

## SUBMISSION TEMPLATE

### Research-2-Practice Forum on Renewable Energy, Water and Climate Security in Africa 16 - 18.04.2018, Tlemcen, Algeria

#### Category: Research-2-Practice Contributions

The call for Research-2-Practice contributions aims to showcase existing collaboration between practitioners in private sector, policy makers, financial institutions, civil society and beyond with academic, scientific or research institutions within the priority areas of this call (energy, water, climate change and the nexus between energy, water and climate change).

#### General Guidelines:

Abstracts or projects cases should be written according to structure given in the template below, including the following headings: abstract/Project and keywords, introduction, method, results and discussion, conclusion and recommendations, references or links. There is flexibility as to the naming of the sections. Sub-headings can be used when necessary.

Abstracts or project cases shall be written in Calibri font, single line spacing and 10 font size. Extended abstracts can contain figures, tables and/or images. Page format should be A4 page size with margins 2.5 cm wide from the right, left, top and bottom. **Extended abstracts should not exceed 4 pages (including references)** and pages should not be numbered.

The abstracts (in PDF format) shall be submitted via <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=res2prac>

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#### Author's details:

*Please complete the table below before submitting the abstract.*

*Consultants are encouraged to co-author and if selected present with a senior representative of the organization whose work is exhibited on the abstract.*

Title and Full Names	<i>Dr Reuben Lubem Ibaishwa &amp; Anne-Marie Abaagu</i>
Position	<i>Director Documentation and research and Director Communication</i>
Organization/Institution	<i>Women Environmental Programme (WEP)</i>
Mailing Address	<i>reubenibaishwa@gmail.com</i>
Country	<i>Nigeria</i>
Email	<i><a href="mailto:reubenibaishwa@gmail.com">reubenibaishwa@gmail.com</a> and <a href="mailto:anne4queen@gmail.com">anne4queen@gmail.com</a></i>
Phone	<i>+2348066046731</i>
Gender	<i>Male and Female</i>

## Title: Gender Access to Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene in Rural Communities in Benue State, Nigeria

*Reuben Lubem Ibaishwa*

*Director Research and Documentation, Women Environmental Programme*

[reubenibaishwa@gmail.com](mailto:reubenibaishwa@gmail.com), +2348066046731

*Nigeria, Abuja*

### Summary

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) has become a prevalent issue in Nigeria. Many communities lack WASH facilities in the country. Women in Nigeria are responsible for WASH. To ensure WASH in the family, women depend directly on the availability of WASH facilities in the communities. Despite the important roles women play in ensuring WASH in the house, they face various challenges. These challenges call for research. Therefore, this study examines gender and WASH and adopted a mix methodology. A total of 1,300 participants responded to the household survey questions, 480 participated in the focus group discussion and 60 key informants were interviewed. Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants for household survey, FGD and KII. Questionnaire, interview and direct observation were utilized in collecting data. Findings of the study revealed that cultural practices, education, gender inequalities, poor access to WASH services/facilities, low level of awareness, lack of sustainability of existing WASH facilities and lack of capacity of agencies was responsible for poor gender access to WASH services. The study recommended that more women development programs on WASH should be formulated and implemented rural Nigeria. Also, there is need to build the capacity of CSOs/NGOs to strategically provide WASH services.

**Keywords:** *Gender, Rural, Water, Sanitation, Hygiene*

### 1. GENDER ACCESS TO RURAL WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

- a) Women Environmental Programme (WEP) is a Nigerian NGO working to address gender injustices on issues relating to the environment and economic and social rights of women and young people. WEP's work includes raising awareness of gendered impacts on climate change; advocating for natural resource management, land rights, social infrastructure, the management of environmental conflicts and empowering of women and youths. WEP is an NGO with the United Nations ECOSOC Consultative Status, Observer Status to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Observer status to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate. WEP is an active member to the UNFCCC, including facilitating the attendance of women and youth leaders to COP negotiations and is also an active member of the Environmental NGOs constituency. WEP work is hinged on four pillars of Environment, Governance, Peace and Security and Climate hinged. Under the Environmental pillar, WEP work revolves around natural resource management and biodiversity, chemicals and waste management,

water and sanitation.

