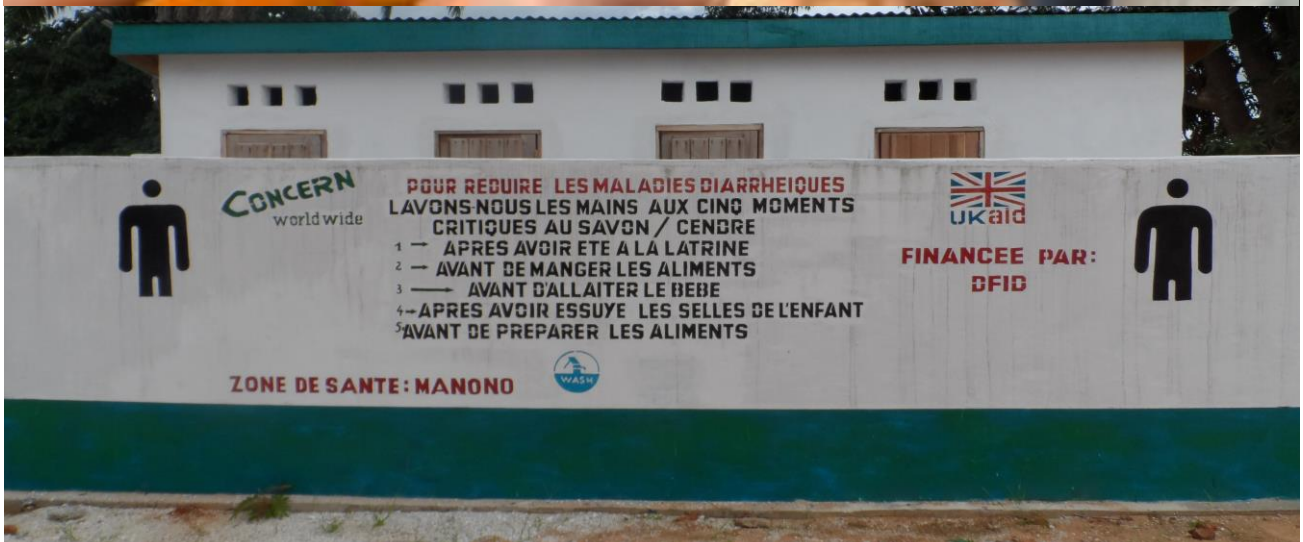


Controlled Document Control Sheet A Control Sheet is to be completed for each controlled document that is approved for use within Concern Worldwide		
Document Title Name that appears on the document	WASH Strategy 2021 –2025	
Document Type Please check the appropriate box	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure / Process / Manual
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Guideline / Guidance Note / Position Paper
	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard	
Purpose Brief overview of the document and why it exists	This strategy sets out Concern Worldwide’s goal, objectives and core interventions for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) from 2021-2025.	
Document Owner Team / department / directorate responsible for the document	WASH unit/ SAL Directorate	
Audience Please check the appropriate box	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concern Worldwide (ALL)	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern Korea
	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern ROI	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern Charity Trading
	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern UK	<input type="checkbox"/> Country Office
	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern US	
Version – Used to distinguish the document from any earlier or later versions of the same document	2021	
Approved Date – When the document was approved by the appropriate group or individual	31th May 2021	
Approved By Please check the appropriate box	<input type="checkbox"/> Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Director
	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern Worldwide SMT i.e. organisation-wide	<input type="checkbox"/> CMT i.e. senior management team in the country
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sub Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Country Director
	<input type="checkbox"/> Steering Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of CMT
	<input type="checkbox"/> Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Subject Expert
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager	
Name – Please provide the name of the group or individual who approved the document	Chris Pain	
Issued Date – When the document is shared with the audience	20/05/2021	
Next Review Date – When the document is scheduled to be reviewed		
Retirement Date – To be completed when the document is being retired / taken out of use / superseded		
Cross Reference to Other Controlled Documents – List any other controlled documents to which the document refers		
Relevant Laws and Regulations – List any laws and regulations which are addressed by and/or relevant to the document		

CONCERN worldwide

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy

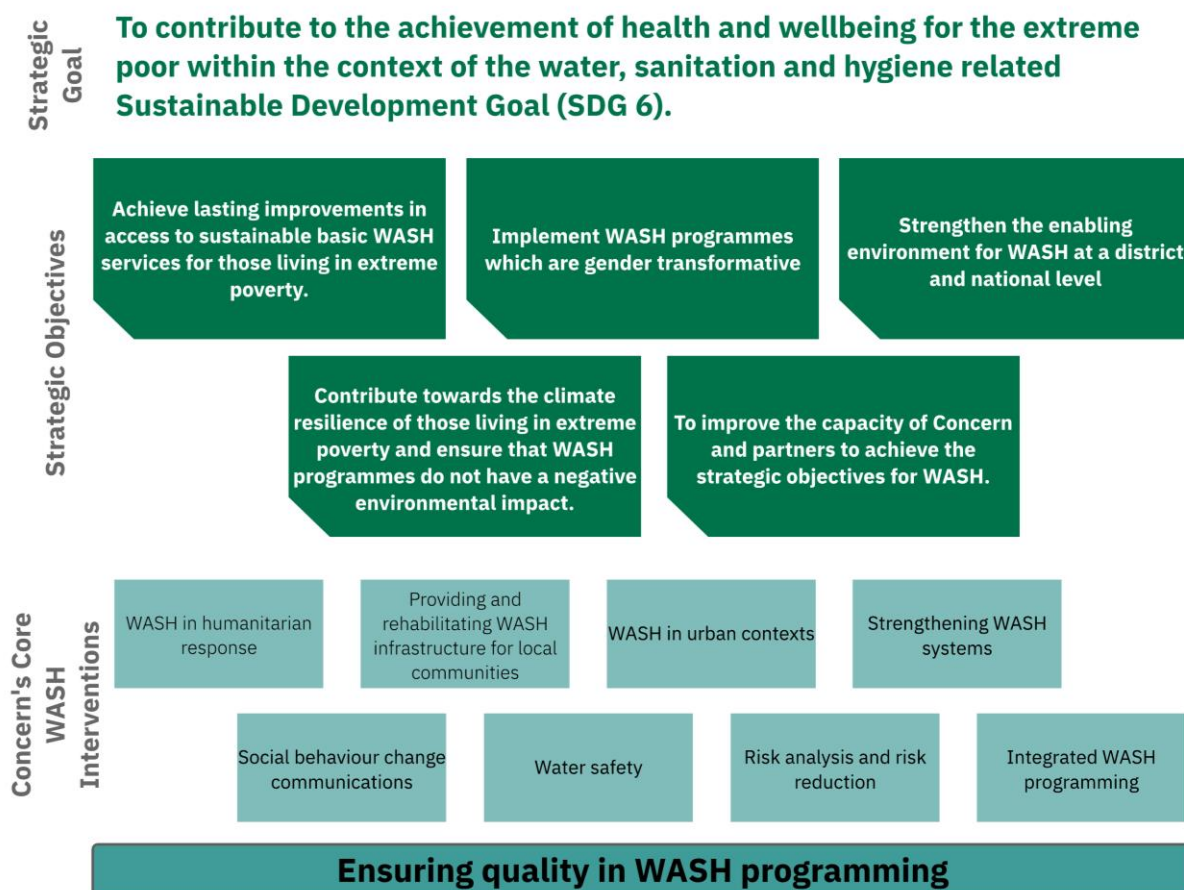
2021 – 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategy sets out Concern Worldwide’s goal, objectives and core interventions for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) from 2021-2025. Building on the previous WASH strategy, it reflects internal changes in how Concern positions itself and the priorities it sets and external changes in how the WASH sector has evolved over the last five years. It sets out an ambitious agenda of how Concern can use its core strengths - a humanitarian organisation working to eliminate extreme poverty in some of the world’s poorest countries – to contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG6) for water and sanitation: *Ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.*

Figure 1. Overview of Concern’s WASH Strategy 2021 – 2025



This WASH strategy (see Figure 1) is based around the strategic goal **‘To contribute to the achievement of health and wellbeing for the extreme poor within the context of the water, sanitation and hygiene related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6).’** To achieve this goal Concern has set out five strategic objectives:

- **Strategic Objective 1** Achieve lasting improvements in access to sustainable basic WASH services for those living in extreme poverty.
- **Strategic Objective 2** Implement WASH programmes which are gender transformative.
- **Strategic Objective 3** Work towards strengthening the enabling environment for WASH by helping to build strong systems at a district and national level.
- **Strategic Objective 4** Contribute towards the climate resilience of those living in extreme poverty and ensure that WASH programmes do not have a negative environmental impact.
- **Strategic Objective 5** To improve the capacity of Concern and partners to achieve the strategic objectives for WASH.

