



## Perspective

## Preventing violence against women and girls in refugee and displaced person camps: Is energy access the solution?

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## ABSTRACT

In humanitarian crises, experiences of sexual and gender-based violence, primarily experienced by women and girls, are known to increase and intensify. There are current humanitarian crises across several regions of the world, and as many as 65 million displaced people. As such, there is an ongoing need to consider the role of energy interventions in addressing gendered violence in emergency contexts. Here I argue that although international humanitarian actors may advocate for them, technological energy interventions, including lighting, improved cookstoves and the provision of firewood, cannot prevent or solve the problem of violence against women or girls. By bringing the existing literature on energy interventions into conversation with the emerging literature on causes and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, I highlight the limitations of a technical, universal intervention to gender-based violence in complex and traumatised social settings, each with their own local dynamics and gendered norms. Moreover, advocacy for such technical solutions makes both the particularity of gender in different sociocultural contexts, and other possible responses, invisible. Indeed, local contexts, and local responses must be considered the starting point for responding to gender-based violence, in which engaging with energy practices is at most one approach to prevent violence by engaging the broader context of trauma, poverty and gender in which it occurs.

## 1. Introduction

Humanitarian emergencies, developing from conflict and other disasters, are at present occurring in several regions of the world, including Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia [1,2]. The UN Refugee Agency estimates there are currently more than 65 million displaced persons worldwide as a result of these emergencies [1]. It is well established that the intensity and prevalence of gendered violence increases in emergency settings, and present crises therefore indicate the ongoing need to consider the role of energy in preventing such violence. My purpose here is to re-examine this role of energy from a feminist framework, by bringing the literature on energy, refugee settings and gendered violence into conversation with the broader literature on women, sexual and gender-based violence and emergencies, and the emerging literature on the causes and prevention of men's violence against women and girls.

## 1.1. A note on terminology and focus

Humanitarian emergencies can be broadly understood as times of intense disruption and hardship, in which a group of people's

immediate human needs, including food, shelter, and water, become compromised or are unable to be met, and can require humanitarian relief or aid. Emergencies can occur in a number of forms and from different causes, including natural, technological, conflict causes, can be complex, rapid or slow, or 'permanent' in the case of on-going poverty in deprivation [3]. That's to say, emergencies may occur as conflict or genocide, political events and disruption, or as a result of a tsunami or famine, which are natural emergencies. The existing literature on energy as a solution to gender-based violence in emergencies has largely focused on fuels and stoves in refugee camp settings in Sub-Saharan Africa [4–9], in addition to several studies examining other contexts, including Bhutanese refugee camps in Nepal in comparison with Africa [10], and lighting interventions in camps for people displaced by the 2010 earthquake in Haiti [11]. As such, I focus my analysis of the potential role of energy for preventing gender-based violence specifically in the context of emergency responses in camps for refugees or displaced persons.

While the term gender is used in a variety of ways, including to denote sexual difference between male and female bodies, although this use is not without significant critique [12], I employ it as an analytical tool to unpack and understand social relations. Gender is therefore

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understood here as a set of meanings associated with bodies and identity, constituted through social practices, and which structure social relations, often unequally [13]. Moreover, I understand gender to be dynamic, and to operate differently in different cultural contexts and places.

Gender-based violence can be defined as “any form of violence used to establish, enforce or perpetuate gender inequalities and keep in place unequal gender-power relations” [14]. Violence against women and girls is one form of gendered violence, specifically directed against women and girls as a result of the performance of their gender, or expectations of their gendered role in society, and with the intention of subjugating women. However, the two terms are not interchangeable, as gender-based violence includes other kinds of violence which may be directed toward people as a result of their gender or sexual diversity, or masculinity.

Gender-based violence takes many forms, not only those that are physical, and can include psychological, reproductive, verbal and economic coercion, abuse and harassment [15]. It is also important to note that an individual’s experience of gendered violence, and more broadly, gender inequality, is relative, and shaped by other aspects of their identity, including their culture or race, age, or socio-economic position.

I wish to stress at the outset that there is ample evidence to demonstrate that sexual and gender-based violence is overwhelmingly committed by men, against women and girls [14]. It is to emphasise this particular and prevalent pattern of gender-based violence that I use this terminology. Moreover, it must be considered that the literature on energy, emergencies and gender-based violence is almost exclusively based on data on women and girls’ experiences of violence by men, and it is this literature which sets the scope of my critique and discussion. However, I do not use such terms without qualifications, which I will elaborate below.

