

Women and Water in the time of Covid-19



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***WOMEN & RESILIENCE IN THE
WATER SECTOR
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“COVID-19 could reverse the limited gain in gender equality and women’s rights made over the decades are in danger of being rolled back due to the COVID-19 pandemic”

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

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“Nearly 60 per cent of women around the world work in the informal economy, earning less, saving less, and at greater risk of falling into poverty” UN

How does COVID 19 impact on women?

Women's capacity for endurance sorely tried already ?

What support do they need for recovery?

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- Covid-19 emphasizes access to safe water and sanitation but 40 per cent of the global population lack access to clean water and soap at home
- We have been talking WASH through the MDGS and now the SDGs -Will the current crisis help us make it a top global priority?
- Most importantly, will it bring in the critical investment needed?

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Gender equity is the key to global success

Ensuring the wellbeing of half the world's population matters,-
do we believe it?
Or do we say it to be diplomatic?

Gender-disaggregating data rates of infection, access to water ,
unemployment, underemployment, domestic abuse cases, and
unpaid labour burden related to pandemic?

A gender-blind approach to fiscal stimulus ? The economic
devastation for women could continue well after the pandemic.

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This is the family of a migrant worker walking on the Mumbai Nasik Highway along with their belongings

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A Message from the field

- “Most of the villagers are daily wage earners and since lockdown they have lost their jobs. This crunch has led them to extreme poverty which in turn has increased violence against girls and women. On the other hand, the farmers under our project have suffered a great loss. The middlemen are not coming hence their produce cannot be sold. Moreover the amount of sell through two or three middlemen is not at all sufficient to run their big families. The fruit farmers are worst sufferers as their produce is getting wasted in the orchards. People are panic-stricken about consuming raw fruits due to the pandemic, our area which is’s largest fruit producing area is witnessing an absolutely dry season in terms of sell.
- The ration which is provided by the government is not adequate as village families are usually bigger comprised of infants, sick, aged and disabled. The worst sufferers are the single mothers and destitute grannies who have no income at all. We have dedicated ourselves in distributing the relief essentials and food stuff to these vulnerable people. Our resources are limited still we would support these distraught villagers till our last breath.Furthermore the violence against girls and women has scaled up drastically leading us to form innovative protection circles to save them. Our group leaders and girls are persistently negotiating with the police and local stakeholders to protect the innocent souls from the imminent danger. “

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Is the “new normal” going to be the old system painted over ?

- COVID marked by increased authoritarianism –how will women fare
- A gender sensitive stimulus package for water? Not yet on the horizon
- A media focus on the issues impacting on women in water

A crisis is a good time to start on change - move out of our comfort zones,
plan a more inclusive, more supportive social contract , boosting resilience
Challenging the tyranny of the status quo

Women in water sector experience defeat after defeat, yet keep fighting

Don't get sad – get mad ! Seize the day!

Thank you