This strategy marks an evolution of Concern’s strategy for WASH rather than a radical departure. In some areas – the provision of basic water, sanitation and hygiene services – Concern’s programming will continue, with an unrelenting focus on reaching those living in extreme poverty and implementing high-quality interventions. Work in the areas of gender, systems strengthening and capacity building is not new for Concern’s WASH programming, but this strategy sets out increased ambition in this area reflecting shifts in the sector and a recognition that business as usual is not enough. Whilst the inclusion of an objective specifically on climate-resilient WASH is new for this strategy, it represents a continuation of Concern’s historical strength of integrating risk analysis and risk reduction into WASH programming

These objectives will guide programming design and implementation for WASH in all Concern WASH programmes, drawing upon a core set of WASH interventions - based on Concern’s experience and expertise and WASH sector best-practice – which set out what Concern WASH programmes should look like on the ground, and what makes Concern’s WASH programming distinctive.

Each Country programme will identify the WASH interventions which are best suited to the local context. Concern’s long history of leading humanitarian WASH responses will mean that emergency WASH interventions are a feature in many contexts. Whether working in humanitarian or development setting Concern will implement WASH programmes which are centred on beneficiary needs and involve communities and individuals in all steps of the process. Participatory methodologies – including CLTS and PHAST – will form a key component of many country WASH programmes, complemented by methodologies involving the private sector (such as sanitation marketing) where appropriate. Underpinning the strategy is a commitment to ensuring that all WASH programming is delivered to the highest possible quality.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
Abbreviations.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
External context.....	1
Leaving no one behind - 10 years left to achieve SDG6.....	1
WASH, health and nutrition	3
An evolving WASH sector.....	3
WASH and COVID-19.....	4
Internal context.....	5
Strategic goal and objectives.....	6
Concerns comparative advantage in WASH.....	6
Strategic Objectives.....	6
Strategic Objective 1 Achieve lasting improvements in access to sustainable basic WASH services for those living in extreme poverty.....	6
Strategic Objective 2 Implement WASH programmes which are gender transformative.....	10
Strategic Objective 3 Strengthen the enabling environment for WASH at a district and national level.....	11
Strategic Objective 4 Contribute towards the climate resilience of those living in extreme poverty and ensure that WASH programmes do not have a negative environmental impact..	13
Strategic Objective 5 To improve the capacity of Concern and partners to achieve the strategic objectives for WASH.	15
Concern’s core WASH interventions	17
Ensuring quality in WASH programming	24
Target groups.....	26
Monitoring, evaluation and learning.....	26
Monitoring WASH programmes	26
Monitoring this strategy.....	27
THEORY OF CHANGE.....	28
ANNEXES	29
Annex 1: WASH-related Sustainable Development Goals and Targets.....	29
Annex 2: Concern’s WASH portfolio	30
Annex 3: WASH STRATEGY RESULTS FRAMEWORK	31
Annex 5: Viewing WASH through an extreme poverty lens	34

Acknowledgement

Thanks to all who contributed to the development of this strategy including the WASH advisers, other SAL staff including, PALU, IPD, WASH programme managers, ACDPs and CDs and the emergencies directorate.

.

Cover photos

Community Health Worker demonstrating handwashing during the Ebola outbreak, Kuntorloh Community, Freetown, Sierra Leone, Michael Duff/Concern/2014.

Abbreviations

A4C	Agenda for Change
CLTS	Community-Led Total Sanitation
CRM	Complaints Response Mechanism
DALY	Disability Adjusted Live Years
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EE	Environmental Enteropathy
FSM	Faecal Sludge Management
GPS	Global Positioning System
HCUEP	How Concern Understands Extreme Poverty
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JMP	UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme
LCCA	Life Cycle Costs Analysis
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PHAST	Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation
SDA	Small Doable Actions
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	Standard Operating Practice
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WEDC	Water Engineering and Development Centre
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction

This strategy sets out Concern Worldwide’s goal, objectives and approach for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) from 2021-2025. Building on the previous WASH strategy, it reflects internal changes in how Concern positions itself and the priorities it sets and external changes in how the WASH sector has evolved over the last five years. It sets out an ambitious agenda of how Concern can use its core strengths - a humanitarian organisation working to eliminate extreme poverty in some of the world’s poorest countries – to contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG6) for water and sanitation: *Ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.*

The strategy is structured as follows:

- **External context** setting out changes and priorities in the global WASH sector.
- **Internal context** covering how Concern views WASH, and how it fits within the organisation
- **Strategic goal and objectives** Concern’s overall aim for its WASH programming, and what outcomes programmes need to deliver to achieve this aim.
- **Concerns approach to WASH** what are the defining features of a Concern WASH programme, and how what activities will Concern implement to achieve the objectives.
- **Ensuring quality in WASH** Outlining the measures Concern will take to ensure all WASH programming is of the highest quality possible
- **Target groups** Where is the focus of Concern’s WASH programming
- **Monitoring, evaluation and learning** how will Concern monitor WASH programmes and this strategy.

External context

Leaving no one behind - 10 years left to achieve SDG6

Concern’s previous WASH strategy (2016-2020) was launched at the start of the SDG era and reflected the shift in ambition to ensuring universal access to safely managed services. Five years later it is clear that achieving SDG6 (see Box 1 for details of SDG6) continues to represent a serious challenge to the WASH sector as a whole. On current rates of progress, the world will not achieve SDG6: business as usual is not an option.

Data from the UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) shows that few of the countries where Concern works in WASH are on track to achieve universal access to basic services by 2030¹ (see figures 2 and 3²). In a small number of countries, there has been negative progress in recent years – meaning that even more people lack access to basic services than at the start of the SDG era.

¹This is a lower level of ambition than the overall target for SDG6 of universal access to safely managed services

² These estimates do not cover countries – such as South Sudan – where sufficient data is available to establish the current rate of progress.

It is clear that the scale of the challenge means that an unprecedented effort is needed over the next ten years to extend and improve access to basic WASH services. A significant part of this challenge will be ‘covering the last mile’ – reaching people and communities where poor WASH conditions persist. On a national level, this means working in those areas facing conditions of extreme poverty and marginalisation. On a global level, it means being prepared to work in fragile and conflict-affected areas, where weak or non-existent institutions and lack of access to many WASH actors leave large numbers of people with no access to basic WASH services.

Box 1. Sustainable Development Goal 6.

The overall goal for SDG6 is to *Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*. Beneath this goal there are eight targets, but the two targets most relevant to Concern’s work in WASH are:

- **6.1:** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
- **6.2:** By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

Full details of the SDG6 targets are available in Annex 1.

