



SAFE WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION

Towards safe and healthy living

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



ISSUE

The world has met the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water. However, in 2011 an estimated 768 million people worldwide still lacked access to safe water. More worrisome, the goal of reducing by half the number of people without basic sanitation will fall significantly short. In 2011, an estimated 2.5 billion people did not have access to basic sanitation.

Around 3.4 million people die each year from diseases associated with the lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene. In addition, global figures mask great disparities between regions and countries, and within countries. In many countries, the wealthiest people have seen the biggest improvement in access to water and sanitation, while the poorest lag far behind.

HOW WE HELP

Over the last 15 years, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has established and consolidated an agenda to support its vision, policy, capacity and advocacy for the promotion of water, sanitation and hygiene activities. This agenda addresses two principal global problems.

Acute water and sanitation challenges, which mainly concern crises and disasters, and the provision of basic needs to save lives, contain or reduce health threats and restore dignity. We take the lead not only in deploying global rapid response interventions, but also in developing further the crucial response capacity at local, national, regional and global levels.

Chronic water and sanitation challenges, which are mostly related to establishing large-scale, longer-term sustainable water and sanitation programmes. Key to this approach has been the establishment of the Global Water and Sanitation Initiative 2005-2015 (GWSI), which promotes a common integrated approach for all water and sanitation projects run by National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

At the global level

The IFRC is involved in the relief, recovery and developmental context globally. It builds strong partnerships and provides technical and financial support to enable National Societies to deliver and scale up high-quality programmes at global, regional and national levels. We are a key partner in the Global WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Cluster and foster partnerships with various networks, donors and academic institutions.



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“Governments, donors and humanitarian actors must all ensure sanitation activities are at least as well funded as water supply, so that come 2015 and the next global push for universal access to water and sanitation, there is an equal focus. We must get the balance right.”

Bekele Geleta,
Secretary General, IFRC

At the national and community levels

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies work to strengthen local knowledge and capacities in order to help communities to provide emergency water and sanitation services and to design and implement participatory and sustainable interventions.

Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion programmes aim to reduce the risk of water-borne and water-related diseases by providing:

- the ‘hardware’ aspects of disaster response, recovery and developmental interventions (engineering inputs, equipment and material), and
- the ‘software’ aspects of hygiene promotion, behavioural change, community mobilization and community-managed operation and maintenance of water and sanitation infrastructure.

Red Cross Red Crescent work aims to address the disparity in water and sanitation coverage by targeting the populations that are the most difficult to reach and those contributing to building resilient communities and reducing health inequities.

IMPACT

Providing safe water and sanitation and promoting hygiene have significantly reduced the burden of disease. Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion are also essential for human dignity and economic growth.

The IFRC has well-established water and sanitation disaster response mechanisms and capacity, and is recognized as a leader in this field. Every year, we have supplied an average of 1.8 million people with water, and sanitation and hygiene promotion activities in emergencies.

Since the launch of the GWSI in 2005, we have provided more than 5 million people with sustainable access to water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities. We expect to treble this number to reach a total of 15 million people by 2015, a significant contribution to the MDGs.

Although we will maintain our efforts to contribute to the MDGs through our water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities, we are also committed to continuing beyond 2015 to a time – sooner rather than later – when all people, regardless of their location, ethnicity, wealth or gender, are able to attain their human right to safe water, basic sanitation and improved hygiene.

Red Cross Red Crescent in numbers

13 million

Active volunteers worldwide

6 billion

Economic value (in US dollars) of
volunteer services to the global
economy

5.7 million

People supported by the GWSI from
2005 to 2011

1.8 million

Annual average number of people
provided with emergency water
and sanitation, and benefiting from
hygiene promotion activities

300

Large-scale developmental water
and sanitation projects undertaken
between 2005 and 2011

56

Water and Sanitation Emergency
Response Units (ERUs) deployed in
the last 16 years, providing millions
of people with safe water, sanitation
and hygiene promotion activities

75

National Societies engaged in the
GWSI

36 Swiss francs

Average cost per person of
providing water and sanitation, and
promoting hygiene for ten years
under the GWSI

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Case study

Water and sanitation in northern Namibia

“Let’s loosen up these bolts first,” says Uandondo to Inoo, as they start repairing the broken hand pump with their heavy tools. Himba women, proud of their traditional ways, have developed self-confidence when it comes to water system repairs.

“Why should we wait for months for someone else to come here and repair the pump?” says Uandondo. “We can do it ourselves. Anyone can repair it, women or men, it doesn’t matter, as long as they know how.”

Over the last five years, the Namibia Red Cross, in partnership with the European Union, Belgian Red Cross (Flemish Community), Swedish Red Cross and the IFRC, has implemented a water and sanitation project in northern Namibia. Phase one of the project (2007–2010) improved water points and constructed latrines for 35,000 people. An additional 26,000 people will be reached over the four years of the project’s second phase, which will have a more substantial sanitation element. Community participation and hygiene promotion through the PHAST (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation) methodology is a crucial aspect of the project.

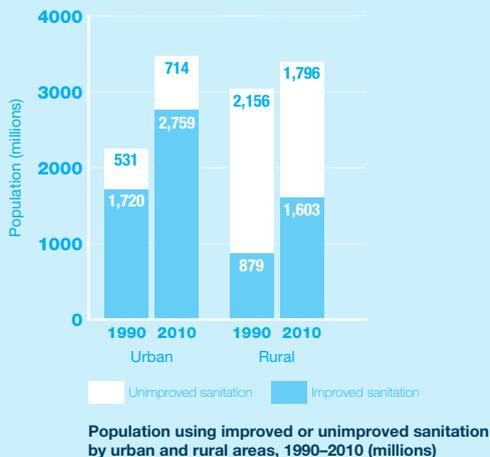
The GWSI outlines a common approach among National Societies to establish larger-scale, longer-term sustainable water and sanitation programmes to contribute more effectively to meeting the MDGs. Together with the MDG initiative and the launch of a second United Nations Decade for Water (2005–2015), intends to target 15 million vulnerable people worldwide over ten years, helping them to gain access to an improved water supply, basic sanitation facilities and encourage behavioural change in hygiene practices.

Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

Improving health and restoring dignity

ISSUE

Despite progress, disparities in sanitation coverage between urban and rural areas persist



Source: WHO/UNICEF, Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, 2012

Every **20 seconds**, a child dies from a water and sanitation-related disease – that's **4,000 children every day**



Worldwide, over **2.5 billion** still do not use improved sanitation



and **768 million** still lack access to an improved water supply

WHO/UNICEF

HOW WE HELP

National Societies with their network of dedicated and far-reaching volunteers, have an extraordinary comparative advantage in community-based work, like in water, sanitation and hygiene promotion initiatives

Disaster management
Meeting 'acute' needs

Recovery

Development
Meeting 'chronic' needs

Trained staff, volunteers and pre-positioned equipment at global, regional and national levels

Transition

Sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion (GWSI)

IMPACT

Emergency

We serve on average **1.8 million people** per year with water, sanitation and hygiene promotion in emergencies.

2005-2011

Water

12.6 million

people reached



Sanitation

3.8 million

people reached



Development

Global Water and Sanitation Initiative
2005-2015



5 million people

Original GWSI target reached in 2011

15 million people

New GWSI target by 2015

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.