

## Lights and Safe Access to WASH Facilities in Camps

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### Background

Lack of lights deter usage of WASH facilities especially communal latrines at night. Its impact is worse in Rohingya refugees living in the camps, especially females. In addition to relieving themselves, women might need to use facilities at night to manage menstrual hygiene needs. There are ample findings that lights facilitate usage of wash facilities at night.

Over the past 5 years, many WASH partners have addressed the issue of lights through different approaches. WASH Sector has not encouraged light inside sanitation facilities, yet few partners have implemented such projects. This led to few camps/blocks (e.g. camp 25) exhibiting 70% of communal latrines having light inside the facility. Nevertheless, many sanitation facilities in camps do not have light inside or around them. Hence, WASH Sector drafted this guidance note to capture recommendations on lights and safe access to WASH facilities in the camps.

### Girl's and Women's Perception

- According to community consultation report by UNHCR, several evidence indicated Sexual and Gender Based Violence incidents take place at night near WASH facilities due to insufficiency or absence of lighting around the facilities. Yet, females mentioned, lights should not be too close to latrine. Illumination might limit access due to privacy issues making it a meeting points for men.
- In IOM managed camps, 90% of the beneficiaries responded- their family members feel safe going to latrines at any time and there is no difference between male and female respondents (IOM quick survey). Similarly, from World Vision's camp-wide study (November 2022), 74% of women feel safe to use communal latrine at night. One of the reasons for feeling safe could be, 81% of the beneficiaries use portable light to access latrines at night among the 35% use portable solar light, 25% flashlight of their phones, and 21% portable torch.
- Sector-wide study showed 95% women prefer to use in house bathing space and 86% of the households have bathing facilities within the shelter. Unsurprisingly, sometimes these spaces are used for urination or defecation at night.

### Existing situation in camps

Recent quick survey (November 2022) in 11 IOM managed camps showed, 28% of the access road of the wash facilities are illuminated. In those camps, solar light coverage may be significant as 20,600 lights were installed. Nevertheless, according to energy and environmental technical working group (EETWG), only 47% of the streetlights were fully functional in both IOM and UNHCR camps (1 December 2022).

## WASH Sector's Recommendations

Considering the above evidence and discussions at HP TWiG and WASH Sector meetings; WASH partners agreed on the following recommendations regarding safe access to WASH facilities at night. The role of WASH Sector is advisory, and implementation needs to be ensured through SMSD and Shelter/NFI sector primarily, with the support of energy and environment working group as required.

### 1. WASH Sector:

- a) Does not recommend lights inside latrines or bathing facilities.
- b) WASH Sector should advocate for SMSD/EETWG for street lighting in strategic areas. [Solar Lighting Guidance](#) is attached to this document for future consultation.
- c) WASH Sector should advocate to SHELTER/NFIS sector to make sure their NFIs kits contains solar/non solar torch lights (batteries/charging system).

### 2. SMSD Sector:

Access to the WASH facilities need to be illuminated. However, streetlight should not be installed right in front of the sanitation facilities to avoid gathering. According to [Solar Lighting Guidance](#) – low intensity, smaller lights can help with visibility at night without attracting static activities that may cause protection concerns, high intensity flood lights that illuminate an area would attract night-time activities). Suggested distribution is along main pathways at every 20-30 metres.

- a) SMSD Sector to oversee installation of lights inside camps- adequately illuminating the access to WASH facilities distributed along main pathways at every 20-30 meters.
- b) Clear understanding of who (actors/community/volunteers/trained technicians) would be involved in monitoring, operation and maintenance of such lights and detailing the roles and responsibilities ensuring safety especially fire safety, prevention of vandalism and stealing, correct waste management and final disposal.

### 3. Shelter/NFI Sector:

- a) Beneficiaries to be provided with minimum of two lighting items per household including either solar light or hand carry torch) by Shelter/NFI sector to aid them in accessing WASH facilities at night; minimum of two lighting items per household.
- b) Replenishing batteries, replacing out of order torches as necessary through regular following up with beneficiaries. Beneficiaries must be aware of where to seek help regarding issues related to such device. In case of solar powered devices, they need to be well oriented on solar recharging of devices to ensure efficient use.

### Annex and references

- <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620606/rr-lighting-sanitation-literature-review-211218-en.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>
- World Vision camp-wide HH Survey
- [https://archive.ids.ac.uk/clts/sites/communityledtotalsanitation.org/files/Shedding\\_light\\_on\\_humanitarian\\_sanitation.pdf](https://archive.ids.ac.uk/clts/sites/communityledtotalsanitation.org/files/Shedding_light_on_humanitarian_sanitation.pdf)
- WASH Sector meeting minutes November
- HP TWiG meeting minutes November
- UNHCR Community Consultation Report
- Quick survey by IOM
- Bathing facility report
- Wash Programs-Tips for protection mainstreaming