



নিয়ম মেনে সঠিক ভাবে হাত ধোব, সবসময় জীবাণু মুক্ত থাকব



Country Programme Strategy

CPSP 2023
2028

BANGLADESH





AT A GLANCE

Bangladesh Country Programme Strategy 2023-28



VISION

Vulnerable communities having access to climate resilient and inclusive Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



BARRIERS

WASH inequality remains a gap

Disconnect among stakeholders

Lack of female leadership

Climate change not synced with WASH

Insufficient WASH budgets

Inadequate understanding of inclusive WASH



OUR AIMS

1

Advancing climate resilient and inclusive WASH

WASH systems and services are climate resilient, gender responsive, and inclusive

Climate resilient WASH agenda incorporated to policies, plans and priorities

Resources, capacity and leadership are in place to sustain climate resilient and inclusive WASH

What success looks like?

2

Universal, sustainable and safe WASH for wider change

Effective WASH service delivery and management models established and replicated

Institutional commitments for universal WASH are ensured

Resources and capacities are improved to enable sustainable WASH systems

What success looks like?



OUR APPROACHES

Improved and adaptive **services, capacity and influencing** efforts

Embedded **gender equality and inclusivity** ethos in our interventions

Foster **impactful partnerships**, including with private sector, to drive change

Capture **evidences and learn** for better decision making and innovation



Introduction

Over the past few decades, Bangladesh has made significant progress in improving access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services for people across the country. 98% of the population now has basic drinking water coverage and open defecation has been almost completely eradicated (WHO/UNICEF, 2021). Along with the government, communities and other development partners, WaterAid has been at the forefront of this journey.

However, Bangladesh is still a long way to go to achieve its Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG6) targets. A significant proportion of the population remain exposed to unsafe WASH conditions that are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change which poses new challenges. Unplanned urbanisation, coupled with climate induced migration, is creating greater stress on overcrowded services, especially in low-income communities.

Through our new Country Programme Strategy (2023-2028), WaterAid Bangladesh envisions vulnerable communities getting access to climate resilient and inclusive WASH - guided by WaterAid's Global Strategy. In our new strategy we will be the catalyst for change in WASH systems and approaches, influencing service providers and government authorities to act (WaterAid, 2022).

WHO/UNICEF. (2021). Joint Monitoring Programme, Bangladesh. Retrieved from [washdata.org: https://washdata.org/data/household#//bgd](https://washdata.org/data/household#//bgd)

WaterAid. (2022). How we work. Retrieved from WASH Matters, WaterAid: <https://washmatters.wateraid.org/how-we-work>



📍 Pallabi, Dhaka, Bangladesh



The situation

Bangladesh is a densely populated riverine country with a population of over 165 million (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2022) - 50.4% of whom are female (World Bank, 2022). The country has witnessed strong and stable economic growth over the past few years, with GDP growth of 6.24% in 2020-2021. However, COVID-19 and recent global instability have led to slower economic growth, higher inflation, increasing poverty and inequality.

Bangladesh is the seventh most climate-affected country in the world (Eckstein, Künzel, & Schäfer, 2021). Natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, storm surges, heatwaves and droughts are common.

Shyamnagar, Satkhira, Bangladesh

Nur gave birth to her son three days after Cyclone Bulbul hit her village in 2019. Her family had been using an open and unhygienic sanitation setup and experience severe scarcity of safe drinking water.



ONLY 59%
of people have access to safely-managed water

More than 10.6% of people have to drink arsenic-contaminated water



ONLY 39%
of people have access to safely-managed sanitation

Sewage treatment is limited and sustainable faecal sludge management is rare



ONLY 58%
of people have access to basic handwashing facilities



1 in 5
schools lack safe drinking water



ONLY 31%
of healthcare facilities have basic sanitation services

6% have no access to sanitation



53 million
people live in high climate exposure areas⁷



NEARLY 26 million
people are exposed to very high salinity in shallow groundwater⁸



10%
increase in droughts in northern regions between 1979 and 2018⁹

Amidst the challenge of escalating salinity, many families are living in Paikgacha – a climate hotspot in coastal Bangladesh



