

VIOLENCE GENDER & WASH

A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

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

Toolset 6: Violence experienced by people who may be vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

This toolset includes:

1. Information on the vulnerabilities to violence linked to WASH that might be faced by people who may be vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances
2. Examples of good practice on how to effectively consider vulnerabilities to violence for people who may be vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances



Matthew Fryer / University of Winchester

Sections in this toolkit:

TS6-A – People who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

TS6-B – Case studies of violence related to WASH faced by people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

TS6-C – Good practice in reducing vulnerabilities to violence of those who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

TS6-A – People who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

The terms 'vulnerable' and 'marginalised' are often used interchangeably. Some people who are marginalised may also be vulnerable and vice versa, but not always.

People who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances¹

Vulnerable – A person is more vulnerable in any given context when they are less able/unable to cope with problems/hazards and hence are more at risk. They are likely to have limited influence and control over decisions or resources.

Marginalised – A person who is outside of the main body of society or has limited decision-making power within it. Such people may have limited resources (financial or otherwise) and they do not automatically gain the same benefits from programmes as others. They have often faced historical or cultural discrimination and are under-represented in political decision-making.

Special circumstances – A person who is in special circumstances is considered for the purposes of this toolkit to have needs that may not be met by services or responses that do not consider people's different needs (for example, accessibility for people with limited mobility). They may or may not also be vulnerable or marginalised.

About this document

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

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

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

Copyright and request for feedback

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

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

Please send any feedback to: gbv@wateraid.org

Promising good practices

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

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

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



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

What 'violence' means in this toolkit

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

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

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

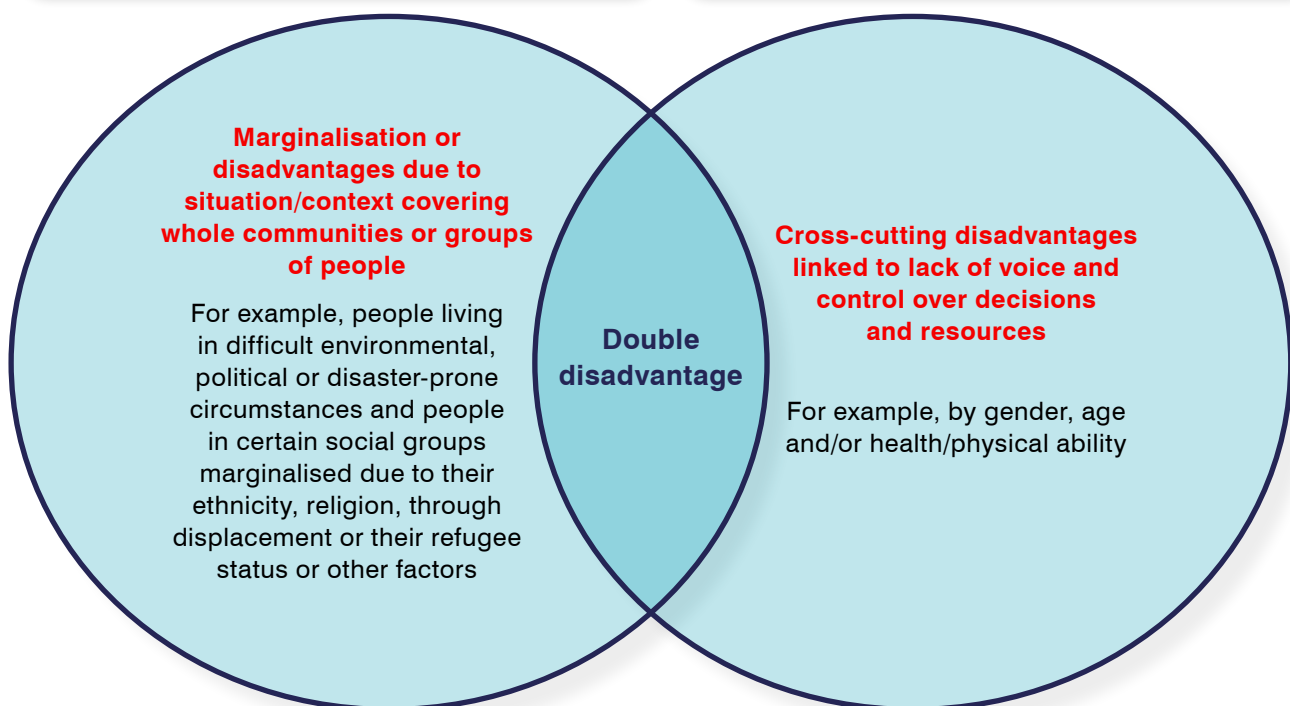
Understanding who may be vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

Social groups position in society/prejudice:

- People living with HIV or other serious illnesses
- Low caste
- Indigenous peoples
- Minority groups (by culture, religion, ethnicity, caste...)
- Travellers, nomadic populations

Ultra-poor and marginalised:

