerabilities to violence
- 10** **Principle 10.** Pay particular attention to transparency in processes where non-food items are distributed in humanitarian contexts

For actions that have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence – see the following pages

About this document

This document is one part of the 'Violence, Gender and WASH: A Practitioner's Toolkit – Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services'.

This toolkit has been developed by Sarah House, Suzanne Ferron, Dr Marni Sommer and Dr Sue Cavill, on behalf of WaterAid with contributions from a wide range of organisations and individuals. It was funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) through the Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research For Equity (SHARE) Consortium and co-published by a number of organisations.

Details of co-publishing organisations can be found on the back page of this document. The acknowledgements, acronyms, definitions and an overview of the toolkit are included in [BN1](#).

Copyright and request for feedback

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The authors of these materials would be very happy to receive feedback from users of the materials contained within, whether positive or negative, so that it can be used if the materials are updated at a later date.

We would also be interested to receive feedback where the methodologies have been used and their impacts evaluated in respect to reducing violence linked to WASH programmes or services. This will add to the general body of evidence on the best ways to improve policy and programming.

Please send any feedback to: gbv@wateraid.org

Promising good practices

This toolkit brings together a range of examples of *promising* good practice that have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence associated with WASH programmes and services. The approaches have been selected on the basis of case study examples where some successes have already been seen, from good practice guidance already being recommended within the WASH sector or across sectors, and also some selected based on best judgement and common sense. These are approaches and strategies that at least give those who are vulnerable a say in the programme and service provision, which encourage communities to develop their own strategies for prevention of violence, provide opportunities for peer support, and encourage ethical behaviours from staff – and are therefore likely to be effective in helping to reduce vulnerabilities.

There is a critical need to increase understanding of the links between violence and WASH, on appropriate ways to improve policy and programming, and for testing and evaluation of the same.

Every effort has been made to obtain permission for the inclusion of materials, and also to verify that information is from reputable sources, but checks have not been possible for all entries.



This material has been funded by UK aid from the Department for International Development (DFID). However, the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the Department's official policies.

What 'violence' means in this toolkit

The main focus of this toolkit is the forms of violence that occur because of the differences in power between males and females. This is known as 'gender-based violence' (GBV). A large proportion of GBV is aimed at women and girls, because in most societies they face discrimination and hold less power than men and boys. However, violence that is associated with the gender roles assumed by men and boys can also make them the object of violence. People who have other gender and sexual identities, such as those who are lesbian, bisexual, gay, transsexual and intersex (LGBTI) may also face GBV.

We also consider violence against those from specific social groups, particularly those who may be in vulnerable, marginalised or special circumstances; and we consider violence that may occur between people of the same gender, such as between women or between men, or between men and boys.

The forms of violence that are the main focus in this toolkit are: sexual violence (rape, assault, molestation and inappropriate touching), psychological violence (harassment, 'eve-baiting', bullying or other actions which may cause fear, stress or shame), physical violence (beating or fighting leading to injury and death) and socio-cultural violence (social ostracism, discrimination, political marginalisation or social norms that have negative impacts).