Paikgacha, Khulna, Bangladesh

WaterAid/ Habibul Haque



MAJOR BARRIERS

to resilient and inclusive WASH

- 1 WASH inequality and lack of sustainable services that ensure 'no one is left behind' in line with SDG6 targets
- 2 Bureaucratic procedures and inadequate coordination among concerned agencies
- 3 Inadequate female professional and lack of female leadership in decision making roles misses the opportunity to address 'special gender needs'
- 4 Climate change not included in WASH policies, plans and budgets
- 5 Insufficient WASH budgets and low budget utilisation
- 6 WASH needs for marginalised communities and people with disabilities are poorly understood and addressed inadequately

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Population and Housing Census, Preliminary Report. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Statistics and Informatics Division, Ministry of Planning.

Eckstein, D., Künzel, V., & Schäfer, L. (2021). Global Climate Risk Index. Berlin, Germany: Germanwatch e.V.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2022). Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Geneva, Switzerland: Sixth Assessment Report (AR6).

Mondol, M., Zhu, X., Dunkerley, D., & Henley, B. (2021). Observed meteorological drought trends in Bangladesh identified with the Effective Drought Index (EDI). Agricultural Water Management.

Moran, A., Raleigh, C., Busby, J. W., Wight, C., & Krishnan, N. (2018). Fragility and Climate Risks in Bangladesh. Washington, DC 20523: United States Agency for International Development.

WHO/UNICEF. (2021). Joint Monitoring Programme, Bangladesh. Retrieved from [washdata.org](https://washdata.org/data/household#/bgs): <https://washdata.org/data/household#/bgs>

World Bank. (2022). Population, female (% of total population), Bangladesh. Retrieved from World Bank Open Data: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.FE.ZS?locations=BD>





Our role

With over three decades of working in Bangladesh, we have established our position as a thought leader within the WASH ecosystem, contributing to the national policy agenda and demonstrating quality WASH technologies and services. During this strategy period, we will consolidate our position through being **pioneering**, demonstrating **leadership**, and by **collaborating**.

PIONEERING

We will introduce contextualised and resilient WASH technologies blending indigenous practices with scientific knowledge in adverse climatic conditions. We will develop resilient technologies in consultation with local communities to address their WASH needs. We will strengthen the links between citizens and key decision makers.

LEADERSHIP

We will invest in nurturing female leadership at different levels, from communities to professionals, and create pathways for future leaders in the WASH and climate sectors to influence decision making in favour of women, girls and marginalised communities. We will build on our extensive experience and intensify our policy advocacy work, aligning climate concerns with others.

COLLABORATING

We will continue to collaborate with WASH sector actors and bring in other active networks, research and academic institutions, and private sector actors to create synergy between WASH and climate change sector.



WaterAid/ Tapash Paul

Pallabi, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Our niche

Over the next five years, in line with the shifting context and dynamics of the WASH sector in Bangladesh, our added value will be:

- Demonstrating contextualised inclusive WASH technologies, models and approaches that are sustainable and gender responsive.
- Influencing and advocating for policy makers and duty bearers to shift their focus towards WASH and climate change.
- Showcasing effective communication, campaigns and media engagement on WASH with communities, civil society, governments and the private sector.

WHAT DID OUR PREVIOUS STRATEGY TEACH US?

Building on lessons from our previous strategy we will progressively adapt the following learning into our work. These lessons are **(a)** effective knowledge generation through proper documentation and dissemination, **(b)** collaboration with the private sector to facilitate their contributions towards achieving the SDGs, **(c)** a gender focus to address the root causes of inequality, and **(d)** amplifying voices through strong networks and multi-dimensional partnerships, aligning a with climate focused WASH agenda.

Our aims



In the coming years, we will focus our efforts, together with our partners, supporters, the government and private sector actors, on two interlinked aims that will contribute towards achieving universal access to WASH in Bangladesh.