- Poorest
- Former/current child soldiers
- Children or adults living on the streets
- Children/adults living on refuse tips/dumps
- Sex workers and those engaging in transactional sex (sex for 'help')



People who are dependent on others for decisions and their care:

- Children in social care
- People who are bed-bound or hospitalised
- Persons in custody

Displacement/ refugee status:

- Internally displaced persons
- Refugees, asylum seekers

Lack of voice and control over decisions and resources:

- Children
- Women
- Older people
- People with disabilities
- Single-/woman-/elderly-/child-headed households
- Unaccompanied children who have been separated from their parents or orphans

Understanding vulnerability by context

The people who are vulnerable or marginalised in any specific context will vary, although those in the groups identified in the figure on page 3 are likely to be some of the most vulnerable or marginalised.

If a person is in several of the groups, then they are also more likely to be vulnerable; for example, an adolescent girl, who is an orphan, has a disability and looks after her siblings is likely to be highly vulnerable.

It is important for us to be aware of and to specifically consider the situation, needs and priorities of people who are vulnerable or marginalised, because they can face additional challenges that can increase their vulnerabilities to violence. They may not be able to easily participate in community activities, may not be able to express their needs and may be less able to defend themselves. See the following box.

People who are in vulnerable and/or marginalised situations may:

Be less visible;

- Have less of a voice and less confidence to speak in public;
- Be less likely or able to demand their rights;
- Not be listened to;
- Have less time available for community activities;
- Be under-represented in policy- and decision-making, and face barriers accessing public institutions due to language, culture or racism; Not be able to read or write easily;
- Live on the edge of communities with less access to services;
- Face stigma or prejudice;
- Have less access to finances and resources, and may be unable to provide cash or labour contributions;
- Have different beliefs, cultures or practices to the majority;
- Have different needs, including relating to WASH; and/or
- Have less access to information (such as information on services, tariff structures, their rights and entitlements as per national policy and international laws, and on mechanisms to make complaints and claim their rights).

Capacities and care over stigmatisation

However, while it is important to specifically involve and consider the needs of people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances, the following should also be recognised:

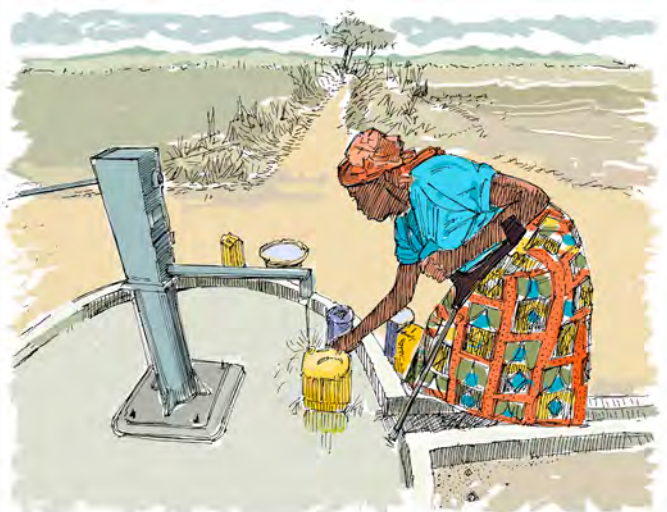
- Even if someone is vulnerable or marginalised, they will have capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Often people who are vulnerable are very resourceful, which helps them survive on a daily basis.
- Even if some people have additional or special needs, they may not consider themselves to be vulnerable and may prefer not to be referred to as such.
- Care should be taken when working to identify people who may be more vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances to ensure their dignity, to respect their capacities and not to increase the stigmatisation that they face.

‘Social model of inclusion’

The ‘social model of inclusion’ is a model that helps us to understand how people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances face a range of barriers to being able to function equally in society. The model considers that the barriers are caused by society not recognising that differences between people are normal, and hence not considering the differing needs of all people within society. The ‘barrier analysis’ tool is based on the social model of inclusion and helps us to identify and analyse the barriers, some of which are identified in the box above. It groups the barriers into:

- The physical/natural environment;
- The physical/infrastructural environment;
- Policy/institutional factors; and
- Social/cultural/attitudinal factors.

For further details see [TS4-B](#).



Rod Shaw / WEDC, Loughborough University

TS6-B – Case studies of violence related to WASH faced by people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

This section provides examples of a range of people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances, and the particular challenges that they may face. These in turn may impact on their vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH, or their abilities to reduce these vulnerabilities themselves. At the end of this section, a table provides linkages to other relevant case studies located in other parts of the toolkit.

People who are lesbian, bisexual, gay, transsexual and/or intersex (LGBTI)

People who are LGBTI often experience²:

- Violence, including sexual abuse, torture or murder at the hands of state actors or community and family members;
- Lack of police protection;
- Severe discrimination and exclusion from access to healthcare, housing, education, employment and other social services;
- Arbitrary arrest, detention or extortion, especially in countries that criminalise same-sex relations;
- Social banishment from their family, their community and other support mechanisms; and
- High levels of misunderstanding, because people rarely discuss their lifestyle with them due to the taboos surrounding the lifestyles of people who are LGBTI.

