Major developments, October - December 2021:

In this period, the WASH programme provided 305,981 people with access to safe drinking water through water trucking, construction of new water points and rehabilitation of non-functional water facilities. UNICEF continued supporting construction of the water supply systems for urban and peri-urban communities in Juba, now 95% completed, that will serve 70,000 people living in the city and 30,000 living in the former Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites 1 and 3. Construction and upgrading of similar water projects are ongoing in the towns of Yei, Yambio and Torit.

The WASH sector continued to scale up Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures as well as hygiene promotion through an integrated response with the Communication for Development, Health and Nutrition sectors. In 2020, 737,748 people have been reached with critical WASH supplies including soap, buckets and water purification tablets to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. 102 health facilities are being supported with IPC services. So far, triage and screening areas have been set up in 34 health facilities; 75 health facilities have been provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); and 526 health workers have been trained on IPC measures. A total of 2,523,214 people have been reached with weekly hygiene promotion and COVID-19 prevention and control messages. 405 handwashing facilities were installed in communities and health facilities and 90,105 people were provided with locally fabricated cloth masks.

Severe flooding has displaced and left hundreds of thousands of people in dire need of WASH services since July. Effects of these floods are widespread across the whole country with the States of Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity, Lakes and some pockets of Western and Central Equatoria being hit hardest. As cluster lead on WASH, UNICEF is managing the core supply chain of WASH items. Twenty-five WASH cluster partners were mobilized and have reached an estimated 133,000 people with essential WASH supplies.
Major challenges:

- National access to basic water is at 40 per cent and the challenges in the water sector remain critical on the humanitarian, recovery and development front.
- Poor maintenance of the limited facilities, and weak government institutions at national and state levels contribute to inequities in access to WASH services.
- The WASH sector – including UNICEF’s WASH programme - is also facing serious funding shortfalls which has significantly affected service delivery at scale. Without additional funding the country will not be able to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or respond to critical humanitarian needs.
- Moreover, the impact of serious droughts and floods, linked to the effects of climate change, are creating an increased demand for WASH services. This is aggravated by displacement of population through intercommunal violence, especially in Jonglei State and Rumbek.
- The deteriorated economic situation continues to be volatile, leading to high costs of service delivery.

Solutions:

- The use of private contractors and NGOs for rehabilitation of water supply systems in major towns, construction of new water facilities and machine drilling, rehabilitation of malfunctional boreholes and setting up surface water treatment systems where possible.
- The use of cash or water vouchers to access water services, operation and maintenance of water infrastructure, including sanitation services (i.e. desludging) is now being rolled out as part of the COVID-19 intervention in the distribution of non-food items (NFIs).
- UNICEF supports the strengthening of the Registered Pump Mechanic Associations and Manual Driller Associations, particularly in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap States. The latter support WASH committees with the necessary technical expertise for the construction of water points through manual drilling technology.

Situation snapshot:

- 40% of population have access to safe water
- 10% of population have access to improved sanitation
- 61% of population practise open defecation

UNICEF targets for 2020:

- 817,000 people receive access to safe water
- 303,500 people receive access to improved sanitation
- 1,454,000 people reached with hygiene promotion

Funding situation:

2020 UNICEF South Sudan WASH appeal:

US$ 45.5 million

Current funding gap:

69 %

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