



# Working effectively with women and men in water, sanitation and hygiene programs

*Learnings from research on gender outcomes  
from rural water, sanitation and hygiene  
projects in Vanuatu and Fiji*

## Working effectively with women and men in water, sanitation and hygiene programs

### Resource Guide

This resource is part of a tool kit of materials that includes:

- Flash Cards
- Resource Guide
- Poster of Principles and Practices

## Acknowledgements

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For further information please visit [www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)

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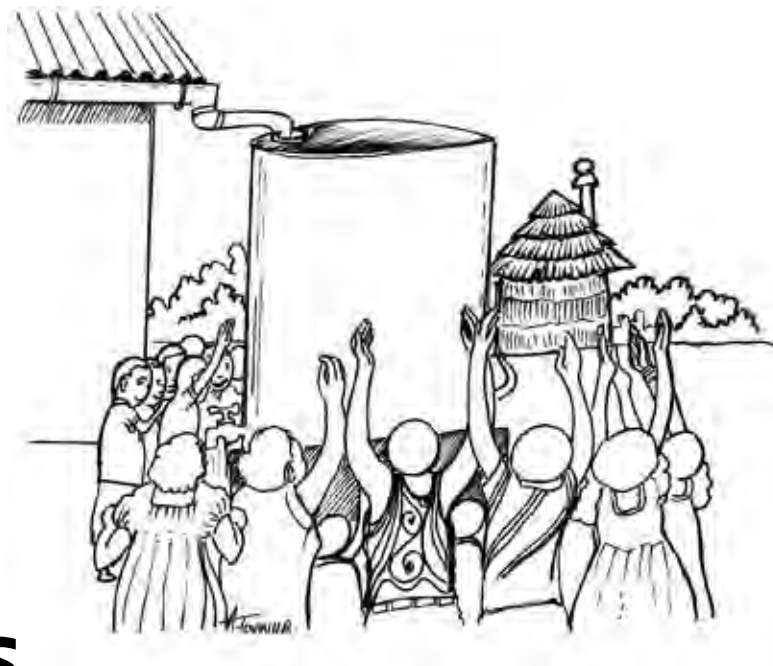
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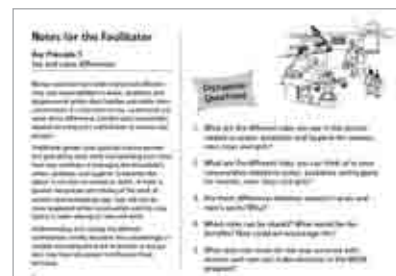
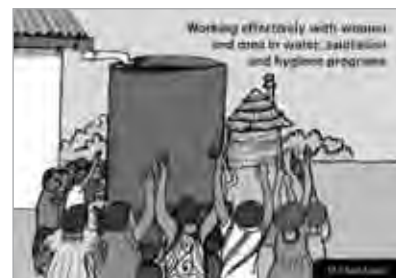
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- Flash Cards
- Resource Guide
- Poster of Principles and Practices



Resource Guide



Flash Cards x 12



Poster





## 1

# Introduction

This Guide is to assist program and field staff involved in the design, implementation and/or evaluation of community-based water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programs to work effectively with both women and men. By 'working effectively' with women and men we mean:

- promoting positive and empowering relationships between program staff and the community and between members of the community;
- seeing and valuing the different contributions and views of women and men, to further their community's development;
- ensuring that women and men can meaningfully contribute to discussions and decision-making relating to WASH in their community;
- promoting WASH outcomes that address the different but equally important needs and hopes of women and men; and
- recognising that WASH programs are not only a pathway to better water access and quality, sanitation and hygiene but can also promote positive and respectful roles, responsibilities and relationships between women and women, women and men, and men and men within communities.



When women and men are equally and meaningfully involved in WASH programs, the program results are more sustainable. Such participation can also improve community and family relations, the status of women and men, the value placed on their opinion and work by other community members, and community decision-making processes.

*When women and men work together they can reach their shared goals more effectively.*

**“** Water and sanitation information helped improve our lives. It also helps strengthen our relationship in our home, especially in the family, because we now share responsibilities. **”**  
In the community, we now work more closely together.

*Female community member, Vanuatu*

## What is this guide?

This guide provides ideas about how to make WASH approaches more sensitive and responsive to the views, status, needs and responsibilities of both women and men. It is designed to be used at the same time as other WASH guidance material, as well as improve and build on existing WASH approaches.

The material in this guide has been drawn from research undertaken in Vanuatu and Fiji. The research looked into the positive social and gender outcomes for women and men associated with a number of WASH projects. These WASH projects had taken specific steps to promote women's and men's active involvement in activities and in deciding their community's development goals.

The material is also based on the principle that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. Men and women are not the same, but as human beings, they have the same human rights. Their responsibilities and opportunities to contribute, to have a say in what happens in their community and to benefit from development should not depend on whether they happen to be born male or female. In the long run, there are more benefits when men and women are meaningfully involved in decisions about important things that affect their lives. Sometimes that will mean changes in the relationships between women and men, but we know that such changes are possible, because the way women and men relate towards each other today is different from in the past. It is important that changes benefit both women and men, and that women and men can work together in making these changes. These ideas are part of what is called gender and development theory and practice. Key concepts relating to gender and development are included in Part 4.

## Who is this guide for?

This guide is for program and field staff in water supply, sanitation improvement and hygiene promotion programs in rural areas. It is based on examples drawn from non-government organisation (NGO) projects in rural communities in Vanuatu and Fiji but is applicable more broadly to Melanesia. It may also be relevant to staff working on WASH in rural areas in other Pacific Island countries.

## Why use this guide?

This Guide seeks to assist program and field staff working in WASH programs with Melanesian communities to improve their practice, program outcomes and sustainability. Program managers can use this guide to increase their own knowledge. It can also be used as a basis for developing staff trainings and materials for community based work. The guide:

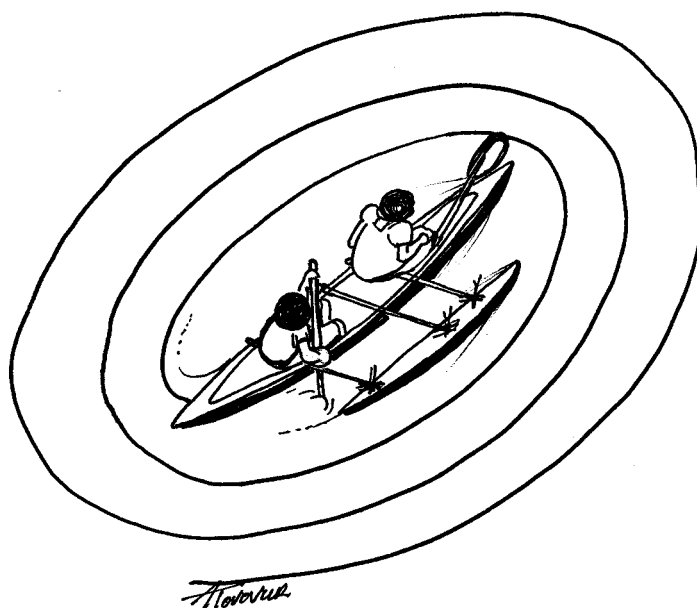
- Shares stories of women, men and staff involved with WASH programs in Vanuatu and Fiji that communicate the positive changes that WASH programs can have on women's and men's roles, responsibilities and status in communities ('social outcomes').
- Provides guiding principles, examples of good practice and ideas for project teams to achieve these positive and inclusive social outcomes.
- Assists organisations and their teams to plan, implement and monitor their own WASH activities with communities in a way that ensures that both women and men have opportunities to be meaningfully involved and equally benefit from outcomes.
- Communicates gender practice and theory in ways that are easily understandable and based on practical experiences, to support changes towards gender equality.

## What will I be able to do if I use this guide?

Through working with the materials in this guide, you will be able to:

- Recognise, plan for, support and monitor social outcomes for women and men as part of WASH projects.
- Use four key principles to work more effectively with women and men on WASH projects.
- Increase awareness of the importance of social benefits from WASH projects within your WASH project team(s) and communities.
- Improve WASH project outcomes, sustainability and effectiveness.
- Support positive and empowering relationships between women and men.

## 2



# Principles & Practices

As development workers, the values we hold and ways we work influence the social outcomes and changes that occur in communities with which we work.

The following values and ways of working support strong positive social outcomes, and are called social development principles:

- Place people at the centre of their own development.
- Focus on reaching and including disadvantaged groups.
- Focus on empowerment, local voices and ownership.
- Use participatory approaches.
- Appreciate and build on existing strengths of the community and its members.
- Respect tradition and culture and use these as the basis for developing appropriate solutions.
- Recognise the different needs and contributions of women and men.

So, it is important that we understand the context in which we are working, promote community-led solutions to problems, and focus on the way we work to get good social outcomes. This guidance material proposes **four key principles** to guide our practice so we can work more effectively with women and men in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiatives.



These are informed by social development principles, by gender and development theory and practice, and by the practical experiences of NGO teams involved in WASH projects. The principles are important at the community level and at the family or household level. The materials also include tools and tips to help you use the principles in your work.

### **Principle 1: Facilitate participation and inclusion**

Focus on ways of working that enable women, men, girls and boys to be actively involved in improving their water, sanitation and hygiene situation.

### **Principle 2: Focus on how decisions are made**

Use decision-making processes that enable women's and men's active involvement, within the project and in activities.

### **Principle 3: See and value differences**

See, understand and value the different work, skills and concerns of women and men related to water, sanitation and hygiene.

### **Principle 4: Create opportunities**

Provide space and support for women and men to experience and share new roles and responsibilities.

## **Principle 1: Facilitate participation and inclusion**

**Focus on ways of working that enable women, men, girls and boys to be actively involved in improving their water, sanitation and hygiene.**

Applying this principle involves thinking about ways of including everybody in the community, and encouraging their meaningful participation at every step of the process or project cycle – from seeing the need to improve water supply, sanitation and hygiene practices, to planning, managing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating what is done.



*Water, sanitation and hygiene is important to everyone!*

### **Why is this principle important?**

It's important so that everyone can have the opportunity to be involved, to benefit and to have their ideas and concerns heard and considered. Different members of the community have different needs and priorities and different knowledge – because of their age, health, roles and responsibilities, the work they do and whether they are men or women. If everyone is involved from the start, then choices made will consider these differences, and result in more appropriate and utilised water and sanitation facilities and safer hygiene practices.