The box on the right highlights that people who are LGBTI may face violence while accessing WASH services. Considering the high risk of violence against them and the manner in which they can be ostracised in their daily lives, as noted above, the problems related to accessing WASH facilities are likely to be high, particularly in relation to shared and male/female gender-segregated sanitation facilities. However, because people who are LGBTI risk high levels of violence in their daily lives, and because those who are responsible for their protection may also be the perpetrators of violence in some circumstances, the reporting of cases is likely to be lower than the reality.

Children

Several case studies noted in the table at the end of this section highlight children experiencing violence. Children can be particularly vulnerable to violence, because they have less social and economic power than adults and less ability and strength to fight back.

Exclusion and prejudice against people who are LGBTI³

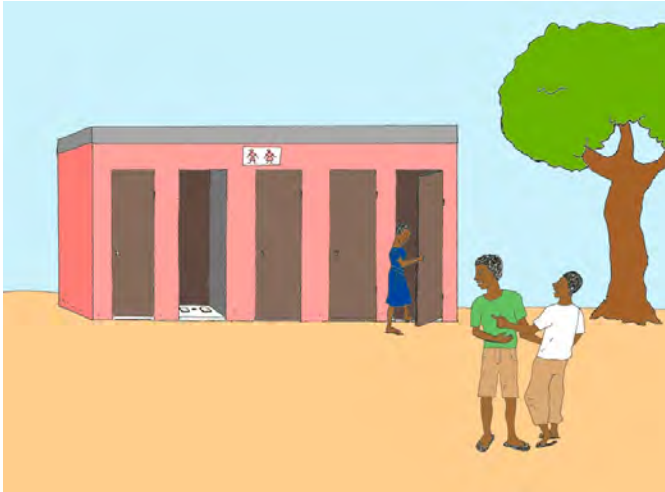
Examples of the ways that people who are LGBTI have faced prejudice and exclusion in emergency and disaster-affected situations:

- Men who have sex with men in Haiti were denied food aid after the 2008 earthquake, because ration schemes were targeted only at women, and these men had no women registered at their residences;
- Transgender people reported being denied entry to internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps after the floods in Pakistan, because they did not possess proper government identification papers that matched their appearance; and
- Aravanis (people who are feminine, male-bodied, gender-variant) routinely faced discrimination in access to housing, medical care and toilets in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami in Tamil Nadu.

Research suggests that development and humanitarian staff often overlook gender identity and sexuality concerns, because they cause unease and because of a lack of protocols to deal with such issues across different cultural contexts.

Documents relating to protocols often make no reference to the needs of LGBTI people. Relief efforts typically use the family as a common unit for analysing and distributing relief services, yet people who are LGBTI are vulnerable to being forced out of their family living situations as a result of stigma and prejudice. As a result, relief may not reach people who are LGBTI living on their own, and if they continue to live with their families, then their families may receive less support. After the disaster they may also not be treated fairly, including in relation to the provision of re-construction materials or land.

In a half-day seminar to share information and to identify the LGBTI communities' views related to disaster-risk reduction, transgender trainees voiced concerns about male and female segregated emergency shelter, health and bathroom facilities, and asked how they should select the facility that would guarantee them safety and dignity.



Annina Bornstein / Independent

Very young children are also often more vulnerable to WASH-related diseases. Hence where feelings of safety may restrict a mother or a child's carer's ability to collect adequate water or to perform good hygiene practices, this is likely to impact on the child the greatest.

In many societies the full rights of the child are not respected, and they are not allowed to participate in decision-making within the household or in the wider community.

WASH responses may fail to meet the different of needs of children or recognise the contribution they can make to the success of the programme.

If children are expected to use adult facilities that are not adapted to their needs, they may feel unsafe or uncomfortable and may be put at greater risk of bullying, harassment or violence. The lack of sex-segregated school water and sanitation facilities or the provision of facilities that are otherwise inadequate may make it difficult for girls to manage their monthly menstrual period, which may lead to them missing time from school (see [TS1-D-5](#)). Some children may also be frightened of using school latrines due to their perceptions of lack of privacy, lack of safety or actual incidents of harassment or assault (see [TS1-B-20](#) and associated case studies).

Older people

Older people may face challenges, such as:⁴

- They are often marginalised from projects and decision-making, their contributions are undervalued and their needs may be ignored.
- There is a higher prevalence of disability in older people, and the associated limitations in mobility lead to challenges when collecting firewood and water or when using sanitation or bathing facilities.
- They may find it difficult to queue for emergency distributions.

