

BANGLADESH
ANNUAL REPORT

2021
HIGHLIGHTS





Close up of cracked earth along the river edge which illustrates the direness of climate impact in Tahirpur border area, Bangladesh. Along with the rainwater, a reddish sandy soil, that comes from the hills of the Indian side of the border, covers up the croplands.



Note from Country Director

The year 2020/21 has been a testing year for all of us. This has been a year that has changed our lives quite significantly with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance of WASH as a fundamental need to protect lives from virus hasn't reached such significance in recent history. As WaterAid our call to respond to the crisis has led to ensure safer lives for vulnerable communities across our working areas.

Despite challenges posed by restriction on movement, lockdowns, and difficult working conditions, I take pride in sharing that WaterAid team has fulfilled its commitment with timely interventions to respond to COVID-19.

We cherish our partnership with government in activating healthcare facilities as model for national scale-up with WASH facilities. We collaborated with businesses in optimizing industrial water consumption and to aid groundwater recharge. We raised our voices and partnered with CSOs to ensure more inclusive menstrual health and hygiene management in Bangladesh. Our work in climate prone areas stood the wrath of cyclone Amphan, and sheltered communities with clean water in times of need. We along with Local Government Division and DWASA invented ways to curb the spread of the virus with mobile handwashing devices in public places.

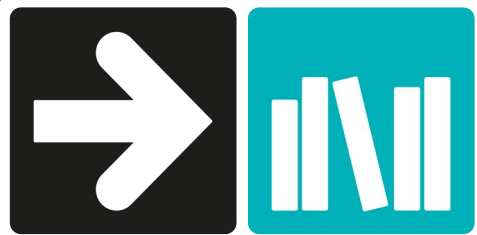
We remain resolute to our mission of leaving no one behind with access to clean water, decent toilet, and hygiene. I am deeply grateful to our on-ground implementing partners, the stewardship of our donors and supporters across the world for their unfettered support in helping us to continue our journey and reaching out to people in need with access to these basic services – water, sanitation, and hygiene for another year. Thank you.

