



unicef 
for every child

WASH in the new UNICEF

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Key facts

- Worldwide, 2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water.
- Nearly half the world's population does not have access to safely managed sanitation.
- 2.3 billion people lack basic handwashing facilities with soap and water available
- 494 million people practice open defecation.

The challenge

Every child has the right to grow up in a clean and safe environment. Access to clean water, sanitation and good hygiene practices not only keeps children thriving, but also gives them a healthy start in life.

Despite COVID-19 highlighting the importance of hand hygiene to prevent the spread of disease, 2.3 billion people worldwide, including hundreds of millions of school-going children, do not have access to handwashing facilities with soap and water. People living in rural areas, urban slums, disaster-prone areas and low-income countries are the most vulnerable and the most affected.

The consequences of unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) on children can be deadly. Over 700 children under 5 years of age die every day of diarrhoeal diseases due to lack of appropriate WASH services. In areas of conflict, children under 5 years of age are nearly 20 times more likely to die from diarrhoeal disease than from the conflict itself. WASH systems are increasingly threatened by the

destructive impacts of climate change, increasing disparities in access. Vulnerable groups – isolated communities, poor households, people with disabilities, and particularly women and girls – bear the brunt of inadequate WASH services.

UNICEF's response

UNICEF works in 120 countries to help provide access to clean water and reliable sanitation, and to promote basic hygiene practices in rural and urban areas, including in emergency situations. UNICEF achieves WASH results for children by:

- Supporting Governments and partners and empowering communities;
- Supporting schools and health care facilities;
- Delivering humanitarian action and responding to public health threats including cholera, COVID-19;
- Focusing on the security and sustainability of WASH services and practices.

UNICEF's new strategy

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, sets out the global, concrete results that UNICEF aims to achieve for children. The work will be conducted in close collaboration with partners in the United Nations, with governments, civil society and the private sector. The new Strategic Plan includes a number of shifts being made in UNICEF's WASH programming to chart a course towards inclusive recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of a society in which every child is included and has agency, opportunity and their rights fulfilled.

Result Framework architecture

IMPACT

Realizing the rights of every child, including adolescents especially the most excluded

OUTCOMES

Goal Area 1.
Every child, including adolescents, survives and thrives with access to adequate diets, services, practices and supplies

Goal Area 2.
Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future

Goal Area 3.
Every child, including adolescents, is protected from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices

Goal Area 4.
Every child, including adolescents, has access to safe and equitable water, sanitation and hygiene services, and supplies and lives in a safe and sustainable climate and environment

Goal Area 5.
Every child, including adolescents, has access to inclusive social protection and lives free from poverty

WASH is a critical component of the new UNICEF Strategic Plan and elements of WASH influence all UNICEF results. WASH, together with climate change, disaster risk reduction and environmental degradation make up Goal Area 4. The full results framework of Goal Area 4 can be found in the [UNICEF Integrated Results and Resources Framework](#) for the Strategic Plan period.

Strategic shifts on WASH in the new Strategic Plan

1. Making all WASH programming climate-resilient and addressing increasing water scarcity as per the [UNICEF Water Game Plan](#), while engaging with a broad spectrum of partners to leverage innovative resources and approaches.
2. Addressing the full ambition of the Sustainable Development Goals towards universal access to safely managed sanitation and hygiene services and practices; especially on maintaining the push towards the elimination of open defecation, building on the momentum developed under the COVID-19 response to push for strengthened [Hand Hygiene for All](#), and continuing efforts on market-shaping.
3. Accelerating the scale-up of WASH in health care facilities and schools through increased commitment and investment in national plans.
4. [Linking lifesaving WASH needs with sustainable development solutions and peacebuilding](#), while working with young people to drive this change.

5. Increasing the focus on strengthening the enabling environment, including policies, financing, market development, delivery capacity, knowledge management and learning, and supporting national and sub-national governments to deliver on the SDGs.