Beyond improving access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services, WASH is also central to the achievement of many of the other SDGs, including:

- **SDG 1 (No Poverty)** – targeted sanitation and hygiene interventions in support of programmes to end child poverty.
- **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** – targeted sanitation and hygiene interventions in support of programmes to reduce malnutrition
- **SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing)** – WASH in healthcare facilities.
- **SDG 4 (Quality Education)** – WASH in education.
- **SDG 5 (Gender Equality)** – MHM and other interventions focusing on women and girls.
- **SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)** – sectoral interventions to protect children and women from violence and indignity

Figure 2. 2 of 21 countries are on track to achieve universal basic water services by 2030

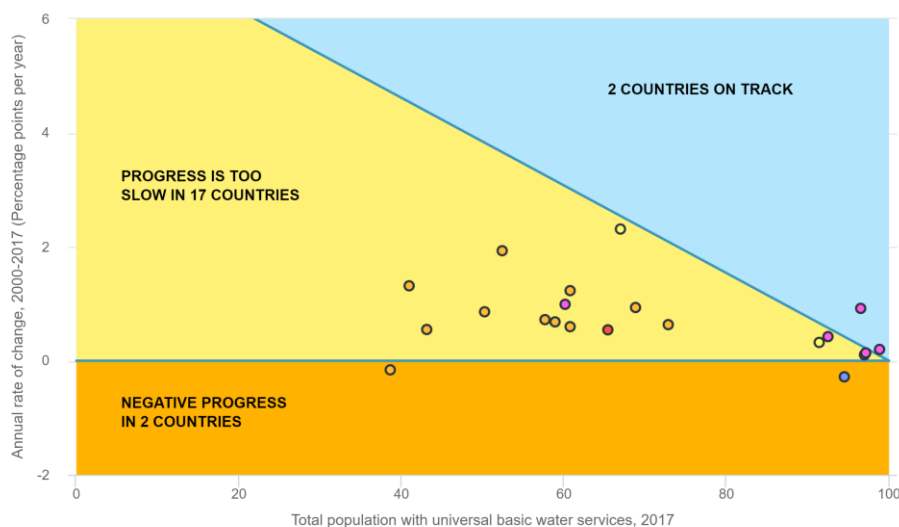
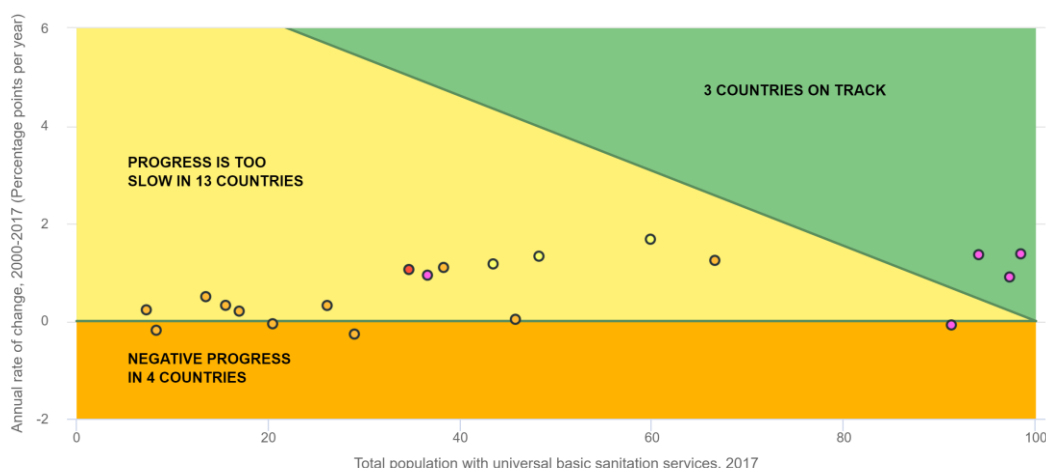


Figure 3. 3 of 20 countries are on track to achieve universal basic sanitation services by 2030



WASH, health and nutrition

Historically the case for investment in WASH has rested heavily on the health and nutrition benefits that improved water and sanitation deliver for society. From the earliest public health interventions in 1854, population-level reductions in key health issues such as diarrhoea and stunting have never been achieved without large scale investments delivering improved sanitation and hygiene. The WHO estimates that in 2016, over 800,000 deaths were attributable to poor WASH: this includes nearly 300,000 deaths of children under 5 (5% of all deaths of young children and infants)³.

The health and moral cases for investment for WASH are unquestionable. However, recent studies have suggested that typical WASH interventions did not lead to the improvements in childhood health and nutrition expected.⁴ By themselves, isolated WASH interventions which achieve progressive improvements in people’s living standards may not be enough. A wake-up call to the WASH sector, the findings underline the importance of aspiring to higher service levels for water, sanitation and hygiene – reflected in the SDG6 targets. An emerging consensus suggests that for WASH to be truly impactful on health and nutrition it must deliver transformational changes in the environment in which people live. For NGOs such as Concern, this reinforces the need to deliver WASH programming, which is of the highest quality, adapted to the local context and relevant to the needs and condition of the people it serves to reach.

This strategy includes the steps Concern has taken to date and will take over the next five years, to ensure that its WASH programming is of the highest quality and informed by the best available evidence.

An evolving WASH sector

Over the last decade, the global WASH sector has progressively adopted a realisation that investment in water and sanitation facilities is by itself not enough. Providing WASH services means ensuring that conditions - institutions, capacity, finance - are in place to sustain and

³Burden of disease from inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene for selected adverse health outcomes: An updated analysis with a focus on low- and middle-income countries. Available at:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1438463918310484?via%3Dihub>

⁴ Implications of recent WASH and nutrition studies for WASH policy and practice. Available at: who-unicef-position-paper-on-wash-and-nutrition-studies-20191125.pdf

manage those services forever. This reflects a history of water points and latrines falling into disrepair after construction and being abandoned or neglected.

This shift was recognized in the last Concern WASH strategy with the inclusion of an objective around a ‘Service Delivery Approach’ – now referred to as ‘systems strengthening’ – where Concern committed to working to strengthen local capacity to plan, implement and manage sustainable WASH services. In the last five years Concern has built on this commitment by joining Agenda for Change - a coalition of leading WASH organisation working to build strong WASH systems in the countries and communities where they work.

In the same period the language of ‘systems strengthening’ has moved firmly from a few organisations into the mainstream of the WASH sector. It is no longer acceptable for organisations to construct water and sanitation facilities without working simultaneously to build strong WASH systems.

WASH and COVID-19

WASH services play a critical role in the control and prevention of disease, and WASH – most notably hygiene – has been at the forefront of the response to COVID-19 in many of the countries in which Concern works. Advice from the WHO⁵ and government health authorities indicated that good hand hygiene – whether handwashing with soap or use of alcohol rubs – was one of the most important measures that could be used to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This has led to an unprecedented focus on hygiene behaviour change, with large-scale, high-profile campaigns across both low income and high income countries. WASH in health care facilities – globally one in four health care facilities lack a basic water service – is also critical to infection prevention and control (IPC). The focus on hygiene and WASH in health care facilities has meant that for many international humanitarian actors WASH has taken on increased importance throughout 2020, and the links between WASH and other sectors – such as health and livelihood – have been reinforced.

At the same time there is emerging evidence of the impact that COVID-19 has had on existing WASH services⁶. Access to water has become more difficult across urban and rural areas, and the economic shock has had an impact on the financial stability of water service providers – there is a risk that in some context water services may be disrupted as providers (particularly smaller providers) cannot maintain services. Access to sanitation has also suffered as markets are disrupted and reductions in disposable income threaten the ability of households to purchase sanitation facilities and services such as desludging. Both these trends threaten the ability of countries to meet SDG 6.1 and 6.2.

However, the unprecedented focus on handwashing has created an environment in which it is possible that there will be a paradigm change in hand hygiene, and the pandemic leads to sustained long term behaviour change.

⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/brief/wash-water-sanitation-hygiene-and-covid-19>

⁶ Assessing the Effects of COVID-19 on Access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene in USAID High Priority and Strategy-Aligned Countries - Synthesis Report
<https://www.globalwaters.org/resources/assets/washpals/assessing-effects-covid-19-access-water-sanitation-and-hygiene-usaid-high-priority>

Internal context

Concern has worked in WASH for over 45 years, delivering live-saving interventions to some of the most vulnerable people living in extreme poverty, or enduring humanitarian crises. As of 2021 Concern has active WASH programmes in all 23 countries in which it works – representing a slight increase over the 22 countries with Concern WASH programmes in 2016 (when some Concern country programmes had no WASH activities). It is anticipated that WASH will continue to be a significant component of Concern’s programming, with the majority of Country programmes including some form of WASH intervention.

Within Concern, WASH is a sub-sector of health but is also a distinct technical speciality, with WASH-specific expertise at global and country level. Concern’s rationale for undertaking WASH programming rests heavily on the expected health outcomes arising from improving access to basic water and sanitation services. WASH sits alongside nutrition and maternal, neonatal and child health in contributing to the objectives set out in Concern’s health strategy. In addition to this, there are strong links to other sectors including livelihoods, education and equality and

Strategic goal and objectives

Concern's strategic goal for WASH is:

To contribute to the achievement of health and wellbeing for the extreme poor within the context of the water, sanitation and hygiene related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6).

Concerns comparative advantage in WASH

Concern's focus is on addressing extreme poverty: helping people who are the furthest behind in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts.

Concern aims to provide high-quality WASH programmes which improve the lives of those living in extreme poverty. Concern's focus on working with the extreme poor, its ability to work in hard-to-reach areas, and its presence across multiple sectors are all core strengths which Concern can bring to bear in its WASH programming. Within this context it is important to consider where and when Concern may be best placed to deliver WASH programming and where its unique experience and expertise provides an advantage over other WASH sector actors.

Strategic Objectives

Concern's WASH strategy is based around five strategic objectives that set out what Concern seeks to achieve with its WASH programming. These objectives are universal – they apply to all WASH programming in contexts and should inform the design of WASH programmes.

The five strategic objectives are:

1. Achieve lasting improvements in access to sustainable basic WASH services for those living in extreme poverty.
2. Implement WASH programmes which address the needs of women and girls, address the root causes of gender inequality in WASH outcomes and support gender equality.
3. Contribute towards the climate resilience of those living in extreme poverty and ensure that WASH programmes do not have a negative environmental impact.
4. Work towards strengthening the enabling environment for WASH by helping to build strong systems at a district and national level.
5. To improve the capacity of Concern and partners to achieve the strategic objectives for WASH.

Strategic Objective 1

Achieve lasting improvements in access to sustainable basic WASH services for those living in extreme poverty.

Concern's primary objective in delivering WASH programmes is to extend access to WASH services in the countries and communities in which it works. This will be achieved through a variety of interventions, including through directly providing services or constructing new infrastructure where appropriate. The focus of extending access to WASH will be on those living in extreme poverty and with no existing access to WASH services: ensuring that no one is left behind in the achievement of SDG6 and recognising that a lack of

access to water and sanitation, and poor hygiene practices can directly impact health and nutritional status, contributing to poverty.

Improved access to basic water services

Concern will continue to deliver programmes which extend access to basic water services, both through strengthening local systems for providing WASH services and directly delivering new or rehabilitated water supplies. Central to Concern’s approach is providing a water-secure future for all. Water security is defined as “The capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability”⁷. For all means ensuring marginalised groups – whether for socio-economic, political or geographic reasons – are not left behind as access to water services is extended for less vulnerable groups in the countries where Concern works.

All programmes which include a water element will ensure that any new services meet or exceed the JMP definition for basic water services – that is an improved water source within 30 minutes collection time for households. Where possible Concern will seek to implement services, which exceed this service level and contribute towards meeting the overall target for SDG6 of universal access to safely managed services, by ensuring the accessibility, reliability and safety of water supplies (see Box 2).

Box 2. Safely managed drinking water services.

When the SDGs were adopted in 2015 the UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) introduced a new service ladder for WASH. This included the concept of ‘safely managed services’.

To be considered ‘safely managed’, drinking water services must be an improved source:

- located on-premises; and
- available when needed; and
- free from contamination.

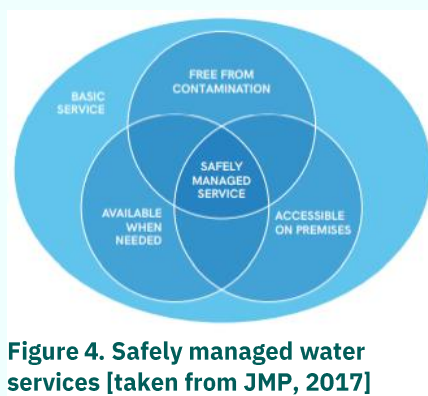


Figure 4. Safely managed water services [taken from JMP, 2017]

Meeting the new service levels for WASH requires not only constructing suitable infrastructure but also managing and monitoring the service on an ongoing basis (such as regular water quality testing) to be sure it is continuing to provide the same level of service.

While Concern WASH programmes should work towards safely managed water services wherever possible achieving all these criteria may be challenging for example in rural areas served by point water sources ‘located on-premises’ is unlikely to be feasible and may not be an appropriate focus. The ambition of WASH programmes – in terms of the service level achieved – should be in line with local policies and guidelines.

Details of the JMP definitions for WASH service levels can be found at <https://washdata.org/monitoring>

⁷ Taken from the UN-Water working definition, available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/water-security-infographic/>

Water infrastructure represents a considerable capital investment in the communities where Concern works. When implemented to a high standard handpumps and water systems have the potential to provide many years or decades of service, but faults in the design or construction phase can lead to unreliable services. In implementing programmes with a water component Concern will ensure all WASH infrastructure – whether provided by Concern, contractors or partners – is constructed to the highest quality, and that all relevant engineering guidelines are followed. For more details on this see the section *Ensuring quality in WASH programming* below.

Improved access to safe sanitation systems

The Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach will continue to be the primary approach Concern uses to extend access to sanitation, as a proven way of achieving high sanitation coverage in rural areas in low-income countries. Whilst successful, CLTS can lead to the simplest form of pit latrines being constructed, and there can be challenges when conditions are not suitable for communities to construct their own latrines – for example when ground conditions are unsuitable, or there a lack of locally available materials. Concern will adopt complementary interventions to help improve the quality of latrines constructed by households and ensure they are appropriate for the context, particularly where there are environmental hazards such as a high water table, flooding, or unsuitable soil types.

Concern will increasingly adopt a sanitation marketing approach: leveraging sector actors and the private sector to help provide high-quality sanitation. This could be in areas where CLTS is not appropriate, or where the local context supports a higher level of sanitation service than that typically provided by self-built latrines. In pursuing a sanitation marketing approach Concern WASH programmes will need to ensure that market solutions are aligned with demand from the local population. This means ensuring that demand creation activities (which could encompass some aspects of CLTS) are undertaken and using participatory processes to help define appropriate products.

Where appropriate, where Concern programmes extend access to sanitation services this will be implemented without subsidies. However, sanitation programmes should also ensure that they are accessible to all, and do not reinforce existing inequalities – in some contexts, this may justify the use of well-targeted and limited support for those groups least able to provide sustainable and accessible sanitation for themselves. For example, those living in extreme poverty with no assets to permit construction of a latrine, or people living with disabilities, who face greater costs and challenges in constructing an accessible latrine. Support should not automatically mean external subsidies and does not mean a return to externally imposed supply-driven sanitation programming. Wherever possible support from within communities, such as pooling resources or providing fee labour, is likely to be better targeted and less likely to be disruptive of community structures.