Participatory processes create a sense of ownership and responsibility that leads to more sustainable outcomes. If people are not involved in deciding what improvements to make, they will not feel responsible for looking after their water and sanitation facilities and will depend on someone else to maintain the systems.

A participatory process also provides an opportunity for all participants to learn new ideas and skills, and to work together, building a sense of pride and unity.

Participatory processes ensure that those people most affected by an issue are included. In the case of water, sanitation and hygiene, women are among the first to be affected. In rural communities in the Pacific, they often have the main responsibility for collecting and storing water for cooking and hygiene purposes for themselves and their families, and caring for family members when they are sick. So they need to be involved, and the community benefits from their involvement. A focus on inclusion and participation provides an opportunity for women to be involved, along with other groups that may otherwise be excluded. If this principle is not applied, it is possible that women and minority groups will be left out. This means they miss the opportunity to learn, their voices will not be heard, and the community doesn't benefit from their knowledge and ideas, or their help in sharing the long-term work of maintaining facilities and practices.

## What does good practice look like?

Participation is about more than providing labour or attending meetings. It's about having the choice and ability to contribute at each of the steps within a project (including the decisions), in ways that are effective and empowering. It requires preparation and consultation with leaders, partners, team members and communities to ensure there is a shared understanding about the concept of 'participation'.

Good practice involves thinking about and then monitoring participation throughout each stage of the project cycle or activity. This includes consideration of who has information about the project activities, who is choosing to participate and contribute, how they are involved and whose voice is being listened to at the different stages.

Participatory processes require staff training and capacity development, developing resources such as participatory planning tools, good relationships, lots of time and flexibility. They require a commitment from the team and organisation to ways of working that are empowering and enable everyone to be meaningfully involved – women, men, boys, girls and groups that may be excluded or marginalised such as people with disabilities.

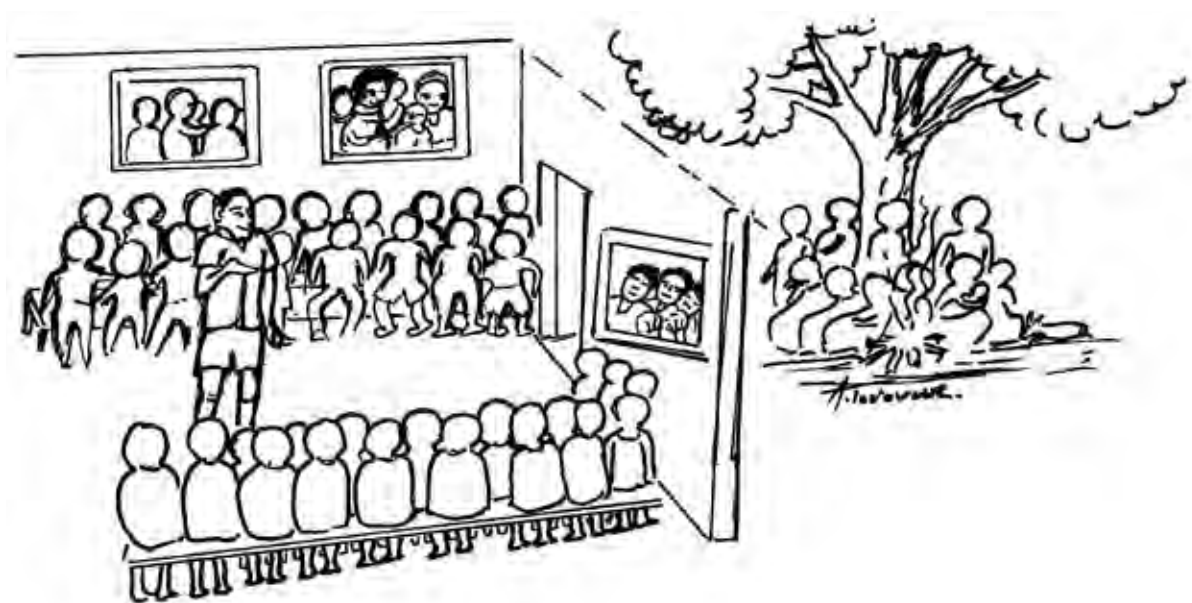


*Involving everyone in planning will result in more appropriate and utilised water and sanitation facilities.*

## Using participatory planning tools and visual aids

There are several examples of participatory planning tools developed to support WASH projects. One that is used globally and increasingly in the Pacific is Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST). PHAST is a participatory approach to controlling diarrhoeal diseases. It is a methodology designed for those seeking to help communities improve hygiene behaviours, prevent diarrhoea, and encourage community management of water and sanitation facilities<sup>1</sup>. It uses specific adult learning tools supported by visual aids to facilitate a group planning process, using seven steps through which participants discover how faeces can make people sick. Participants then analyse their own hygiene behaviours and develop a community plan to prevent members from getting sick in this way. The underlying idea is that no lasting change will occur in people's behaviour unless they understand and believe in the health benefits. To assist people with low literacy to understand these health issues, PHAST uses a lot of visual aids.

For further information and to download the Step by Step Guide to PHAST visit [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/index.html)



*Women may be excluded if a meeting is held in a place that is traditionally a men's meeting space.*

<sup>1</sup> Wood S, Sawyer R, Simpson-Hebert M (1998). *PHAST step by step guide: a participatory approach for the control of diarrhoeal diseases*. Geneva, World Health Organisation.



## Tips for encouraging good participation in a consultation or planning process

- ✓ Spend time developing relationships with and understanding the community, particularly how women and men relate, and what they have a say about and an influence on.
- ✓ Facilitate activities within the community rather than requiring community members to travel to you.
- ✓ Allow enough time in each stage of your project cycle for all community members to be heard and contribute to decision-making and implementation. Be prepared to change project activities in response.
- ✓ Start where the group is at in terms of their understandings and priorities, and progress at their pace.
- ✓ Use visual aids, particularly if low literacy may be a barrier to communication.
- ✓ Be respectful and encourage and value everyone's contributions.
- ✓ Organise separate spaces for discussions with women and with men and use female and male facilitators.
- ✓ Work with the male leaders to encourage support for women's participation.
- ✓ Provide time and space for women to speak in meetings or trainings.
- ✓ Work with community members to find ways of sharing child care, cooking or other duties so that women and men can equally participate.
- ✓ Work with existing community groups, particularly those in which women participate.
- ✓ Ensure women have access to information about the project and activities.
- ✓ Advocate for women's inclusion on committees.
- ✓ Recruit female staff to work alongside male staff.
- ✓ Use local terms that will encourage both women and men to talk freely about sanitation and hygiene.

## Focusing on inclusive approaches – Learning Circles

**“** There has been more collaboration amongst people, the project has helped men and women to talk properly together and listen. Men are able to listen to the women more compared to the past. There was a lot of training over the six years, lots of group work and discussions and Learning Circles, with people sharing their views. The concept helped us to come up with better ideas. The norm is in a village meeting, the men / leaders would speak and tell people what to do – it was one-way communication and decision-making. The Learning Circles helped us to listen together and we started to value the discussion and sharing of ideas before arriving at a decision. **”**

*Male community member, Fiji*

A Learning Circle is a group of people who meet regularly to discuss, explore and learn about issues that concern them, their communities or the wider society. Groups are usually small (5-15 people) and meet once or twice a week for a number of weeks, often for around two hours at a time. The aim of a Learning Circle is not necessarily to learn a lot of facts or for everyone to reach agreement. Rather, it should provide each person with the chance to increase their understanding of the issues, and the tools and confidence to act on their beliefs. The basis of a Learning Circle is a discussion among equals where everyone learns from each other. Talking allows group members to explore different sides of an issue, look at what will happen if they act in one way or another and reach a decision on the best way to go in the circumstances<sup>2</sup>.

To find out more about Learning Circles and download examples of facilitators' manuals and guides, visit <http://www.livelearn.org/resources/manuals.asp>

<sup>2</sup> Live & Learn Environmental Education (2006), *Learning Circles Facilitators Guide*, Solomon Islands, available online at <http://www.livelearn.org/resources/manuals.asp>

## Stories from women and men about participating in a WASH project

**“** ... if more people attend the meeting then there will be more ideas – it will improve the discussion. We give women time and opportunity to speak because we know not only men make good decisions – women also have good ideas about building communities. We give the head of the women’s group time and also let other women participate and provide ideas.

*Male community member, Fiji*

There has been more collaboration among people (as a result of this WASH project); this helps men and women to talk properly together and listen. Men are able to listen to the women more compared to the past. **”**

*Male community member, Fiji*



## Story about why participation matters

In a rural community WASH project in Vanuatu there was strong participation from the women. The women fundraised and contributed a lot to the project because they wanted everything in the WASH community action plan to happen. The money women made through fundraising helped bring all the materials (roof sheets, sand, slab material) needed for the water system to the community as it paid for the transport. Because of the women's efforts, the plan happened. These efforts were recognised by the men in the community, which was another positive outcome.



### Example of a participatory monitoring tool

#### Pocket voting for participation: information, voice and choice<sup>3</sup>

Pocket charts can be used as a tool to record and monitor participation within projects. Pocket charts can be made from cloth with pockets to hold people's 'votes' (pieces of paper, seeds, shells, small stones, so it is possible to count the number of individuals who voted for a particular idea, choice or option). Pocket charts can also be drawn on the ground and incorporate locally available materials such as bowls or jars to hold people's 'votes'.

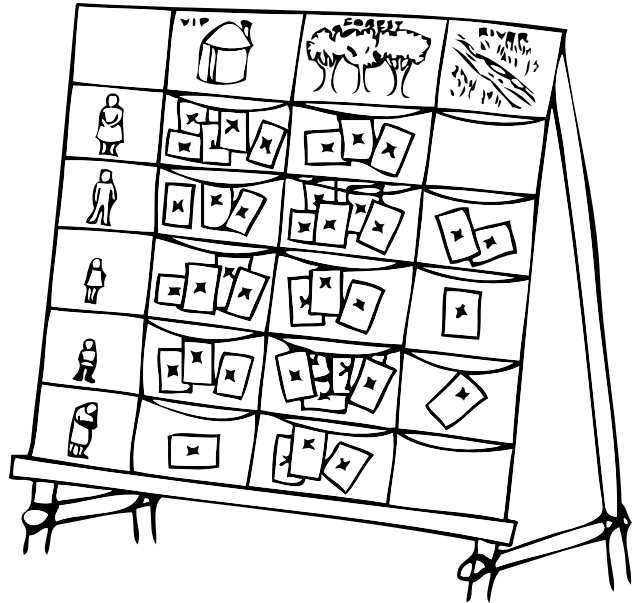
Pocket charts can also be used to identify community priorities among different WASH options.