## 2. The relationship between violence against women, emergencies and energy

### 2.1. Gender, violence and emergencies

It has been well-established in academic literature that sexual and gender-based violence overwhelmingly impacts women and girls [14], and intensifies in emergencies [15–17]. Conceptualisations of gender may become amplified, or be challenged, and the policing of gender and subjugation of women with violence is reinforced in a context of other forms of violence and violent practices [3,16]. Indeed, in conflict and post-conflict contexts, women and girls face particular forms of sexual and gender-based violence, and have often been treated as rewards or objects of war [3,15]. Raping and intentionally impregnating women has also been used as practice of ethnic cleansing and genocide, intended to disrupt the cultural lineage of a particular group, or render their women ‘impure’ or spoiled [15]. In natural emergencies, the lack of privacy and security in displaced person camps puts women at increased risk of partner and non-partner violence, as well as trafficking [15].

Gender roles have also been shown to shift in emergencies. In political or conflict contexts, gender roles for women may be challenged by women who become guerrillas [18], or in both natural and complex emergencies, by it becoming more acceptable or necessary for women to take on additional roles or behaviours for survival in conflict or camp settings [19]. On the other hand, men and women have been found to respond differently to the stress, trauma and loss experienced by communities in emergencies, and men may be more likely to act through violence and aggression [17].

Indeed, the reality of gender in conflict is complex and contextual, with some women engaged as combatants in conflicts, while men are particularly vulnerable to death in armed conflict as a result of their gender [18]. Moreover, men may be impacted in other ways, for

example, Ritchie [19] found amongst Somali refugees in Kenya, and Syrian refugees hosted in Jordan, that men were unable to secure work, and subject to greater policing of illegal work respectively, and therefore marginalised from work opportunities. Similarly, Hilhorst et al. [18] note how men and boys, and non-hetero-conforming groups, can be considered of lesser priority by aid and resettlement agencies. It is worth noting that the construction of and focus on women’s victimhood in development and emergency discourse can contribute to this marginalisation and vulnerability, and has implications for gender-based violence. The disruption of masculinities and femininities, or ‘ways of being’ for men and women [14], via threats to gender norms such as men’s roles and identities as breadwinners, or women’s handling of household tasks, not only marginalise men, but also increase the likelihood and prevalence violence against women and girls in emergencies as attempts may be made to re-establish gender roles and norms [17,19].

There is greater risk of violence against women and girls in contexts in which violence is normalised, communities are experiencing stress, trauma and sudden poverty, and gender roles are being challenged. However, while gender is in a state of flux, there is also the possibility to transform gendered norms which support inequalities and enable violence against women and girls. Indeed, the Somali and Syrian women studied by Ritchie [19] expressed a greater sense of confidence, involvement in household decision-making and desire for independence as a result of the necessity of taking on traditionally masculine income-earning and entrepreneurial roles, albeit without the support from and with potential sanctioning by the men in their communities. Thus, the positioning of women as victims of emergencies, should not be assumed, or rather, may be an incomplete picture of the complexity of how gender plays out in crisis settings.

I maintain a focus on violence against women and girls here, but rather than reproduce a narrative of women, as put by Hilhorst et al. [18] “as the primary victims and primarily as victims”, I aim to contextualise and complicate this violence.

### 2.2. The causes and nature of men’s violence against women and girls

In order to understand the role that energy sources, including fuels and technologies such as cookstoves and lighting, can play in prevention, it is useful to engage with emerging feminist literature on the causes, drivers and prevention of violence against women and girls.

At the heart of the violence against women and girls are gendered social norms and structures which condone and enable violence to be perpetrated against women and girls, that’s to say gender inequality [14,15]. As put by Hughes et al. [15], violence against women and girls:

is both an expression and a reinforcement of unequal relations of power between women and men.

Indeed violence against women and girls, in the majority of lived contexts across the world, is reinforced by social structures and institutions, including that of marriage, and associated practices of dowry and household roles, legal frameworks which do not adequately protect women in cases of violence, and health systems, which may deny or curtail women’s rights to bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health services [15].