Box 3 Smart support for rural sanitation

The WASH sector is still learning how the CLTS approach can be complemented with support and subsidies, without undermining the original CLTS principles of community-led decision making and local solutions; focused on people, not hardware; behaviour change, not construction programmes; total not partial improvements. If you are considering introducing a support or subsidy element you should contact the WASH technical support team to discuss options for doing this. Information and guidance can also be found from the Sanitation Knowledge Hub learning brief on supporting the least able:

- [Supporting the Least Able Throughout and Beyond CLTS - Sanitation Learning Hub](https://sanitationlearninghub.org/resource/supporting-the-least-able-throughout-and-beyond-clts/) [https://sanitationlearninghub.org/resource/supporting-the-least-able-throughout-and-beyond-clts/]

Concern will attempt to ensure that all sanitation services provided as a result of Concern programming meet the JMP standard for basic sanitation services – an improved sanitation facility which is not shared with other households – but this may not always be possible where latrines are constructed by communities without subsidies, or where shared latrines are culturally accepted by the communities in which Concern is working⁸. Over the next five years, Concern will place an increasing emphasis on achieving safely managed sanitation, by understanding and working to improve the whole sanitation chain.

Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) is a challenging technical area (particularly in urban areas) which requires specialist knowledge and the ongoing provision of services, rather than a project-based approach. Where Concern WASH programmes identify the need and feasibility for an FSM intervention this should be undertaken with a strong local partner which either already provides a well-established service for the collection, transportation and treatment of faecal waste, or has the potential to do so with appropriate support from Concern.

Improved uptake of hygiene practices

Concern will continue to place behaviour change for hygiene at the centre of its WASH programming and strive to improve the quality of behaviour change interventions and outcomes. Achieving lasting behaviour change for hygiene is a significant challenge for all WASH actors, and the historic performance in this area has been weak, with many programmes improving knowledge but failing to shift cultural norms. Whilst there is increasing evidence from behaviour science on how to best achieve behaviour change for hygiene, the WASH sector is still learning how to translate the theory into programmes at scale. Concern is at the forefront of initiatives which seek to translate academic findings into practical programming applications (see Box 4).

Concern has already shifted from the more traditional hygiene education consisting of didactic training and advice to a *Designing for Behaviour Change* approach to improve the impact of our hygiene promotion activities. Over the next five years, Concern will continue the focus on behaviour change as the key element of hygiene programming and deliver programming which draws on best practice. Behaviour change programmes will be designed based on formative research (such as barrier analysis or the WASH'Em approach below) to understand the barriers and motivators to improved hygiene behaviour and ensure the interventions are specifically designed to address these behaviours.

Concern will continue to promote the use of participatory methods for behaviour change. Behaviour change is core to much of Concern's work in sectors such as nutrition, health and education. Concern will maximise opportunities to promote links across sectors by encouraging intersectoral behaviour change campaigns and focus on areas where there is natural alignment – for example, Concern is already promoting the BabyWASH approach which focuses on the first 1000 days of life from conception to 2 years old and includes integrated actions across maternal new-born and child health (MNCH), nutrition and early childhood development (ECD).

The COVID-19 crisis and response has led to an unprecedented focus on handwashing and has been accompanied by global hygiene behaviour change campaigns. This has served to underline

⁸ Where shared latrines are promoted care should be taken to ensure that they are high quality, and do not present a potential health risk. Some guidelines on what constitutes high quality shared sanitation are available from WSUP: High-quality shared sanitation: how can we define that? – Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor (wsup.com)

the importance of hygiene behaviour change and represents an opportunity for Concern to develop more expertise in this area.

Box 4 New approaches for behaviour change in emergencies: WASH'Em



Many hygiene interventions in emergencies focus on the distribution of non-food items (NFIs) such as soap, and messaging on the benefits of handwashing, but do not focus on how to change behaviour for handwashing.

WASH'Em is a software-based tool developed in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) which helps WASH practitioners understand the existing hygiene behaviours of the population in need, and design behaviour change programmes to specifically target these. Based on key information, WASH'Em will provide a set of evidence-based activities, tailored to the context with step-by-step guides for planning the logistics and delivery of each activity and advice from experts.

Concern was involved in the steering committee for developing WASH'Em and as of 2020 currently rolling the tool out across four country programmes. Over the period of this strategy, the use of WASH'Em will be encouraged in all emergency WASH programmes.

Outcomes for Objective 1

- 1.1 Concern WASH programmes lead to improved access to safe drinking water for the extreme poor.
- 1.2: Concern WASH programmes lead to improved access to safe and hygienic sanitation facilities for the extreme poor.
- 1.3: Concern WASH programmes lead to effective adoption of sound hygiene practices for the extreme poor.

Strategic Objective 2

Implement WASH programmes which are gender transformative.

Gender inequality, including the unequal status of women, is perhaps the most pervasive and entrenched inequality and a major barrier to maternal and child health. Typically, women bear the burden of most WASH-related tasks and feel the greatest impact of poor access to basic WASH services. Concern will implement WASH programmes which specifically address the needs of women and girls, but which go beyond this to tackle the root causes of gender inequality in WASH outcomes.

All WASH programmes should draw upon a gender analysis, to help understand how different gender groups view issues related to WASH and to understand their needs. This should be done before detailed programme design, to ensure that interventions are context-specific and meet the needs of programme participants and address the gender dynamics that contribute to WASH inequalities.

Great care should be taken to ensure that WASH interventions do not reinforce existing gender inequalities (e.g., women being exclusively responsible for cleaning the area around a new borehole) and to ensure that steps taken to involve women are not tokenistic (e.g., where an agreed percentage of Water User Committee (WUC) members are female, but they have no voice in key decisions).

As a minimum commitment, all Concern WASH programmes will be *gender sensitive*. That is, they must identify the different roles, responsibilities and challenges that men, women, boys and girls face, and seek to ensure that their different practical needs are met to achieve equitable WASH outcomes. This includes mitigating risk to the safety and security of women and girls as far as possible when they are accessing WASH services or participating in WASH-related activities.

Wherever possible, country programmes should aspire to implement *gender-transformative* WASH programmes that seek to shift harmful gender norms and dynamics and supports moves towards greater gender equality within WASH outcomes. In this light, WASH programmes should be a vehicle to help improve the lives of women and girls which will ultimately improve WASH outcomes in the long term. The appropriate way to achieve this aim is highly context-specific and depends on existing gender norms and status, but some examples include:

- Actively targeting men through behaviour change communications to break-down preconceptions about WASH primarily being a women’s issue, and challenge taboos around menstrual hygiene.
- Encouraging and supporting women to take on roles which break gender stereotypes – for examples as hand pump mechanics.
- Mentoring and training women WUC to ensure they can take an active role in WUC decision-making – and in the process building the confidence of women to take a greater role in wider community leadership discussions.

Concern resources for WASH and gender

- WASH and Gender Technical Brief, July 2020
- Understanding the Gender Continuum Guidance Note, June 2020

Outcomes for Objective 2

2.1: Concern WASH programmes demonstrate that steps are taken to take account of the WASH needs of women and girls.

2.2: Concern WASH programmes contribute to transforming harmful gender norms and improving the status of women and girls in their local communities.

Strategic Objective 3

Strengthen the enabling environment for WASH at a district and national level.

Concern’s goal for WASH is to contribute to lasting health and wellbeing improvements for those living in extreme poverty. This can only be realised if WASH services provided through Concern WASH programmes are sustainable and provide services to communities and users continuously. A WASH intervention which fails – after a few years or even months – cannot be considered a service, and all too often WASH interventions led by NGOs have failed due to insufficient ongoing support. To address this Concern will work to strengthen the WASH system – that is the ecosystem of institutions, resources and policies which are necessary to support WASH services – wherever it implements WASH programmes.