<sup>3</sup> This activity is adapted from Dayal, R, Can Wijk C & Mukherjee N (2002), *MetGuide – Methodology for Participatory Assessments with communities, institutions and policy makers*, Water and Sanitation Program and IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Delft, the Netherlands.



## Steps

1. Prepare simple locally-recognisable pictures of the main people or groups involved in the project. e.g. NGO staff, community leaders, women, men, main community groups.
2. Place the pictures down the left side of a pocket chart, leaving the top square free.
3. Pictures representing types of opportunities, choices and decisions are placed across the top of the chart. These might include (for example) receiving information about the project, selection of committee, choosing the type of water supply or toilet to be constructed, location of toilets, who will provide labour and fundraising.
4. Women and men from the community involved with the project vote twice, first, on *who participated* and second on *who made the decisions*.
5. Women and men need to use voting paper, seeds or shells that are a different colour or shape, so it is possible to see if women's and men's experiences and practices differ.
6. After voting is completed, the contents of the pockets are laid out for analysis and discussion. The contents will provide information for discussion about:
  - Who participated (and in what way) during the planning phase?
  - Who participated in making the main decisions leading to the water and sanitation facilities?
  - Who did and did not participate and why?
  - How much information and choice was available to those involved in making the decisions?
7. Facilitate a discussion with participants about the results, and ask them to give their thoughts on the similarities and differences between the groups and why these exist. Are there differences between women's and men's votes? Did some people participate in decisions while others were excluded?



*Example of a pocket chart for voting.*

## Principle 2: Focus on how decisions are made

**Use decision-making processes that enable women's and men's active involvement, within the project and in activities.**

This involves thinking about *how* decisions are made, about *what*, and *where* they are made – because this will affect who can be involved, how much they are involved, and how far different views and priorities are taken into account.

The process for making decisions is important at all stages of a project – from the first decision to improve water, sanitation and hygiene behaviours, through to planning and ongoing management, at both community and household levels. Committees are a key part of WASH programs – both existing community committees and those formed specifically for WASH activities. The success of a WASH program will be greatly influenced by how well they work. This includes the relationships between members of committees, particularly whether some people have more power and influence than others, and how well a committee represents the interests of women, men and different groups within communities. Decisions made within families and the household influence how WASH issues are addressed and tasks allocated and managed. If some members of the family have more influence than others over decisions about water, sanitation and hygiene, the decisions may meet the needs of some family members more than others.

### Why is this principle important?

Good decisions are those that are made with the active involvement of people who will be affected by the decision. Such decisions are more likely to be supported by everyone, and reflect everyone's concerns. In water, sanitation and hygiene this means involving the different groups of women, men, young people and those that are commonly marginalised in communities.

Those most effected by the issue are often best placed to find a solution. For example, the water and sanitation technologies most likely to be successful are those that potential users think are most appropriate. A solution that fits the needs and context of the community and that people have helped choose increases sustainability and community ownership.

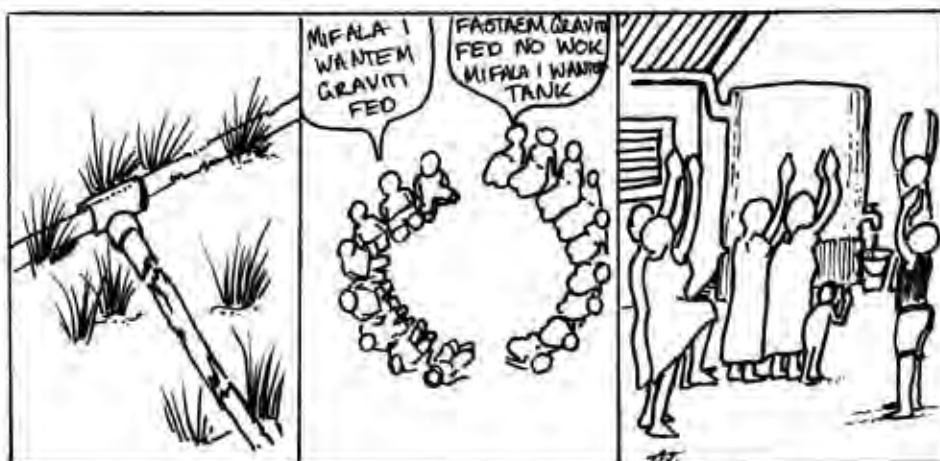
Applying this principle enables both women's and men's voices to be heard together in decision-making, which can improve relationships and increase respect for women and the contributions they can and do make. This also enables women to feel better about themselves and more confident about speaking up. For women, involvement in decisions about WASH activities may be their first opportunity to take a visible leadership role within their community.

From a community perspective, the involvement of different groups of women and those who may be excluded, alongside different groups of men and community leaders, enables everyone to hear and learn about the different needs, priorities and contributions across the community. This can increase community unity, reduce the potential for conflict and disputes arising from disagreements about aspects of WASH management and minimise the risk of unfair outcomes (for example a situation where one group benefits more than others or one group is burdened unfairly by additional labour).

Decision-making that includes and values women's and men's views encourages good, respectful relationships and leads to more equitable sharing of roles and responsibilities in the household and labour relating to WASH. In addition, when women's participation in decision-making is valued in the home, women can gain support for their participation in community decision-making.

### Story from Vanuatu about choosing a water system

During a community planning process using PHAST, women and men were involved in collective decision-making about the water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. In a group activity they ranked various types of water supply options. The women ranked a rainwater catchment highest while the men prioritised a gravity feed water system. The women's decision was supported in the end as it was based on the difficulties they had experienced with a previous gravity feed system, which had failed due to a land dispute. The women had been directly affected by the past decisions and failures. The participatory process enabled both women's and men's views to be heard. The final decision, made jointly, was to fundraise for rainwater tanks, which the women led. In the words of one female participant "after PHAST workshops the voices of the women have been heard; now we have water tanks". The community has a reliable source of safe drinking water.



## What does good practice look like?

**“** We must involve more women in water and sanitation committees and men have to allow women to make decisions in the committees. **”**

*Male community member, Vanuatu*

A good decision-making process for example may involve discussion with everyone in the community to identify options that are appropriate for everyone, and then for the community to decide which option they prefer. This way, decisions are more likely to meet the different needs in the community. If everyone hears the different views in the community, everyone learns more about the needs and priorities of others. This is particularly important in communities where men and women, boys and girls have different roles and responsibilities. They may spend quite a lot of time apart each day and may not be aware of the needs and priorities that arise from the different work they do.

Participatory decisions are best supported through participatory approaches that allow discussions about WASH activities, such as which water and sanitation technology to install, where it is to be located, how it will be maintained and who will manage and pay for it. Different methods may be needed for decisions such as voting, or ranking processes. Sometimes a process for resolving conflict may be required when the needs and priorities of individuals or groups differ.

Committees are key to addressing this need. Clear roles and responsibilities and transparent processes for electing members are important, as is involving the community in agreeing on what good representation will look like. It's an opportunity to encourage positions for women alongside men, and for any groups that will be impacted by the decisions the committee makes.

**“** The committee was very important in the project. Women and men always talked together about matters concerning water. **”**

*Male community member, Vanuatu*





### **Power matters: and it is both visible and invisible**

It's important to be aware of how power affects decision-making. Power can be visible and recognised, such as the power of chiefs, leaders and even the project staff. But it can also be invisible or harder to see, such as the power of long-held traditions and beliefs about what are acceptable roles for men and women. These values will influence things like whether or not a woman feels able to speak in meetings or feels supported to attend by her husband.

In many families and communities, men's and women's roles are not just different, they are valued differently also. Men's roles and work can be valued more than women's, even though they are both essential to the family and community well-being. This can give men more influence, in families and in the community. This difference in power between men and women can make it harder for women to contribute their ideas and question aspects of traditional roles and status of women and men.

When there are differences in power between people, changes in power may be seen by some as a threat and others as a positive change. If you think power is like a piece of fruit – one person can only get more if another person gets less – then change can feel threatening. Everyone worries they might end up with less. But actually, power is more like the plant that produces the fruit – it can grow. One person can feel more powerful and able to help make decisions about what happens without taking away another person's right to have a say. In fact, helping another person to feel able to contribute can make you feel more powerful – you have a say, you help someone to grow and feel more confident, and decision-making benefits from hearing different ideas and taking all needs into account. Everyone wins!

**“** Women can speak but they still don't have confidence in themselves. In a meeting, women have very good ideas, but they don't really have the confidence to give them out. **”**

*Male community member,  
Vanuatu*

Culture and tradition can be used as barrier to change, but it can also provide a basis from which to bring about change.

“ It (listening to women) strengthens traditional leadership, women are the backbone. They do the work so it’s only fair we listen to them. ”

*Male community member, Fiji*

### Tips for working with women and men in making decisions

- ✓ Work with women and men to reduce the fear of change and support them to be comfortable about women having a say, to see the value of their contributions and to provide safe encouraging spaces for women to speak.
- ✓ Encourage men, and women, to talk about and work through their concerns.
- ✓ Share stories of women and men from other villages where women have had an opportunity to be part of community decisions and the benefits of this for the community.
- ✓ Work with the men and particularly with the male leaders to build their commitment and capacity to support women’s participation in decision-making.
- ✓ Work with existing groups, as these will be more sustainable in the longer term.
- ✓ Recognise that promoting change takes time and needs to be carefully monitored for unintended negative outcomes.



*Which committee is working the most effectively? Enabling women’s participation on committees involves both women and men.*

## Tips for working with committees

- ✓ Encourage committees to include the same proportion of women and men as there are in the community.
- ✓ Work with women so they understand the roles of the committees and any rules about how they work.
- ✓ Seek to support women, to increase their confidence to contribute.
- ✓ Support the women on the committees, including by asking about their experiences e.g. Are they being given opportunity to speak? Are they attending? If not, think about why and what can be done.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for women and men to experience different roles, for example rotating the role of chair or treasurer among all the committee members, or alternating each role between men and women.
- ✓ Some committee membership rules require literacy, which limits the number of women who may be eligible. But people may be able to contribute even if they are not literate. For every committee, think about whether literacy is essential, and whether all members need to be literate.



## Example of a tool to help everyone have a say

### Talking sticks for committees

An object such as a stick or shell can be used to provide opportunities for all committee members to speak and be listened to during meetings. When a person wants to speak they are given the 'talking' stick or shell. The group can make simple rules that allow the person holding the object to speak while others listen. The object can then be shared fairly so everyone has the opportunity to speak in a meeting. Making sure everyone gets a turn can build confidence in speaking, ensure one or two voices don't dominate and be fun.