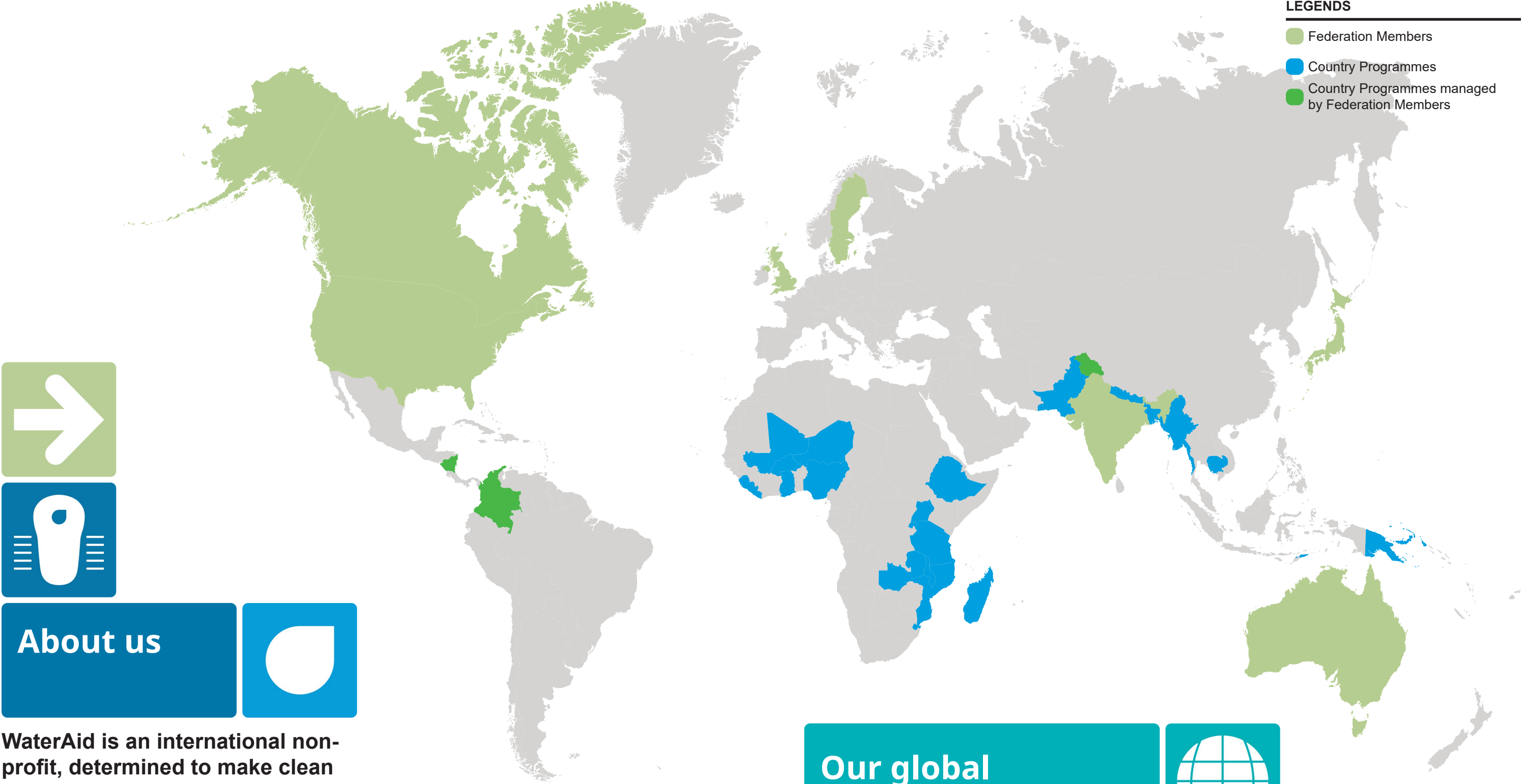
Hasin Jahan



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About us

WaterAid is an international non-profit, determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene accessible and normal for everyone by 2030. We are working to transform the lives of the world’s poorest and most marginalised people - making sure that no one is left behind.



Our global coverage

We change millions of lives every year, working in 28 countries to provide clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. Our work is supported by offices in the UK, US, Australia, Sweden, Canada, Japan and India.



WaterAid Bangladesh at a glance

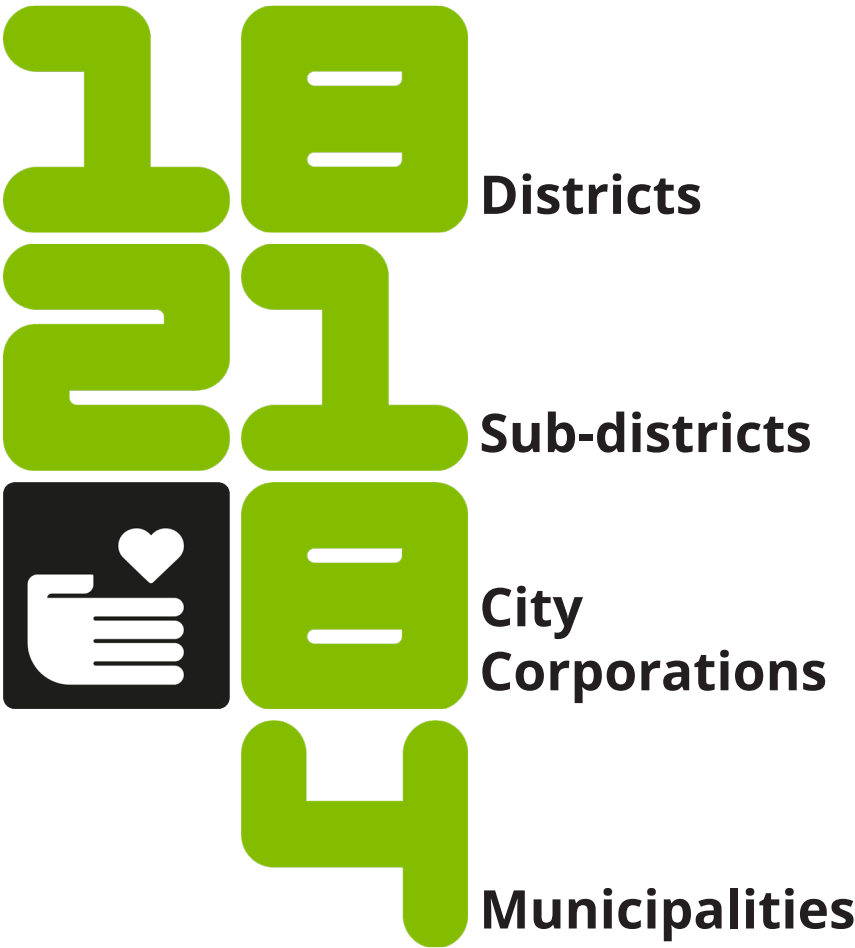
Decades of activating and advocating for WASH