Historically the WASH sector has focused on investing in water and sanitation infrastructure but paid insufficient attention to ensuring that the supporting systems are in place to ensure that

this infrastructure is maintained and continues to be used well into the future. In the last WASH strategy Concern recognised these historic shortcomings and adopted strengthening WASH systems as a strategic objective⁹. Concern remains committed to systems strengthening and will seek to build on this area of work. This commitment to systems strengthening is underlined by Concern becoming a member of Agenda for Change (A4C – a collaboration of like-minded organizations committed to strengthening WASH systems) in October 2019.

Concern WASH programmes must be part of a service integrated within a water or sanitation plan at a district or city level and not just a standalone service for one community. Concern recognizes that it is more important to strengthen what is already in place and therefore we are committed to developing and improving our relationship with local government partners and helping to strengthen their systems and supporting them to fulfil their needs rather than working independently. Adopting systems strengthening is central to Concern’s vision of sustainable WASH services which leave no one behind, but this does not mean stopping current WASH activities. Delivering interventions which extend access to WASH services and working directly with communities will continue to be key to Concern’s WASH work, but without systems strengthening these interventions may not be sustainable beyond the original programme timeframe.

At a country and district level, the extent to which WASH programmes can adopt systems strengthening will depend on the local context and the capacity of local authorities and partners. However, Concern has experience of implementing systems strengthening activities in a range of contexts, including the most fragile and challenging (see Box 5), and it is expected that all WASH programming will include some elements of systems strengthening. As a minimum, all Concern WASH programmes should include mapping the WASH system to understand strengths and weaknesses and to define priority areas for support, which can be integrated into future programming. As with other sectoral programmes Concern’s main system strengthening efforts will be focused at the district level while using our evidence from the field to influence policy change and develop an enabling environment at the national level. In addition, Concern will recognise the important role of the private sector and will work to find ways to involve the private sector and to enhance our capacity to fully develop their potential.

At a global Concern will continue to be an active and engaged member of A4C, which will be the primary vehicle for advocating for progress on systems strengthening across the WASH sector. The shift towards systems strengthening represents an ambitious agenda which will not be achieved immediately. The evolution of Concern’s WASH strategy will need to be matched by a similar evolution in donor funding, with increased flexibility and duration of funding needed for effective long-term programmes. Concern will make use of existing flexible funding modalities to advance its systems strengthening work where possible, and Concern’s global advocacy (through A4C) will help raise awareness of the need for new types of funding with key WASH donors.

Outcomes for Objective 3

- 3.1: Concern WASH programmes contribute to stronger district-level WASH systems through the adoption of systems strengthening for WASH
- 3.2 Concern WASH programmes contribute towards necessary changes in the national enabling environment for WASH through effective evidence-based advocacy
- 3.3 Concern secures long-term, flexible funding for WASH systems strengthening activities.

⁹ The 2015 Strategy used the terminology ‘Service Delivery Approach’ which is synonymous with systems strengthening.

Box 5 WASH Systems Strengthening in Diverse Contexts

System strengthening is frequently seen as a development intervention, which may not be suitable for humanitarian or fragile contexts. However, Concern has experience of implementing elements of systems strengthening in a variety of contexts, including fragile and post-conflict regions. As Concern continues to focus as an organisation on reaching the poorest in the most vulnerable areas, applying systems strengthening for WASH in these contexts should be key to Concern's unique offer.

Northern Uganda: identifying the missing piece

The Concern team facilitated a WASH system analysis that led them to that District Water Offices in charge of the maintenance and repairing the water points were not able to go in the field without external financial support. Discussions at different levels triggered a change of role for the DWO, passing from a direct service provider to a regulation body, and the setting up of a Hand Pump Mechanics Association to perform regular maintenance and repairs services in the relevant districts.

South Sudan: counting the cost

Concern has helped to define the operating cost of the water services, through using the Life Cycle Cost Analysis (LCCA) tool with local partners. As a result, a 'willingness and capacity to pay' study has been commissioned to identify whether user fees could be introduced for commercial water service users. Concern is also in discussion with the local District Water Office to revive a water utility to manage the two main water treatment plants. The first option being considered is a mixed public-private status for this new entity.

DRC: stepping up community management

The Concern-led WASH consortium developed an innovative 'Economic Approach' based on the life cycle cost analysis tool. This was used to support the WASH Management Committees to take very high ownership of their WASH services: Professionalising their work and preparing them to take on the ongoing costs of maintaining their water point. The consortium partners worked with them to develop "Business Plans" which showed the anticipated costs of their water point and to set-up revenue streams to cover these costs. Two-thirds of communities reached a level of financial self-sufficiency to manage the operation and minor repairs, and two years after implementation 89% of the water points were still in use, 99% of them were managed by a water management committee and 81% of committees felt competent to manage the water service

Strategic Objective 4

Contribute towards the climate resilience of those living in extreme poverty and ensure that WASH programmes do not have a negative environmental impact.

The countries in which Concern works face an increasing number and intensity of climate hazards. From flooding and cyclones in Bangladesh to irregular rainfall and drought in Sub-Saharan Africa. The climate crisis poses an unprecedented risk to the health, lives and livelihoods of the extreme poor. This includes the direct impacts of climate hazards on WASH services (through the destruction of infrastructure) and direct health impacts. The WHO estimates that climate change will cause an additional 48,000 diarrheal deaths in 2030.

But equally well-designed and context-appropriate WASH programming can help to improve the climate resilience of communities and reduce the potential negative climate impact of WASH infrastructure and related practices (do no harm principle). As this is a developing area for Concern and the wider WASH sector, the WASH response to climate change will evolve throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

Ensuring that WASH services are climate-resilient

The most significant area of climate-related WASH programming will be in ensuring that WASH services (and specifically infrastructure) and WASH-related practices are climate-resilient, aligning strongly with Concern’s existing work on integrating Disaster and Risk Resilience (DRR) into WASH programming. Risk assessment and risk reduction is a central pillar of Concern’s WASH strategy (see the section on WASH approaches below) and should always include an assessment of climate-related risks, including undertaking participatory water security risk assessments with local communities.

How WASH programmes take this into account will be context-specific and dependent on the main climate-hazards in that area (see Figure 5). These hazards may be experienced through short term/unpredictable events (e.g., flash floods or storm surges) and slow-onset events. Some examples of appropriate adaptations are:





THE MAIN CLIMATE HAZARDS	
	VARIABILITY of seasonal rainfall patterns , leading to longer dry seasons and unpredictable rainfalls
	INCREASE of average temperature globally but also increase of peak temperatures and heatwaves
	DROUGHTS , causing water scarcity
	INCREASE of the frequency and intensity of extreme climate events , such as floods and storms

Figure 5: Key climate hazards for WASH services [taken from PS-Eau, 2018]

- Ensuring that communities have access to year-round drinking water supplies, and do not suffer through lack of water availability during dry seasons. Interventions which could contribute to this include ensuring that groundwater sources are non-seasonal and increasing awareness and use of complimentary water supplies such as rainwater harvesting, storage and re-use.
- Ensuring that water points are not situated in flood-prone areas. When water points are flooded this restricts access and can lead to source contamination.
- Ensuring that groundwater abstraction is sustainable in the long term and that new water points and improved access to clean drinking water do not lead to over-

abstraction and waste. When groundwater is depleted this has immediate consequences for users (in terms of reduced access to clean water) and long-term effects on the broader watershed.

- Taking care when sitting latrines to ensure that they are not in areas of high groundwater or flooding. Flooded latrine sub-structures can create a serious health hazard for communities and potentially lead to water source contamination.

