



## A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

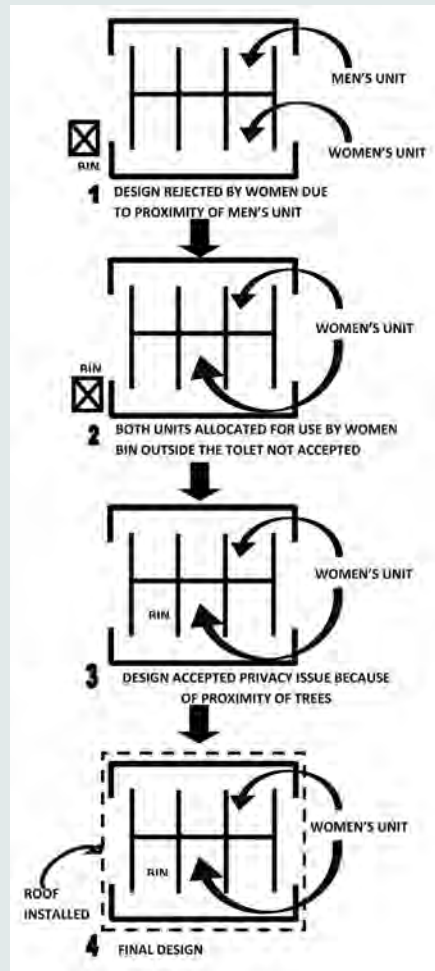
Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

## Toolset 3-C

Facility siting, design and management

## TS3-C-4 – Innovations in WASH in emergencies to improve dignity and reduce violence against women

<b>Context</b>	<p>The background research report documents learning from simple innovations which have been adopted in front-end emergency responses, and which have had an impact on the dignity and safety of women and girls when using WASH facilities. The learning has been translated into a simple set of training materials that can be used for the training of staff.</p>
<b>Implementing organisations</b>	<p>OXFAM, with inputs from a range of organisations working in humanitarian response.</p>
<b>Description of good practices</b>	<p>The research report brings together a few examples of WASH interventions which have been developed in front-end emergency responses, and which have resulted in WASH solutions with the potential to improve dignity and reduce vulnerabilities to violence for women and girls.</p> <p>The case study examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>India, Bangladesh and Uganda:</b> Covered and screened bathing facilities, and the involvement of women's groups in identifying needs and developing solutions.</li> <li>• <b>Pakistan:</b> Gender-segregated screened toilet and bathing blocks, with facilities to wash menstrual materials privately and with internal water supplies.</li> <li>• <b>Northern Sri Lanka:</b> Linkages made between the provision of WASH infrastructure and the prevention of violence against women. This led to gender-segregated WASH facilities with roofs, violence prevention messages included on water tanks and in bathing areas, and training women in construction and ensuring they received equal wages.</li> <li>• <b>Democratic Republic of the Congo:</b> Involvement of dedicated gender specialists to assist in embedding violence prevention in WASH. This resulted in agreement on five minimum standards to help ensure the dignity and safety of young girls, involving protection actors in the design of WASH facilities, and the development of 'gender markers' against which to assess how strong the real intent is by organisations to prevent/respond to gender-based violence.</li> <li>• <b>India and Bangladesh:</b> Development of child-friendly spaces in emergency responses, including gender-segregated sanitary facilities for girls and boys.</li> <li>• <b>Bangladesh and Sudan:</b> Improving access to safe water in emergency responses and the use of cash-for-work with equal wages for men and women.</li> </ul> <p>See the figure and associated notes that follow, which highlight the steps taken to adapt the design of toilet facilities in the emergency camps in Sri Lanka following feedback from women users.</p>



**Design adaptation to fulfil privacy needs of women**

In one of the emergency camps in Sri Lanka, Oxfam built two sets of three toilets each back to back with a septic tank in the middle. One of these blocks was designated for use by men and the other for use by women. A bin was constructed close to the block meant for use by women.

The location of the toilets was perfect from a purely engineering point of view considering the ground water, table proximity to the shelters and functionality. However the toilets were not used by the women because of their proximity to the men's unit.

The toilets were then allocated for use by women alone. The bin was moved out of public eye into one of the toilets. However, a few days later it was discovered that every evening men were climbing trees in the vicinity of the toilets to extract sap to make toddy. Women once again stopped using the toilets. Although the WASH programme was over by then, the community under the guidance of project staff installed extended roof covers to ensure adequate privacy for the women.

(Source: Personal communication with Vikas Goyal, Oxfam, as noted in Anand, M.C., 2010)

**Results**

A simple set of training tools has been developed by the Thoughtshop Foundation from the case studies. These can be used to prompt discussion and analysis on how practitioners can adapt their work to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls to violence against women (VAW), and respond to issues of dignity, work burden and security of women and girls through simple improvements to WASH designs in emergency response.

The tools consist of a short training manual, a range of cards, and other interactive training aids that enable effective consultation with women on WASH designs.