While the link between gender inequality and patterns of violence is well-established, the reality is complex and locally-specific. Rather, whether and why men, as the primary perpetrators of gender-based violence (including against women, other men and LGBTQ-identifying people), engage in violence has been shown to be varied and context-dependent [14]. Moreover, the structures and institutions enabling such violence are not homogenous, as are the kinds of gendered violence they enable and support, for example sexual violence of partners versus non-partners, or emotional violence [14]. While research in the field has overwhelmingly focused on women’s experiences of violence, there is an emerging body of literature examining the causes behind gendered

violence, and particularly the ways in which masculinities, or ‘ways of living for men’ [14], and men’s own experiences as victims of violence are implicated in its occurrence [20].

In one of the most recent and broadly scoped studies, based on the surveys undertaken with 10,000 men and 3000 women across six countries in the Asia Pacific, including Sri Lanka, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea as post-conflict, and in the case of Sri Lanka, post-disaster contexts, Fulu et al. [14] found that men’s violence against women is driven by gender norms and sexual practices [see also 15], these were related to narratives of masculinity which celebrate toughness, violence and heterosexuality. Moreover, men’s own experiences of abuse, victimisation were strongly associated with their use of violence against women, and men who were socially less powerful or experiencing social pressures, such as food insecurity or poverty, and therefore lacking in control over their lives were also more likely to use violence [14]. Indeed, Fulu et al. [14] write that

violence is complex, and different forms and types of violence are interrelated. For example, men’s experiences of childhood abuse or neglect are associated with their perpetration of violence against women. Men also experience violence during adulthood – from sexual violence, such as rape or homophobic bullying to participation in a gang and fights with weapons. These experiences are also associated with violence against women, suggesting that men’s use of violence cannot be considered in isolation from their own experiences of trauma.

Moreover, one of the most important findings from the study was that the risk factors associated with men’s violence against women were not the same in every country, nor were they same for different types of violence, for example intimate partner violence and non-partner violence. That’s not to say there were not recurring themes and factors across the study, for example childhood abuse and trauma and harmful ideals of masculinity and heterosexuality. However not all factors were significant in every country, and different factors had varying degrees of significance in different countries [14]. This finding highlights the importance of understanding gendered violence in the specific cultural and socio-economic practices and context in which its occurring, and the importance of this for informing responses.

Fulu et al. [14] demonstrate that violence is driven by a complex interplay of factors, from individual factors such as gender inequitable attitudes, childhood abuse and trauma, and participation in violence, to community level factors including normalisation and acceptance of violence and gender norms practices, to society-level factors including socio-economic positioning and gender-unequal institutions and structures. What is striking about the findings is how many of these key risk factors, from each level, are relevant in humanitarian crisis, refugee camp and displaced persons camps settings. Poverty and food insecurity, men’s experiences of victimisation, violence and trauma, and exclusion and threatened masculinities may all be prevalent in such contexts [18,19].

Such evidence complicates a simple narrative of women as victims and men as perpetrators, suggesting that violence against women and girls in humanitarian and emergency settings is actually indicative of a complex and much broader context of violence and pervasive marginalisation. Prevention of violence against women and girls in refugee and displaced person camp settings must, therefore, give consideration to and address these multiple factors, including strategies to address poverty, improve responses to trauma, and engage men in prevention to transform gender norms and masculinities [14].

### 2.3. Evidence on energy, refugee and displaced persons camps, and violence against women and girls

Energy, including firewood and improved cookstove technologies, have been advocated for as a violence prevention strategy by prominent NGO actors [21], including the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves

(GACC), and Women’s Refugee Commission and Refugees International [21]. However, a critical examination of the literature shows that there is little evidence to show that providing fuels, including firewood, or energy technologies such as cookstoves or lighting to women in refugee camps reduces the prevalence of violence against women and girls.

Indeed, in spite of the Alliance’s ongoing advocacy for energy programs, in a recent review of gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies, and the role of cookstoves and fuels in its prevention, the GACC noted that there is a lack of “compelling evidence base that shows whether and how cookstove and fuel projects can reduce [the risks] and reduce the overall frequency of [gender-based violence].” [8]. Importantly, the GACC report highlights that out of fourteen projects which have distributed cookstoves to reduce rates of violence against women and girls, only one collected baseline and end-line prevalence data [8]. As such, links drawn between the distribution of cookstoves, as one specific energy technology, and the prevalence of violence of women and girls are supported only by anecdotal evidence.