**b) Present the scope and objective of work.**

The work is hinged on gender and water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in 20 rural communities of Benue State, Nigeria. A total population of 1,300 participants responded to the household survey while 480 participants took part in the focus group discussion and 60 key informants were interviewed. The objectives of the study are to examine

- i. cultural, political and socioeconomic issues affecting women access to rural WASH in Benue state
- ii. prevailing gender gaps in the design and implementation of rural WASH programs in Benue state
- iii. gender dynamics affecting access to urban WASH services in Benue state.
- iv. To carry out an in-depth understanding on the capacity of WASH implementing partners on gender based WASH programming, and
- v. To suggest programmatic actions to address availability of WASH for women in the rural communities.

**c) Briefly review the pertinent literature or supporting theoretical framework that guide your work.**

It is known globally that access to drinking water and sanitation is very vital for a healthy individual, family and society. Due to the importance drinking water and sanitation, access to safe water supply and sanitation is therefore a serious issue across the globe. In Nigeria, more than half of the population is affected by lack of access to safe drinking water and poor sanitation (Galadima, Garba, Leke, Almustapha & Adam 2011). According to the World Bank (2010), water production facilities in Nigeria are “rarely operated to full capacity due to broken down equipment, or lack of power to fuel the pumping”. Equipment and pipes are poorly maintained, leading to intermittent supply of pipe borne water in Nigeria.

For Over a decade, huge amount of public funds estimated at about 82.5billion Naira have been spent on the provision and management of water, sanitation and hygiene in Nigeria (Daniel, 2014). However, there is still no potable water and many lack access to adequate sanitation. More than half of the deaths recorded in the nation’s health facilities are caused by complications arising from bad water and poor sanitation (Abaje, Ati & Ishaya, 2009). This has made successive governments and other donor agencies to see that they could expand water supply infrastructures, but despite their efforts, the public is still disenchanted because access to safe water and sanitation is not improving (Emosbino & Alayande, 2007).

Gender perspectives are critically important in rural areas like Benue when examining water supply, sanitation and hygiene due to the role of gender in utilization of WASH services. It is also widely assumed that cities are far better places than rural areas for accessing safe and convenient water and sanitation services, and therefore gender issues in access to rural services would be difficult. Women and girls typically take responsibility for fetching water, and this can take hours out of their day, reducing time for farm work, education, childcare and rest (UNDP, 2008). When relatives become sick because of poor hygiene, it is also women and girls who bear the greatest burden of care. Lack of separate-sex toilet facilities in rural schools, including those in informal settlements, in most cases causes girls to miss classes or drop out of school in adolescence. Rural women also tend to spend more time than men in the home and are also more directly exposed to environmental hazards of poor sanitation—such as diseases caused by poor drainage, contact with human feces and decomposing rubbish. Yet, little or no attention to gender issues in the design and implementation of rural water and sanitation programs has been very slow which

has widened the health, social and economic benefits to women and their communities.

Women in rural areas in Benue State perform all domestic tasks relating to WASH and also farm and trade. These women are also responsible for the care of children, the sick and the elderly, in addition to carrying out essential social functions within their communities. Customary laws on marriage in Benue has created in response to men's anxieties about the independence of women transformed the previously fluid and negotiable relations between them into rigid duties and obligations of wives and women. Inadequate potable water, sanitation and waste disposal in rural areas of Benue State leave the general population vulnerable to water-borne and other environmental diseases. These conditions of inadequate potable water, sanitation and waste disposal in rural Benue State are compounded for women by some unhelpful or even dangerous socio-cultural, religious norms and practices centered on their reproductive and productive functions, their heavy workloads, high birth rates and socio-cultural factors that limit their dietary intake (WHO/UNICEF JMP 2010).

According to WHO/UNICEF JMP (2010) socio-cultural factors in Benue State influence women and girls lack of access to WASH. To meet women and girls' WASH needs, there is need to recognize the gendered barriers to WASH access, as well as addressing women's and girls' specific WASH needs, namely sexual and reproductive health needs like menstrual hygiene, maternal and newborn health, which are overlooked or ignored by WASH policy and programs. Reaching all women and girls in rural areas of Benue State also requires understanding how different individual inequality factors such as age, disability and social status intersect to limit women and girls' access to WASH.

