

**VIOLENCE**

**GENDER**

**& WASH**

# **VIOLENCE GENDER & WASH**

## **A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT**

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



Matthew Fryer / University of Winchester

# Aims of the toolkit



1. Raise awareness on types of violence related to WASH
2. Enable learning on good policy and practice
3. Improve understanding on linkages with protection, GBV, women's empowerment specialists
4. Encourage institutional commitment
5. Identify what we should do when faced with violence

**Practitioner's working in  
development, humanitarian and  
transitional contexts**



The learning, research and publishing which was undertaken in 2013-14 led to the development of the: 'Violence, Gender & WASH: Practitioner's Toolkit'. It was funded by:

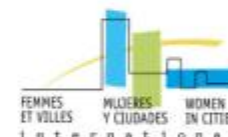


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Toolkit authors: Sarah House, Suzanne Ferron, Dr Marni Sommer, Dr Sue Cavill

The toolkit is co-published by:



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## *Root cause of violence*

Poor access to WASH *is not the root cause* of violence

The root cause is the *difference in power between males and females and between people of different societal groups* and persistent discrimination which often occurs against females and people of marginalised groups

But – poor access to WASH *can increase vulnerabilities to violence*



# Findings – violence & WASH

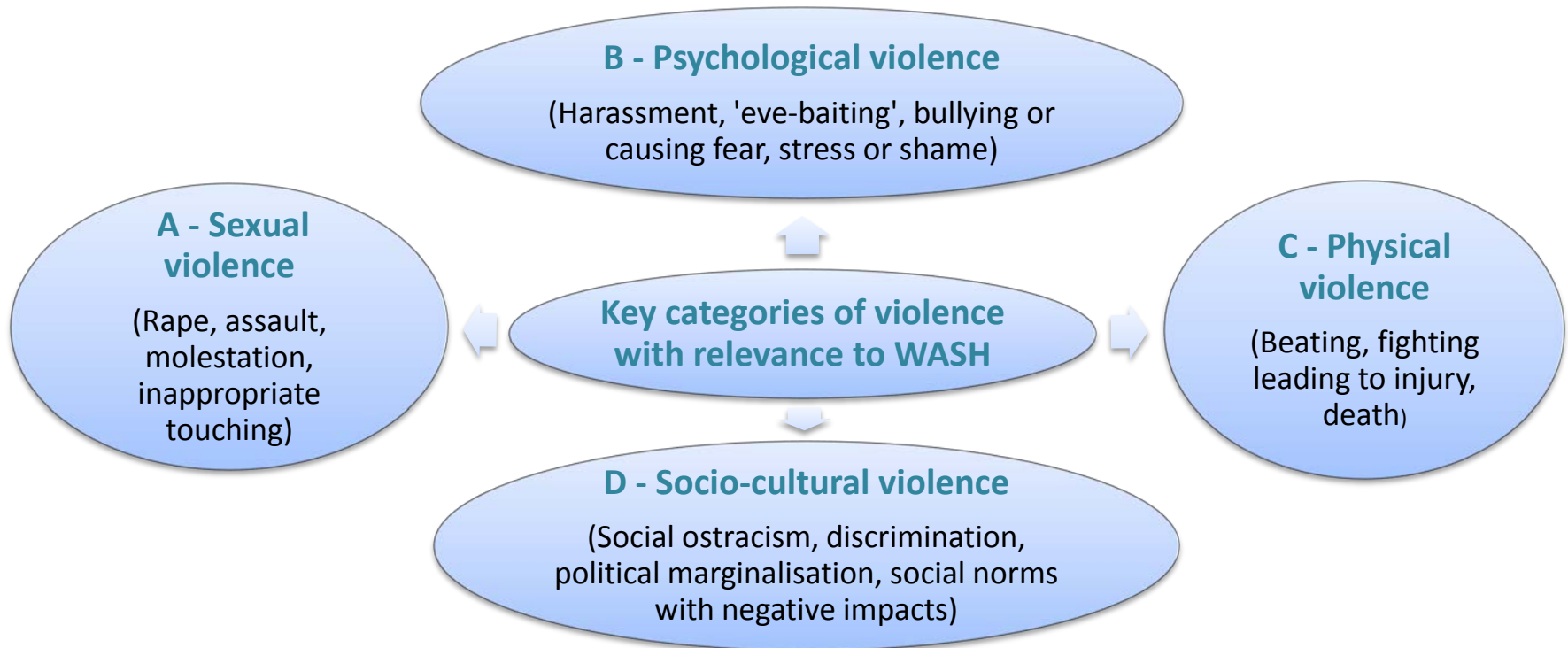


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- Range of case study examples:
  - Over 30 different countries
  - Various types of violence
  - Range of contexts – urban, rural, development, humanitarian, transitional
  - Community & household levels
  - WASH staff & organisations
- Many are anecdotal or small case studies but across range of different types of publications & sources
- A few targeted more in-depth quantitative & qualitative studies