It is important to note that collecting data on gender-based violence in emergencies is challenging. Factors such as fear of retributions, social sanctioning, stigma and the impunity of perpetrators, weak data protection systems, limitations in the capacity to ensure privacy in survey and interview setting, and a lack of time to establish rapport and trust between researchers and affected people all impact the accuracy of the disclosures made by women, men or sexually or gender-diverse people [4,22]. Moreover, practical challenges such as the lack of consistent data collection tools and methods, lack of services for survivors, and restricted physical access to affected women and girls, due to the emergency context, also affect the accuracy and the comprehensiveness of data that is collected on experiences and the prevalence of gender-based violence in emergencies [22].

Nonetheless, the relatively few existing studies on this topic indicate that although energy can address one of the contexts of opportunity for the perpetration of one specific type of violence, namely non-partner rape during firewood collections, it does not necessarily reduce rates of violence against women or girls which also occur in other environments or address its underlying causes. The Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children [10] examined the benefits and appropriateness of different fuels and efficiency strategies to reduce the amount of firewood women living in camps need to collect, and the time they spend doing so. Indeed, the report demonstrates that fuel provision and availability can be an important part of reducing the opportunity for violence against women and girls while collecting firewood. However, while the authors acknowledge the role of increased security forces to ensure camp safety, and the role of income generation strategies in reducing the need for women to collect firewood and fuel, the report frames firewood collection as a cause of, rather than a context for violence.

Such a framing is problematic without consideration of the broader context of violence against women and girls in emergency settings. Indeed, an evaluation of the Doro refugee camp in South Sudan by the Danish Refugee Council [5] highlighted this context, and found that while rape rates were reported to be highest at firewood collection points, water collection points within camps were reported to have similarly high rates of violence, including sexual abuse, beatings and attempted rape. Moreover, intimate partner violence was widely prevalent, and considered a normal part of life and relationships [see also 4], as were other forms of violence against women and girls including sexual harassment and early marriage.

The findings of the report indicate how firewood and fuel, and the ability to meet basic household needs, are intertwined with some (not all) forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, when food is scarce or undercooked, or sexual exploitation resulting from poverty. The authors highlighted safer access to resources, including fuel-efficient stoves and safer water collections points, as one component of a strategy to address violence against women and girls in the camp, in addition to redesigning the camp

layout, establishing community watch groups and other social settings, supporting the reproductive health of women and girls, improving response and support services and establishing income generation and education opportunities for women [5].

Similar recommendations were made in an evaluation of the Dadaab refugee camp firewood project in Kenya by CASA Consulting [4]. In a comprehensive review of the provision of firewood as a strategy to address rape during firewood collection in Dadaab, the authors studied the prevalence of rape before and after the intervention, and demonstrated that the rates of rape were not substantially affected by the project's partial provision of firewood to women. Similar to the Doro report, the findings demonstrated that violence in firewood collection settings was part of a much broader pattern of violence against women and girls within the camps. The authors postulate that patterns of scarcity and environmental crisis a greater determining factor in the rates of violence than the impacts of providing fuel to women directly [4].

Moreover, CASA Consulting [4] found that focus on firewood provision as a strategy to address rape was problematic, as it elicited

... ever-increasing demands on the part of both UNHCR staff, refugees and local contractors for larger and larger proportions of free firewood supply, as 'the solution' to rape. Instead of fostering community involvement, initiative and share responsibility in the problem of rape, [the project] reinforced the notion that firewood supply and sexual violence are problems UNHCR can solve alone.

Indeed, according to the evaluation, the technical fix of firewood or fuel projects cannot address or solve problems social and community problems such as violence against women and girls.

In addition to scarcity, CASA Consulting [4] also showed that the prevalence of violence differed between different camp sites, in which each had minority cultural groups and relations. The study therefore suggests that factors such as culture, and local norms of violence also determine the nature of violence against women and girls. Indeed, this is consistent with the emerging literature on men's violence against women and girls as I described above. Interestingly, tensions between host and refugee communities, and scarcity of natural resources, were also identified to be factors affecting the prevalence of violence against women and girls in a World Food Programme (WFP) study in Kakuma camp, Kenya [6].