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Principle 1.</p> <p>Institutionalise the requirement to analyse and respond to vulnerabilities to violence in WASH-related policies, strategies, plans, budgets and systems (human resource management and M&E)</p> | <p>Policies, strategies, plans, budgets</p> | |
| | <p>✓ The organisation has up-to-date policies on gender equality; equity and inclusion; and protection (including child protection) and WASH policies, all of which include information around violence and WASH.</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-F TS3-G</p> |
| | <p>✓ Violence-related vulnerabilities are regularly discussed in meetings, with learning and experiences shared to build knowledge on challenges and good practice, learning from successes in particular.</p> | |
| | <p>✓ Assessment of vulnerabilities to violence and the development of strategies to reduce these are specifically incorporated into programme strategies and plans.</p> | |
| | <p>✓ The costs of reducing vulnerabilities to violence and WASH have been considered; budgets have been analysed in light of their potential gendered impacts (including potential to reduce violence) and have been allocated.</p> | <p>BN3</p> |
| | <p>Advocacy</p> | |
| | <p>✓ Advocacy is undertaken for increased attention on violence linked to WASH and for increased allocation of finances and resources to reduce vulnerabilities.</p> | <p>BN2 TS3-H TS2</p> |
| | <p>✓ Violence related to WASH is integrated into broader advocacy campaigns.</p> | <p>BN2 TS2 TS3-E TS3-H</p> |
| | <p>Human resource management</p> | |
| | <p>✓ All staff and partner staff have signed a code of conduct that includes clauses on sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries.</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-G-3</p> |
| <p>✓ A code of conduct has been developed for institutions that train WASH professionals which emphasises good practice, including that relating to prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of trainees</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-G-1</p> | |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Principle 1.</p> <p>... continued</p> | <p>✓ Well-defined channels for staff feedback and complaints for those who experience violence or suspect abuse have been established that will not put the whistle-blower at risk.</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-G-3</p> |
| | <p>✓ All staff and partners have signed a bullying and harassment policy (or this is incorporated into the code of conduct).</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-G-3</p> |
| | <p>✓ Female staff members are always available for community engagement, so that women and girls at community level have the opportunity to communicate with women.</p> | <p>BN3</p> |
| | <p>✓ The number of female staff working in the organisation is on a par with the number of male staff at all levels. Mentoring opportunities exist to build confidence, self-esteem and capacities.</p> | <p>BN3</p> |
| | <p>✓ Female trainees/interns/employees/ apprentices are only placed in sites and organisations with other female trainees/interns/employees/apprentices.</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-G-1 TS3-G-2</p> |
| | <p>✓ Where females are interested in taking training courses or roles that are not traditionally expected of women, encouragement as well as ongoing support are provided.</p> | <p>BN3 TS3-G-2</p> |
| | <p>Monitoring and evaluation</p> | |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 2.</p> <p>Build the capacity of staff and partners to understand the problem of violence related to WASH and what their responsibilities are in relation to this issue</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff and partners understand the potential vulnerabilities related to WASH and why these need to be understood. | <p>BN1, 2, 3, 4 TS1</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff and partners know how they can improve programming to reduce vulnerabilities to violence. | <p>BN1, 2, 3, 4 TS3</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff and partners have been trained in what they should and should not do if they face incidents of violence in WASH programmes or are approached by people who have experienced violence and are requesting support. | <p>BN3, BN4</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff and partners know the content of the organisation’s gender, equity and inclusion, and adult and child protection policies ✓ All staff and partners are aware of what is and is not appropriate behaviour when working with people who are LBGTI, from other vulnerable or marginalised groups or in other special circumstances. | <p>BN3 TS3-G-4 TS3-G-5 TS6</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff and partners know the content of the organisation’s code of conduct and its confidential complaints system procedures | <p>BN3 TS3-G-3</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 3.</p> <p>Make links with protection, gender and GBV specialists to assist in improving programmes and responding to challenges faced</p> | <p>Collaboration is established with protection and GBV professionals to develop strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To guide WASH staff on how to respond appropriately to incidences of violence when they occur (including the 'do's and don'ts' when communicating with people who have experienced violence) ✓ To provide mentoring or supportive supervision (where this exists). | <p>BN4 BN3 TS3-B</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assistance is requested from protection/GBV professionals to map protection/GBV-related support services. In this way information and contacts are available for people who have experienced violence if approaches are made to WASH staff. | <p>BN4 TS3-B-1 TS3-B-2</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Where transactional sex is known or believed to occur in relation to WASH, organisations working on protection, HIV or prevention of GBV are contacted to request their engagement. | <p>BN4</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 4.</p> <p>Consider possible vulnerabilities to violence linked to WASH, integrate responses into all stages of WASH programming/service delivery</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Vulnerabilities to different forms of violence related to WASH are considered during each stage of WASH programming/service delivery, from the perspectives of women, men, girls and boys and people from minority groups. | <p>BN1 BN2 BN3</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 5.</p> <p>Adapt existing participatory tools and involve women, men, girls and boys in the process of identifying the risks and identifying solutions, allowing women and adolescent girls to express their views separately</p> | <p>✓ During the assessment and planning processes the vulnerabilities to violence linked to WASH for women, girls, men and boys are identified. Particular attention is paid to listening to the voices of adolescent girls, who are a particularly vulnerable group.</p> | <p>TS2-A TS3-A TS3-C</p> |
| | <p>✓ Where cultural norms mean it is not possible for women and girls to discuss openly with men, alternative strategies are utilised for meeting separately and feeding back.</p> | <p>BN2 TS3-C</p> |
| | <p>✓ Men and boys are involved as community leaders (elders, political, religious, other), as participants, allies and as change agents in the process of acknowledging and responding to the risks of violence.</p> | <p>TS3-A TS3-E-3</p> |
| | <p>✓ Women and girls, boys and men, including people with disabilities, are involved in the siting and design of WASH services. The facilities are designed to provide privacy, dignity and safety.</p> | <p>TS2-B TS3-C</p> |