- They may face specific WASH-related challenges due to incontinence that are not covered by standard sanitation and hygiene-related interventions.
- They can be particularly vulnerable to diarrhoea, in a similar way to children.
- In some circumstances, older people who lose family members can be left without support. They, particularly women, may find themselves looking after young children after the death of middle-generation adults, or in extreme cases they may be abandoned.
- Older widows are often the most marginalised, particularly in cultures where inheritance codes dispossess them on their husband's death. This is also because their place in the informal economic sector leaves them with few marketable skills and no retirement compensation.
- Older people can in some circumstances be particularly vulnerable to robbery or intimidation, and they can also face sexual abuse. They may feel unsafe in urban or secluded areas.

Older people may face particular vulnerabilities and needs, or have particular concerns over accessibility and safety when using WASH facilities and services, and hence require our specific attention.



Rod Shaw / WEDC, Loughborough University

People with disabilities

Like all people who are vulnerable or marginalised, people with physical and/or mental disabilities may face a range of barriers on a daily basis related to:

- The physical/natural environment;
- The physical/infrastructural environment;
- Policy/institutional factors; and
- Social/cultural/attitudinal factors.



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Because of the above, they are also more likely to be economically disadvantaged and have less access to resources. In relation to violence⁵:

- Disabled women and girls are twice as likely to experience GBV than non-disabled girls.
- Disabled women and girls face the 'double jeopardy' of being disabled, as well as being women and girls. This leads to them often being invisible in programme interventions and services, including in those working to reduce violence against women and girls, and being excluded from mainstream services and groups.
- Disabled women and girls may be more vulnerable to abuse within the family, and to sexual violence and abuse both within and outside of the family due to their extreme marginalisation, social isolation and dependence. They are also in some circumstances less able to fight back due to physical or mental impairments.
- Violence can also cause disability.

Due to the additional vulnerabilities to violence that women and girls with disabilities face, we need to pay particular attention to ensure that they can access WASH services and feel safe in doing so.

Women and girls living in seclusion/purdah⁶

Women and girls living in seclusion/purdah are required to stay within their home compounds and to only be seen by males who are their relatives. The degree of seclusion will depend on the wishes of the husband and his male relatives. The husband is meant to provide all basic necessities. In cases where the household does not have a well within its compound, children are often expected to collect water and take laundry and dishes to the local stream to wash them – so reducing time available for activities such as schooling. Women are likely to be responsible for much of the household hygiene and cooking, but are not able to join in community meetings or to participate in hygiene promotion outside of the home or when men (other than male relatives) are present.

People living with HIV and/or other long-term illnesses

People living with HIV may also face stigmatisation and discrimination when trying to access WASH facilities, and these can lead to violence.

Other case studies

The table below provides links to case studies included in other parts of this toolkit which highlight vulnerabilities to violence faced by people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances.

Links to case studies highlighting vulnerabilities to violence faced by people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

Case study	Country	Section
Violence against Dalits ⁷ in India when accessing water and sanitation	India	BN2 TS1-D-2 TS2-A-9 TS6
Slaves/domestic servants from Mali prevented from accessing sanitation and hygiene promotion	Burkina Faso Mauritania	BN2 TS1-D-15 TS3-B-3
Social ostracism of scavengers who undertake the task of night soil collection	India	BN2 TS1-D-8 TS2-B-4 TS3-D-2

... continued

Case study	Country	Section			
Taboos and cultural norms due to menstruation, which impact on the dignity and lives of women and girls	Various	TS1-D-5 TS1-D-7 TS1-D-10		Malawi	TS1-A-20
				Mauritania	TS1-B-13
				Philippines	TS1-B-18
				Sierra Leone	TS1-C-13
				Somalia	TS1-D-1
				South Africa	TS1-D-14
				Sudan	TS1-D-15
				Zambia	
Roma communities denied access to water and sanitation	Slovenia	TS1-D-3			
Violence against people living on the streets when accessing water and sanitation	India	TS1-C-10	Conflict-affected areas (see also some of the case studies related to IDPs and refugees above)	Democratic Republic of the Congo	TS1-A-2 TS1-A-12
A child with disabilities restricts her eating and drinking during the day because of difficulties accessing a toilet in school	Malawi	TS1-D-11	Low-income urban slums	Afghanistan	TS1-A-5
				India	TS1-A-8
				Kenya	TS1-B-1
				Nigeria	TS1-B-6
				Tanzania	TS1-B-7
				Uganda	TS1-B-8
Schoolchildren scared to use school toilets; incidents of assault or rape around school toilets or on the journey to/from school, including when practicing open defecation; and transactional sex for sanitary pads	Afghanistan	TS1-A-10			TS1-B-9
	Ethiopia	TS1-A-14			TS1-B-10
	India	TS1-A-17			TS1-B-11
	Kenya	TS1-A-18			TS1-B-14
	Mozambique	TS1-B-20 TS2-A-8			TS1-B-15
					TS1-B-19
					TS1-B-21
Women garment factory workers face poor accommodation provided by employers	Cambodia	TS1-B-5 TS2-A-7			TS1-C-3
					TS1-C-4
					TS1-C-5
					TS1-C-10
					TS1-C-12
Conflicts over water resources between agriculturalists and pastoralists	Tanzania	TS1-C-7 TS1-D-13			TS1-D-8
					TS1-E
					TS2-A-5
					TS2-A-6
Refugees and IDPs face violence when accessing water and sanitation	Angola	BN2			
	Burkina Faso	TS1-A-1			
	Ethiopia	TS1-A-7			
	Guinea	TS1-A-16			
	Haiti	TS1-A-18			
	Liberia	TS1-A-19			

TS6-C – Good practice in reducing vulnerabilities to violence of those who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

This section provides examples of good practice in contributing to reducing vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH for people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances. At the end of this section, a table provides linkages to other case studies on related good practice located in other parts of the toolkit.