The WFP project distributed improved cookstoves to women in the Kakuma camp, including both host and refugee women, and evaluation found that the time spent by women collecting firewood was reduced, and therefore women's risk of experiencing rape. It is worth noting, this claim is made on the assumption that reducing the frequency of trips made to collect firewood, reduces the prevalence of rape by reducing exposure [6]. Yet, there is no evidence to verify whether reducing the opportunity for violence while women collect firewood did not simply redirect violence toward other settings such as sanitation facilities. This is an important omission, as the CASA Consulting [4] report on the Dadaab camp found that during periods in which reporting of firewood collection rapes decreased (by as much as 45%), rapes in other locations and contexts were found to increase as much as 78–113%. As the authors write

Our findings suggest that firewood collection provides a convenient context or location for rape, but should not be viewed as its 'cause'. We cannot conclude that if women were provided with more firewood, they would be significantly less at risk.

Nonetheless according to anecdotal evidence from the Kakuma study, the ability to cook food more thoroughly and the need for less firewood for fuel resulted in anecdotal evidence lessened incidents of domestic violence and sexual exploitation in which some women were transacting sex for fuel [6]. As I suggested earlier, such findings indicate that firewood and fuel scarcity are intertwined with experiences of poverty, which exacerbate or increase the risk of men using gendered

violence.

The role of resources such as lighting have been considered in less depth in the literature, perhaps due to the discourse and high-profile attention afforded to fuel and improved stoves [21]. Nonetheless, in an evaluation of handheld solar lights among populations displaced by the 2010 earthquake in Haiti et al. [11] found that although women reported that they used solar lamps frequently, their perceptions of their safety either remained the same or became worse after the lamps were distributed. As opposed to individualised lamps, women reported that improvements to security, public lighting, camp infrastructure and shelters were needed to improve their safety. Although it's interesting to note that public lighting was identified as a safety need, it is equally evident that energy technologies are only able to provide one aspect of a camp environment which is supportive to women and girls' safety. Moreover, none of the measures reported in the survey address the underlying norms or causes violence against women and girls as identified by Fulu et al. [14] above, but rather reduce the opportunity or shift the environment for men's violence against women.

#### 2.4. What role for energy?

In spite of the mixed evidence base, and poor links with the underlying causes of violence, actors including the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children and the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves continue to advocate for cookstoves and fuels as tools of violence prevention. The contradictory construction and agenda of this position is demonstrated by the GACC [8], who claimed in 2016 that:

The risks of [gender-based violence (GBV)] related to firewood collection for cooking in crisis settings are clear... A stronger evidence base on the relationship between GBV and cookstove and fuel interventions could spur action among donors, policy-makers and critical stakeholders, as well as increase the prioritization of energy-access for crisis-affected people.

Emerging literature on why men use violence demonstrates that while women's role collecting firewood in humanitarian emergencies is an opportunity for the perpetration of rape, it is not the cause of violence. Therefore, while introducing alternative fuels or efficient stoves may address one environment in which violence against women and girls is perpetrated, it is not a solution. Indeed, as the CASA Consulting [4] report indicated, addressing violence perpetrated during firewood collection may only cause rape to emerge in other contexts such as around camp sanitation facilities, or to translate into domestic violence or intimate-partner rape.

While I'm not disputing the importance and benefit that energy access may have for crisis-affected people, it is important to problematise the instrumentalisation of women, as victims, as a means to justify this agenda, particularly when founded upon a myth or misrepresentation of violence against women and girls [23], rather than a strong base of evidence. Energy, whether fuel or cookstove, cannot provide a technical solution to the complexity of people's experiences of violence or gender which result in gender-based violence in refugee or displaced person camps. As Abdelnour and Saeed [24] argue, the reduction and simplification of and contextual gendered violence to the single issue rape during firewood collection in displaced person and refugee camp settings serves to position stoves as a universal and technical solution to a complex lived experience. This is to the detriment of women, girls and other refugee people. As is illustrated by the GACC above, Abdelnour and Saeed [24] write that:

as the rape-stove problematization is distanced from its originating context, efficient stoves become a solution independent of any problem.

Indeed, I have previously argued that constructing and reproducing gender myths of women as victims of energy poverty is problematic because of the real and lived implications for policy-making and



development practice [25]. By framing gender inequality, in this case violence against women and girls, as a technical problem, it becomes depoliticised [24,26]. Yet, gender, and gender-based violence, are fundamentally about power, and inequalities of power, and so are inherently political.

