

# Strategic Framework

for WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)



## Overview

Today, 2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water, and 3.6 billion people lack safely managed sanitation services<sup>1</sup>.

Unsafe hygiene practices are widespread, compounding the effects on people's health. Safe water, sanitation, and hygiene are essential for progress on several health-related targets the third Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, including reducing child mortality and deaths from WASH-related diseases.

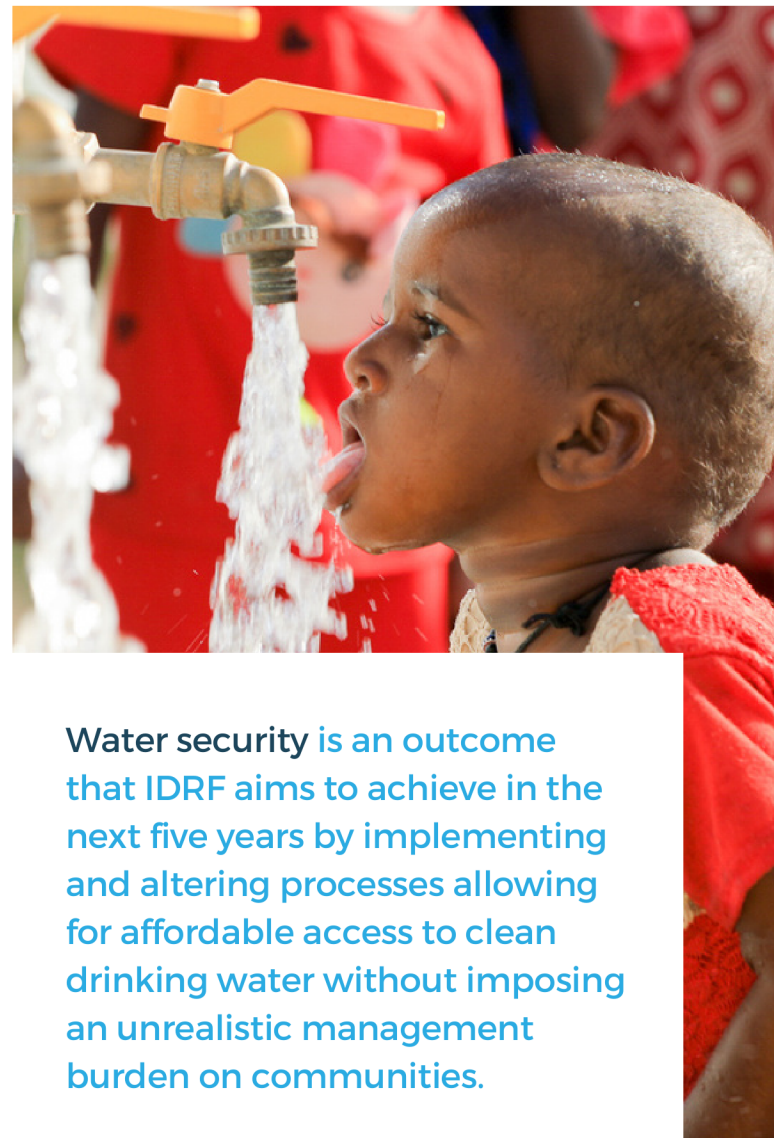
## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## 1. Water

Water scarcity affects every continent. Water use has been growing globally at more than twice the rate of the population increase in the last century. An increasing number of regions are reaching the limit at which water services can be sustainably delivered.

The higher the need for water security, the more vulnerable people are forced to rely on sources such as surface water, unprotected and possibly contaminated wells, or vendors selling unverifiable provenance and quality water. For many communities, water sources are usually far from their homes. It typically falls to women and girls to spend much of their time and energy fetching water, a task that often exposes them to violence.



## 1.1 Water Trucking During Conflict

Water trucking is essential when local water systems have fallen into despair, either through conflict or time. Direct water trucking during times of conflict allows for clean, potable water to be transported over long distances to people in areas with no permanent water points. The emergency water supply allows immediate access to clean drinking water for the most vulnerable populations.

Water trucking remains the most efficient tool in an emergency water response. However, water trucking should be carefully implemented as an absolute measure of last resort. In regions where water infrastructures are non-existent, IDRF aims to provide individuals with immediate access to clean drinking water through water trucking at an average of 15L of water daily, following the recommendations of the SPHERE standard guidelines.

Where water infrastructures are more established, IDRF aims to shift towards water vouchers or cash interventions to shift towards water vouchers or cash interventions within the next five years during emergencies. Implementing water vouchers and/or cash utilizes existing commercial markets and vendors that the population usually utilizes.