Contributing to longer-term change

Although as WASH practitioners we may not be in a position to make significant changes to the status of

people who are vulnerable or marginalised, we can contribute to ensure that they are not excluded from our interventions, that their needs are met and that we contribute to the longer-term process of change that seeks to give these people a greater say in society.

The box below highlights the challenges that Dalit women political leaders face, including those related to harassment and violence.

There are opportunities for the WASH sector to partner with Dalit⁸ women leaders or women leaders from other marginalised groups. This can help to build their confidence and abilities in facilitating WASH projects, and at the same time to contribute to their increased status within the community; such partnerships also help to ensure that vulnerabilities faced by women and girls are also considered within WASH programmes.

Challenges facing Dalit women political leaders

One hundred elected Dalit/Scheduled Caste female sub-panchayat political leaders in India, who provide political representation across a number of villages, participated in a national consultation event on violence against Dalit women (see later).

They highlighted the wide range of challenges that they face on a daily basis. For example, they face the multiple burden due to their gender, their identity/caste and due to poverty and a lack of access to education. Challenges Dalit women face in their work as sub-panchayat leaders are outlined below.

Lack of power and low status:

- They are looked down upon as Dalits;
- No-one listens to them and anti-social elements threaten them;
- Their position as women means they have very little power in their families and in society;
- Their husbands may take over and go to meetings for them, leading to 'figurehead leadership';
- They have to face problems related to alcoholism – which is high among Dalit men, as they are also excluded from society; and/or
- They are given money from the government to allocate to householders for the construction of toilets; but then the householders may use the money for alcohol and subsequently the woman leader gets into trouble with the government, as the money was not spent correctly.

Literacy and lack of access to education and support:

"We don't get the support, but if we had it we would like to learn."

- Women sub-panchayat leaders have low levels of literacy, and hence can easily face charges of corruption – as they don't know what they are signing when they sign documents;
- They may have little confidence when speaking in front of others, as they are not used to having such opportunities;
- Some may not know how to access funds to respond to water and sanitation needs, including that from the government and they feel that no-one helps them;
- They may have to cover several villages which are located large distances apart, but have limited access to resources for travel or transport; and/or
- They are criticised as not being capable.

Poor infrastructure/working context:

- Infrastructure is worse in Dalit areas – for example, roads are constructed in the higher-caste areas first.



Rod Shaw / WEDC, Loughborough University

Establishing partnerships between organisations working on WASH, GBV and women's empowerment and those working with marginalised groups

The following example highlights how a number of organisations with different strengths worked together to bring women from marginalised groups together with national decision-makers to discuss issues related to violence, including those related to WASH.

Water, sanitation, safety and freedom from violence: Dalit women speak out

On 5–6 December 2013 a national consultation was organised by the National Confederation of Dalit Organisations (NACDO), WomenPowerConnect (WPC), WaterAid India, Oxfam India and Christian Aid. The event was funded by the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID).

The National Confederation of Dalit Organisations links Dalit organisations from across India, which support the rights of Dalits in the country. WomenPowerConnect works to help connect women with political decision-makers. WaterAid India works on WASH, and has supported NACDO to undertake research into violence against Dalits that occurs in relation to WASH (see [TS1-D-2](#)). Both Oxfam India and Christian Aid in India work on women's empowerment and reducing GBV.

This national consultation brought together 100 women Dalit political leaders from a number of different states (as noted in the case study above) with government decision-makers and politicians to discuss issues related to violence against Dalit women, including when accessing WASH.

Good practice – disability

Barrier analysis and solution tool

The 'social model of inclusion' presents a model where any kind of difference – including those faced by those who are vulnerable, marginalised or are in special circumstances, such as people with disabilities – is considered as a normal part of society. The model proposes that it is society that needs to adapt itself to support people's different needs, rather than the other way around where people who are different are expected to change and fit in with society as it is. Refer to [TS4-B](#) for the 'barrier analysis and solution tool',⁹ which is based on the 'social model of inclusion'. This assists us as WASH practitioners to work with

communities to consider the barriers for those who are vulnerable, marginalised or are in special circumstances, such as people with disabilities, to be able to access WASH, including barriers related to safety and possible solutions.