This socio-cultural and gendered division of labor in Benue leaves little time or water for women and girls own personal hygiene needs. This is common mostly when water sources are not easily accessible (WHO/UNICEF JMP 2010). Inadequate WASH provision in a community not only impacts on women and girls own access, but puts a greater burden on women and girls in their roles in care and unpaid domestic duties, which impacts on their physical health and time for economic, social and leisure activities (Wilbur & Huggett, 2015). This burden may be exacerbated in times of stress such as conflict, humanitarian emergencies or natural disasters. It also creates greater disadvantage for girls and women if they are facing multiple vulnerabilities, such as living with a disability or in poor urban slums.

In terms of political factors, WASH services in Benue are mainly established and funded at the state level, it makes sense to assume that when the Benue State government do not run well, they are unable to provide satisfactory public WASH services (WaterAid & CBM-Nossal, 2015). On the other hand, the more stable a government is at the basic level, the stronger its foundation for providing good public services, such as water and sanitation. By providing and regulating such services, governments yield responsibility over the health of their citizens. Because government is responsible for the management of these services, it directly and indirectly impacts human development via the reduction of disease. However, in rural and urban Benue State, people have trouble getting prompt, efficient service from the public administration, thus limiting their access to basic services (World Bank, 2001).

In terms of socio-economic issues limiting women's access to rural WASH services in Benue, education of women has been found to have the strongest association with regards to access and utilization of WASH services (Itoe, 2012). Education serves as a proxy for information, cognitive skills and values. It exerts effects on access and utilization of WASH services through a number of path ways. These pathways include higher level of health awareness and greater knowledge of available WASH services among educated women, improved ability of educated women to afford the cost of safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, their enhanced level of autonomy that results in improved ability and freedom to make WASH related decisions, including choice of toilets to be used, choice of water to drink (Hotchkiss, Krasovec, El-Idrissi, Eckert, & Karim, 2003).

Educated mothers are more likely to take advantage of public WASH services than other uneducated women. Education may impart feelings of self-worth and confidence as well as reduce the power differential between service providers and clients thereby reducing the reluctance to utilize these services. Level of income also influence WASH facilities in the household in Benue. In many ways, that income

should be an important determinant of WASH is more plausible among the poor people living in Benue rural areas than among the rich people. Women, whose incomes are high, are more likely to use safe drinking water, good sanitary facilities and maintain hygiene than women of lower incomes (Chakra, Islam, Chowdhury, & Bari, 2004) which is common in Benue. It is well known that increased income has a positive effect on WASH facilities. Husband's occupation can be considered a proxy of family income, as well as social status.

## 2. Problem

What challenges related to Water, Energy or Climate Change does your organization address?

The challenge of providing WASH facilities to rural communities, in schools and public places, the challenge of training and building the capacity of local CSOs and NGOs on water, energy and climate change as well as ensuring the government live up to expectation in providing water facilities to communities.

## 3. Solution

- a) What solution(s) does the organization use or create to address these challenges?  
and/or
- b) What value proposition does your organization present to address these challenges?

Generation of sector data critical to the development of programming in water, energy and climate change on immediate service improvements that can be achieved in the short term, financing of local CSOs and NGOs on implementing WASH activities as well as training and building the capacity of local CSOs and NGOs. It also engaged in training of legislatures, school children and the general public on WASH and Climate change.

## 4. Methodology

- a) The methodology must be clearly stated and described in sufficient detail or with sufficient references.

The study adopted a mix methodology which helped in gaining generalized and in-depth understanding of WASH in rural communities in Benue State. These mix methods and techniques illustrated below enabled the acquisition of specific data needed to achieve the objectives of the study.

1. **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**; involving between 8-10 participants with the common characteristics of being adult male, adult female, young girls and young boys resident in the community were conducted in each of the 20 communities selected in Katsina-ala, Logo and Ukum LGAs. Three (3) FGD sessions were held in each of the 20 communities.
2. **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**; were held with purposively selected respondents who were considered critical stakeholders with appreciable knowledge in WASH facilities and services in Katsina ala, Logo and Ukum LGAs.
3. **Case Studies**; case studies were conducted involving consenting marginalized female and male. Criteria for selection included age, state of health, residency, and disability status.