This method allows for a more uncomplicated exit strategy as the local water tanks remain available for those who would continue purchasing water. It would allow for more equitable distributions and equal access as water will always be available to individuals travelling long distances.

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## 1.2 Building and Rehabilitating Water Wells

Groundwater is the largest source of usable, fresh water in the world. In many parts of the world, especially where surface water supplies are not available, domestic, agricultural and industrial water needs can only be met using the water beneath the ground.

### Drilling water wells can improve sustainability.

Drilling wells with traditional hand pumps can be a long-lasting, sustainable solution to addressing rural communities' water problems. Drilled wells tend to be protected from contamination from the surface. They can also reach water in deep aquifers, meaning seasonal fluctuations in the water table are less likely to affect the quantity of water availability at the well.

IDRF and its local implementing partners are building water wells across South East Asia, The Middle East, and Africa to address the continuous water scarcity. In the next five years, IDRF aims to focus on drilled and not shallow water wells, rehabilitate existing water sources that have lost functionality, focus on direct monitoring of water quality through water sensory devices, and focus on the maintenance of wells and building maintain wells and build local capacity.

Communities must have access to regular maintenance, a supply chain of parts and emergency repair services. If maintenance is not regularly conducted and parts aren't replaced with the proper frequency, even the highest quality, most expertly constructed hand pumps and water wells will break prematurely.



**Drilled wells** tend to be protected from contamination from the surface.



### 1.3 Building Water Sanitation Stations and Water Purifiers

Several wells worldwide have lost their functionality to continue to provide clean drinking water wells and are now functioning as agricultural, industrial or used for everyday tasks. For example, hundreds of water wells in Gaza, Palestine, are constructed from underground aquifers that are not fit unsuitable for drinking.

Placing water sanitation stations on top of the water well will transform the water pulled from the aquifers to become into clean drinking water addressing the crippling water scarcity in Gaza.

*This initiative avoids construction costs and licensing fees.*

## 2. Sanitation

The overall effectiveness of water supply interventions to boost water security is undermined if poor hygiene and inadequate sanitation are not addressed. Clean water collected from a water source can be contaminated by dirty collection vessels and unwashed hands.

Sanitation facilities and services safely separate human waste from human contact. With inadequate services, people have no choice but to use poorly sited communal latrines or practice open defecation. Finding a place to go to the toilet outside can leave women and girls vulnerable to abuse and sexual assault.

Disposal of human fecal material in the open environment increases the risk of human contact with pathogens and helps spread severe diseases such as cholera. Beyond the community, the lack of adequate waste disposal or sewage systems can contaminate ecosystems and contribute to disease outbreaks.

IDRF's strategy has been integrating gender-inclusive WASH interventions into humanitarian programming and in fragile contexts as an entry point in the transition towards longer-term development efforts and to meet the basic needs of women and girls. IDRF aims to build gender-inclusive latrines and washrooms inside schools, medical facilities, and rural settings. A recent commission for The Lancet outlines how these and other "frugal" technologies – low-cost technologies that meet low-income countries' specific needs—can significantly contribute to global health (2).

A much-neglected aspect of safe and dignified sanitation is the protection of workers, particularly at the "back-end" of the sanitation systems, which tends to employ the most marginalized, disempowered groups. IDRF aims to increase the coverage of latrines while also accounting for the increased health risks and violence experienced by the people emptying the pits, working towards the 2030 Agenda's principles of dignity, equality and non-discrimination.



### 3. Hygiene

Good hygiene practices have a significant role in reducing the spread of disease, improving the health of individuals and their communities, and its various social and economic benefits.

**Hygiene promotion is imperative in sustaining the success of water and sanitation services as safe hygiene practices are not automatically adopted following the provision of water and sanitation.**

Much of the success of their adoption hinges on their compatibility with existing beliefs and practices, as well as psychological factors, environmental conditions and the availability of cleaning materials.

IDRF's strategy has been the promotion of sustainable gender-inclusive hygiene through the provision of providing hygiene kits to individuals living in camps and urban settings - improving general sanitation and hygiene situations for vulnerable households, and supporting a more comprehensive COVID-19 prevention effort.

IDRF aims in the next five years to ensure the sustainability of hygiene promotion by holding informative sessions for women and girls on proper hygiene practices, management of menstrual and perimenopausal hygiene, and sanitary childbirth, enabling access to sexual and reproductive health. IDRF also aims to fully and effectively promote strengthening women's participation in WASH management and decision-making.



