

# WHAT DOES SUCCESSFUL SANITATION LOOK LIKE: Investigating Gender Guidance and Implementation



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## BACKGROUND AND KEY CONCEPTS

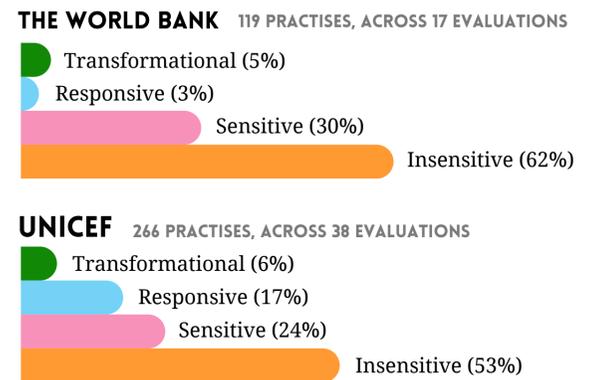
Water, sanitation and gender equality are fundamental human rights.

Gender is a social concept that influences access, needs and usage of sanitation facilities. Gender Guidelines exist to inform and advise practitioners towards gender-sensitive solutions, yet their existence has not dramatically increased availability of accessible and appropriate sanitation spaces.

The first piece of PhD research assessed the level of gender inclusion from 'insensitive' (no explicit consideration of gender) to 'responsive' (active consideration that is contextually specific, non-harmful and diverse) (according to MacArthur et al, 2023), in a systematic cross-agency assessment of WASH development agency investments (World Bank and UNICEF).

**Graph 1** depicts the overall classification of 385 analysed practises across 55 evaluations (between 2000-2022), and shows more than 50% of all practises were categorised 'insensitive'.

**Graph 1: Percentage of 'gender' elements in WASH evaluations meeting the Gender Integration Framework requirements (MacArthur et al, 2023) for specified sensitivity levels**



Taken from Robinson et al, 2023 (forthcoming)



## GENDER EQUALITY: INTENTION VS REALITY

To investigate the reality of gender inclusion, 4 months of research were conducted in India, exploring national implementation of gender guidance in the Swachh Bharat Mission (the world's largest sanitation program).

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions were conducted with Government Employees, Activists, Academics, NGO employees and marginalised community groups (Elderly, Differently Abled and Diverse Genders/LGBTQIA+), across New Delhi (National Capital Territory), Jaipur (Rajasthan), Hyderabad (Telangana) and Chennai (Tamil Nadu).

## PERCEIVED CHALLENGES IN INDIA

**ACCOUNTABILITY** ..... Policies and Guidelines exist, yet they remain unused in reality

"Guidelines are published, government really accept them; accept them in the sense that they put their logos and they accept to circulate it. But in most cases those are actually not executed" / "there is no point – no push or no pressure from the government to work on gender on the ground"

(Research Trip 1, Interviews: Non-Governmental Organisation, New Delhi, Man A / Non-Governmental Organisation, Rajasthan, Man)

**FINANCING** ..... No guidance stipulates associated costs for adding 'gender-sensitivity' to a project

"They are just on pen and paper - money is not being paid on them" / "Policy is written clearly, but there is no extra funding path for these features"

(Research Trip 1, Interviews: Academic, Telangana, Man / Non-Governmental Organisation, New Delhi, Woman A)

**GENDER DIVERSE REPRESENTATION** ..... LGBTQIA+ Persons are excluded from program design

"They [transgender people] don't have a voice, either by choice or by design, or by systemic failure" / "In India, if we talk about gender, people mean women. The main focus is on women, and I think most of our programs are all women centric"

(Research Trip 1, Interview: Non-Governmental Organisation, New Delhi, Woman B / Focus Group Discussion: Non-Governmental Organisation, Tamil Nadu, Woman A)

**DISSEMINATION** ..... There is unawareness of policy, guidance and programs across all levels

"There are a lot of people, even within the community, they don't have the knowledge of what schemes the government is doing for them" / "Many local government were willing to work, but they didn't know that what really female-friendly toilets looked like"

(Research Trip 2, Interview: Activist, New Delhi, Transgender Woman / Research Trip 1, Interview: Non-Governmental Organisation, New Delhi, Man B)



## FUTURE OF INCLUSIVE SANITATION

The research provides evidence that gender guidelines and policies are underutilised due to their lack of accountability, funding guidance, diverse representation and dissemination. It suggests the need to work away from striving for 'gender-sensitive' design that is often seen as an 'add-on', by moving towards universal design, or human-centred design, that seeks to include all people and all bodies regardless of gender to find human centred solutions. Only by designing services for all, can we demonstrate and ensure usability and access for all.