



**Humanitarian  
Leadership  
Academy**

# **An Introduction to WASH in Emergencies**

WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) is a key component of **public health**.

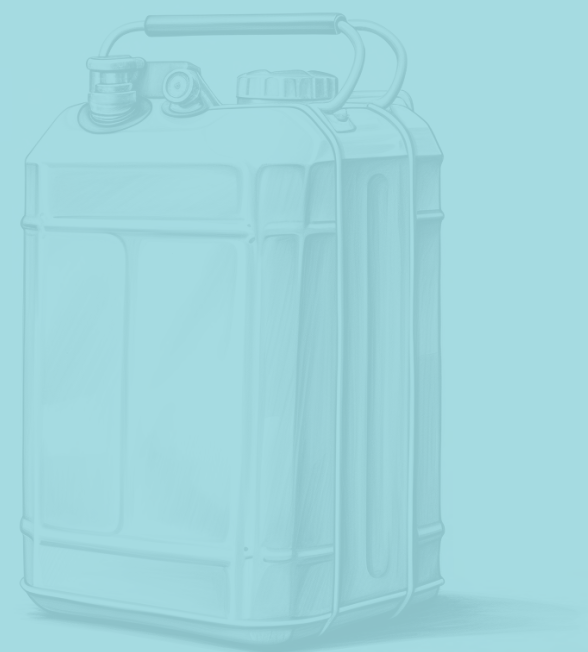
In emergencies, existing WASH services are often stretched beyond their capacity.

**Diarrhoeal and infectious diseases** will spread more quickly if WASH needs of the affected population are not met.

The role of WASH in a humanitarian response is to reduce public health risks preventing the spread of infectious disease by:

Ensuring the **safe disposal of excreta**

Providing **safe water in adequate quantity** and quality to meet domestic and hygiene needs





Providing **essential hygiene items** such as soap, menstrual hygiene management products and water storage containers

Promoting **protective hygiene practices** such as handwashing with soap







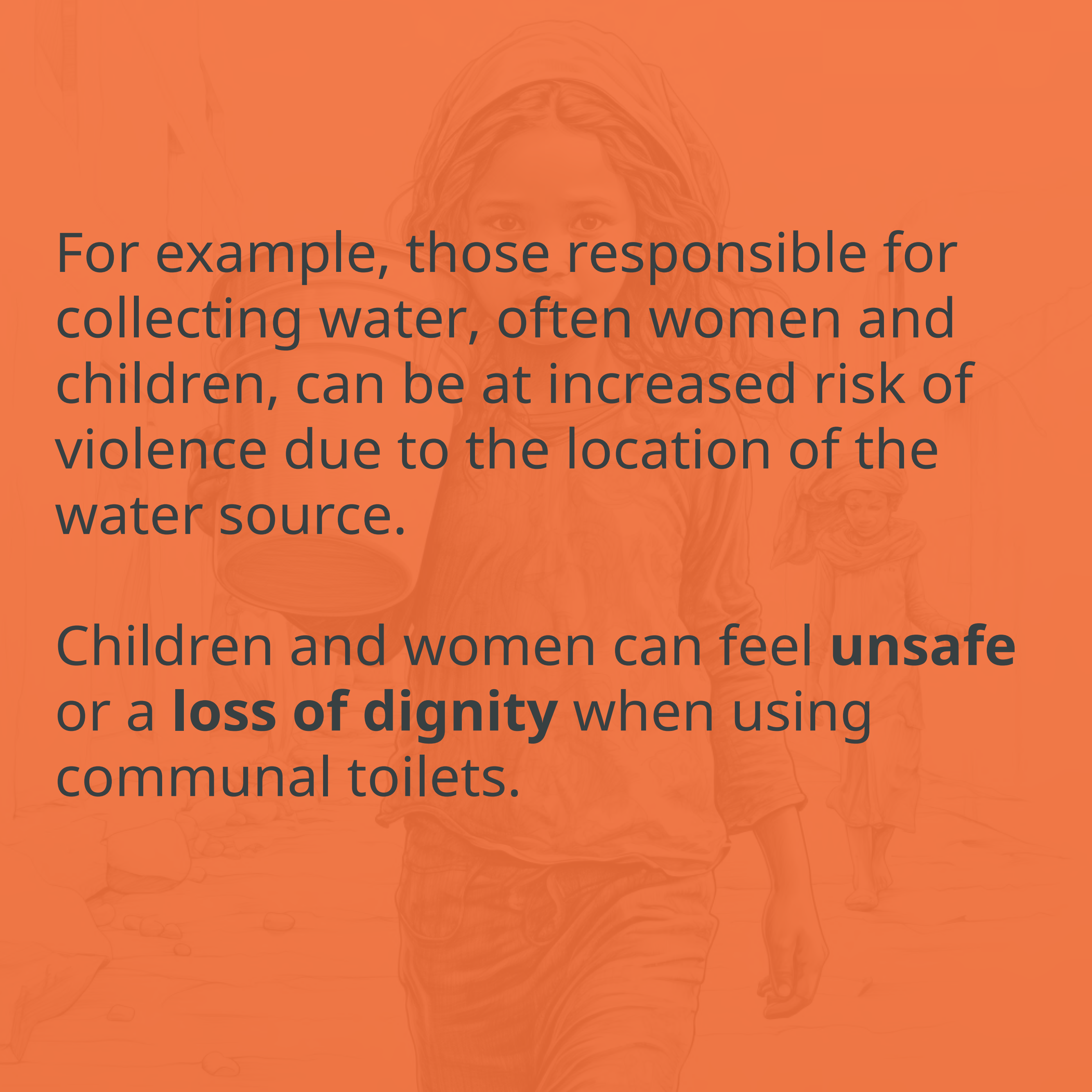
WASH services are essential for ensuring conditions that allow people to live with **dignity, comfort and safety.**





Poorly designed or located WASH facilities can **endanger the safety and dignity of users.**



A woman in a headscarf carries two large water pots, one on her head and one in her hands. A young child walks behind her, also carrying a pot. The scene is set against a background of a brick wall. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

For example, those responsible for collecting water, often women and children, can be at increased risk of violence due to the location of the water source.

Children and women can feel **unsafe** or a **loss of dignity** when using communal toilets.





Therefore WASH facilities need to be designed and provided to meet user needs through **consultation with affected populations** and **collaboration across sectors and disciplines** of engineering, behavioural science, education and healthcare delivery.





You can find more information about WASH in emergencies by visiting **[kayaconnect.org](https://kayaconnect.org)**

For more information on the Humanitarian Leadership Academy:

**[humanitarianleadershipacademy.org](https://humanitarianleadershipacademy.org)**