

UNICEF NEPAL
WASH PROGRAMME (2018-2022)

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

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COUNTRY CONTEXT

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is at the centre of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda with a distinct sector Goal (SDG 6) and its corresponding targets 6.1 and 6.2 envisaging universal and equitable access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene by 2030. Achievement of SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2 will contribute to a number of other goals including those related to nutrition, health, education, poverty and economic growth, urban services, gender equality, resilience and climate change.

In the last 25 years, Nepal has made significant progress in expanding the coverage of improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene practices. According to the 2016 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), 95 per cent of households are using improved drinking water. However, there is still a lot to be done for access to improved sanitation. It was then the Government of Nepal prioritized sanitation and hygiene by creating an enabling policy environment, inclusive planning, decentralized service delivery arrangement and transforming sanitation promotion into a social movement. As a result, access to improved sanitation increased dramatically from 40 per cent in 2011 to 65 per cent in 2016, and 45 out of 75 districts have achieved Open Defecation free (ODF) status by end of 2017 setting a remarkable precedent for South Asian countries. Drinking water functionality and its quality remain priority concerns now. Only 25 per cent of the water supply systems function properly, 36 per cent require minor repairs and 39 per cent require either major repairs, rehabilitation or reconstruction.



Achievement of SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2 will contribute to a number of other goals including those related to nutrition, health, education, poverty and economic growth, urban services, gender equality, resilience and climate change.

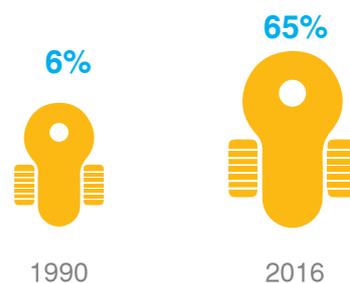


The data available for access to WASH services in schools and health facilities, for instance, seems very impressive with 78 per cent of schools and 81 per cent of health facilities having a water supply and 82 per cent of schools and health facilities having a toilet. However, comprehensive data on functionality is not available, a significant proportion of these services are non-operational.

Water quality remains a priority concern given the vulnerability of existing systems to contamination and poor water treatment practices, thus exacerbating the occurrence of diarrhoea. A total of 71 per cent of households are at risk from E. coli contamination of the source water, and 82 per cent are at risk from re-contamination by E.coli at the household-level.

Nepal has developed a comprehensive WASH Sector Development Plan (SDP) that has clearly set the targets, approaches and road map for holistic development of WASH sector, to achieve the SDGs by 2030 for the period 2016-2030.

ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION



MAJOR SECTOR GAPS

Despite achievements made in the WASH sector, Nepal has had to overcome major challenges and issues. These include but are not limited to (i) poor drinking water quality, (ii) functionality of water supply systems, (iii) equity/regional disparity in access to WASH services for the disadvantaged and marginalized population, including schools and health care facilities, (iv) poor hygiene practices especially around handwashing with soap, menstrual hygiene and child faeces management, and (v) lack of resilience and adaptation of WASH infrastructure to climate changes and disasters. These are considered to be major factors contributing to the high prevalence of WASH related diseases (e.g., diarrhoea) and occurrence of outbreaks (e.g., cholera) in the country.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS, 2014) revealed that only 29 per cent of the water sources (at point of collection) were free from bacterial contamination (*E.coli*) while only 18 per cent of households had their drinking water free from bacterial contamination at point of use. This showed significant contamination during transport and storage. Access to safely managed drinking water as per the SDG definition is thus estimated to be at 27 per cent (*JMP 2016*). This means that there is a long way to go for Nepal to achieve the target of universal access to safely managed drinking water services.

Though sanitation coverage has increased in the last seven years, there are regional disparities in terms of sanitation coverage, which is 83 per cent in the mountains and 96 per cent in the hills, but only 77 per cent in the Terai. Similarly, open defecation practice is predominant in the Terai region and particularly among Terai Dalit communities where 79 per cent of households practice open defecation as compared to 2 per cent in the Newar ethnic group. About one fifth of schools and health centres lack access to basic WASH facilities, mainly affecting health and education opportunity of girls and women.

Nepal has recently moved to new decentralized federal structures with 753 local governments replacing 3,165 village development committees and 217 municipalities. Though this provides wonderful opportunities for the sector to meet localized needs and prioritize resources, significant support is needed for creating an enabling environment and build the WASH sector's capacity at local government level. With time and with UNICEF's support this should lead to improved planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH services based on localized understanding of need and financial prioritization.