**“** Men need to give space.... men don't always give the space. **”**

*Female committee member, Vanuatu*

## Stories of positive change from women and men on committees and involved in decision-making

“ I was elected to the committee and am very proud, it is unusual to have a woman on a committee and contribute to decisions e.g. about payment for water etc. I feel more respected by my husband, like my status has improved and I am taking more of a leadership role also in the religious group of which I am a part. In my family the relationship is improved and I am happier.

Female water committee member, Vanuatu

Once they allow us to speak they usually listen to what we say. So being heard isn't the issue so much as [gaining permission to speak]. Women before were never given space in meetings, this is a big change.

Female community member, Fiji

In the past they weren't able to speak in meetings. But then men started noticing that women were very punctual to meetings and regularly attended. So the men decided to give women a larger role in the meetings. Men could also see that women were really hard workers and so felt they had something to contribute to decision-making.

Male community member, Fiji

We [women] used to be scattered and not working together, now we have representation in the committee. Now women start to talk in meetings, now there are women who help take decisions. Before women didn't talk in community meetings, now they participate and also take decisions. It makes me so proud that we have a voice in development compared to previous years where only men talked.

”

Female community member, Vanuatu

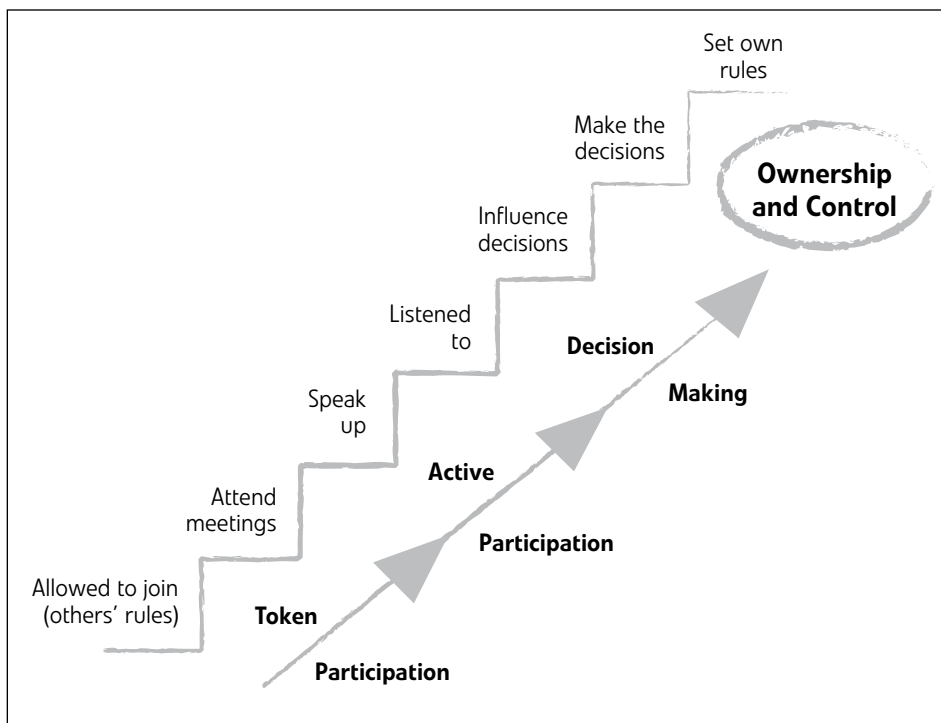




## Example of a participatory monitoring tool for decision-making

### Participation ladders

Participation ladders can be used to monitor how effectively women, men or groups report they are participating in decisions being made in committees. They can also be used more broadly to support planning for participation in all stages of a project. A visual aid that illustrates the different steps of participation – from token participation, to active involvement, to decision-making and finally ownership and control – can help facilitate a monitoring activity with a group such as a committee.



Different members of the group can be asked to identify and discuss the following points, in relation to particular decisions in the community or in the household:

- Where are they currently on the ladder?
- Where would they like to be?
- What would support this happening?
- Are there any differences between the different members of the group in terms of where they are on the ladder? Think about factors such as status, sex or age.

The ladder can be used regularly to monitor changes in the extent of participation, to raise awareness of the barriers faced by different groups or members and develop steps or strategies to overcome them.

## Principle 3: See and value differences

**See, understand and value the different work, skills, concerns and priorities of women and men related to water, sanitation and hygiene.**

Women and men have both shared and different roles and responsibilities in water, sanitation and hygiene work within their families and within their communities. Women and men are also affected by, and benefit differently from, efforts to improve water, sanitation and hygiene. Efforts may impact differently on their time, roles and responsibilities, and on women's reproductive health needs. These different uses, concerns, needs, work, skills and ideas are important things to consider in WASH programs. These differences vary between families, communities, over time and are influenced by differences in power and social status. It's important to see, understand and value these differences: families and communities depend on everyone's contribution to survive and prosper.



*Women's and men's roles are different but equally important in water, sanitation and hygiene.*

### Why is this principle important?

Applying this principle will result in more appropriate and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene outcomes for everyone. Decisions about activities, locations and technologies such as taps and toilets are likely to be better when the different needs, uses, concerns and priorities of key users and groups are considered.

Having a good understanding of all the work done in a family and community and valuing the different work for its contribution will help avoid unknowingly or unfairly increasing anyone's workload.

Traditional gender roles typically involve women and girls doing more work and spending more time than men and boys in managing the household's water, sanitation and hygiene. For example women spend more of their day carrying the water or cleaning the toilets. The time involved in this work and its contribution to family and community well-being are often undervalued. Sometimes this labour is not seen as 'work' but just part of what women do. If there is greater recognition and valuing of the work of women and excluded groups, they will be more respected within communities. This may lead to a fairer sharing of roles and work. Women also feel better about themselves when they are more recognised for their work and this recognition increases mutual trust between women and men.



*The main users of a facility such as a tap stand have important ideas and concerns to be valued.*

Applying this principle builds healthier relationships between women and men in families and communities because different contributions are recognised and valued. It also provides a positive example to the next generation; children will learn from their parents about sharing roles and responsibilities.

### **What does good practice look like?**

Good practice involves working with women and men to understand the different potential impacts of a project on them. It also involves asking how a particular activity, decision or plan will affect women and men.

As part of participatory processes and during decision-making discussions, it is important to ensure there is time to listen to and understand the different concerns, experiences, work, needs and ideas of women and men, and ensure they are addressed in the decisions that are made. This may require speaking with women and men separately at some points.

Include activities in the beginning of the project that assist you and the community members to understand the different work of women and men and to recognise the different skills that women and men bring. Use this opportunity to raise awareness of any unfair divisions of work and encourage more sharing of work and roles. This can be done through working with positive role models and messages to continue encouraging sharing.

Always record data about women and men separately and report data back to the community, giving time for discussion about what the data reveals. This helps to make visible the different roles, contributions, work and needs of men and women.



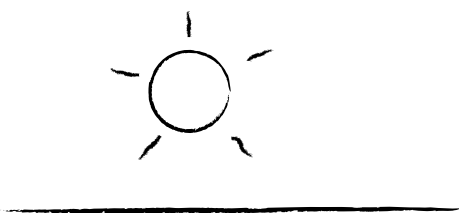
### Example of a participatory planning and monitoring tool

#### What's in a day? Using a 24 Hour Clock to record the work of women and men

As part of a participatory planning process, include an activity to record how work is shared between men and women within each community. One example is the 24 Hour Clock Activity that is facilitated with small groups of women and men separated from each other. It requires sensitivity, trust and a safe space to discuss the issues.

#### Steps

1. Separate men and women into different groups.
2. Ask the individual groups of women and men to think about the different work tasks they commonly do in one day and to draw all of these different tasks including how long each one takes, from when they wake up until they go to sleep.



3. Encourage them to use visual aids such as sunrise and sunset to mark the different times.
4. Prompt them to include all of their activities in their roles as women or men, including activities that are done together, such as caring for young children while preparing meals, and leisure activities.
5. Ask them to indicate which activities are related to water, sanitation and hygiene.
6. Once the groups have finished, invite each group to present their 24 Hour Clocks to the other group, taking care to facilitate this activity respectfully.
7. Facilitate a group discussion using questions to prompt:
  - What are the main differences? What are the similarities?
  - Are there differences in how long activities take or the types done by women and men?
  - Which tasks relate to water, sanitation and hygiene? Are they more men's or women's?



- Which of these are important in our WASH planning?
- Are there more roles that can be shared?

It's important that this information informs the planning of activities and the allocation of work and roles to ensure a fair distribution. It's also important to use the opportunity to discuss and raise awareness of any current inequities in the allocation of work. Identify and agree on things they may be willing to change so that both women and men will be able to participate in project activities if they choose to.

### Positive stories from women and men

**“** Now we have recognised the women's labour and we respect them.

*Male community member, Vanuatu*

We like the roles women play and we acknowledge them. It doesn't disturb the traditional leadership as it's our responsibility as men to listen to our women. For us, not to would be unfair. We see that things are changing slowly, in the past we didn't listen so much. We see it as positive and appreciate it. We see that things are changing and that the women put their views forward and it is not done in a challenging way, it's seen as supportive and an improvement.

*Village headman, Fiji*

We have community work on Tuesdays, to look after the animals, cleaning community etc. Before, not many participated but now many participate, both women and men. Every Tuesday they have a meeting as part of this. Now the women are speaking – and being listened to – about things like water supply and maintenance and general responsibilities. Based on this discussion, the community work gets planned and women and men cooperate to undertake the agreed work.

*Female community member, Vanuatu*

Our dream is that men respect us and they start to do the same work we do and that we be given permission to speak **”** in meetings.

*Female community member, Vanuatu*

## Principle 4: Create opportunities!

**Provide space for women and men to experience and share new roles and responsibilities.**

Community-led efforts to improve water, sanitation and hygiene within families and communities involve many different roles and contributions. Both women and men have strengths and valuable skills to contribute if they choose to. Creating spaces for both and being fair in the way we work with men and women gives the opportunity for everyone to participate in these roles, regardless of whether they are a woman or a man. It's a chance to share or experience new roles and responsibilities and makes sure everyone has access to the benefits.