Goal Area 4

GA4 reads, *“Every child, including adolescents, has access to safe and equitable water, sanitation and hygiene services and supplies, and lives in a safe and sustainable climate and environment.”*

Goal Area 4 has three Result Areas:

- **Result Area 1:** Sustained access to and use of safe water, sanitation and hygiene services and practices for all children and adolescents, particularly the most disadvantaged and those living in humanitarian and fragile contexts.
- **Result Area 2:** Strengthened and resourced WASH systems and empowered communities for gender-equal, inclusive, affordable and sustainable services to meet the rights of all children and adolescents, particularly the most disadvantaged and those living in humanitarian and fragile contexts.
- **Result Area 3:** Increased and enhanced child-sensitive programmes to address climate change, disaster risks and environmental degradation that meet the rights of all children and adolescents, particularly the most disadvantaged and those affected by humanitarian and fragile contexts.





Cross-cutting issues

Cross-cutting principles have been incorporated throughout the new Strategic Plan:

- **Climate action:** Goal Area 4 incorporates UNICEF's cross-sectoral work on climate change and [WASH climate-resilient programming](#). Climate action is thus an intrinsic part of this Goal Area and is one of the key shifts being made, with increased synergies between the WASH and CEED components of the Goal Area and significant scaling up and acceleration of initiatives that impact both, such as [Water Security for All](#).
- **Gender and disability:** Action on climate change, disaster risk, energy access, and environmental sustainability that truly serve the needs of a community must consider the particular vulnerabilities of women and girls, adults and children with disabilities, across rural and urban contexts.
- **Resilience and peacebuilding:** Working within the humanitarian-development nexus to strategically shift to integrate peacebuilding into WASH programming is planned as one of the outputs of Result Area 2. UNICEF will continue to play a critical role in strengthening leadership and accountability for coordination around the Core Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs).

- **Biodiversity and ecosystems:** Biodiversity and ecosystems feature prominently across many of the SDGs, including SDG 6. [Water Security for All](#) contributes directly to this work.

Internal resources

A number of internal resources are being strengthened to achieve the level of ambition of the new Strategic Plan:

- **Knowledge management:** The new Strategic Plan continues to emphasize that evidence and knowledge management are key change strategies towards the attainment of WASH goals. The global virtual knowledge management team has been activated to contribute to these themes, and the WASH knowledge management strategy will be updated by the end of 2021.
- **Capacity building:** Building a dynamic and inclusive global WASH team continues to be an important enabler towards the attainment of UNICEF's 15-year WASH strategy. The WASH team's vision for capacity development is for UNICEF to be a thought leader in WASH and a partner of choice to support sector processes in the pursuit of the SDGs.
- **Talent review and management:** UNICEF's WASH programme's most important asset is its over 700 staff. The Talent Management Initiative (TMI) involves addressing staff mobility, advancement, pro-active succession planning, and increased geographic diversity and inclusion across the WASH workforce over the coming years.
- **Resource mobilization:** The projected cost of delivering the Goal Area 4 programme over the coming four-year cycle is estimated at \$4.4 billion, or just over \$1 billion per year, 83 per cent of which needs to be funded by new resources beyond UNICEF's core budget. UNICEF's new Strategic Plan highlights the need to leverage public and private financing for scaled-up, sustainable WASH programmes. WASH team, in close collaboration with a wide range of colleagues in country offices, regional offices, Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP), Public Partnership Division (PPD) and NatComs, are developing the UNICEF's resource mobilization strategy for WASH with the intent to leverage the much-needed resources required to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 6: "[Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all](#)".

For every child

Whoever she is.
Wherever he lives.
Every child deserves a childhood.
A future.
A fair chance.
That's why UNICEF is there.
For each and every child.
Working day in and day out.
In more than 190 countries and territories.
Reaching the hardest to reach.
The furthest from help.
The most excluded.
It's why we stay to the end.
And never give up.



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Inquiries and feedback:
Aidan Cronin, Senior WASH Adviser, UNICEF NYHQ.
acronin@unicef.org

Published by UNICEF
Programme Group/WASH
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017 USA
www.unicef.org/wash