Aim 1



ADVANCING CLIMATE RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE WASH

We will focus our collective efforts on climate governance and national adaptation priorities. Our programme work will be anchored in 11 climate impact hotspots (identified in the National Adaptation Plan) with a focus on the coastal belt (increased salinity), the central north (droughts), and the north and northeast (flooding).

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1

WASH systems and services are adapted to be climate resilient, gender responsive and inclusive in communities, institutions and public places.

2

Climate resilient WASH agenda are incorporated into relevant national policies, plans and priorities.

3

Resources, capacity and leadership to operate and sustain climate resilient and inclusive WASH are in place at local, sub-national and national levels.

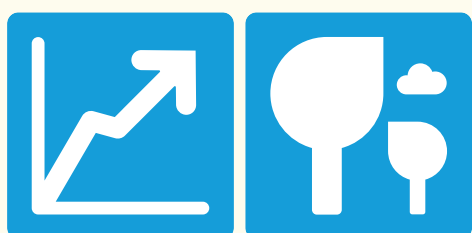




WaterAid/ Fabeha Monir

From the left: Mallika, Chandna, Swapna, Anita and Parul.

The narrative of the role of 'women' for fetching water needs to be changed. Water Entrepreneurship for Women Empowerment (WE-WE) approach demonstrated women leadership in Water Business through managing Reverse Osmosis plants at coastal locations and providing safe drinking water to the communities at affordable price reducing the burden of water fetching from kilometers away spending hours.



Jatrabari, Dhaka, Bangladesh

WaterAid/ Habibul Haque

Aim 2



UNIVERSAL, SUSTAINABLE AND SAFE WASH FOR WIDER CHANGE

We believe that WASH inequalities, people's rights and national SDG targets will only be met if there is a step change to accelerate progress and leave no-one behind through a system strengthening approach. Hence, our programme work will involve two pronged delivery streams: **(a)** creating a demonstration model in one area for replication in other areas, and **(b)** amplifying change by contributing to the national WASH agenda through system strengthening approach.

Our initial focus will be the municipal zone of Paikgacha, Khulna District - a climate hotspot - and gradually increase our coverage in the Upazila (sub-district). We will infuse learning from our system strengthening work in Paikgacha into other local government institutions and amplify these into national level work, building the capacity of service delivery institutions and influencing policies and strategies.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1

Effective, sustainable, climate resilient service delivery and management models are established and replicated in other locations, encouraging gender responsive and inclusive WASH.



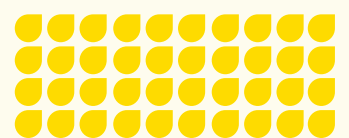
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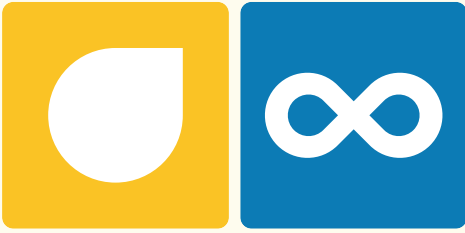
Institutional commitments for universal WASH are ensured by pursuing relevant policies and influencing agenda that demonstrate accountability.



3

Resources and capacity are improved, enabling sustainable and safe WASH systems.





📍 Saidpur, Nilphamari, Bangladesh

Faecal sludge management plant operator shifting sludge from drying beds.

The 8th Five Year Plan of the Government of Bangladesh recognises WaterAid’s Faecal Waste Management plant in Shakhipur as a replicable model. WaterAid is further working on developing climate resilient faecal waste management plant affordable and manageable by municipal authority adapting sustainable management model.



Monjur coordinates waste and sanitation workers in a secondary transfer station in Dhaka. The waste workers are often deprived of essential social safety net. WaterAid mobilised a health protection insurance scheme by the name of 'Shasthya Nirapotta Scheme' that enables affordable access to healthcare and life insurance coverage. Monjur champions the enrolment and escalation of the scheme to the waste workers he manage.