### Why is this principle important?

Water, sanitation and hygiene are central to the health and well-being of families and communities. They matter to everyone, and everyone has a role to play in developing and sustaining WASH systems and safe hygiene behaviours. WASH programs can contribute to positive change in families and communities through providing new opportunities to participate in and access benefits related to development activities. At the very least, we need to avoid reinforcing existing inequalities in workloads and opportunities between women and men or for commonly excluded groups.

In the Pacific, men and women often spend much of the day working separately from each other. Programs to improve water, sanitation and hygiene can provide an opportunity to work together, to de-mystify women's and men's work, to try new things, and start to change ideas that some roles are only for women or men. Creating opportunities to work together can create shared understanding between men and women including an appreciation of their work and the challenges of their different roles.

It also builds new skills, self esteem and confidence. It can provide women and men a unique opportunity to lead positive change in their community and demonstrate positive role models for the next generation.

Providing opportunities for women and men to experience or share new roles and responsibilities also helps achieve better and more sustainable WASH outcomes. Water supplies and sanitation facilities will be better maintained if we work with people because of their willingness, interests, availability and motivation to be involved, rather than whether they are a man or a woman. It means that a community is better equipped to resolve any problems or issues with their WASH system. Practicing safe hand washing is important to protect everyone's health and both mothers and fathers have a role in teaching children.



*"Wash your hands" (Mother). "Daddy never washes his hands" (Child).*

### What does good practice look like?

During planning and consultations, focus on messages of inclusion and equal opportunities and avoid assuming which roles or project activities men and women should be involved with according to tradition. For example, encourage everyone to participate in training opportunities about construction or maintenance of systems, roles and responsibilities of committees, leadership or hygiene promotion.

It may take different strategies and approaches to enable women and men to access these opportunities. This means adjusting the way you offer opportunities or trainings. It also means deliberately creating spaces to allow discussion about new roles and responsibilities and being intentional about who has the opportunity to participate in training. For example: purposely involving men in training as hygiene promoters in their families and communities, or as health promotion staff.



Role modelling is important. If key people such as leaders take on new roles, encourage them to share this with the wider community. It can have a big social impact.

Encourage the male and female staff of WASH teams to be role models and support each other to be involved in all aspects of a project. For example, encouraging male staff to support a female hygiene promoter in training not only sets a good example, it may encourage men to attend. Alternatively, seek to include female staff in the technical aspects of water and sanitation systems. In the words of one hygiene promoter who was involved in construction, *"It's a success because I'm a women and I can do these things. I know in my heart for the other women they are thinking 'Yes we can do it!'"*



### **Example of a participatory activity to explore women's and men's roles**

It's important to understand what the socially acceptable roles in the community are and ensure that opportunities for change or sharing are presented in ways that focus on inclusion and are not threatening. Role playing each other's gender roles is one way of having fun while starting what can be challenging conversations.

#### **Ideas for role plays**

- Ask separate groups of women and men to look at a particular situation and role play the other gender's views and experience.
- Role play the different work of women and men related to water, sanitation and hygiene within families and communities.
- Problem solving – ask the groups to think about a challenge associated with the WASH program such as maintenance issues or conflict on committees. Role play the different scenarios and solutions, involving women and men in different types of roles from what they might usually take.
- During training on roles and responsibilities of committees, encourage men and women to role play the different roles, such as chair or secretary.





## Stories of positive social change from women and men

“ Previously, women were responsible for all household work. But now it's time that we share the responsibility – both men and women – to bring about change in the community.

*Male community member, Fiji*

The project has opened my eyes. I have changed how I manage my family, for example how to manage health. I am chief of the family. I encourage the family to go to church and to go to school and achieve more things. I have changed how I attend to family affairs. Now I play more and different roles – I weed grass in front of house, help manage waste, and support my wife.

*Male community member, Fiji*

I was the treasurer last year for the community [water] committee. I was very proud. The men had chosen me and voted for me. I was very proud as I was the first and only woman to be on the committee. I was faithful in attending the workshops, the community trusted me and gave me this position of high trust. It made me feel proud to be a woman. I was the first lady to have a position of responsibility. As the treasurer I was responsible for organising the fundraising as part of the action plan.

*Female water committee member, Vanuatu*

Not only mothers make life easy at home. Because I also believe in myself as a father and in contributing to making mother's work easier, this results in easy life at home.

”

*Male community member, Vanuatu*



# 3

## People & Organisations

**“** Inside NGOs it's about personal attitude. When we talk about gender, it's hard for just one man or person to change. We have to work together. It will take time for women and men to work together inside the organisation. **”**

*Male NGO worker, Vanuatu*

The people who work in NGOs and the organisations that employ them and support them have a big influence on how successfully projects work with women and men. The principles outlined in these materials apply within organisations as well as in our work with communities. The people in NGOs are part of the culture too, and their views about men's and women's roles and responsibilities are influenced by social expectations as well as by their studies and the policies and processes of the organisation.

The following questions can help program managers think about how the issues and ideas in these materials apply in an organisation<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Morris P (2003), *Gender Audit: Questionnaire Hand Book*, Commission on the Advancement of Women, InterAction, 2nd Edition, Washington, [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org)

### Political will

How do leaders use their position of power to communicate and demonstrate their support, leadership, enthusiasm for and commitment to working effectively with women and men in the organisation?

### Technical capacity

What level of ability, qualifications and skills of staff in our organisation is needed to carry out the practical work of effectively involving women and men in all our activities?

### Organisational culture

What are the norms, customs, beliefs and codes of behaviour in an organisation that support or undermine working effectively with men and women?

What are seen as acceptable ideas, how are people “expected to behave”, and what behaviours are rewarded?

### Accountability

How does our organisation determine how well it is integrating women’s and men’s concerns and experiences in its programs and its organisational structure?



### Gender audits

A gender audit is a participatory process for assessing how effectively an organisation is integrating gender in its work and structures, and planning how to build on these results. Interaction, the peak body for NGOs in America, has developed a gender audit tool to help organisations identify strengths and challenges in integrating gender into their systems, operations, programs and projects. The tool can be used across a whole organisation or in field offices, headquarters, or other parts of the organisation. The audit process requires commitment from senior staff and a person or team with some gender skills and experience to implement it. The gender audit commonly has three stages:

1. Survey;
2. Focus Groups, to discuss the results of the survey; and
3. A Gender Plan of Action which sets out the priorities the organisation wants to work on, and the steps it will take.

Interaction recommends an activity before the gender audit process to get commitment and support from senior leadership in the organisation to promote the audit process and urge staff to be involved. Handbooks and further information about the audit process are available online at [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org).

## Building on your organisation's strengths

Taking action to work effectively with both women and men may seem like a large task to begin. It is important to take time together to consider your organisation's current practices and strengths and how you can build on these.

This could be done in various ways. One way would be to hold a workshop with WASH staff and divide the day into sessions focused on each of the four principles in this guide. In each session, spend time together first discussing your current practice in relation to that principle. Then use your own ideas and the ideas in this guide to create a vision of the changes you could make to improve your practice. The visual aids that are part of these resources (flash cards, poster) will be of assistance in generating discussion.

It may also be useful to discuss what skills are required to successfully implement the principles proposed in this guide, particularly for field staff, and what support is needed to ensure staff have or can acquire these skills. For example, below is a list of some of the key skills and qualities that NGO staff involved in the Vanuatu and Fiji research process considered important to implement the four principles:

- ✓ Sensitive to others, non-judgemental and able to communicate effectively.
- ✓ Good listening and observation skills including about local culture, attitude and psychology.
- ✓ Able to establish strong trust and adapt to local culture.
- ✓ Ability to solve conflicts in a constructive and peaceful way.
- ✓ Creative, uses humour to allow serious issues to be raised and discussed in a non-threatening way.

Finally, a key requirement for implementing the principles in this guide is for staff to have or acquire some gender awareness. The personal values that staff members hold about women's and men's roles, status and responsibilities influence the values and attitudes they will promote in the communities they work with. There are many resources available to support gender awareness training, some of which are included in the list of resources at the end of this resource guide and are available online.



# Ideas for program managers and organisations to support the Principles and Practices

## Principle 1: Facilitate participation and inclusion

**Focus on ways of working that enable women, men, girls and boys to be actively involved in improving their water, sanitation and hygiene.**

- ✓ Project designs, plans and budgets need to promote participation of women and men and minority groups in communities. This takes time, flexibility and a focus on process.
- ✓ Invest in developing the skills of project staff in facilitation, participatory processes and conflict resolution.
- ✓ Support the development of training resources that assist participatory processes.
- ✓ Ask teams to report back on processes used as well as numbers of participants.
- ✓ Ensure reporting includes sex-disaggregated data – for example, how many women and men, boys and girls were involved, whether particular views were expressed by women or men, boys or girls.
- ✓ Trial and continually improve your community engagement strategies.
- ✓ Be creative and use your local knowledge.

## Principle 2: Focus on how decisions are made

**Use decision-making processes that enable women's and men's active involvement, within the project and in activities.**

- ✓ Ensure project designs and processes make it possible for women and men to have a real role in decision-making at the community level.
- ✓ Review how and when technical expertise is provided to ensure it supports this process. For example, technical experts can support through providing clear information on possible design options, to support communities to make informed decisions.

- ✓ Integrate the WASH project as part of a broader program to strengthen decision-making processes, which might include activities focused on governance, leadership, literacy and women's empowerment.
- ✓ Include an understanding of local power dynamics in designs and in training with teams.
- ✓ Have a policy about working with committees that supports involvement of women and men and inclusive decision-making.
- ✓ Monitor the effectiveness of women's and men's participation e.g. use the participation ladder (see p. 23) and follow-up with the committees.
- ✓ Ensure reporting includes sex-disaggregated data.

### Principle 3: See and value differences

**See, understand and value the different work and concerns of women and men related to water, sanitation and hygiene.**

- ✓ Make women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral part of the design and the implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- ✓ Ensure project cycles incorporate a gender analysis, which is a process that asks how a particular activity, decision or plan will affect men and women differently. It requires collecting and separating data about women and men and understanding how labour is divided and valued. The 24 Clock Activity (pp. 26-27) is a good way to record the work of men and women.
- ✓ Keep learning from what you see about women's and men's work and involvement in the community, and adjust your approach.
- ✓ Monitor the impact activities are having on women and men, including on their time and labour.
- ✓ Build the capacity of staff to understand what to look for and what to value.
- ✓ Recognise the contributions of both female and male staff in the teams.
- ✓ Develop policies for your organisation that support gender equality.