## Categories of violence





## Examples - violence at community and household levels

**Rape of a woman who was defecating in the sea**

(Solomon Islands, Amnesty International)

**Fear of rape of both boys and girls in school toilets**

(South Africa, UNHCR)

**Harassment of women and girls when using public services including public toilets**

(India, Jagori, Women in Cities International and International Development Research Centre)

**Rape including gang rape of women who were fetching water from river beds or collecting firewood**

(Darfur, Médecins sans Frontières)

**Exclusion from WASH services for domestic servants living in slave like conditions in refugee camps**

(Burkina Faso and Mauritania, Oxfam-Intermon)

**Domestic disputes and beating, fighting in the water queue and accusations of water theft from neighbours – related to water scarcity**

(Ethiopia, Stephenson et al, Social Science and Medicine)

**Multiple forms of violence against Dalit women when collecting water, including abusive language, sexual harassment, scolding and physical violence; main perpetrators being women of a higher caste**

(National Commission of Dalit Organisations and WaterAid, India)

# The Toolkit

**Briefing Note 1 – About  
this toolkit, its limitations  
& how to use it**

**Checklist  
of actions  
– 10 key  
principles**

**Briefing Note 2 – Improving WASH  
programming**

**Briefing Note 3 – Institutional  
commitment and staff capacity**

**Briefing Note 4 – Understanding the  
protection sector and how to respond  
to violence as a WASH actor**

**Supporting documents**

**Toolset 1 – Case studies (Violence & WASH)**

**Toolset 2 – Videos**

**Toolset 3 – Case studies (Good practice)**

**Toolset 4 – Methodologies for working with  
communities**

**Toolset 5 – Training scenarios**

**Toolset 6 – People in vulnerable,  
marginalised and special circumstances**

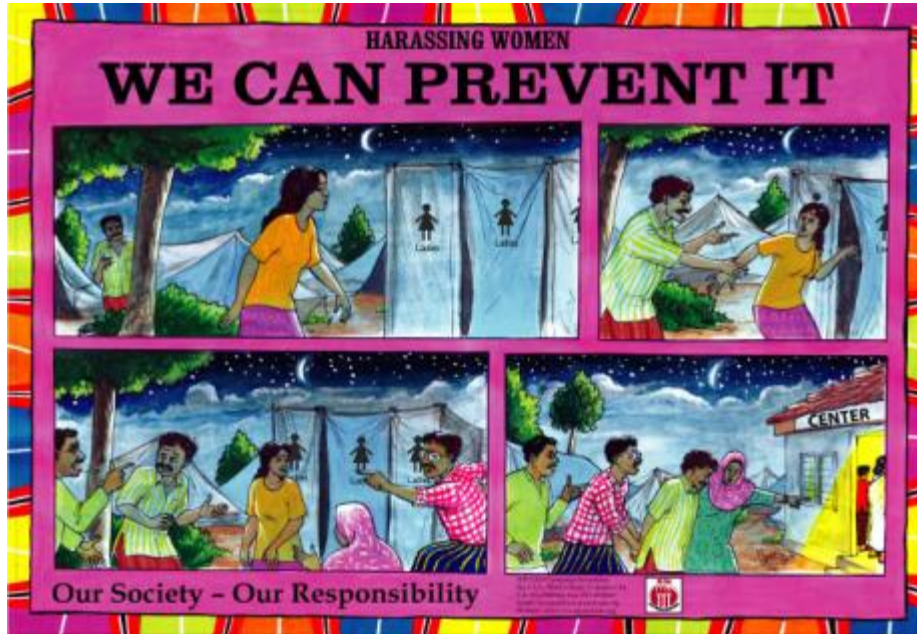
**Toolset 7 – International legal instruments**

**Toolset 8 – References**

# 10 key principles

1. Institutionalise commitment
2. Build capacities
3. Make links across sectors
4. Understand the vulnerabilities to violence
5. Adapt existing participatory tools
6. Particular attention to people in vulnerable and special circumstances
7. Build self-esteem & link groups and networks for peer support
8. Ensure community members have adequate information & feedback mechanisms
9. Design and construct WASH facilities to reduce vulnerabilities
10. Particular transparency in processes for non-food item distributions

