Female-Friendly Public and Community Toilets:

a discussion about why we need them and how to design them
The guide

• **Why** focus on female-friendly public and community toilets?

• **What** does a female-friendly public and community toilet look like?

• **How** to achieve scale? City-wide planning and local implementation

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  What?
  How?

• Female-friendly toilets: case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

• Implementing the guide: experience from programmes.

• Questions, reflections and discussion.

Presenters

Priya Nath: Equality, Inclusion and Rights Advisor, WaterAid, UK

Olutayo Bankole-Bolawole: East Africa Regional Director, WaterAid, Uganda

Lizette Burgers: Senior Advisor WASH, UNICEF, USA

Sam Drabble: Head of Research and Learning, WSUP, UK
Why focus on female-friendly public and community toilets?
Where does she **pee** – at night?

Where does she **defecate** – at night?

Where can she change her **sanitary pads**?
Why do we need community and public toilets?

**Community toilets**

- Low-income, high-density settlements.
- Challenging context for household sanitation.

Shared facilities may be the only/best option in the short term.

Universal use of private toilets accessible on premises remains the ultimate goal.

**Public toilets**

- Near public spaces.
- Public transit.
- Parks.
- Markets.

Always essential to enable people to move freely throughout the day.
“Paying special attention to the needs of women and girls“ (SDG 6.2)

**Biology and physiology**

- Women cannot urinate as easily as man can – more space, privacy and time needed.
- Even more so when managing menstruation.
- Urinary incontinence affects women more often than men.
- Pregnancy can increase the need for women to use the toilet as the bladder is compressed.

**Social and cultural roles, responsibilities and restrictions**

- Different social expectation, taboos and stigmas.
- At greater risk of sexual violence and harassment.
- Still the main caregiver for children, sick, people with disabilities and older people.
Watch the animation here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCtJVNdcKWA
What does a female-friendly public or community toilet look like?
Safe and private

Meet menstrual hygiene requirements

Accessible to all users

Affordable and available when needed

Well-maintain and managed

Meet requirements of caregivers and parents
Safe and private

• Separate entrance for female toilet section.
• Safe location.
• Good lighting.
• Trained female and male care takers.
• Robust cubicles.
• Designed for privacy.
• Clear signage.
Menstrual hygiene management and other hygiene requirements

• Access to water and soap.
• Access to menstrual products.
• Disposal of menstrual products.
• Hooks and shelf.
• Mirrors.
• Washing/bathing units.
Accessible to all users

- Reasonable distance.
- Accessible cubicles.
- Accessible path.
Affordable and available when needed

- Affordability.
- Open when needed.
- Enough cubicles (more for female users)
Well-maintained and managed

• Cleanliness.
• Well-maintained.
• Solid waste management.
• Faecal and liquid waste management.
• Adequately managed.
Meet the requirements of caregivers and parents

• Baby changing station.
• Family-friendly cubicle.

Desirable and context-specific:
• Laundry
• Breastfeeding station
How to achieve scale?

City-wide planning and local implementation
City-wide assessment

• How many community and public toilets does the city have?

• Where are they located?

• To what extent do existing facilities meet female-friendly requirements?

• Which areas are lacking public and community toilets?

• What needs to be done?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour code</th>
<th>Zones</th>
<th>Strategies suggested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red</strong></td>
<td>Zones with no access to community toilets or with defunct community toilets.</td>
<td>Provide new female-friendly and accessible community toilets or fully renovate defunct ones. Prioritise these zones, starting with settlements with least household sanitation coverage and worst indicators for nutrition and for gender-based violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amber</strong></td>
<td>Zones served by community toilets that are not female-friendly.</td>
<td>Upgrade and expand toilets, addressing the female-friendly features that are missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green</strong></td>
<td>Zones served by female-friendly community toilets.</td>
<td>Monitor whether toilets are and remain female-friendly. Apply any necessary corrective action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local implementation

• Participatory processes to understand the experiences and perspectives of existing and potential toilet users.

• Inform:
  - Exact location of toilets
  - Opening times
  - Tariffs
  - O&M arrangements
  - Priority female-friendly features, etc.
Key principles

The city-wide assessment and implementation processes need to be:

• **Gender sensitive**, gathering the perspectives and ensuring meaningful participation of women and girls and any disadvantaged groups throughout.

• Be **realistic**, rooted in an understanding of the institutional, regulatory and financial frameworks and limitations.

• Not a standalone process.
Examples from Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia
Case study: Visakhapatnam

• Citywide sanitation mapping exercise generated data on prevalence/functionality of PTs/CTs.
• Of 262 blocks, only 6 in good condition.
• Upgrading these facilities identified as crucial component of citywide activities to eliminate OD.
• 198 toilet blocks upgraded through gender-sensitive retrofitting plans.

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Case study: Maputo

• Model for **high-quality shared sanitation** developed in partnership with the Municipality.

• Women adopted a central role in the planning and management process:
  • **Needs-based** location/site planning.
  • **Women-centred** infrastructure design clinics.
  • Women **leadership roles** within Communal sanitation block management committees.

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Case study: Dhaka

- 25 public toilets built in Dhaka (WaterAid in partnership with city corporation)
- Inclusive considerations:
  - Female toilet attendants
  - Menstrual products
  - Security measures
  - Breastfeeding space
  - Poor inclusive fee structure
- 8 Million uses by Dec 2018 (1 Million female)
- Expanded to Chattogram, Sylhet and Khulna.
Reflections from Uganda and Nepal

Olutayo Bankole-Bolawole: East Africa Regional Director, WaterAid, Uganda
Questions, reflections and discussion
Resources

• **Animation** with subtitles in French, Spanish and Portuguese: [https://youtu.be/wCtJVNdcKWA](https://youtu.be/wCtJVNdcKWA)

• **Full guide** in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese: [washmatters.wateraid.org/female-friendly-toilets](http://washmatters.wateraid.org/female-friendly-toilets)

• **4-page summary** in French, Spanish, Portuguese, English - (Hindi version coming soon)

• This **webinar** will be available at: [https://www.youtube.com/user/susanavid eos/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/susanavid eos/videos)
Thank you!

Full guide in Spanish, French, English, Portuguese: washmatters.wateraid.org/female-friendly-toilets