



RESOURCE

Violence, gender and WASH: spurring action on a complex, under-documented and sensitive topic

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Description / Abstract

The global community of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) researchers, practitioners and policy makers has to date inadequately addressed the challenge of vulnerability to violence in relation to access to water and sanitation in development and humanitarian emergency contexts. Reasons may include the lack of valid and reliable documentation of girls', boys', women's, and men's experiences of violence while accessing water and/or sanitation facilities; the sensitivity of the topic, with secrecy around individuals' experiences of violence and their sanitation needs further hindering the collection of reliable data; the complexity of understanding the gendered dimensions of vulnerability to violence, with girls and women at least anecdotally reported to be more likely to experience violence in relation to WASH; and the likelihood that many WASH practitioners lack training in gender and violence, affecting their ability to deliver adequate programming and evaluation. In an effort to encourage increased action and learning on the intersection of gender, violence and WASH, a review of the existing evidence and practice was conducted. Findings indicate the need for more systematic, reliable, and ethically conducted monitoring and learning on this topic to build a more solid evidence base, while also refining key principles for improved policy and programming.

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