# *Promising good practices*



Poster developed and used in internally displaced persons camps in Batticaloa Area, Sri Lanka (We Can Campaign)

**Safety audits / safe-scaping / safety mapping**

**Links between WASH & protection actors**

**Practical design features of facilities & services**

**Institutional codes of conduct, gender and protection policies, whistle-blowing policies etc**

**Strengthening & modifying accountability & participatory processes  
Dialogue particularly with women and girls / boys  
Opportunities for peer support & empowerment**

# Closing note

This issue can sometimes feel a bit overwhelming – but please don't feel overwhelmed...remember:

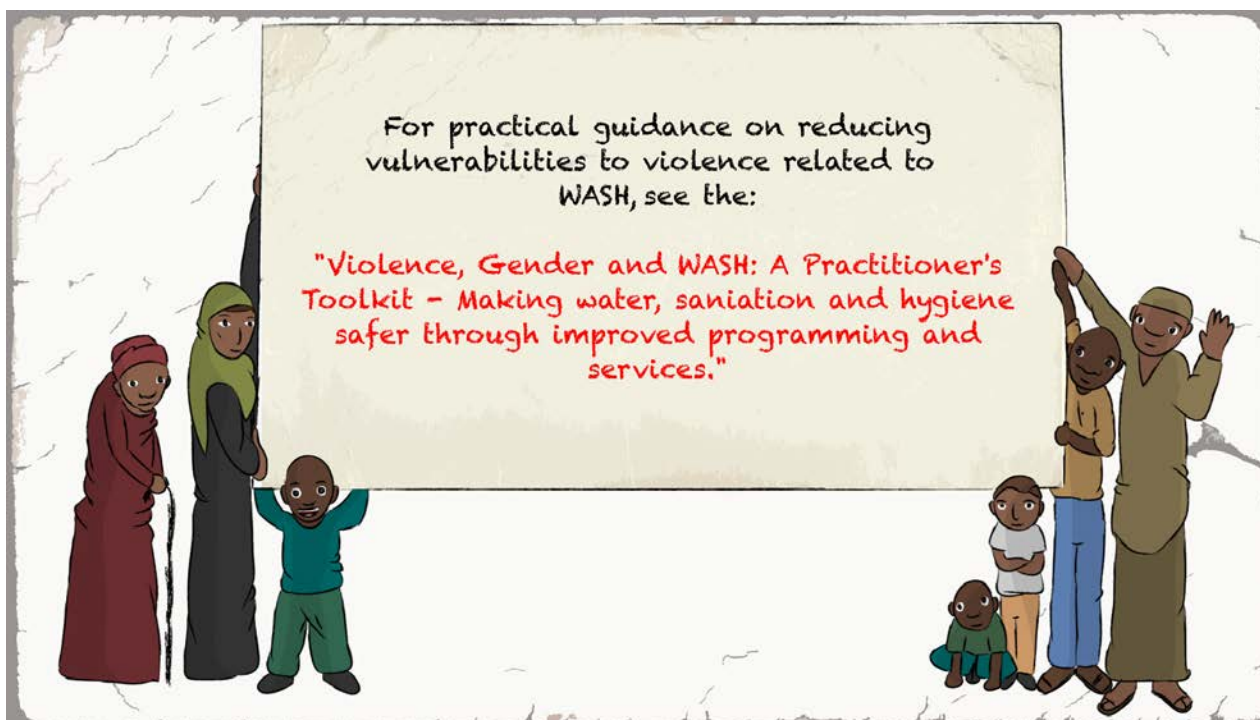
1. **We don't have to respond to it on our own** – *there are other experts out there who can help work out ways forward (gender, GBV, protection specialists and others)*
2. **We can't alone solve the wider issue of violence** – *but we can take small steps... which contribute to reducing some vulnerabilities.. and in turn contribute to the overall process of change*
3. **Many of the good practices are what we do or are meant to do already** – *its just a matter of not forgetting to do them or slightly modifying them to also to consider 'feelings of safety'*

*If the sector starts to ask the question of 'feelings of safety' related to WASH during assessments, participatory processes and monitoring, this could be the 'game changer'... We would become more aware of the issue and its scale, as well as having more evidence on what sector approaches work or otherwise*

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<http://violence-WASH.lboro.ac.uk>