

**WASH**

Every year 1.7 billion cases of diarrheal disease are recorded worldwide. Over 760,000 children under five die as a result, despite the fact that diarrheal diseases are both preventable and treatable.

By 2025, half of the global population will be living in water-stressed regions. An estimated 663 million lack access to safe drinking water, which is deemed the leading cause for such diseases. Children who are malnourished or individuals with impaired immunity – such as people living with HIV/AIDS – have increased susceptibility to life-threatening diarrhea.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) related diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia, eye and skin infections, malaria, cholera and typhoid, account for 50% of the bed occupancy in health care delivery services in developing countries, adding an extra burden to services that are often already overstretched.

International Medical Corps prioritizes the prevention of WASH related diseases as part of our comprehensive approach to health interventions, with a focus on the following key areas:

- Access to safe, clean water
- The provision and improvement of sanitation facilities
- The promotion of safe hygiene practices within communities and at health facility level

As hygiene promotion is widely recognized as the more cost-effective WASH intervention, we integrate hygiene promotion across programs to enable communities to better protect themselves from the threat of infectious diseases. We build capacity within facilities such as health clinics and schools, and actively engage communities and relevant authorities in the development and implementation of sustainable WASH interventions. All of our interventions are based on evidence-based methodologies.

NEPAL

In the aftermath of the 7.8-magnitude earthquake in 2015, International Medical Corps worked to reduce the risks from waterborne and sanitation-related diseases by building emergency latrines and handwashing stations, distributing hygiene supplies to affected families, and promoting good hygiene practices. As the earthquake response transitions to longer-term recovery initiatives, International Medical Corps works with local partners to support sustained WASH interventions, such as the rehabilitation of local water infrastructure in affected districts, the construction and repair of sanitation infrastructure in health facilities and schools, and continued hygiene education at the community level. International Medical Corps also distributes hygiene kits which contain basic supplies, such as soap, water containers and detergent, and are sufficient to assist a household of up to five people. In the early phase of the response and during monsoon season, International Medical Corps distributed more than 5,000 hygiene kits, sufficient to assist up to 25,000 people in earthquake-affected districts.



THE PHILIPPINES

WASH services were among the most urgently needed interventions after Typhoon Haiyan caused large-scale damage to water and sanitation infrastructure. Such damage continues to threaten the health of vulnerable communities and puts children, in particular, at risk for contracting communicable diseases. In response, International Medical Corps continues to focus efforts on water supply and hygiene promotion in at-risk schools. Our teams also continue to rehabilitate WASH system at over 100 schools in Leyte province and trains teachers on proper hygiene practices. We also train teachers and students as hygiene champions who then go on to train others.

YEMEN

Data gathered in Yemen early this year indicated that roughly half the country's population struggles daily to find or buy enough clean water to drink or grow food. Conditions in Yemen have deteriorated further since armed conflict broke out in March 2015. International Medical Corps currently provides hospitals in Sana'a, the capital, with thousands of liters of water per day. At one hospital in particular we provide 24,000 liters of water a day—an amount sufficient to support 600 patients. Our WASH teams also distribute hygiene kits to the displaced amid the violence.

ETHIOPIA

International Medical Corps staff in Ethiopia have a multifaceted approach to WASH programs in the country and in the refugee camps located there. The team constructs communal latrines at health centers and installs roof rain water harvesting systems. We procure and donate water storage containers and water purification materials to households and health posts. Also, we rehabilitate water boreholes - shallow hand dug wells and springs that improve water supply systems. Furthermore, we construct sex-segregated institutional latrines, in addition to medical waste incinerators and placenta pits at various public health facilities. In addition, we provide training to health workers and community volunteers on appropriate sanitation and hygiene practices.

International Medical Corps works in three Somali refugee camps to improve access to sanitation and hygiene facilities for over 130,000 refugees. Through mass awareness campaigns and home visits, International Medical Corps educates refugees on hand-washing, hygienic latrine usage, safe-water chains and solid waste disposal. Waste collection sacks are provided to families for deposit in waste collection bins throughout the camps, and donkey carts are then utilized to transport solid waste to safe landfills.

KENYA

The remote and arid Samburu district of northern Kenya's Rift Valley Province is one of the most water-scarce regions in the country. In this area, local residents limit themselves to about one half liter per day during the eight-month dry season – or about 1/600 of what the average American consumes. To increase water supply, International Medical Corps installs rainwater harvesting systems at health facilities and constructs latrines at schools. We also form community support groups that share and teach each other about important hygiene practices. We teach health facility staff and community health workers about key hygiene practices and train them on basic care and maintenance of sanitation and hygiene facilities. We have also built two large sand dams, a borehole and a piped water system in Samburu County to boost access to clean water. These water systems reduce the number of women who walk for hours to a water source by at least 50% in the beneficiary communities.



A girl from Barangay Palacio washes her hands during the celebration of World Water Day in the Municipality of Dagami, Province of Leyte



**International
Medical Corps**

www.InternationalMedicalCorps.org

Since its inception 30 years ago, International Medical Corps' mission has been consistent: relieve the suffering of those impacted by war, natural disaster and disease, by delivering vital health care services that focus on training. This approach of helping people help themselves is critical to returning devastated populations to self-reliance.

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