UNICEF WASH PROGRAMME 2013-2017 ACHIEVEMENTS

The major achievements under UNICEF country programme 2013-2017 include:

- (i) Support for development of the:
 - a. WASH Sector Development Plan (2016-2030)
 - b. Total Sanitation Guideline
 - c. WASH in School Guideline
- (ii) Achieving ODF status in 746 village development committees (lowest administrative unit comprising of a number of villages) and 24 municipalities, which benefited 1.83 million people with access to improved toilets and resulted in 4.2 million people living in an open defecation free environment in 22 UNICEF-supported districts under the sanitation social movement,
- (iii) 73,915 people gained access to improved drinking water through the construction of 79 water supply schemes
- (iv) 488,100 school children in 1,627 schools benefited from the WASH in School Programme.

UNICEF'S NEW COUNTRY PROGRAMME (2018-2022)

UNICEF will be implementing a new country programme starting from 1 January 2018. The various programme components include Health, Nutrition, Education, Child Protection, WASH, Social Policies & Economic Analysis, and Programme Effectiveness.

The WASH programme aims at ensuring children and their families have improved and equitable access to and use of safe and sustainable drinking water, sanitation services and improved hygiene practices. The programme is guided by the recent WASH Sector Development Plan (2016-2030), to be implemented by the Ministry of Water Supply and Sanitation. Support will be provided to improve water quality through strengthening the water regulatory body, implementing water safety plans, and raising community awareness on household-level water treatment. A strategy to ensure the access of unreached populations to quality water will be developed and implemented by strengthening the functionality, sustainability and resilience of water-supply systems. Access to quality water in schools and



health care facilities will be improved through inter-sectoral collaboration.

The sanitation social movement will come to end, and the Total Sanitation programme will be scaled-up. The private sector will be engaged to promote improved hygiene practices and create markets for sanitation. Access to gender and disability-friendly sanitation facilities in health centres, ECD centres and schools will be advocated through the child-friendly schools initiative.

The provision of WASH facilities in schools will be scaled up nationally, building upon the lessons learned from the previous programme. Mass media and social media campaigns will be mobilized to raise awareness on hygiene behaviours, including menstrual hygiene practices.

The operationalization of the federal structure for capacitating the WASH system will be supported within the context of the WASH Sector Development Plan. Support will be provided to the Government to formulate a new WASH Act and to revise policies to promote gender equality and social inclusion.

The implementation of new guidelines for WASH in schools and health care facilities will be supported. As the Global WASH Cluster co-lead, UNICEF will provide support for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), especially in mainstreaming DRR and CCA into existing policies, strategies and plans, and multi-hazard risk analyses, risk-informed programming and capacity building.

An overview of the programmatic approach and current funding gaps can be found in Table 1.



MAJOR RESULTS, PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS, AND FUNDING REQUIREMENT (2018-2022)

The major results of the new programme are:

1. Water Supply	Increased capacity to improve water quality and functionality and to deliver and sustain safe water (especially schools and healthcare facilities)
2. Sanitation and Hygiene	Improved sanitation and hygiene behaviours and enhanced capacity of sector stakeholders to provide access to safe and sustainable sanitation and hygiene facilities in homes and institutions
3. Systems Strengthening	Increased capacity to legislate, plan and budget to improve WASH systems, including mainstreaming disaster risk management

Further details of the results and funding gaps for WASH in new country Programme are summarized in Table 1.

The total fund requirement is US\$ 18 million. UNICEF has already secured US\$ 8 million (44 per cent) and has a funding gap of US\$ 10 million. UNICEF is advocating for co-financing of the programme to achieve critical results targeted at the most at need children and women of Nepal.

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM AND PARTNERSHIP

The UNICEF supported WASH Programme (2018-2022) will be implemented in close partnership with the government at national and subnational levels for system strengthening and ensuring effective service delivery. UNICEF will collaborate with UN-Habitat, WHO, the World Bank and Asian Development Bank for advocacy and to promote synergy for policy formulation, roll-out and implementation. UNICEF will strengthen its existing partnerships with civil society organizations and establish new partnerships to enhance demand generation, advocacy and effective service delivery. Private sector agencies will also be engaged for strengthening supply chains, innovation and leveraging resources.

MAJOR STRATEGIES

The major strategies to be adopted for achieving the planned results will include:

- (i) partnership and cross sectoral collaboration,
- (ii) community dialogues and behaviour change (Communication for Development),
- (iii) evidence generation and resource leveraging,
- (iv) capacity development on water quality, monitoring, planning and budgeting, sanitation social movement, total sanitation, hygiene promotion,
- (v) advocacy to the government and other stakeholders and,
- (vi) public and private sector engagement for resource leveraging.

WASH service delivery components will be implemented in selected local



governments located in **20** of the most deprived districts including eight districts in the Terai region.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS AND CONVERGENCE WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES

Under the UNICEF country programme, districts have been prioritized according to the child deprivation index (based on a combination of key programmatic indicators), population and multi-hazard/climate change indices. WASH service delivery components will be implemented in selected local governments located in 20 of the most deprived districts including eight districts in the Terai region. Efforts will be made at national and sub-national level for creating an enabling environment across the country. The WASH Programme will be implemented along with other UNICEF programmes (e.g., Nutrition, Education, Health and Child Protection) to maximize impact.