Reducing the climate and environmental impact of WASH services

The climate impacts of WASH services (particularly the small-scale services which are a feature of most Concern WASH programmes) are more limited. Some of the key issues to consider are over-abstraction of groundwater (further exacerbating climate-related water scarcity) and emissions from WASH infrastructure. Concern WASH programmes should look to reduce these

impacts by ensuring that water sources do not lead to unsustainable levels of abstraction – looking at alternative sources where this is likely to be a significant impact – and implementing renewable options such as solar pumping in place of diesel generators, reducing the need for the use of fossil fuels, where this appropriate and sufficient capacity and financing is in place to ensure the long term sustainability of more complex water systems. Achieving sustainable water resources use requires long-term monitoring of groundwater levels.

Integrating with climate change programming across sectors

Concern’s approach to climate-resilient WASH services will integrate with Concern’s broader response to climate change, including livelihoods programming – working at the community or system level to strengthen resilience. This could include focusing on a specific geographical area and adopting a comprehensive approach to climate resilience encompassing watershed management, WASH services, agriculture, livelihoods and markets. For example, WASH and agriculture overlap when looking at multiple use of services¹⁰ (MUS) for water, and there may be potential for integration around implementing and promoting sustainable irrigation techniques which both enhance crop yields (supporting livelihoods) and reduce the burden on water sources, supporting watershed management. In many contexts the primary response of Concern’s WASH programming to the risks posed by climate hazards will be through technical interventions (infrastructure) and through strengthening the WASH system at the district level, to help ensure communities and authorities have a greater capacity to respond to crises.

Outcomes for Objective 4

- 4.1: Concern WASH programmes lead (directly or indirectly) to more climate-resilient WASH services
- 4.2 Concern WASH programming supports cross-sectoral climate resilience work.
- 4.3 Concern’s WASH programmes have a minimised negative effect on the availability of freshwater resources

Strategic Objective 5

To improve the capacity of Concern and partners to achieve the strategic objectives for WASH.

Concern is committed to ensuring that its’ staff have the skills and knowledge to deliver the highest quality WASH programmes and that there is a legacy of local and national capacity to deliver WASH services through supporting and lifting-up local partners. The objectives outlined in this strategy will require new ways of working, and will only be achieved if County programmes, staff and partners are given the necessary support and guidance.

Adapting to the challenge of meeting these strategic objectives will require Concern staff and partners to have strong core technical WASH skills (whether in engineering, systems strengthening or behaviour change) but this must be matched by the ability to analyse and understand the context in which programmes are being implemented and adapt approaches as necessary.

Concern will support the development of staff and partner capacity in the following ways:

¹⁰ MUS is for all the water users (livelihood activities including agriculture and pastoralism, human drinking consumption)

- Producing technical briefs, guidance notes and standard operating procedures to help staff implement high-quality WASH programmes.
- Ensuring that training for Concern field staff and partners is included in all WASH programmes. Where partners are trained this should be accompanied by a roadmap for how the skills learned will be used and maintained to achieve a lasting change.
- Supporting the continuing professional development of Concern staff where this is feasible. This could be using freely available Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) such as those provided by EAWAG¹¹ (urban sanitation programming) or IRC¹² (systems strengthening).
- Where necessary by hiring staff with the correct expertise and experience – for example ensuring there is sufficient in-house engineering expertise to risk-manage projects or bringing in specific expertise on urban programming.

Internally, Concern is committed to staying abreast of research, development and innovation in the area of WASH and to apply as much of this as possible to our programmes to make them more effective, cost-effective, and sustainable. Our global WASH advisers will continue to support countries through visits and remote support through one-to-one contact, webinars and sharing of materials and will develop technical briefs and abstracts for conferences as appropriate. We will encourage closer collaboration of Equality, DRR, livelihoods and other sectoral advisors with WASH advisors. Concern will also continue to participate in various WASH fora and networks (ex: Global and National WASH Clusters, A4C, RWSN, Susana, WEDC conferences) to share our experiences and learn from other’s lessons. Concern will use it’s engagement at country level (e.g. through national WASH clusters or A4C) to inform it’s engagement at a global level, and to help ensure that global coordination mechanisms are rooted in the practicalities of programme implementation. These fora will also provide a platform to advocate for changes in water policies or funding approaches that will affect the extreme poor

Box 6 Concern priority areas for capacity development

To meet the objectives in the strategy, capacity development will need to be prioritised in the following areas:

- In ensuring the quality of all WASH interventions through staff following appropriate standard operating processes and risk management processes.
- In adopting a system strengthening approach, with all WASH programmes including some elements of this.
- In building experience and expertise to implement urban WASH programmes.
- In continuing to follow best practice for hygiene behaviour change programming and implementing high-quality behaviour-centred interventions.

Outcomes for Objective 5

5.1: Concern staff have increased capacity to plan, implement and monitor WASH programmes in line with this strategy.

5.2 Concern WASH partners have increased capacity to implement programme activities and make a contribution to a strong WASH system.

¹¹ <https://www.eawag.ch/en/department/sandec/e-learning/moocs/>

¹² <https://www.ircwash.org/wash-systems-academy>

Concern's core WASH interventions

How Concern will achieve the objectives set out in this strategy.

Whilst the goal and objectives of Concern's WASH programming will apply across all country programmes, how this is achieved in practice will vary based on the country and programme specific context. The WASH programming used by Country Programmes will be influenced by needs assessments and contextual analysis conducted by Country Offices. We can loosely group our countries of operation into three streams:

- **Stream One** Countries have weak local capacities often with no tradition of service provision by government and are afflicted by frequent and often cyclical and predictable natural hazards, conflict, poor security and instability which create challenges both in terms of the needs of the population and Concern's ability to operate.
- **Stream Two** Countries are more stable with the government somewhat committed to service provision. These countries are easier to deliver programmes in, although there are still operational challenges.
- **Stream Three** Countries have a higher level of domestic capacity for service delivery, with strong local and national systems for WASH. Programmes working in these countries face relatively few operational challenges.

The appropriate balance of WASH interventions will carry across these three streams. Countries in Stream Three are more likely to be suitable for a programme which relies heavily on systems strengthening, with Concern working closely with local government to extend access to WASH services and ensure these are sustainable. Countries in Stream One will likely require more investment in providing first-time access to WASH services, and Concern may need to work through local civil society organisations where the government is weak or does not have access to populations in need.

Country programmes will be best placed to determine the correct balance of interventions to be used in a WASH programme, but the following are considered core interventions for Concern's WASH strategy and all programming is expected to include some elements of these.

Box 7 Concern Best practices for WASH interventions



This section of the strategy outlines the core interventions which it is anticipated Concern WASH programmes will use to achieve the strategic objectives.

The Concern WASH Technical Support unit has pulled together a practical guide on how to avoid some of the most common pitfalls of designing and implementing WASH programmes. This complements the outline of the core interventions given below.

Box 8 Interventions to be avoided

The core interventions included in this strategy are not exhaustive – over the course of this strategy new WASH interventions will be developed, and some contexts may call for the use of specific methodologies. However, the intervention in this section represent where Concern’s expertise and experience lie. Before planning interventions outside the scope of this strategy careful consideration should be given to whether Concern has the appropriate capacities in place, and advice should be sought from Concern WASH advisors.

Specifically, Concern will not use the following interventions in it’s WASH programming:

- **large scale infrastructure construction and rehabilitation** programmes in urban areas, which require a depth of engineering expertise and rigorous risk management processes which are beyond Concern’s capacity.
- **Faecal Sludge Management** without working closely with a partner which has the potential to deliver an ongoing sanitation service beyond the project timeline.
- **Didactic hygiene training** which focuses solely on knowledge and does not seek to use emotional triggers to change behaviour
- **Supply-driven sanitation** such as the distribution of sanitation facilities which is not accompanied by demand-creation activities.
- **Infra-structure only water** where drinking water facilities are constructed (or rehabilitated) without being accompanied by activities to strengthen the enabling environment for WASH.