4. **Transect Walks;** were used to observe WASH related facilities available in the LGAs. A scanning of the environment revealed reasons why men and women, marginalized persons were excluded WASH services.

**Quantitative Approach;** involved the collection of quantitative data through a household survey. The collection of the quantitative data involved the use of a questionnaire to elicit specific information on household socio-economic and demographic data, WASH availability in the households.

A total population of 1,300 participants responded to the household survey while 486 participants took part in the focus group discussion and 60 key informants were interviewed. Selection of communities for the study area based on the following set criteria:

1. Rural community with record of poor access and utilization of WASH services
2. Rural communities with presence of WASH implementing CSOs
3. Rural communities recommended by CSOs.

Purposive sampling technique was however used to select participants for household survey, FGD and KII. Questionnaire, interview, internet surveys, and direct observation were utilized in collecting data. In analyzing the quantitative data, responses to questionnaires were coded and entered into SPSS (version 20), and SPSS was used in the statistical analyses. The analysis included descriptive statistics. Qualitative data from FGD and KII were gathered and transcribed verbatim. The transcribed interviews and discussions were analyzed using the thematic approach.

## 5. Research and Practice Synergies

- a) How has your organization created synergies between academia/research and practice within its operations?

Through engagement of academic lecturers in conducting practical researches, the organisation is currently collaborating with university of Glasgow in ensuring the combination of academic and practical researches in the university. It seeks to collaborate with the university on the need to conduct practical researches that will be applicable beyond the university environment.

- b) What has been the impact of these synergies thus far?

The academia is adopting practical research. It's basically combining qualitative and quantitative methods in conducting researches,

- c) What are some of experiences of collaboration that have contributed to the research and practice synergies?

The collaboration has brought to light the need to combine academic and practical researches as well as adopt mix method in conducting research.

## 6. Impact

Provide an overview of the main results of your work:

Findings of the study revealed that cultural practices, education, lack of political and economic power, gender inequalities, poor access to WASH services/facilities, low level of awareness, lack of sustainability of existing WASH facilities and lack of capacity of agencies was responsible for poor gender access to WASH services plays a key role in women access to WASH facilities in rural Nigeria. The findings also reveal the need to establish centers in rural communities that will provide awareness to rural dwellers weekly on WASH services.

- a) What impact have you experienced thus far in science, policy or societal change?  
Or
- b) What are your learnings and how can this knowledge contribute to research and/or practice?

Am learning the need to combine qualitative and quantitative method in conducting research. The knowledge will help in conducting both practical and academic researches which can go beyond the academic field thereby putting the findings and recommendations to practice.

The impact or learnings of the work should be explicitly described and illustrated. Supporting figures, tables and images of the results (no more than two figures and two tables) may be included in the extended abstract. Figures, images and tables must be numbered (see Figure 1 and table 2 as examples); figure headers should be placed under the figure or image; table header should be placed at the top. References (if any) of the tables, figures and images should be presented right under the tables, figures and images in the form of author surname and publication date.

**Table 1: FGD, KII and Physically Challenged Participants**

Participants	FGD	KII	Physically Challenged
Females	251	23	7
Males	235	37	13
Total	480	60	20

*Ibaishwa & Abaagu (2017) (Field survey)*

## 7. Conclusions

The study concludes that women play key role in ensuring availability and utilization of WASH services in the household and community. However, there exist various challenges hindering effective participation of women in accessing WASH services in rural Benue State. These challenges are political, gender inequalities, socio-cultural, socioeconomic, poor access to water sources, lacks of decision-making power. The government has pay little attention to the WASH needs of the rural dwellers which has led to inadequate laws, institutions and policies on water in rural areas.

Theoretical and/or practical implications of the work

The practical implication of the work is on the need to ensure provision of WASH services in the rural areas so as to ensure the health of the rural dwellers.

- d) Recommendations for areas of collaboration between research and practice.

The study recommends that more women development research that that focus on WASH should be conducted by and recommendations be implemented as well as more women development programmes should be formulated and implemented rural Nigeria. Also, there is a greater need to build the capacity of researchers to strategically conduct practical researches that high light existing issues in the society.

## 8. References , Further reading and/or links

### a) References

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