| | <p>✓ Other participatory tools (where appropriate) are modified to enable safety-related issues to be raised and discussed with communities.</p> | <p>TS3-A TS4</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 6.</p> <p>Adapt existing participatory tools and involve women, men, girls and boys in the process of identifying the risks and identifying solutions, allowing women to express their views separately where necessary</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Those who are the most vulnerable or marginalised (because of their social/ethnic group, sexual identity, age, poverty level or other factor) are specifically identified at the beginning of the programme as they may be more vulnerable to violence. Special care is taken to consult and understand their specific vulnerabilities and needs, and to ensure that WASH programmes meet those needs. | <p>TS6</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ People from vulnerable or marginalised groups or those in special circumstances are involved in community committees and decision making bodies related to WASH. Where this is not possible, for example where it would put the people in danger or they would feel uncomfortable to participate, mechanisms are put in place to obtain their views at each stage through household visits or working with groups that represent their views. | <p>TS6</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Links are made with organisations that have expertise in working with specific groups of people in vulnerable, marginalised or special circumstances (where appropriate) | <p>TS6</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Income generating opportunities and strategies to make hygiene-related items more affordable and available are considered, in order to reduce the likelihood of people engaging in transactional sex (including the possible production of locally made more affordable sanitary protection materials). | <p>TS6 TS2-A-8</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 7.</p> <p>Build the self-esteem and self-worth of all, but with particular attention on women and adolescent girls, linking to existing groups and networks to provide support and also to help respond to backlash</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Women involved in supervisory roles are provided with ongoing mentoring and support, and it is ensured that there is always more than one woman in such a role (with three as the ideal minimum number). This rule is also followed when women attend trainings or meetings. | <p>BN2 BN3 TS1-D-16 TS3-G</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Discussions are held with women and adolescent girls on how they can travel and return home within daylight hours, and how they can still undertake their household and other responsibilities without added vulnerabilities, if they are taking part in the WASH programme. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategies are discussed for the care of children when their mother or main carer is working on the WASH programme. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Opportunities are taken to use existing community groups, such as women’s or disabled people’s groups or savings groups, as entry points for discussions on violence-related risks and for developing strategies to respond and to build women’s self-worth, self-esteem and self-confidence. | <p>TS3-C TS3-D</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Collaborations between organisations working on WASH, women’s empowerment, adolescent girls’ and boys’ forums, and livelihoods are all considered, so linking programmes and opportunities for longer-term support to communities. | |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 8.</p> <p>Ensure that community members have adequate information on safety linked to WASH and that community feedback processes are built into programmes</p> | <p>Information is provided to community members on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How staff working on the project should behave and what is unacceptable behaviour; ✓ Who they can contact if there is a problem with the staff working on the programme; and ✓ That they have the right to provide feedback (good or bad) through both an informal and institutionalised feedback system, and to receive a response where the feedback is negative. | <p>BN3 TS3-F-2 TS3-G-3 TS3-G-5</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community members are provided with information in a sensitive and appropriate way on where they can go if they are affected by violence. | <p>TS3-F-2 TS3-G-1</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community members identify potential dangers associated with WASH implementation, facilities and services, options available to minimise the vulnerabilities and the ‘pros and cons’ of different options. | <p>BN2 TS1 TS3 TS4</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The WASH programme ensures that representatives of all members of the community (women, men, people with disabilities, elderly, youth) feel they have something to contribute to a WASH project/services, and that their involvement is likely to make the facilities more suitable, safer, sustainable and accessible to all. | <p>TS4</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Men are encouraged to think about the way the facilities are used by their daughters, wives and sons (who are often responsible for water collection) and to consider the potential risks if the facilities are not maintained and fall into disrepair. | <p>TS3-E-3</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
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| <p>Principle 9.</p> <p>Ensure that WASH facilities are designed, constructed and managed in ways that reduce vulnerabilities to violence</p> | Applicable to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities | |
| | <p>✓ Facilities are sited as near as possible to houses, and sited with the agreement of women and girls in particular.</p> | <p>TS3-C-1 TS3-F-3 TS3-F-4</p> |
| | <p>✓ Facilities are accessible for people with limited mobility.</p> | <p>TS4-B TS4-C TS6</p> |
| | <p>✓ The provision of targeted subsidies or free access for the poorest (including people with disabilities who are less likely to work, people who live on the streets, the elderly etc) has been considered within the context of ensuring sustainable financing.</p> | <p>BN3 TS6</p> |
| | <p>✓ Paths and drains on the way to and around the facilities are kept clean.</p> | <p>TS3-A-1</p> |
| | <p>✓ Long grass and trees on paths to waterpoints and sanitation facilities have been cut back.</p> | <p>TS3-B-1</p> |
| | <p>✓ Staff, operators and caretakers are trained in acceptable conduct and the importance of reducing opportunities for harassment.</p> | <p>TS3-A-1</p> |
| | Applicable to sanitation and bathing facilities | |
| | <p>✓ Household latrines and bathing facilities are provided wherever possible.</p> | <p>TS1-E TS3-A</p> |
| | <p>✓ Where public or shared facilities are necessary, sex-segregated facilities are provided which are clearly labeled and women and girls especially have agreed on the distance between facilities. Encourage people to keep the use of the facilities separated by gender.</p> | <p>TS3-C TS3-D TS3-F TS6</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Principle 9.</p> <p>... continued</p> | <p>The following has been specifically considered in relation to the sanitation and bathing needs of people who are lesbian, bisexual, gay, transsexual or intersex (LBGTI):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How they can safely access toilets and bathing facilities (considering the possible risks if the toilets are split on a male-female basis). ✓ How the definition of the family unit may affect the allocation of latrines or other WASH related resources and how this might affect same-sex couples. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lighting for facilities (on the way to, in and around) are provided. If this is not possible, then families are provided with alternatives e.g. a minimum of two wind up or solar torches per family. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Units are installed with solid doors and <u>locks on the inside</u> (which should be compulsory and not optional). <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Additional screening is provided for privacy in front of facility doors where women and girls feel this makes them safer and gives them more dignity when using the facilities <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adequate numbers of latrine units or cubicles are provided so that women, girls and boys are not forced to resort to open defecation. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Roofs are provided for the latrine or bathing facilities, particularly in areas with nearby buildings, trees or other structures that people can climb up. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The latrine facility allows for effective menstrual hygiene management (disposal for sanitary materials, water available, privacy etc.). | <p>TS1-E</p> <p>TS3-A</p> <p>TS3-C</p> <p>TS3-D</p> <p>TS3-F</p> <p>TS6</p> |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| <p>Principle 9.</p> <p>... continued</p> | <p>Applicable to water supply facilities</p> | |
| | <p>✓ There is adequate water flow so as to prevent long queues.</p> | <p>TS3-F</p> |
| | <p>✓ The supply of water for both the host and displaced communities has been considered and negotiated in displacement situations to ensure adequate access for all.</p> | |
| | <p>✓ Wherever possible, household water connections are provided.</p> | |
| | <p>✓ Fence the water collecting points to allow orderly collection of water at the tapstands.</p> | |
| <p>✓ In front-end emergency or drought situations where water is provided by tanker or where it is particularly scarce, provide management of the water point and queues to reduce the risks of violence.</p> | | |