## Principle 4: Create opportunities

### Provide space for women and men to share and experience new roles and responsibilities.

- ✓ Recruit male and female staff for WASH teams for any roles, including management. For example look for male hygiene promoters and female technical workers.
- ✓ Value the capacity to create opportunities when recruiting staff.
- ✓ Support female staff to work alongside male staff and encourage respectful working relationships.
- ✓ Work within a programmatic approach that integrates components like governance, leadership training, literacy work or income generating activities.
- ✓ Consider both practical skills and strategic interests in providing opportunities for men and women.
- ✓ Ensure training for the team is available to all members.
- ✓ Encourage male and female staff to see themselves as role models.

## Monitoring

Monitoring approaches need to include the social outcomes for women and men involved with WASH activities as well as the changes in access to safe water, improved sanitation and hygiene practices. This involves using both qualitative and quantitative methods, supported by participatory tools or approaches.

### Working with field staff in monitoring – examples of things to look for

- ✓ What is the impact of training /new skills on women's and men's lives?
- ✓ Review community plans – are women's and men's ideas/voices reflected in activities?
- ✓ What does participation in decision-making look like in this plan/activity? Can we improve it?
- ✓ Who is participating in the meetings, activities and trainings? How many men and women? Who isn't attending? Why? What can we do differently to improve this?

- ✓ Are women speaking in workshops or meetings? How do women and men respond to women speaking?
- ✓ Women's involvement in committees: What type of roles do they have? Are they consistently going to meetings? Are they speaking and being heard? What are their experiences?
- ✓ Have there been changes in females' or males' labour or time? What are they? Are they fair?
- ✓ What are the attitudes of women and men in the community towards women's and men's work and roles? Have there been any changes?
- ✓ Are there social changes? Are these positive or negative?
- ✓ What are men's roles in hygiene at household and community level?
- ✓ Have there been any changes in levels of violence linked to water, sanitation or hygiene?

### **How can you monitor these changes?**

- ✓ Observation.
- ✓ Regular follow-up.
- ✓ Conversations and spending time with men's and women's groups outside of project-related activities.
- ✓ Formal feedback process through community meetings.
- ✓ Conversations with key people such as leaders, both males and females.
- ✓ Use qualitative methods such as storytelling or most significant change techniques to complement quantitative methods.
- ✓ Use the participation ladder tool.
- ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of training sessions with both women and men.
- ✓ Require social analysis skills when developing terms of references for consultants or conducting evaluations.
- ✓ Include questions that focus on women's and men's roles and responsibilities in baseline surveys, so you can identify changes.
- ✓ Review forms and reporting templates to ensure they capture basic information such as sex-disaggregated data and process-related indicators.
- ✓ Analyse the sex-disaggregated data collected.

Further examples of monitoring tools and indicators are included in the resources in Part 4.





# 4

## Additional Resources

- ⊗ **Key Gender and Development concepts and terms**
- ⊗ **Where can I find out more?**
- ⊗ **Background to the Research Project**
- ⊗ **Vanuatu Case Study Snapshot**
- ⊗ **Fiji Case Study Snapshot**
- ⊗ **References**
- ⊗ **Feedback form**



## Key Gender and Development concepts and terms

These gender and development concepts and terms have informed the Principles and Practices for working effectively with women and men.

### Gender is

- The socially-learned roles and responsibilities that are assigned to females and males in a given culture, time and place.
- Learned behaviour that changes across time, place and culture.
- How women and men are perceived, how they are expected to behave or how they *feel* they are expected to behave.

### Sex is

- Biological differences between men and women.

### Gender equality

- Refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will be the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity among different groups of women and men. Equality between women and men is a human right, and a precondition for, and an indicator of, sustainable people-centred development (AusAID, 2006).
- The condition of fairness in relations between females and males, leading to a situation in which each has equal status, rights, levels of responsibility and access to power and resources.

### Gender equity

- Refers to fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development, according to the different needs of women, men, girls and boys (AusAID, 2006).

**Gender analysis is**

- The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels.
- A systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development projects on males and females. It requires separating data by sex and understanding how labour is divided and valued. Gender analysis must be done at all stages of the development process and always ask how a particular activity, decision or plan will affect males differently from females (Morris, 2003).

**Gender awareness is**

- A sensitivity to the perceived differences in roles and relations of women and men and how this results in differences in power relations, status, opportunities and needs in an organisation or community, workplace or classroom.

**Gender mainstreaming is**

- A strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral part of the design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men can benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.
- The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

**Practical gender needs are**

- Needs that have been identified by women in relation to their current socially-defined roles. Meeting these needs might make women's life easier but it doesn't change their status in society (e.g. a water supply which reduces women's physical labour or time burden).
- A result of the unequal gender division of resources, responsibilities and power.

**Strategic gender needs**

- Vary by context and are identified by women as a result of their lower social status.
- Tend to challenge gender divisions of labour, power and control, as well as traditionally-defined norms and roles (e.g. legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages, and women's control over their bodies).

## **Gender and development**

- Approach focuses on the socially-constructed basis of differences between men and women and emphasises the need to challenge existing gender roles and relations.

## **Gender division of labour**

- The socially-determined ideas and practices that define what roles and activities are considered appropriate for women and men. Most societies allocate different roles, responsibilities, and activities to women and men, but the nature of the work that is allocated to men and women varies greatly between and within countries and cultures.

## **Sex-disaggregated data**

- The differentiation by sex of statistical and other data. It is a basic requirement for good practice in development programming, because without it, it is difficult to determine the gender impacts of development activities. Gender analysis requires data to be separated by sex, to allow different impacts on men and women to be measured.

## **Women's empowerment**

- Women's empowerment means enabling women to develop their ability to collectively and individually take control over their own lives, identify their needs, set their own agendas and demand support from their communities and the state to see that their interests are responded to. In most cases the empowerment of women requires transformation of the division of labour and of society (UNDP, 2001).
- Women's empowerment recognises the need to address years of discrimination against women through programs and strategies that increase women's skills, capacities, rights, and opportunities.



## Where can I find out more?

The ISF and IWDA website about researching gender aspects of water, sanitation and hygiene projects with Pacific communities includes further resources, case studies, current reports and activities.

[www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)

## Websites and networks

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### **GENDERNET**

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender>

The OECD Development Assistance Committee Network on Gender Equality provides an international forum where gender experts from development co-operation agencies meet to define common approaches in support of gender equality. Its website provides a range of useful resources on integrating gender in development work as well as up-to-date statistics.

### **Gendermatters.eu**

<http://www.gendermatters.eu/>

This website is a portal for sharing experiences, knowledge, resources, online courses and tools produced on gender and aid effectiveness, in countries worldwide. It is a joint program of the European Commission (EC), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITC/ILO).

### **Gender Water Alliance**

<http://www.genderandwater.org/>

The Gender Water Alliance (GWA) is a global network of more than 1400 members in 106 countries, dedicated to mainstreaming gender in water resources management. The mission of GWA is to promote women's and men's equitable access to and management of safe and adequate water, for domestic supply, sanitation, food security and environmental sustainability.

### **Gender Water Network**

<http://rspas.anu.edu.au/gwn/>

The Gender Water Network (GWN) links students, professionals and researchers interested in gender concerns in water resource management in the Asia Pacific region. It acts as a voice in 'engendering' the water management sector in the region, a clearinghouse of information, and a platform for sharing common experiences. It is hosted by the Australian National University (ANU).



### **IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre – Gender and Equity**

<http://www.irc.nl/page/118>

The IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre promotes a gendered approach to water and sanitation projects and programs through its information resources, advocacy work, publications and projects with partners. As part of its website it includes a focus on Gender and Equity with current examples, regular updates, and a search engine.

### **Siyanda**

<http://www.siyanda.org/>

Siyanda is an on-line database of gender and development materials from around the world. It provides a search engine and an interactive space where gender practitioners can share ideas, experiences and resources. It is hosted by Bridge – the gender and development research and information service located at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex in the UK.

## **Resources and guides available online**

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### **Expert Group Meeting on Gender-Disaggregated Data on Water and Sanitation**

UNW-DPC Knowledge Publications Series, 2009

Available online at <http://www.unwater.unu.edu/file/get/51>

This report from an expert group meeting includes the main recommendations of 26 participating experts representing national ministries and other national institutions, and several international organisations and NGOs worldwide on mainstreaming gender issues into water and sanitation policies. It also presents six main gendered indicators that the experts propose should be incorporated into existing surveys and data collection efforts at a national and international level.

### **Gender and Integrated Water Resource Management Resource Guide**

Gender Water Alliance and UNDP, 2nd Edition, 2006

Available online at <http://www.genderandwater.org/page/2414>

The Guide is a comprehensive reference document to assist water and gender practitioners and professionals in gender mainstreaming in the water sector. It is a compilation of newer resources – documents, papers, books, case studies, tools and toolkits – on gender mainstreaming in Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM). The guide aims to facilitate access to available literature and resources regarding gender and IWRM to improve understanding and

awareness of gender concepts through an easy reference to existing materials, cases, and tools.

### **Gender and Water: Mainstreaming gender equality in water, hygiene and sanitation interventions**

Prepared for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Charlie Sever, 2005

Available online at <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/bridge/docs/gender%20&%20water.pdf>

This resource was developed to support SDC project staff and partners such as national program officers and water organisations to mainstream gender equality into water, hygiene and sanitation interventions. It illustrates how to 'put gender on the agenda' in terms of gender strategies and gender-sensitive water policies, and ensure that people are engaged and remain committed.

### **Gender Training Toolkit**

World Vision International, 2nd Edition, 2008

Available online at <http://www.transformational-development.org/>

The Gender Training Toolkit is a training manual designed to help World Vision staff mainstream gender equity into programmes and projects, and to ensure compliance with the Partnership's Gender Policy. It includes a curriculum framework, facilitator's guide, and workshop content and exercises. It's available in English, French and Spanish.

### **Mainstreaming Gender in Water Management: A Practical Journey to Sustainability**

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2003, New York: UNDP

Available online at [http://www.undp.org/water/docs/resource\\_guide.pdf](http://www.undp.org/water/docs/resource_guide.pdf)

This guide is a reference document to assist program managers and gender advisors in mainstreaming gender within the context of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). It builds on existing initiatives by summarizing the available tools and materials on gender mainstreaming in IWRM. It has been developed by UNDP in consultation with stakeholders in various regions, with support from the Gender Water Alliance.

### **MetGuide – Methodology for Participatory Assessments with communities, institutions and policy makers**

Water and Sanitation Program and IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Delft, the Netherlands.