**Lessons**

The general principles established through the case studies include:

- Involve women and girls and boys in the designs of facilities, with specific questions focusing on vulnerability;
- Ensure facilities are gender segregated and that they provide privacy and have considered security of women and girls – such as through locks on doors, screens for privacy, making sure the walls are not opaque, and providing lighting or torches where lighting is not possible;
- Importance of involving users in designing facilities that allow the effective management of menstruation, with the required level of privacy and that are culturally appropriate;
- Women's groups can be a useful channel to establish the priorities and needs of women and girls and to develop appropriate solutions;

- Enabling women to understand and choose appropriate technology will enhance use of hygienic practices;
- Both women and men should have opportunities for paid employment and cash-for-work opportunities; and
- The involvement of or linkages with protection and gender specialists in WASH programmes can strengthen the programme's consideration of the needs of women and girls as well as men and boys, and in particular to consider issues relating to safety and dignity.

## References/Links

Anand, M.C. (2010) *Ideas that Work – Preventing violence against women through water and sanitation interventions in early emergency response*, Oxfam GB, December 2010. OXFAM, available at: [http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project\\_detail/ITW.htm](http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project_detail/ITW.htm) [accessed 11 October 2013].

Links to the research report noted above and the training materials can be located on the thoughtshopfoundation website:

[http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project\\_detail/ITW.htm](http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project_detail/ITW.htm)

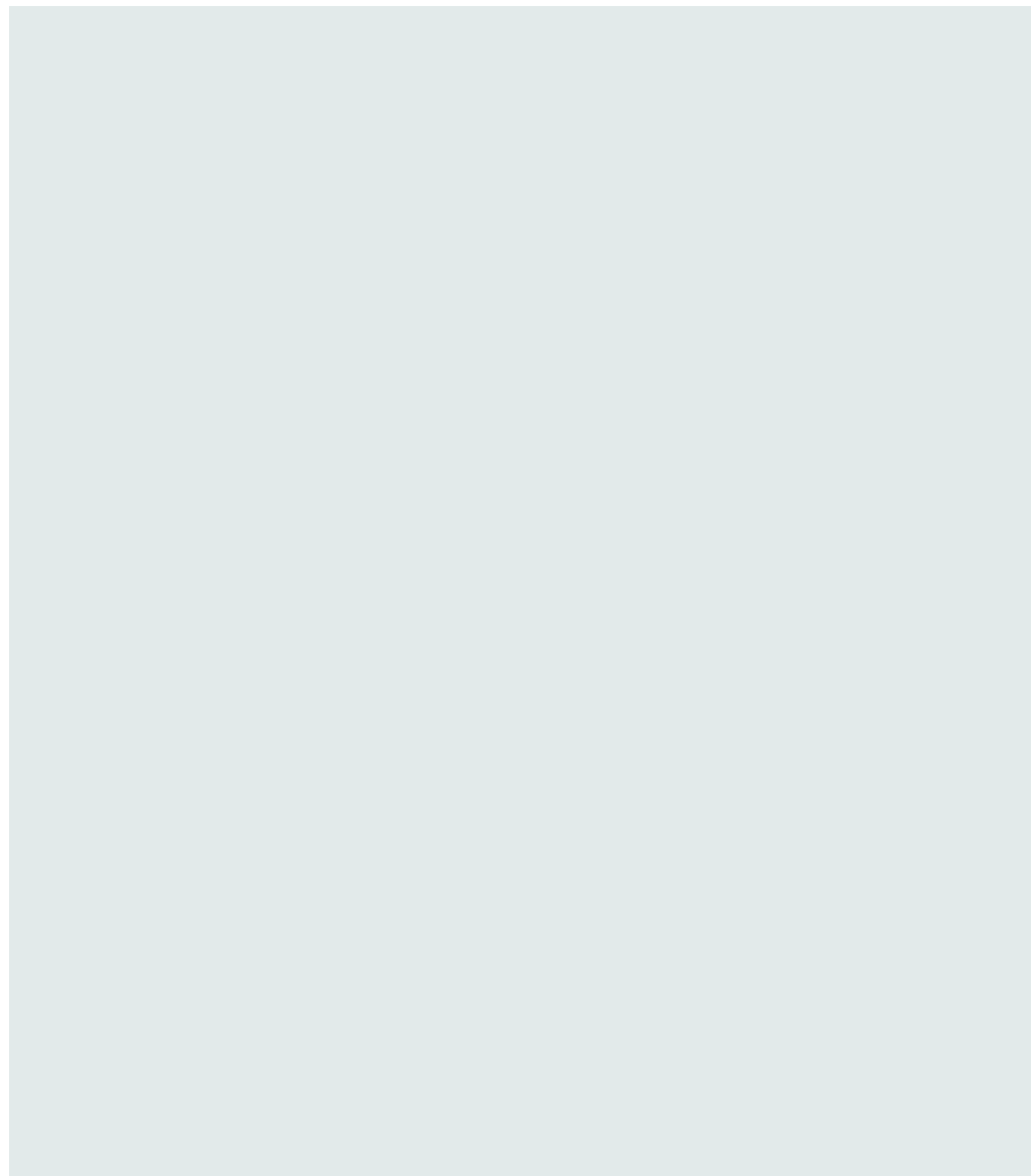
A range of other materials and tools used to promote gender equity and reduce violence can also be found on the following link:

[http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project\\_summaries/Gender.html](http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project_summaries/Gender.html) [accessed 11 October 2013].

A few samples of the We Can materials developed to promote a reduction in violence against women can be found on the USB stick. A range of other participatory materials from *We Can* can be found on:

[http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project\\_detail/Changemakers\\_Tools.htm](http://thoughtshopfoundation.org/project_detail/Changemakers_Tools.htm) [accessed 11 October 2013].

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**VIOLENCE  
GENDER  
& WASH**

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