WaterAid Bangladesh was established in 1986 and has since been working with Bangladeshi communities to help them demand their rights for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and support the government and other duty bearers to respond to citizen’s needs. We co-design and implement WASH-centered solutions with community-led models of development being central to our mission.

As of 2021, WaterAid Bangladesh is working with 13 partners to scale WASH at the grassroots. To make lasting change happen on a grand scale, we collaborate with sector actors, advocate with policy makers and rally support from people so that

many voices can be heard and impact can be sustained.

Our area of focus is crosscutting - ranging from hard-to-reach, salinity and disaster-prone areas in Southern Bangladesh to urban slums, industrial districts and small towns. This also translates to a very diverse range of beneficiaries such as impoverished villagers and workers to ready-made garment industries. To date, we have covered 18 districts, 21 sub-districts, 8 city corporations, and 4 municipalities.



WaterAid/ DRIK/ Farzana Hossen

Priota resides in Dacope, Khulna - a region in Southern Bangladesh ravaged by saline intrusion and little freshwater availability in ponds. WaterAid built a pond sand filtration system which helps the community to access safe water.

WaterAid/ DRIK/ Habibur Haque

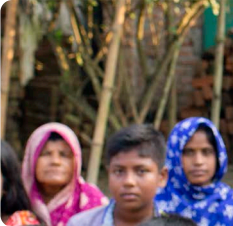
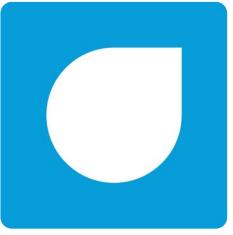


Our focus in Bangladesh

WaterAid Bangladesh is divided into four programme areas that collectively makes up our projects and activities.

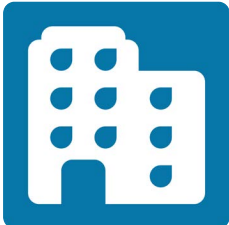


WaterAid/ Jamnatul Mawa



WaterAid/ DRIK/ Farzana Hossen

Influencing & Enabling
Strengthens sectoral policies, planning, and capacity towards the reformulation of national WASH agenda. Works with ministries and relevant civil society actors to advocate for WASH rights.



Urban WASH
Focus on city and municipality-wide approach to WASH service deployment and management while working with institutional actors and communities to scale interventions in major cities.



WaterAid/ DRIK/ Farzana Hossen

Rural WASH
Works to change the lives of poor people by ensuring inclusive and sustainable WASH services in households, healthcare facilities, and schools in remote and poverty pockets.

Climate Resilience
Works with communities and local government to assess climate vulnerability and intervenes with cost-effective and scalable climate-resilient WASH technologies and coping strategies.