Accessibility and safety audits

Tools for undertaking accessibility and safety audits in relation to waterpoints, school latrines and public latrines can be found in [TS4-C](#). These help to analyse existing facilities, to check that they are accessible and also to reduce vulnerabilities to violence through the consideration of safety of users.

Partnerships between WASH and disability-sector organisations and institutions

Partnering between organisations working in the WASH and disability sectors, involving both governmental actors and non-governmental actors, can help to ensure that the contributions and needs of people with disabilities, including concerns around accessibility and safety, are incorporated into WASH policies, guidelines and interventions.

Good practice – older people

WASH practitioners should ensure that older people are involved in discussions related to the design and location of WASH facilities. Although the example in the box that follows is not specifically related to WASH and also not in a low-income country context, it provides an example of involving older people in urban community regeneration. Elements of the process could therefore be adapted for involving older people in the assessment of safety related to WASH services.



Rod Shaw / WEDC, Loughborough University

Design and community regeneration involving older people, including in the assessment of safety¹⁰

A research project in some of the most socio-economically deprived areas of South Wales in the United Kingdom, involved older people in assessing the local urban environment to highlight how they perceived and felt safety.

The research used focus group discussions, mapping and the use of computer-based 'digital walk-throughs' of local streets and buildings to stimulate discussion, and questionnaires to provide supplementary data. A 'safety index' was developed to provide an objective assessment of environments, along with safety concerns; steps taken to improve personal safety at present and recommendations for how the safety of older people could be improved were discussed.

Concerns were identified that related to the social and physical environments and to crime and anti-social behaviour, both of which were also influenced by the poor maintenance and up-keep of neighbourhoods.

Good practice – women and girls living in seclusion/purdah

The following example shows how a WASH programme was adapted to reach women living in seclusion, and how it was also used to provide opportunities for building self-esteem, increasing literacy, increasing income-generating opportunities and for discussing gender issues and building respect. Along with improving the WASH situation, these other elements also contribute to building the capacity and confidence of women living in seclusion, which in turn has the potential to increase their ability to resist violence.

Seclusion is practiced to different degrees in different locations and communities across Afghanistan. One of the challenges faced in reaching women with WASH programmes is that there are many challenges faced in the recruitment and retention of women in employment, along with severe restrictions on their mobility (see [TS1-B-4](#)). To be able to include women in WASH programmes, women are therefore often employed as part of male-female couples, where the woman is employed along with her father, brother or husband. In this way the woman is allowed to travel for work, as she is accompanied by a male relative. Once out in the community, the woman speaks with the women while her male relative speaks with the men. In some villages

Reaching women living in seclusion¹¹

An NGO, the Development Exchange Centre (DEC), working in northern Nigeria modified its WASH programming to consider the situation of women and girls living in seclusion or purdah. Such women are not allowed out of their family household compounds (which usually include extended family members) without the permission of their husbands or other male relatives.

The programme included the following elements:

- Development of a programme manual designed for working with women living in seclusion. It covers group formation, leadership skills, how to run effective meetings and how to raise the women's self-esteem.
- Female staff and partner staff involved during the programme activities with the women living in seclusion and during monitoring.
- Formation of hygiene and sanitation clubs within large compounds managed by the women themselves. Club members were trained in soap-making skills, and included income-generating opportunities and making soap available to themselves.
- Children's sanitation clubs were also established for promoting hygiene and sanitation, as well as child-to-child awareness creation.
- From the hygiene and sanitation clubs, literacy circles were formed and a female instructor was provided for one year – with the group continuing on its own thereafter. Many groups also extended the classes with religious studies. DEC formed a partnership with the Adult and Non-formal Education Agency to support the women who wanted to advance their education.
- Gender awareness workshops were organised, promoting the value of women and men as complementing each other in terms of roles and responsibilities.
- Support was provided for improvement of community boreholes, while some subsidies were also provided for household waterpoint improvements.