## 4. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Institutions

Access to sustainable water management, sanitation and hygiene for all settings – including schools, workplaces and health care facilities – is imperative. Institutional WASH is a priority for IDRF's five-year strategy, and IDRF aims to focus on WASH in schools and health care facilities. These settings are used by many individuals who have particular needs and vulnerabilities. Having safe and sustainable access to WASH in schools and health care facilities, as elsewhere, is a human right.

Providing these services is essential in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and recognizing all people's health, well-being, and dignity by ensuring they have access to institutions with adequate facilities.

### 4.1 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Health Care Facilities

WASH in healthcare facilities is essential for providing safe people-centred health services and maintaining people's dignity. Such services are crucial elements of quality elements within universal health coverage, and quality health care cannot exist without reliable access to safe WASH facilities.

IDRF's strategy aims to improve WASH services in healthcare facilities by building private, safe and clean washrooms ensuring quality health care and contributing to reducing healthcare costs by protecting the clean washrooms, ensuring quality health care, and reducing healthcare costs by protecting staff and patients from infectious diseases. The strategy aims to prevent contamination of the environment by promoting hygiene educational sessions to all medical staff and patients.

IDRF emphasizes the attainment of WASH-related commitments, as expressed in SDG3 on ensuring and promoting health and well-being and SDG6 on safe, adequate and equitable water and sanitation for all.

## 4.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools

The child's right to education and water and sanitation are human rights. Children deserve a healthy learning environment with easy access to safe and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services. Lack of access to adequate WASH facilities can lower attendance and educational achievement in school attendance and educational achievement, especially for young girls.

IDRF's strategy aims to create a conducive learning environment, promote disease prevention, preserve the dignity of children, and provide non-discriminatory access to education. These goals are achieved by providing adequate toilets in schools, providing clean drinking water to students and staff, conducting hygiene educational sessions, and providing menstrual hygiene items to girls.

IDRF's strategy aims to achieve several SDGs, particularly SDG3 on ensuring and promoting health and well-being, SDG4 on providing quality education and promoting lifelong learning, and SDG6 on safe, adequate and equitable water and sanitation for all.





# Clean Water, Healthy Children

2022-2023



Children deserve a healthy learning environment with easy access to safe and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services.



## 5. WASH and Climate Change

Water scarcity is one of the most significant challenges of the twenty-first century (4). 2.2 billion people worldwide do not have safely managed drinking water services, 4.2 billion people do not have safely managed sanitation services, and 3 billion people lack basic handwashing facilities (4). Climate change exacerbates people's vulnerabilities, especially women and girls who face disproportionately limited access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Climate change threatens ecosystems, water supply, food safety and people's health. Its effects may lead to conflicts, increased migration streams, and human rights infringements. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by these threats. To understand climate change, gender equality and access to WASH are linked. Billions of people live in areas with no access to adequate WASH services.

When heavy rainfalls, open defecation areas are immediately exposed to health risks, contaminating water sources. Should there be any safe hygiene practices implemented by the population, such as handwashing with soap, droughts can mean those hygiene practices using surface water or shallow groundwater are no longer viable, which increases the number of people exposed to water insecurity. The vulnerability of communities to increased floods and droughts is compounded by climate change. Building resilient and gender-responsive services for water sanitation and hygiene is an increasingly urgent priority.

IDRF's five-year strategy aims to support the COP 21 commitments by strengthening the capacity of local WASH institutions to respond to climate change and provide WASH to the poorest and most marginalized, particularly women and girls.

## 6. Improving Data on Gender and WASH

IDRF operates WASH services globally across five continents by utilizing data from local governments, local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and International NGOs working locally. The number one barrier to delivering and implementing effective WASH programming in any region is the lack of data on gender-specific indicators and the presence of disaggregated WASH data. Data disaggregation is required both at national and sub-national levels.

The lack of data on gender and WASH poses a concern for concerns monitoring progress on the SDGs progress. For example, target 6.2, while recognizing the specific sanitation needs of women and girls, lacks an indicator that tracks progress on how policies respond to those needs and provides no requirement to disaggregate indicator 6.2.1 on the use of safely managed sanitation services by sex (5). If progress towards safe water and sanitation is to be monitored for all, more and better gender statistics and disaggregated data are needed.

IDRF aims to increase the amount of data on the use of safely managed drinking water services by improving administrative records on water quality and availability by fitting water sensors on water wells. IDRF aims to assess the safety of a broader range of sources by implementing household surveys. Within the next five years, IDRF aims to go beyond water quality assessments and include questions to assess the collection burden for households without water on-premises. The consistent inclusion of questions pertaining to about time spent on water collection and information on household members who perform the task could help improve the global picture of gender roles in water collection and treatment (5).

*Together we are*  
**People Helping People.**



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