📍 Pallabi, Dhaka, Bangladesh

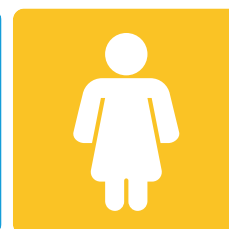
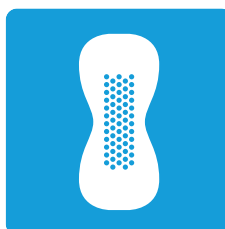




Our approaches

We will make key shifts in focus and delivery approaches to achieve our aims.

Sanitary napkin vending machines in school toilets enable on-demand access to affordable menstrual products. This simple and sustainable intervention has the potential to reduce absenteeism of girls in school during periods and amplify academic performance.



Services, capacity and influencing

We will carry on service delivery as a way of modelling our work in order to widen scale-up. We will systematically integrate sustainability, climate resilience and social inclusivity into our work, with a particular focus on women and girls. We will increase our influencing of high level decision makers and enhance accountability of the duty bearers.

Partnerships and alliances

We will continue our current partnerships with national NGOs, community-based organisations and the private sector. We will facilitate the private sector to mobilise greater resources. We will leverage our work on WASH and microfinance and apply it to different contexts. We will work with partners to further develop market-based approaches. We will expand our partnerships with research institutions and academia to create evidence for advocacy and influencing. We will strengthen our strategic partnerships with different relevant ministries including the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Ministry of Water Resources, the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and relevant line departments/agencies. We will partner with Municipal Association of Bangladesh for horizontal scaling. We will explore partnerships with financial institutes, microfinance bodies, insurance companies and other potential agencies to bring new ideas to leverage our work on WASH in different contexts. . We will team up with youth-led and women-

led organisations and initiatives to harness the potential of young people.

Gender equality

We will accelerate from a 'gender sensitive' to a 'gender transformative' approach. We will promote leadership women and girls to bring them into decision making roles. We will continue our leadership role in menstrual hygiene management so that no girls have to miss school, and will strengthen our evidence-based gender equality action. We will ensure male engagement in all of our conversations.

Evidence, learning and innovation

We will work with our partners to support the Government with data-driven decision making by mainstreaming the National Hygiene Survey and national WASH accounts. We will continue our budget advocacy watchdog initiative, together with other sector actors, and keep reminding the political powers of the need for resilient WASH initiatives and mainstreaming of gender, inclusion and youth engagement. We will continue to generate evidence through high-quality research in the field of climate resilient WASH and its impact on people. We will thrive for innovation and capture learning to enrich our knowledge portfolio nationally and globally. We will disseminate learning to diverse audiences. We will harness digital tools, campaigns and communications to support national and local planning, policies, strategies and decision making.



Paikgacha, Khulna, Bangladesh



WaterAid/ Habibul Haque



Embarking on a journey through an unbeaten path to render great change



We will deliver our strategy over the next five years keeping people and communities at the centre.

We understand that, given challenging external factors such as Bangladesh's economic trajectory, the global political economy and increasing uncertainties in the financial landscape, taking this strategy forward will require a significant shift in our ways of working. We will focus on efficient resource planning, including a diverse skill mix and funding architecture.

We will work with determination, ambition and urgency as advocates for change, rallying support to make inclusive, equitable and sustainable WASH a reality in Bangladesh. We will do this by building stronger links that support our aim of providing sustainable, community focused and business driven solutions to WASH. We will support children, women and men to thrive and unleash their potential for a future where inadequate access to WASH is a thing of the past.



📍 Akbar Sha, Chattogram, Bangladesh

WaterAid/ Suman Paul



This document is based on years of experience in the field that used learnings from the community where WaterAid and its partners work.

This strategy was made practical and worthy because of the contribution of frontline staff, programme leaders, regional and global stakeholders of WaterAid, and officials of different agencies of the Government, NGOs and INGOs active in WASH and beyond, and bilateral and multilateral agencies. Debate, discussion, and constructive criticism helped shape the strategy and aims we undertook with critical sector assessment being done in-house and through engaging experts. A wide range of civil society organisations within the WASH sector and beyond helped enhance this document through their invaluable contribution during consultations.

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