Available online at [www.wsp.org/UserFiles/file/global\\_metguideall.pdf](http://www.wsp.org/UserFiles/file/global_metguideall.pdf)

The MetGuide is a comprehensive and practical tool that details a method for participatory assessments of gender and poverty using participatory learning activities at each stage of larger-scale water and sanitation programs. The methods detailed were used with partners in 88 communities in 15 countries in 5 regions in the 1990s. It is relevant for development institutions, governments and NGOs as well as researchers and policy makers in integrating gender and development analysis into sustainability assessments of community water and sanitation services.

### **Tapping the Connections between People and Water**

SOPAC, 2004

Available online at <http://www.sopac.org/data/virlib/MR/MR0577.pdf>

A handbook for field workers when working with communities to install and maintain water and sanitation systems, and support health and hygiene initiatives in the Pacific context. The guidelines also provide a list of publications and organisations, and suggest techniques for community participation in water and sanitation programmes. The resource uses illustrations with simple language, avoiding scientific jargon. It's based on a Community Participation and Gender survey which was carried out in the Pacific region to collect, analyse and disseminate findings on the extent of community participation in water and sanitation in Pacific Island countries, with particular attention to gender and poverty issues.

### **Untapped Connections: Gender, Water and Poverty: Key Issues, Government Commitments and Actions for Sustainable Development**

Women's Environment and Development Organisation, New York, 2003

[http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/untapped\\_eng.pdf](http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/untapped_eng.pdf)

This paper presents an overview of the relationship between gender, poverty and water. The first section explores how, in every corner of the globe, women play a central role in managing water supply and distribution. It also examines how access to water and sanitation has implications for women's health and economic activities. Case studies highlight water projects and initiatives that have succeeded in elevating women's status. Section two presents strategies for translating government commitments on gender, poverty eradication and water and sanitation into action by advocating for a gender perspective in all water and sanitation-related policies. Section three, in the form of an insert, is a compilation of existing government commitments on gender, poverty and water.

**PHAST step-by-step guide: a participatory approach for the control of diarrhoeal diseases**

World Health Organisation, 1998

Available online at [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/index.html)

An easy to use guide for facilitating community planning to improve water, sanitation and hygiene with rural communities. It details a practical methodology suitable for field workers working with communities to improve hygiene behaviours, prevent diarrhoea, and encourage community management of water and sanitation facilities. It uses specific adult learning tools supported by visual aids to facilitate a seven-step group planning process through which participants discover the faecal oral transmission route. The first five steps help take the community group through the process of developing a plan to prevent diarrhoeal diseases by improving water supply, hygiene behaviours and sanitation. The sixth and seventh steps involve monitoring and evaluation. It also includes guidance for working with local artists to develop a set of culturally-appropriate visual aids to support the planning process. PHAST was developed after field testing and piloting in South Asia and Africa.



## Background to the Research Project

### **Making the Invisible Visible: Gender and Pacific Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Initiatives**

The research on which this guidance material is based was undertaken by the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney (ISF) and the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA), in collaboration with World Vision Vanuatu (WVV) and Live & Learn Environmental Education Fiji (Live & Learn) in two case study countries in the Pacific, Vanuatu and Fiji, in 2009. This research was supported by an Australian Development Research Award (ADRA) from AusAID.

The research engaged with current (or recent) NGO-implemented programs that specifically incorporate a gendered participatory approach of some kind: World Vision Vanuatu's water, sanitation and hygiene projects that utilise the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) methodology (Simpson-Herbert et al. 1997) in rural Vanuatu; and Live & Learn's learning circles and water governance project in Fiji. PHAST is an empowering participatory development approach in increasing use in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. It was developed by WHO/UNDP and informed by UNDP's PROWESS (promotion of the role of women in water and sanitation) work in the 1990s, which aimed to identify strategies and tools for expanding women's role in WASH projects. Learning Circles are an inclusive, deliberative, group-based approach to dialogue and decision-making, focused in this instance on water governance. Live & Learn used the methodology in the case study communities, included separate discussions with men, women and youth, and specifically addressed the involvement of women in decision-making.

The research sought to address four key questions:

1. What does strengths-based research reveal about the breadth and depth of gender outcomes from water and sanitation initiatives in the Pacific?
2. What are the strengths of different WASH approaches for achieving gender outcomes?
3. What are the implications for strategic integration of gender into water and sanitation initiatives in the Pacific and elsewhere?
4. What are the implications of the research for current gender equality theories and approaches?

Using a strength's based approach, the research team conducted a participatory process in four communities (two in Fiji and two in Vanuatu). Steps included: (i) seeking personal stories about positive outcomes for women and for men that had happened as a result of the WASH project, and identifying what enablers led to these outcomes; (ii) discussing and ranking these positive outcomes; (iii) visions of even better outcomes for women and men through discussion and role-play; (iv) participatory voting with respect to the frequency of occurrence of particular outcomes followed by community discussion.



**The table below provides a summary of gender outcomes achieved**

Type of gender outcome	Vanuatu	Fiji
Positive changes in gender relations at the family or household level	Increased respect given to women by husbands and other men in the household	Women are more respected by men and feel more valued
	Men taking on an increasing role in hygiene in their home to support their wives	Communication between husband and wife has improved
	Reduction in violence at the household level	Men are participating more in household sanitation and water management
Positive changes in gender relations at the community level	Recognition of women's hard work in the community	There is an increased sense of community unity, through men and women working together
	Increased trust in and respect for women	Women's efforts to promote community sanitation and health are recognised by men
		Women are more respected by men and feel more valued
Women included in decision-making processes in their community	Women taking on leadership roles for the first time in their community, resulting in individual empowerment	Women have an increased voice at the community level
	Women's inclusion in committees and decision-making processes	
	Increased space and support for women's voice to be heard at community level	
Women's labour in collecting water reduced and their practical need for water, hygiene and sanitation facilities satisfied	Major and strongly valued outcome by women particularly, and also by men	Not applicable in Fiji case study communities, as the relevant NGO project did not provide infrastructure
Women's solidarity increased	Not applicable as not reported	Women are working together and supporting each other

(Willetts, Halcrow, Carrard, Rowland and Crawford, 2010)

Further information, papers and case studies are available on line at [www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)



## Vanuatu Case Study Snapshot

In October 2009 in Vanuatu, two communities participated in the research to explore the links between WASH and gender, both of which had been engaged in WASH projects facilitated by World Vision Vanuatu using the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) methodology. In using this methodology, World Vision placed particular emphasis on socially inclusive community engagement strategies.



The methodology used in this study allowed community participants to share their own ideas about what women and men valued as changes resulting from the project with regard to women and men's roles and relationships. A strengths-based research approach was used, informed by principles of empowerment, appreciation and participation. The aim was to support a constructive reflection and learning process for community members, NGO staff and researchers. In each case study community, the research team spent two days working with 10-20 men and approximately 20 women. Research activities included story-telling, group discussion, prioritisation, visioning and a pocket voting activity.

This summary details five positive outcomes arising from World Vision Vanuatu WASH projects that were repeatedly mentioned through these research activities by women and men in two communities and describes the major enablers of these outcomes. Names of the communities have been changed to preserve anonymity.

### **Relationships between women and men at the family and/or household level have improved**

Men showed an increase in respect for women in their family and household, and men were taking an increasing role in hygiene in their home to support their wives. This outcome was valued in both communities, although different aspects were visible in each. In Puluu, whilst women's roles as the main caregivers within the family did not change, improvements in health and hygiene resulted in increased respect for women. In some cases this allowed women to negotiate sharing of more roles in the home. In Nanen, stories focused more around improved communication in the relationship between husband and wife.

**“** Previously women were responsible for all household work. But now you must share the responsibility – both men and women – to bring about change in the community.

Nanen Village male chief

Water and sanitation information helped improve our lives; it also helped strengthen our relationship in our home, especially family, because we now share responsibility. In the community, we now work more closely together.

Puluan Village woman

It's like a chicken, if it has only one wing it will go in circles. **”**  
We need to work together and not have women left behind.

Nanen Village woman

In Puluan, there had been a reduction in arguments about water management, as improved access to water removed points of tension. Previously, disputes often arose when women requested assistance from their husbands to fetch water and at times resulted in violent responses from husbands against their wives. Such arguments and violence were reported to have been dramatically reduced with the new availability of water.

**“** Water has solved family conflicts, especially violence in homes, because most violence happens just because of laziness to fetch water by men. And now we can see happiness in the home, just because of availability of water. Most of the fighting is only about water.

Puluan Village man

If this is how it is in the future, then there will be no more **”**  
quarrelling or fighting.

Nanen Village woman



### Relationships between women and men at the community level have improved

Men's attitudes towards women in the community had changed. Women's contribution during the WASH projects and in other community work was strongly recognised and valued by men. Men saw women as trustworthy in their contributions to community events and other labour. Men had increased their respect for women which in turn led to valuing their voice in decision-making. In Nanen, women felt that men's recognition of their work was the first step in changing men's attitude towards them, and ranked this as the most important outcome achieved by the project. In Puluau, women felt able to take up roles on the committee because men had recognised their hard work, and because the women themselves recognised that they had a valuable contribution to make.

**“** *“Yu tok wetem action” [women talk with action] – when women want something to happen they talk and they do it themselves. They put into practice what they learn in workshops.*

*Puluau Village man*

*Why women are in the committees? Because men and the majority of the community now trust women just because of their commitment in community works.* **”**

*Puluau Village man*

## Women are more included in decision making processes in their community

The WASH projects involved both women and men in participatory processes, and this had helped to create some important 'firsts'. Women reported that they had taken on leadership roles for the first time within their community, noting that this had built their self-confidence and sense of growing empowerment and also led to increased respect for women in the broader community. Men indicated that they had become more supportive of women having a role in community decision-making and recognised that lack of self-confidence had at times prevented women from sharing their views.

**“** I was elected to the committee and am very proud, it is unusual to have a woman on a committee and contribute to decisions e.g. about payment for water etc. I feel more respected by my husband, like my status has improved and I am taking more of a leadership role also in the religious group of which I am a part. In my family the relationship is improved and I am happier.

*Puluan Village female water committee member*

In the past all discussions and decisions were made by the men in the nakamals (traditional meeting places). Women were just kept behind. In this project we came together, almost, and worked together but with different roles. **”**

*Nanen Village woman*

## Women's labour in collecting water has reduced and their practical need for water, hygiene and sanitation facilities are met

In both communities women and girls are the main collectors of water, and also the main users of water. In their care-giving roles in families it was clear that women, more than men, appreciated hygiene education and resulting changes and having easy access to water and sanitation facilities. These practical needs were satisfied through the WASH projects, reducing women's labour and satisfying their need for WASH in daily life. These outcomes were at the forefront of women's minds when asked about positive experiences with respect to the project, and were ranked as highly important by both women and men. This outcome is the most commonly reported one for women involved in water, sanitation and hygiene programs however, as is clear from other outcomes identified above, it is only one of many potential positive gender outcomes.



