



Social norms change within WASH programming

Sue Cavill, 21 June 2022

Social norms prevent achievement of equitable WASH program outcomes

“Jobs in the WASH sector are not for women”

“People with disabilities cannot live independent lives because they need help with everything”.

“Menstruation is taboo, so menstruating girls should not leave home while they have their period.”

“It is not ‘masculine’ to provide care to children”

“Women can provide voluntary community services during their ‘free time’”



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

“Water collection is the responsibility of girls & women”

“Trans-women should not use female public toilets”

“Girls should drop out of school at menarche to reduce the economic burden on the family”

“People with disabilities should not participate in community WASH decision making”

Social norms are expectations that people in a group conform to a rule of behaviour because they believe: (a) most other people in the group do it; and (b) most other people in the group believe they ought to conform to it (Bicchieri, 2016)

How?



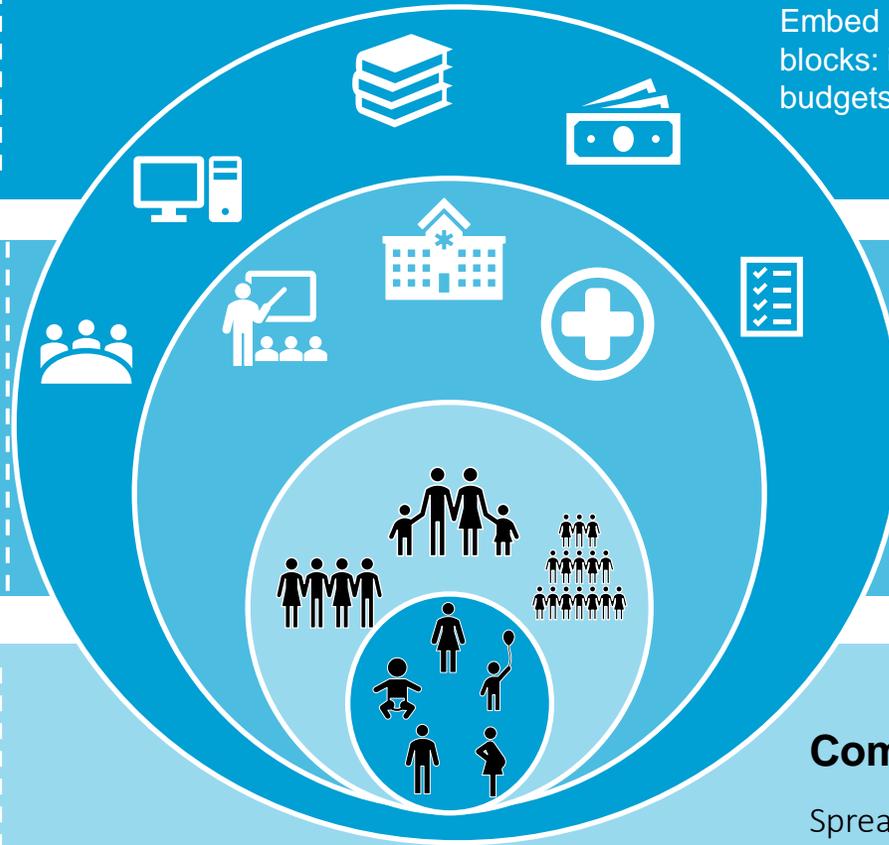
WaterAid Timor-Leste and CARE International are strengthening the capacity of WASH actors through mentoring, resource development, and activities to address harmful social norms and behaviours



SNV Nepal - Support and training for local self-help groups, men at the community and household levels, as well as local government, to transform gendered division of labour and raise awareness of and de-stigmatize menstruation, and combat any residual Chaupadi practices outlawed in 2017



World Vision Bangladesh - Initiated a MenCare approach, which targets couples to challenge gendered roles related to WASH with the aim of increasing equity and sharing the burden of WASH related tasks.



WASH systems level

Embed new norms in sector building blocks: institutions, policy, planning, budgets, regulation, monitoring, learning

Institution level

Working with local, traditional and religious leaders in community-led change to harmful practices

Community level

Spreading new social norms (e.g. masculinity and parenting) through peer support and community dialogue

Forthcoming guidance in August!