| Principle | Actions which have the potential to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH | Further information |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Principle 10.</p> <p>Pay particular attention to transparency in processes where non-food items are distributed in humanitarian contexts</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ People know what they are entitled to and whether it is free of charge (where this is the case – it is usual for non-food items to be provided free as part of emergency responses). If a contribution is expected, this is clearly and openly advertised. | <p>TS3-F-2</p> <p>TS3-F-3</p> <p>TS6</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Women are involved in the establishment of distribution lists and in the distribution process. | |
| | <p>The following has been specifically considered in relation to people who are LBGTI and in relation to the distribution of NFIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Whether government documentation is being used to register recipients for distribution of aid and if so, if anyone is being excluded due to the lack of documentation. ✓ How the definition of the family unit may affect the allocation of NFIs and how this might affect same-sex couples? | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Distributions are undertaken at safe times and locations, and a system is developed so that the most vulnerable are served first and can go home earlier. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Post-distribution monitoring of hygiene or other WASH items is undertaken. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Distribution systems are designed that are orderly and avoid the likelihood of aggressive or violent incidents. | |

The toolkit is co-published by:



Commitments of co-publishing organisations

It should be noted that the organisations co-publishing this resource might not currently practice all of the recommendations proposed within it.

Co-publishing the resource provides an indication of the organisations' commitment to help their staff become increasingly aware of the issues relating to violence and WASH, and that they will continue to work to improve their organisation-wide commitment, policies, strategies, plans and programming over time to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH wherever it is realistically possible.



A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

Short checklist for quick reference

Developed for WASH practitioners working in development, humanitarian and transitional contexts