

WaterAid Nepal

Contactless handwashing stations: to help prevent and control the spread of Covid-19 pandemic



WaterAid has been working to ensure proper sanitation and hygiene across the globe. The importance of sanitation and hygiene gained more prominence since handwashing with soap is crucial to help prevent and control the spread of the pandemic. Although there is increasing awareness about the importance of handwashing, **52%** of the population in Nepal were reported as not having handwashing facilities on premises with soap and water (*JMP 2017*).

Hygiene behaviour change remains an under-invested and challenging area where poverty, lack of information, social and cultural barriers and contexts are often stated as reasons for impeding lasting behaviour change. This is an area for further research and investment. **3.5 million** people in Nepal still do not have basic access to water (*JMP 2017*).

In efforts to respond to the Covid-19, WaterAid Nepal in close collaboration with local government has been establishing contactless handwashing stations. Initially, WaterAid Nepal launched 50 contactless handwashing stations in Kathmandu Valley and 25 in Lahan Municipality of Siraha district. Efforts are underway to establish such stations in other districts mainly, Jumla, Kalikot, Bardiya, Kavrepalanchowk and Dolakha where WaterAid has ongoing work.

What is contactless handwashing station?

The contactless handwashing station is a very simple mechanism operated by foot, reducing human hand touch. The push taps by foot are hygienic as the user does not have to touch the tap after they have washed their hands.



Who will benefit?

Most of the public places in Nepal do not have handwashing facilities with running water and soap, so the contactless hand washing facilities are installed in strategic locations, where many people gather. People visiting such public places with no handwashing facilities will benefit from this intervention. This will benefit the general public, especially people who cannot afford to buy soap or do not have access to sufficient water to wash their hands frequently. It is estimated that approximately 450,000¹ people will benefit from this intervention in Kathmandu valley and 19,200 people in Lahan municipality.

Sustainability of the systems

The contactless handwashing stations installed by WaterAid Nepal will be maintained with supply of water and soap with operation and maintenance support for three months. WaterAid Nepal is working closely with the local government and stakeholders since the planning phase to develop ownership of the local government so that the local government will ensure regular maintenance and functionality of such stations once it is handed over to them after three months.

WaterAid has initiated the installation of contactless handwashing stations at five Covid-19 hospitals in Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Kirtipur (Patan Hospital, Bir Hospital, TU Teaching Hospital, Kirtipur Hospital and Bhaktapur Hospital) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Population, Department of Health Services, Management Division. WaterAid will continue to lobby with central, provincial and local government to replicate this model at a larger scale based on its effectiveness, that will benefit a large section of people with hand hygiene, contributing to preventing Covid-19 and other waterborne diseases.

WaterAid

WaterAid is an international not-for-profit, determined to ensure access to clean water; sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for everyone, everywhere within a generation. Only by tackling these three essentials in ways that last can people change their lives for good. WaterAid works in 28 countries to change the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people.

WaterAid Nepal has been in operation since 1987. We are part of the global WaterAid family, which has a vision to reach everyone, everywhere with clean water, decent sanitation and good hygiene by 2030. Our vision aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 6 – everyone, everywhere with access to sustainable WASH services by 2030. We believe this is only possible with a strong WASH sector; a sector led by national governments who prioritise WASH and aim to protect, promote and fulfill their citizens' rights. WaterAid strives to integrate WASH and health through WASH in healthcare facilities and hygiene promotion through a routine immunization programme in line to achieve SDG 3 (Health and Well-being) and SDG 6.

In close coordination with the Federal and Local Governments, WaterAid Nepal has reached over a million people to raise awareness about the Covid-19 Pandemic in six districts (Bardiya, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Kavrepalanchowk, Dolakha and Siraha) of Nepal. WaterAid Nepal has been targeting its interventions to sanitation workers, health workers, water operators among others, who have been providing essential services that continue even in emergency and lockdown.

¹ The number is projected based on the assumption that 100 people will use each facility everyday.

For more information, please contact
Pratibedan Baidya
Head of Business Development and Strategic Partnerships

PratibedanBaidya@wateraid.org