Drawing from a feminist framework and analysis invites an engagement with gender as analytical concept and lens [25]. Approaching gender not as an essential or biological category, but rather as the operation of a particular kind of power, allows scholars, policy-makers and practitioners to understand how gender and violence are intertwined in differing and specific ways across different refugee camp settings and contexts. It is important to understand the limitations of humanitarian and indeed, technical energy-related responses, and so consider what other avenues and actors might be suitable to act on and engage the political nature of such violence. The emerging literature on the contextual nature of men's violence against women demonstrates that universal or pre-determined solutions to gender-based violence by humanitarian actors, whether they be energy or otherwise, are problematic, and raises limitations on the suitability of politically neutral short-term humanitarian interventions for preventing violence [26]. Indeed, to position violence against women as a universal problem with a technical, energy solution, is also to make other avenues and actors who may better engage the political nature of such violence invisible [26].

To this end, local community or women's organisations or feminist movements may be more important actors in leveraging collective agency to prevent violence, given their embeddedness in local context, networks, norms of gender and meaningful identities [19,26]. Humanitarian or multilateral agencies should support, rather than operate at the expense of such local work. Attempts to prevent or respond to the violence experienced by women and girls in displaced persons and refugee camps must also be sensitive to and respectful of the specific politics, fragility and uncertainty of their lives and networks, as well as those of men [19]. Moreover, humanitarian agencies must also consider how their own practices may construct and perpetuate gender inequalities and myths, rather than challenge them [26].

Nonetheless, energy practices and the gendered division of labour are intertwined in many sociocultural contexts [27]. For example, in refugee camps such as Dadaab in Kenya and Doro in South Sudan, it is women's role to collect firewood and cooking. Involving men and women in new practices around energy could provide a point of mobilisation or intervention for local feminist movements or women's groups or organisations to address gender-based violence and re-establish gender relations in such contexts [28]. Such initiatives could utilise energy resources as a vehicle for income generation, either for women or men as appropriate, for example through micro-enterprises promoting and selling fuel alternatives or improved stoves [4], to address the underlying scarcity and stress which can drive violence [14]. Indeed, in the Doro refugee camp in South Sudan, violence against women and girls was found to be associated with experiences of food scarcity within households [5].

Moreover, in Dadaab strategies including involving men in energy-related social practices, and as leaders to address violence against women and girls, for example as security teams to accompany women during firewood collection, were found to be effective [3,4]. Such measures focus on transforming the gender relations, and rebuilding masculinities and community attitudes and norms which enable and condone gender-based violence, rather than simply attempting to avoid the environmental setting in which it takes place.

Nonetheless, these approaches are not a universal solution to preventing violence against women and girls in refugee or displaced person camps. Indeed, there are alternative non-energy-related development or political approaches which could be engaged by feminist movements or community organisations to strengthen women's relative power or shift threatened and violent masculinities [19]. Energy practices are not the only, or even necessarily a relevant place to address gender in every

context. For example, Ritchie [19] found waged work to be an important site for women's mobilisation and challenging gender norms amongst Somali refugees in Kenya. Engaging with energy practices to address gender relations and inequality may therefore be a possibility in some particular sociocultural contexts; but responding to the complexity of gender-based violence in refugee and displaced person camps is certainly not reducible to a technological energy solution, whether cookstoves or fuel.

### 3. Conclusion

It is well-established that men's violence against women and girls increases in intensity and prevalence during humanitarian emergencies. However, in spite of claims made by policy-makers and multilateral development actors, existing energy literature suggests only a tenuous link between the prevention of violence against women and girls and the provision of energy in emergencies.

Energy, whether it be firewood, fuels or cookstoves, is not a solution to the prevalence of violence against women and girls during emergencies. Indeed, emerging feminist literature demonstrates such violence is driven by underlying gendered inequalities, masculinities and men's own experiences of trauma, violence and poverty. Gender-based violence in refugee and displaced person camps is therefore complex and contextual, and irreducible to a single problem with a single solution.

Moreover, given the nature of the causes of violence against women and girls, grassroots and women's organisations or feminist movements are better placed for the political and localised work of violence prevention than humanitarian or multilateral organisations. For such groups energy resources and technologies could be used as a vehicle to implement strategies to prevent violence. Such initiatives include involving men as security teams in fuel collection, or income generation projects based on alternative fuels or improved cookstoves. However, engaging with gender through energy-related practices may neither be relevant nor a priority for community-based organisations or feminist movements, and is at most one approach to prevent violence, which may only be relevant in particular contexts. Energy is therefore not a solution to preventing violence against women and girls in refugee or displaced person camp settings.

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