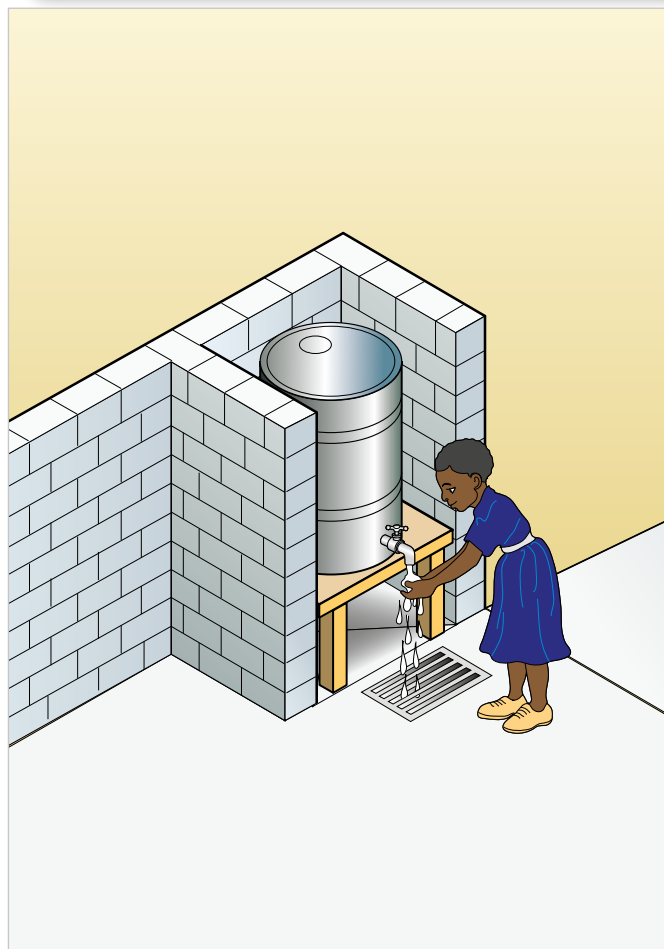
where seclusion is practiced, women are allowed to meet in other women's houses if no men are present. Sometimes in urban areas seclusion is practiced more strictly than in rural areas, and hence hygiene promotion needs to be undertaken house by house. As a result, it is critical to discuss with the women and men of a community to fully understand the strategies that can be used to involve women in WASH programmes.

Good practice – women from the Dalit caste

The following example highlights how training women from marginalised groups in supporting WASH infrastructure can build confidence and start to break down discrimination, both of which can have a positive impact on reducing vulnerabilities to violence.

Dalit women trained as handpump mechanics¹²

In a NGO supported programme in India, Dalit women had been trained as handpump mechanics. One woman who had been trained as a handpump mechanic had previously been harassed by a man in the community. But after her training he needed to have his handpump repaired and he had to ask her for assistance.



Ken Chatterton / WEDC, Loughborough University

Good practice – LGBTI

The examples in the box that follows are not WASH specific, but still provide examples of good practice with relevance for learning by the WASH sector.

Good practice in improving access to rights for people who are LGBTI¹³

- In Nepal, people who are LGBTI have legal recognition under a third gender category – marked 'third gender' or 'other' on documents and registers. This can help them gain access to services or emergency relief when required.
- LGBTI organisations may serve as a de facto family for many of their constituents. In this capacity, the organisations and related networks act as default social spaces, sources of protection and providers of information in a variety of situations, including disasters.
- Because of marginalisation, low education levels and the need for discretion to ensure the safety of people who are LGBTI, working with LGBTI organisations may be the most appropriate way to ensure that people who are LGBTI obtain adequate support.

Good practice – children

Boys and girls of different ages should also wherever possible have a say in how WASH facilities are designed and where they are located – in schools and youth centres and also in the community. Care must be taken to ensure sex-segregated latrines, and bathing facilities that allow girls in particular to be able to manage their sanitation, hygiene and menstrual hygiene in privacy, in safety and with dignity.

Other examples of good practice

The following table provides linkages to sections of the toolkit where there are case studies that highlight good practice related to people who are in vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances to reduce violence related to WASH.



Petra Röhr-Rouendaal / WASH Cluster Visual Aids Library

Case studies highlighting good practice in reducing vulnerabilities to violence for people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances

Case study	Country	Section
Modifying programme practices to improve access to sanitation and hygiene promotion for slaves/domestic servants from Mali living in IDP camps	Burkina Faso Mauritania	BN2 TS1-D-15 TS3-B-3
Work with scavengers who undertake the task of night soil collection to break down discrimination, increase opportunities for education and employment	India	BN2 TS1-D-8 TS2-B-4 TS3-D-2
'Safe-scaping' with Somali adolescent girls in refugee camps	Ethiopia	TS3-A-3
Considering protection in water supply and hygiene promotion in humanitarian responses and links between protection and WASH actors	Bangladesh Democratic Republic of the Congo Sudan	BN2 TS3-B-1 TS3-B-2 TS3-B-3 TS3-C-3
Innovations in WASH in emergencies to improve dignity and reduce violence against women	Various	TS3-C-4
Integrating women's safety into urban services in low-income urban areas of Delhi	India	BN2 TS3-A-1
Community-municipal corporation-NGO partnership, community-designed and -managed latrine blocks, and women's savings co-operatives in urban areas	India	TS3-D-1 TS3-D-3

Advocacy related to WASH in schools and WASH services in urban areas	Global India	TS3-H-2 TS3-H-3
Strategic framework for improving the safety of women and girls in urban environments, including while using public services	India	TS3-F-1
Various emergency-related guidance, standards and resources	Global	TS3-F-2 TS3-F-3 TS3-F-4 TS3-F-5 TS3-F-6
Codes of conduct and gender equality and child protection policies	Global	TS3-G-3 TS3-G-4 TS3-G-5



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The following box summarises a number of good practices when working to reduce vulnerabilities to violence related to WASH against people from vulnerable or marginalised groups or for people in special circumstances. These are integrated into the overall [checklist of actions](#) for the toolkit with specific focus on: **Principle 6 – Pay particular attention to considering the safety of people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances when accessing WASH services**; however, they are also integrated into other principles, such as those related to the training of staff.