WaterAid/ Habibul Haque

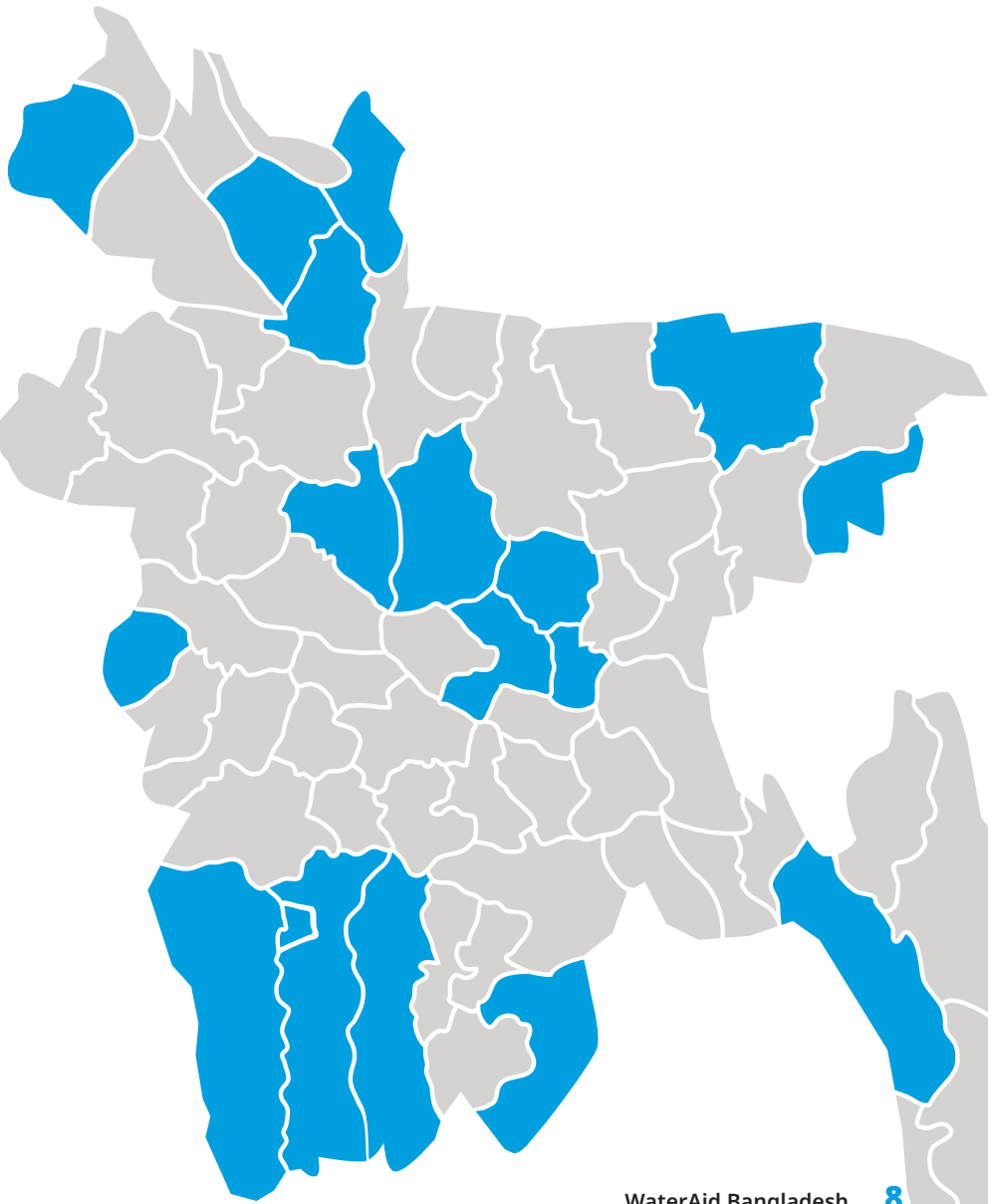


COVID-19 Response
Since COVID-19 outbreak the access to drinking water, sanitation facilities, and access to good hygiene practices became a major tool to avert disease transmission. WaterAid has since adopted the national COVID-19 response plan as its programmatic priority.