**“** In the past they [women] were catching water with bamboo and plastic bottles.... nowadays there is a reduction of burdens.

Puluan Village man

Children every morning used to have to walk long distances before going to the shower. Now it's at home.

Puluan Village woman

I was really struggling to get water from the creek at the coast and our toilets were very poor standard but now we have water here and improved toilets and they are much closer to our house. **”**

Puluan Village woman

## What enabled these outcomes?

### NGO approach

World Vision Vanuatu's approach to community planning was critical to the positive outcomes that eventuated.

- World Vision Vanuatu's approach to WASH was inclusive and participatory and used the PHAST technique as a community planning methodology.
- The World Vision Vanuatu approach was openly stated to be “child focused AND women focused”.
- Staff paid particular attention to the needs of women when deciding timing and locations of project activities. They encouraged women to participate and worked carefully with community leaders to ensure women were supported.
- The participatory planning approach relied strongly on the use of pictures which made it enjoyable, accessible and suitable for low literacy groups. As part of this, a 24-hour clock activity was used to raise awareness of the division of labour between women and men and how equitably it was shared.
- In both communities women were elected to the committees following strong encouragement by World Vision Vanuatu staff before and during the elections.
- World Vision Vanuatu's programmatic approach provided for the committees and their action plans to be supported by follow up training on roles and responsibilities for committee members and leadership training.

- There was preparation and follow-up with the male community leaders to support women's role in the process.
- The quality, commitment and attitude of staff members involved in the projects enabled positive outcomes. The staff included locally recruited women and men, all of whom were well versed in the culture, language and dynamics of the communities and had established good relationships with each community.

### Community strengths

Communities believed having strong role models was important for achieving positive outcomes for women and men. In both communities, strong, respected male leaders supported efforts to ensure women's needs were met and their voices were heard. The chief and other community leaders in both communities were fostering appropriate attitudes towards women amongst the men, including respect, assisting in the home and valuing women's participation in committees and decision-making. The men also emphasised spirituality and the church as underpinning the positive outcomes that were achieved and felt that the influence of the church had contributed to changing their attitude. Women said that recognising their own contribution at the community level provided the foundation for positive outcomes, and both women and men said that they had realised that decisions made only by men may not be as good as those that are also contributed to by women.

For more information and other resources, please see

[www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)





## Fiji Case Study Snapshot

In July 2009 in Fiji, two communities participated in the research to explore the links between WASH and gender, both of which had been engaged with Live & Learn projects between 2004 and 2007. The projects were i) Water Governance and ii) Developing Sustainable Communities. The Governing Water Project aimed to raise awareness about principles of good governance and promote inter-ethnic dialogue using water as a community entry issue and 'Learning Circles' as an implementation tool. In using the Learning Circles approach, Live & Learn placed particular emphasis on socially inclusive community engagement strategies.

The methodology used in this study allowed community participants to share their own ideas about what women and men valued as changes resulting from the project with regard to women's and men's roles and relationships. A strengths-based research approach was used, informed by principles of empowerment, appreciation and participation. The aim was to support a constructive reflection and learning process for community members, NGO staff and researchers. In each case study community, the research team spent two days working with 10-20 men and approximately 20 women. Research activities included story-telling, group discussion, prioritisation, visioning and a pocket voting activity.

This summary details seven positive outcomes arising from Live & Learn WASH projects that were repeatedly mentioned through these various research activities by women and men in two Fijian communities and describes the major enablers of these outcomes. Names of the communities have been changed to preserve anonymity.



### Increased sense of community unity, through men and women working together

Women and men valued how they had worked together to contribute to community-level activities such as waste management and community sanitation. Compared with in the past, the project was considered by the community to have led to increased levels of cooperation and collaboration between women and men, and particularly, men taking a stronger role in areas where they were previously absent. While community participants referred to this notion as 'working together', this usually meant that groups of women and groups of men worked towards a common community goal on specific and different tasks and in roles that were complementary to one another.



**“** We do different jobs but together. Now men do their part. Before it was left to the women. **”**

*Senikau Village older man*

### Women's efforts to promote community sanitation and health are recognised

Women put into action the skills and activities suggested in Live & Learn's learning circles and this was noticed by men and women. They took the lead and as such gained recognition for their efforts from men in the community, and in some cases inspired men to participate too. This recognition of women's increased role in development at the community level was also a strong contributor to increased respect for women and their increased voice at community level.

**“** Men acknowledge the amount of work the women have done and their role...The change is the recognition. **”**

*Senikau Village man*

### Women are working together and supporting each other

Through the Live & Learn project, women started to collaborate between themselves to a greater extent than previously, resulting both in concerted action to improve sanitation and improved relationships between women. There was a sense that by working collectively and by uniting their voices, women were able to achieve more than when working alone.

**“** Women are working together and are very supportive of each other...After the training we started sitting together and discussed what we could do together as a women's group...We see the advantage of working together as women...We have pride in the work we have done, we feel proud of what we have done. **”**

*Senitoa Village woman*

### Women are more respected by men and feel more valued

This outcome related to both household and wider community experiences. Women felt they were more respected and valued by the men in their community, and men expressed increased respect for women and recognition of the roles women play and their labour.

**“** The response to women has changed, they are more listened to, there is more trust of women. Whatever project women take a lead in, it is a success. **”**

*Senikau Village woman*

### Women have an increased voice at the community level

Compared with the past, women and men identified that more space was being made for women to speak, to be heard, and to influence decisions at the community level. There were also improvements noted in women's confidence to speak and with regard to women being given explicit opportunity to bring forward ideas and opinions in a community setting. According to men and women, women's voices and views were 'heard' to a greater extent than in the past, and there were shifts in the outcomes of decisions through taking into account women's views. Within the cultural context, increased women's voice was generally seen as positive by men in that it supported traditional leadership arrangements.





**“** Recently a big change has been women being allowed to talk during the village meeting.

*Senitoa Village woman*

Men are able to listen to the women more compared to the past. **”**

*Senikau Village man*

### **Communication between husband and wife has improved**

There were perceived improvements in the relationship between women and men within the household. Many referred to greater ‘love and listening’ in the household. This outcome also referred to improvements in how issues are resolved at the household level, how roles and tasks are negotiated and shared, how household decisions are made, and how women and their work are valued.

**“** I have changed how I manage my family, for example how to manage health...Now I play more and different roles – I weed grass in front of house, help manage waste, and support my wife. **”**

*Senitoa Village man*

## Men are participating more in household sanitation and water management

As a result of the Live & Learn projects, traditional household roles had shifted. Women played leading roles in implementing household and community sanitation initiatives during the project. The success of initiatives impressed the men and inspired them to participate more in household level sanitation activities.

**“** Before the women used to do all of the carrying of the water from the river...The women then negotiated at the household level that the men should carry the water also – they share **”** the labour now.

Senitoa Village woman

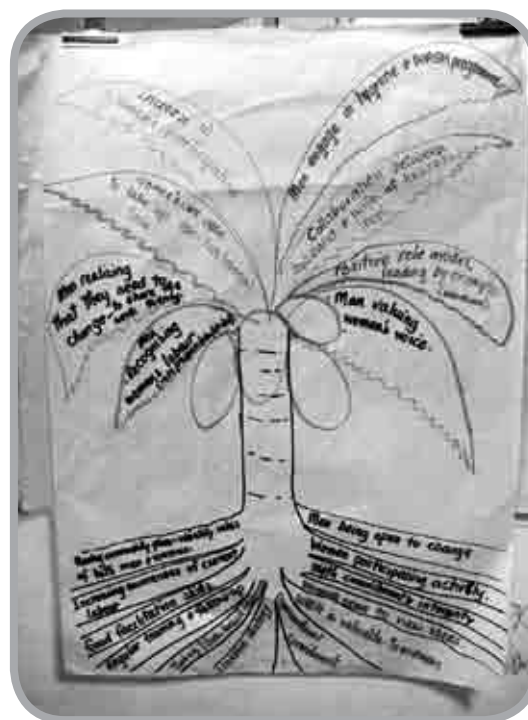
## What enabled these outcomes?

### NGO approach

Live & Learn's inclusive approach was critical to the positive outcomes that eventuated.

- Live & Learn's learning circles approach has a strong emphasis on inclusion and incorporates the use of tried and tested educational resources.
- Live & Learn projects met real needs and responded to what community members wanted. The approach was developed in response to the results of research on attitudes and perceptions of communities relating to water governance conducted at the outset of the project.
- Staff engaged community participants in discussions on why activities were important, which contributed to pride and satisfaction in resultant outcomes.
- The projects used water as an entry point to talk about governance, leadership and inclusion.
- Live & Learn's overall ways of working contributed to the positive outcomes, including building on past projects and long term relationships, trialling and testing of different approaches, drawing on a network of stakeholders and regular follow up and encouragement.

[www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)





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# WASH Resource Guide feedback form

Please help us to improve these resources! Let us know what you think by answering the questions below and sending them to: Program Team Leader, IWDA, PO Box 64 Flinders Lane VIC 8009, Australia, or faxing to: (+61 3) 9654 9877. We suggest you photocopy this form or write/type out the questions and your responses, rather than tearing out this page, so other users of these materials can also tell us what they think.

Alternatively you can provide feedback via: [www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Briefly explain how you have used this resource.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How was the resource guide useful for your work?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Is the guide easy to read and understand? How could it be made easier?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Was the resource translated into another language for you to use in your work with communities?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. After using the guide, which sections or steps have been the most valuable to you in your work or role? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Have there been any changes in your work, or the communities or organisations you work with because of this guide that you would like to share?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Have you or your organisation used the guide for activities beyond WASH-related programs?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. If you have any other comments that you would like to make or suggestions please detail below:

**Thank you!**









## Working effectively with women and men in water, sanitation and hygiene programs

These resources have been created to assist program managers or trainers to work with field teams involved in the design, implementation and/or evaluation of rural community-based water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiatives. They may also be useful in working with communities or groups. They are based on four key principles for working more effectively with women and men as part of WASH programs.

The Flash Cards that are part of this tool kit include supporting notes for a facilitator and prompt questions to generate discussion among a small group or team.

For further information please visit [www.genderinpacificwash.info](http://www.genderinpacificwash.info)