Key principles to ensure that the needs of people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances are met

- Make sure that all staff and partners are aware of what is and is not appropriate behaviour when working with people who are LGBTI, with people from other vulnerable or marginalised groups, or with people in special circumstances.
- Consider at the beginning of the programme who may be particularly vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances, and how they may be excluded from support or services. A range of tools might be useful for this analysis, including stakeholder power analysis tools and barrier analyses.
- Ensure that people from vulnerable or marginalised groups or those in special circumstances are involved in community committees and decision-making bodies related to WASH. Where this is not possible, for example where it would put the people in danger or they would feel uncomfortable to participate, ensure that mechanisms are put in place to obtain their views at each stage through household visits and by working with groups that represent their views.
- Consider in particular:
 - How the definition of the family unit may affect same-sex couples;
 - How LGBTI people can safely access toilets and bathing facilities; and
 - Whether government documentation is being used to register recipients for distribution of aid and, if so, if anyone is being excluded due to a lack of documentation.



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- If organisations exist that involve people from vulnerable or marginalised groups and work with the same, these should be the first point of contact to identify challenges that may be faced and suggestions for ways to respond to a particular group's needs. In some instances, such as for people who are LGBTI, this may also be the safest way to reach this especially vulnerable or marginalised group, particularly in circumstances where they are legally discriminated against and/or their lives may be in danger.
- Consider how WASH organisations can partner with other organisations working with vulnerable or marginalised groups, and those working on women's empowerment and GBV, to establish collaborative programmes and advocacy.
- Ensure that the participation of people who are vulnerable, marginalised or in special circumstances is monitored and reviewed as part of project processes, and that strategies are modified if they are not being reached.

Endnotes

The examples included in this document have been summarised or abstracted from the references identified in the endnotes. A full list of references referred to in the toolkit can also be found in [TS8](#).

¹ Adapted from: Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, American Association for the Advancement of Science and Human Rights Programme, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (2007) *Manual on the Right to Water and Sanitation*. Geneva, Switzerland: COHRE.

² Adapted from: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2011) *Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons in Forced Displacement*. Geneva, Switzerland: UNHCR.

³ Knight, K. and R. Sollom (2012) Making Disaster Risk Reduction and Relief Programmes LGBTI-inclusive: Examples from Nepal, Practice and Policy Notes, *Humanitarian Exchange*, 55, September 2012.

⁴ HelpAge International and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (no date) *Older People in Disasters and Humanitarian Crises: Guidelines for best practice*. London, UK: HelpAge International.

⁵ BOND Disability and Development Group (2013) *Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry on Violence Against Women and Girls*. London, UK: BOND DDG.

⁶ Suwaiba, Y.J. (2003) Water and Sanitation Problems Faced by Women in Seclusion, *Towards the Millennium Development Goals, 29th WEDC International Conference*, Abuja, Nigeria, 2003.

⁷ 'Dalit' is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as 'Untouchables'. Dalits are a mixed population, consisting of numerous social groups from all over India; they speak a variety of languages and practice a multitude of religions. In 2001, the proportion of the Dalit population was 16.2 per cent of India's total population. The Dalit population is broadly distributed across Indian states and districts. The term 'Dalit' has been used interchangeably with the term 'Scheduled Castes', and these terms include all historically discriminated communities of India out-caste and 'Untouchables'. While discrimination based on caste has been prohibited and untouchability was abolished under the Constitution of India, discrimination and prejudice against Dalits in South Asia remains. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalit>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Jones, H., L. Gosling, S. Jansz and E. Flynn (2013) *Equity and inclusion in WASH provision – using the social inclusion model of inclusion (Version 3)*. UK: WaterAid and WEDC, Loughborough University. ([on USB stick](#))

¹⁰ Waters, J., R. Neale and K. Mears (2008) *Design and Community Regeneration: Older people in socio-economically deprived communities in South Wales, Strategic Promotion of Ageing Research Capacity*. Glamorgan, Wales: The University of Glamorgan.

¹¹ Suwaiba, Y.J. (2003) Water and Sanitation Problems Faced by Women in Seclusion, *Towards the Millennium Development Goals, 29th WEDC International Conference*, Abuja, Nigeria, 2003.

¹² Example shared at the National Consultation, 'Water, sanitation, safety and freedom from violence: Dalit women speak out', On 5–6 December 2013, New Delhi, India.

¹³ Knight, K. And R. Sollom (2012) Making disaster risk reduction and relief programmes LGBTI-inclusive: examples from Nepal, Practice and Policy Notes, *Humanitarian Exchange*, 55, September 2012.

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**VIOLENCE
GENDER
& WASH**

A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

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

Toolset 6

People in vulnerable, marginalised or special circumstances