TABLE 1: Proposed Result Areas and Budget Analysis

Component	Key Result to be achieved by 2022	Major Interventions Proposed	Total Budget Required (US\$)	Funding Gap(US\$)
Water Supply	Increased capacity to improve water quality and functionality and to deliver and sustain safe water (especially schools and health care facilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support development and implementation of clear strategy and investment plan to reach the unreached population with safe water supply. Support development of strategy and plans for improving functionality of water supply schemes Support to strengthen water quality monitoring and surveillance mechanism, implementation of water safety plans and promotion of safe water at household level. Advocacy and support for provision of safe and resilient drinking water supply to marginalized and hard to reach communities, schools, ECD centres, and health care facilities including in earthquake affected areas. Capacity development on various aspects of WASH including operation, maintenance and management of water supply. 	6,206,667	4,176,046
Sanitation and Hygiene	Improved sanitation and hygiene behaviours and sector stakeholders have enhanced capacity to provide access to safe and sustainable sanitation and hygiene facilities in homes and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for creation of new social norms around harmful practices including restriction of toilet use for women during menstruation and management of child faeces. Support for rolling out total sanitation programming with gender mainstreaming beyond elimination of open defecation to accelerate progress towards commitments to SDGs. Support for social movement to end open defecation in regions which have not achieved the national targets e.g., Terai region with focus on Dalit communities. Support WASH in Schools Programme achieving Three Star Status Capacity building at various level for sustained use of sanitation and hygiene services Strengthen supply chain through engagement with private sector for construction of affordable, low cost and resilient households and institutional toilets Support for improving access to child, gender and disability friendly sanitation facilities in schools including ECD centres and Menstrual Hygiene Management with focus on Menstrual Hygiene Management. Promote group hand washing for improved hygiene practices (e.g., the Golden 1000 Days Initiative). 	7,095,667	2,794,046
Systems Strengthening including disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation	Increased capacity to legislate, plan and budget to improve WASH systems, including mainstreaming disaster risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to finalize and operationalize a new WASH Act and revise existing WASH policies (including with a view to effectively addressing gender inequality and social inclusion in WASH) Support for operationalization of the WASH Sector Development Plan (2016-2030) including efforts to develop the SDP implementation guidelines and provincial and local government level costed plans, child friendly WASH governance, capacity building master plans, financing strategies, and monitoring mechanism. Support for improving sector monitoring especially to track progress on SDGs 	4,697,666	3,003,045

Component	Key Result to be achieved by 2022	Major Interventions Proposed	Total Budget Required (US\$)	Funding Gap(US\$)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Roll-out the WASH in Schools guideline (currently being drafted), support development and roll out WASH in Health Care Facilities guideline ■ Evidence generation on impact of climate change, urban WASH and mainstreaming relevant strategies for resilient WASH services and evaluation of sanitation programme considering health and nutrition Impact ■ Support for DRR and Emergency Preparedness ■ Emergency Response and sector coordination as WASH Cluster Co-Lead. ■ Sector Capacity Building in Emergencies. 			
			TOTAL	18,000,000	9,973,137



PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

UNICEF WASH Programme will be managed through three field offices supported by the country office at the national level. The WASH team will be comprised of 12 professionals based in the country and field offices. Support will also be provided by the Operations Section and Cross-Sectoral teams in the areas of planning, policy support, communication, finance, supply, logistics and administration. Under current WASH Programme, an innovative Monitoring & Evaluation framework and Results Based Management frameworks have been established for effective implementation of WASH programme. In addition, baseline, midline and end line surveys will be conducted to measure the changes and progress towards planned results. National surveys such as the MICS will be carried out during implementation to measure long term changes. Assurance activities such as micro assessment, spot check, audits, programmatic visits, and joint reviews will be conducted periodically as per Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT). This has been made mandatory for UNICEF since 2013. Micro assessment is done for implementing partners who receives US\$100,000 or more per annum and at least one programmatic visit is done for all partners. The number of programmatic visits, spot checks and audits are based on the amount that is transferred to respective implementing partners.

WAY FORWARD

UNICEF's new country programme, which is developed and agreed with the government, civil societies and other development partners, including donors' group, under new decentralized federal structures, provides a wonderful window of opportunity to address key sector issues and achieve results for children and women. Detailed proposals will be prepared and submitted based on this basic conceptual framework and donor specific interest and requirements. UNICEF is seeking/advocating for co-financing/funding of the new country programme to achieve the envisaged results which are well aligned with SDGs and national targets.

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