Our working area revolves around Rangpur, Dhaka, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram, and Sylhet divisions.

The districts we work in are Thakurgaon, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Sumanganj, Moulvibazar, Sirajganj, Tangail, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Meherpur, Paikgacha, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Bhola, and major metropolitan areas inside the divisions mentioned above.

Geographic presence



Strategic priorities

For FY2020/21, our strategic priorities are urban WASH, rural and small-town WASH, climate resilience, and policy and advocacy to identify critical gaps in order to address contextual realities unique to Bangladesh.

COVID-19 response was part of integrated programme delivery where applicable.



We identified five areas of focus where concentrated approach can bring change in the national WASH programming and development in Bangladesh for FY2020/21.



Partner staff trains women on handwashing techniques during Alo Child Group session at Burir Bazar at Ashulia in the outskirts of Dhaka.

- 1 Ensuring city-wide coverage of handwashing facilities, reaching 3 million people through partnerships with local government.
- 2 Enhance visibility of WASH in Bangladesh government's development activities and mainstream WASH agenda in government planning.
- 3 Engender social movement on water and climate issues through strengthening youth platform.
- 4 Intensify resource mobilisation efforts through creative and agile fundraising.
- 5 Sector-wide financial commitment to press forward the need to invest in WASH becoming a central indicator for healthcare facilities, and nationwide mobilisation of hygiene promotion campaigns as a key priority to contain COVID-19.

Urban WASH

WASH realities in urban areas are complex and diverse - involving low-income communities and marginalised groups in city corporations and municipalities, as well as vulnerable workers in factory settings. We, therefore, spearhead activities to promote pro-poor WASH outcomes.

FY20-21 Highlights

- 1 Supported 77 schools through installation of group handwashing device and 173 schools through hygiene materials for post-pandemic school reopening.
- 2 A total of 14,951 handwashing devices installed at household level and 215,428 people gained access to handwashing facilities. 167 handwashing facilities were installed at public places.
- 3 8 WASH blocks installed resulting in 1,774 people gaining access to clean water and decent toilets.
- 4 Demonstrated use-case of rainwater harvesting for reducing groundwater consumption and digital metering for reducing water bill burdens.



Menstrual health management (MHM) beyond traditional aid

Convenient access to menstrual hygiene amenities remain a challenge particularly in industrial female workers. We installed sanitary napkin vending machines at key industrial pilots which anyone can access using RFID-cards - striving to create a business-case and sustainable ecosystem of MHM access beyond traditional aid-based interventions.



Partnering with industries to adopt rainwater harvesting technologies

We partnered to construct rainwater harvesting systems at 4 garments factories in the Narayangonj district. Ready-made garments is a major economic driver of Bangladesh and to deliver global demands, have to make use of significant amount of material and human resources. Harvested rainwater is used in production and sanitation in the factories to siphon load and dependence on groundwater - thus resulting in gradual recharge of groundwater.

WaterAid Bangladesh provided technical support to install industrial rainwater harvesting systems and is accelerating partnerships for scalability across the sector in regards to water bill savings and reduced water treatment costs - resulting in significant ROI. The system is also expected to drive visible contribution to the environment and the community.



Fakir Fashion Ltd., an example of rainwater harvesting in industrial areas. A total of 14,995 cubic meters is projected to be harvested annually through the system and exclusively used in cloth washing and dyeing.

WaterAid/ Al-Emran

Rural WASH

Rural WASH focuses on both rural and small-town areas and works in both community and institutional levels. Beyond enhancing capacity of service providers and local government institutions to promote sustainable WASH, the programme works to develop technologies on municipality-led solid waste management models in small-town areas engaging private as well as public sectors.



FY20-21 Highlights

Standard design of inclusive school sanitation complex of WaterAid is being replicated at **245** schools by LGD.

