

WASH and CHILD PROTECTION



World Vision believes that sustainable wellbeing is impossible without sustainable, equitable access to clean water, dignified sanitation and appropriate hygiene behaviours. Integrated, holistic WASH is one of the key elements of the work World Vision employs to ensure child wellbeing.

For example, children and families need a secure source of nutritious food, essential healthcare, basic education, and (child) protection. Communities need sustainable livelihoods, peace and resilience. In partnership with parents, local leaders, government bodies, and other organisations, World Vision utilises a holistic approach to address the root causes of poverty.

BACKGROUND



In emergencies, children's risks and exposure to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation are further increased. Violations take place in health clinics, during food distributions, at water points, in schools and sometimes directly due to humanitarian workers' actions or non-actions.

Many threats to the safety and wellbeing of children can be diminished or even eradicated through timely and child-sensitive provision of humanitarian aid across all sectors, including WASH.

In addition, mainstreaming child protection in WASH is an essential part of compliance with the 'do no harm' principle that applies to all humanitarian action.

Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS) provide solid foundation for integration of WASH with child protection, and the following provide more concrete example of the possible approaches of such integration.



APPROACHES OF INTEGRATION



STRATEGY

WASH approaches should promote and respect the rights and dignity of women, boys and girls, especially those who are vulnerable, including vulnerability towards violence.

WASH strategies should be developed in a way that they do not lead or perpetuate discrimination, abuse, exploitation or violence of boys and girls.

EFFECTIVENESS



The effectiveness of WASH response can be strengthened through the integration of child protection considerations, such as:

- ensuring health and nutrition programmes include referral mechanisms for individuals requiring psychosocial support, or for potential victims of abuse and exploitation
- training health workers on clinical management of sexual violence
- facilitating delivery of key prevention messages and access to services for survivors of gender based violence through community workers
- ensuring consultation with women, youth and children on delivery of assistance or design of WASH services.



DESIGN

Child protection concerns need to be reflected in the assessment, design, monitoring and evaluation of WASH programmes. All girls and boys at risk should have access to appropriate WASH services that minimise the risk of physical and sexual violence. As a result, measures must be taken to ensure that WASH activities and facilities – including relevant hygiene information – are available, accessible and adapted to children, that they are safe, non-discriminatory, culture and gender-sensitive, and that prevention measures are included to any activities related to providing WASH.