

# Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

Many low to middle-income countries experience challenges with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). Poor infrastructure, social stigma, and economic factors can make it difficult for all individuals and families to access clean drinking water. Women commonly assume the task of providing daily water for their families.

Currently, billions of people worldwide do not have access to WASH. This massive global problem must be addressed in order to obtain Optimal Health. An intervention as simple as basic education in WASH can profoundly impact individuals, families, communities, and countries by reducing disease, illness, and death.

For women, a primary focus for Global Health leaders is menstrual health. Menstrual health practices are important to prevent reproductive problems, infertility, birth complications, serious health risks, embarrassment, exclusion, missed educational opportunities, and reproductive problems. Hand washing and proper disposal of menstrual products are necessary to prevent the spread of infections. Good menstrual hygiene practices are necessary to support Optimal Health for women and girls. A comprehensive strategy for demystifying menstruation fosters future reproductive health, enhancing educational prospects and achieving the best possible health results.



“Today, however, in the 21st century, an estimated 2.2 billion people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water and 4.2 billion people do not have access to safe sanitation.”

-UNICEF & WHO, 2021



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- Disinfection: shock and pot chlorination
- Successful source selection, water hygiene, household drinking water, and infant nutrition
- Household water treatment: chlorine-based products, filters, solar disinfection, boiling, removing standing water, safe water storage
- Community-driven sanitation: eliminate open defecation, latrine utilization, toilet use, the importance of maintaining shared toilet sanitation, hand-washing
- Proper trash disposal, drainage, and landscape improvements to remove solid and liquid waste
- Management of bodies after death
- Personal and environmental hygiene promotion: WASH education and training, environmental health recommendations
- Hospital water hygiene and hospital water disinfection

WASH interventions are provided to large populations to reduce the risk of disease transmission in various settings, especially outbreaks of Cholera, Ebola, Hepatitis E, and other diseases.



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