Sanitation Safety Plan

A study on sanitation safety plan has been conducted for the first time in Bangladesh at Sakhipur to identify and mitigate existing sanitation-related public health hazards and systemic bottlenecks.

Medical Waste Disposal

A low-cost, context-specific medical waste incinerator was developed using locally-sourced materials and demonstrated to manage medical waste at Shunamganj Sadar Hospital.

117 households

at Harinchhera Tea Garden now have clean water supply via mini piped system.



28,942 households + **368** institutions

subjected to total sanitation assessment to capture sanitation capacity and solid waste management system at Saidpur Municipality.



FSM as a model for national scaling

Our Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) plant at Sakhipur, Tangail, has been cited as a replicable model in the **National 8th Five Year Plan** by merit of its portrayal of a complete sanitation value chain. Future expectation stemming from this is adoption of the model by public and private stakeholders - resulting in safer, more environment-friendly, and sustainable communities.



A piped water system in a remote area of Sreemangal, Sylhet - enabling nearby communities to access safe water.

WaterAid/ Sakat Majumder



Patient using a handwashing facility at the remote Tahirpur community health clinic in Sylhet. Improved WASH facilities helped the community to work with the local government to renovate the clinic as a whole - enabled by WaterAid.



WaterAid/ DRIK/ Farzana Hossen

Climate Resilience

This programme supports comprehensive local planning that spans sectors beyond WASH, including health, livelihood, and education, in order to promote cohesive solutions for more resilient and adaptive communities. Through this programme, we are building knowledge, resources and capacity from the ground-up, to help families cope with a changing climate and an uncertain future.

Programmatic interventions range from building safely-managed and resilient WASH facilities in households, communities, and schools, to introducing reverse-osmosis technologies to help process clean water and developing community entrepreneurs to independently drive sustainable WASH outcomes.



Gita Roy is counting the money she made by selling water through the reverse osmosis plant she manages - helping her community access safe water and establishing a sustainability case for community-led WASH.

Expansion beyond the coastal belt

The programme expanded beyond coastal regions. In 2020, we initiated a project in the drought and erratic-rainfall prone area that will focus on not only climate vulnerable people but climate migrants in urban slums. Amidst the COVID-19 situation, as schools were closed, we worked with the local community to share and distribute captured rainwater in school rainwater harvesting systems to nearby locales in the extreme water-scarce and drought-prone areas.

FY20-21 Highlights

127,051

people have access to safe water

977,750

have access to adequate hygiene services

44,891

have access to proper sanitation services

05

out of 16 reverse osmosis plants in our working area were installed this year

135+

women entrepreneurs trained to drive sustainable service delivery



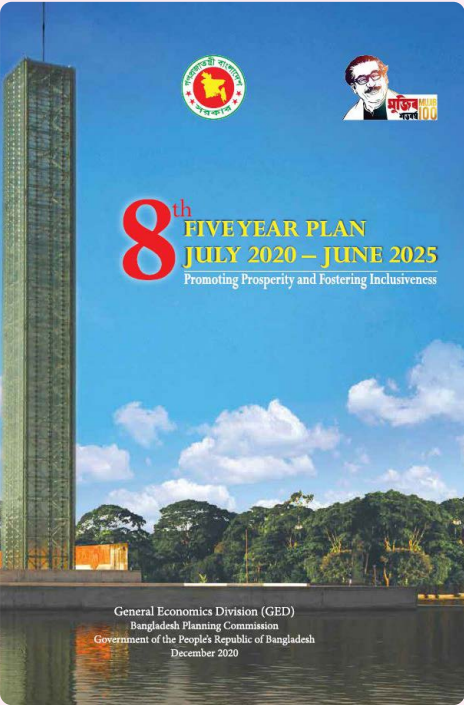
Influencing & Enabling

Shortly referred to as I&E, the programme focuses on influencing policy and plans, sector strengthening and coordination, and works on key themes and issues such as SDG 6 and WASH financing. One of our key agenda is to ensure national policies, practices, frameworks and services are pro-poor, inclusive and functional. We advocate, influence, facilitate, create evidence, build awareness, mobilise sector, and make change happen.

FY20-21 Highlights

National Strategy of Water Supply and Sanitation 2021

WaterAid Bangladesh provided technical support on the 2021 revision with alignment to SDGs - having been already endorsed by the National Forum for Water Supply and Sanitation.



Policy Revisions

In partnership with Policy Support Branch (PSB) of the Local Government Division, we are working on the National Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation 1998, National Hygiene Promotion Strategy, Development of National Policy for Public Toilet Construction, Operation & Management.

SDP Co-Focal

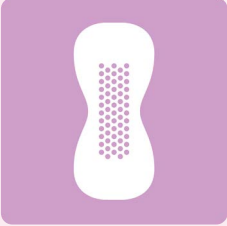
Out of the eight thematic groups, WaterAid became the co-focal with the Department of Public Health Engineering and the PSB in two thematic group of the Sector Development Plan (SDP): (a) Hygiene, Gender and Disability, and (b) Sector Reforms, Institutional Reforms and Lagged Areas.

DGHS WASH Cell

In 2020, WaterAid aided the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) of the Ministry of Health, Bangladesh, to establish a WASH cell in DGHS. The purpose for this cell is to provide technical support and drive advocacy outcomes for WASH priorities in public health avenues, policies, and interventions.

Championing Menstrual Health Management

WaterAid Bangladesh became the Chair of the Menstrual Health and Hygiene Platform and has since acted as the secretariat to support a number of initiatives such as the campaign on VAT & Tax exemption on sanitary pads to make sanitary pads more affordable, deployment of digital tools and media presences among others.



Jolkona

Empowering women in STEM to tackle water and the climate crisis

As part of the Water and Climate Campaign 2020, WaterAid, in collaboration with the Engineering Student Association of Bangladesh (ESAB), deployed 'Jolkona' - a mentorship programme which trained 40 female engineering students in grassroots activism and translated the ideas they generated into small projects to address the water crisis and climate change.



COVID-19 Response

While not part of WaterAid Bangladesh's programmatic structure, COVID-19 Response has become a strategic focus that is viewed with equal importance. Since the pandemic hit, the vulnerabilities as a result of inadequate or inaccessible WASH infrastructure surfaced in public health environs - making hygiene access and practice a national imperative. WaterAid Bangladesh has been tirelessly working on innovating low-cost, mobile, and scalable WASH solutions and awareness in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh and other partners to procedurally curb the impact of the pandemic.



ACT COVID-19 Special Category Award!

The ACT COVID-19 was a innovation challenge by the ICT Division of the Bangladesh Government.

WaterAid Bangladesh's 'Connecting the Unconnected' smartphone app secured the win on the special category. The digital solution use trusted volunteers to collect data on slum dwellers for early detection of COVID-19 outbreak while linking cases to government support systems.



In collaboration with IEDCR, WaterAid Bangladesh released two booklets to outline low-cost handwashing device alternatives for both rural and urban. The purpose of the booklet was to serve as a call to action for numerous organisations working to raise awareness for handwashing and implementing their own hygiene drive in the wake of COVID-19 to adopt innovative, low-cost and scalable methods to deploy handwashing touchpoints across Bangladesh.



Handwashing on Wheels

Launched in 2020, Handwashing on Wheels is a programme by WaterAid Bangladesh, Dhaka WASA, and the Embassy of Sweden which provides mobile handwashing kiosks that can be placed anywhere. The units have multiple sinks, liquid soap dispensers and water tanks. For operation and maintenance, each unit is supported by a hygiene promoter and an operator who also encourage people to use the unit.



Addressing the differently-abled



Shetu and Jyoti, the two children of Shibpada Mondal who suffers from a rare genetic disorder, sporting a golden smile in front of the DAP (Differently-Abled Population) latrine facility of their house.



We wouldn't be able to do what we do without the support of our donors and partners





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