WASH in humanitarian response

Concern has a strong organisational ability to respond to emergencies and WASH has been one of the key components of Concern’s emergency response in many crises. WASH in emergencies will continue to focus initially on the lifesaving and disease prevention activities critical in the initial response phase, but country programmes should continue to be mindful of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus for WASH and link our emergency WASH interventions to post-crisis and recovery as soon as possible.

Where Concern provides populations in humanitarian contexts with access to WASH services, these should always be in line with the Sphere standards for emergency response, or with nationally defined standards (whichever is higher). Emphasis should be placed on closing the gaps in existing humanitarian WASH interventions¹³ such as excreta disposal issues, particularly in urban settings, weak community participation for the design of contextually appropriate activities, poor sustainability of interventions, and failing to link effectively with development programmes and plan for the end of emergency WASH funding and interventions.

Concern is a member of the Global WASH Cluster and will continue to coordinate interventions through the WASH Cluster in all countries where this is activated.

Providing and rehabilitating WASH infrastructure for local communities

Whilst Concern will place an increasing emphasis on improving access to WASH through building the capacity of local actors to plan, implement and deliver WASH services in the long term through systems strengthening, it will continue to implement programmes which include the construction or rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure – particularly water supply systems – where this is appropriate. Whilst sustainable WASH services can only be achieved by

¹³ As of early 2021 the GWC is updating its WASH Gap Analysis (due to be completed May 2021). When available this will be taken into consideration when refining priority areas for humanitarian WASH interventions.

strengthening local WASH systems, the capital investment required to provide basic WASH services is a considerable barrier to achieving universal access. In post-conflict or displacement contexts there will also be a need to either replace WASH infrastructure destroyed during conflict or provide additional infrastructure to meet the needs of significant increases in the local population due to displacement.

In all cases, the costs involved are likely to be beyond the means of national and local governments in which Concern works. To meet the immediate, lifesaving, need for water and sanitation, there is a clear rationale for Concern to help support the construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure. Except in the most exceptional circumstances (for example, due to access or conflict issues), this should always be done in collaboration with local authorities – respecting their mandate to lead on the planning, implementation and delivery of WASH services, and supporting the existing WASH system.

WASH in urban and peri-urban contexts

Over the last decade, Concern has developed its experience in urban WASH, with programmes now taking place in Bangladesh (Dhaka), Sierra Leone (Freetown), Haiti (Port au Prince), Lebanon and Syria covering solid waste management, supporting civil society and providing access to water and sanitation. Working in urban areas poses many new challenges for Concern's WASH practitioners: the needs of users and appropriate interventions are not the same as for rural programming, and the scale and complexity of interventions can be much greater.

The rapid urbanisation of many of the countries Concern works in means that urban WASH needs will continue to grow and, in some cases, outstrip WASH needs in rural areas. To stay relevant Concern will need to continue to strengthen and develop its experience and expertise in urban WASH programming, in line with Concern's core strengths and with a focus on those in extreme poverty. As part of this Concern will develop capacities to overcome some of the important challenges associated with urban and peri-urban WASH programmes such as heterogeneity of the community, lack of space, difficulties over land ownership, and legality of settlements and natural and human-derived hazards.

Working in urban WASH will require new interventions and should be an entry-point for Concern to work with non-traditional partners, including the private sector, to deliver services which meet the needs of the community, can be scaled to match the level of need within urban areas and are sustainable.

Areas in which Concern should look to increase urban WASH programming include:

- **In small towns and rural growth centres**, which require more sophisticated services than rural areas (for example a basic water distribution network, or faecal sludge management rather than a latrine building campaign) but are not yet covered by formal utilities. In these contexts, work must be done to put in place long term operation and maintenance arrangements in line with systems strengthening.
- **In underserved urban areas**, including informal settlements. Here Concern should work to connect marginalised communities with existing services wherever possible, either through direct interventions or through advocacy work (where, for example, policies and regulations need to change to allow services to be extended). In these contexts, Concern will need to partner with local authorities and municipalities, utilities, and other organisations focusing on city-wide services.

Box 9 Covering the last mile – linking the extreme poor to municipal services

In Freetown, Sierra Leone, Concern is working alongside Catholic Relief Services and Freetown City Council to improve solid waste management for some of the most marginalized communities. Whilst CRS is working to improve downstream services (connecting local transfer stations to municipal waste management sites) Concern is helping to improve access between transfer stations and those living in extreme poverty. This includes practical interventions such as improving access routes in informal settlements to ensure waste collection carts and tricycles can reach all areas – making it easier for people to dispose of their solid waste.

Concern should not be leading large scale infrastructure construction and rehabilitation programmes in urban areas, which require a depth of engineering expertise and rigorous risk management processes which are beyond the capacity of typical NGOs. This does not mean there is not a role for Concern in large scale urban infrastructure programmes led by partners, such as engineering firms. For example, using Concern’s expertise in participatory processes to engage with communities and ensure that interventions meet community needs and provide equity of access.

Strengthening WASH systems

Concern has adopted strengthening WASH systems as a strategic objective of its WASH programming (see above). System strengthening involves taking actions and supporting interventions that are considered likely to strengthen one or more elements of the whole WASH system. This includes strengthening both the factors (technology, financing, regulation, coordination, service delivery, etc.), as well as the capacity of actors and their interrelationships, to improve the quality and sustainability of WASH services and ensure that all populations are served.

There is no single way of assessing WASH systems or working to strengthen them. The work which is needed will differ in each country and district depending on the existing system, actors, capacities and resources. It is critical that Concern WASH programmes take the time to understand Concern’s place in the WASH system, how this relates to other actors, and what actions to improve system strength Concern is best placed to support. As part of this, it is vital that Concern and Concern staff must be able to look past traditional interventions for delivering WASH services.

Concern is a member of Agenda for Change (A4C) which sets out eight building blocks which are necessary for a strong system. Whilst ultimately all building blocks need to be strong to ensure sustainable services, it is not possible to strengthen all of them at once. At the same time, the building blocks are interdependent – it may be necessary to strengthen one before progressing to linked areas (e.g., planning may only be possible once a full asset inventory to understand current provision has been undertaken).

Concern’s core strength is in focusing on supporting WASH systems at a district level while using our evidence from the field to influence policy change and develop an enabling environment at the national level where appropriate. As an entry point to systems strengthening, all Concern WASH programmes should consider mapping the WASH system to understand strengths and weaknesses and to define priority areas for support. In nearly all cases this process should be led by the relevant local authority, with support and facilitation from Concern. This can be a useful process for building consensus on which areas of the system need to be strengthened and identifying all stakeholders who need to be involved in the process.

The table below gives examples (and examples only) of activities which may be undertaken to strengthen each of the building blocks.

Building Block	Example Action
Institutional Arrangements & Coordination	Mapping the roles and responsibilities of various actors in the district WASH sector, clarifying ambiguities and strengthening the mechanisms that bring different stakeholders together.
Service Delivery Infrastructure	Conducting asset inventory surveys (e.g., water point mapping) and supporting their implementation with district stakeholders.
Monitoring	Strengthening the monitoring capacities of local authorities
Planning	Helping service authorities to develop evidence-based fully costed strategic WASH plans
Finance	Applying a ‘life-cycle costing approach’ at the district level and influencing budget allocations
Regulation & Accountability	Helping service users understand their rights, and to hold service providers accountable.
Water Resource Management	Undertaking water resource assessments and strengthening water resource registration and ongoing monitoring processes
Learning & Adaptation	Supporting and strengthening multi-stakeholder platforms for reflection and cross-learning at district levels

Box 10 Systems Strengthening Resources

- Concern’s *WASH System Strengthening Approach Guidance Note* (January 2020) is a starting point for understanding systems strengthening for WASH.
- A4C has a detailed library of resources available at [Home - Agenda for Change \(washagendaforchange.org\)](http://washagendaforchange.org).
- A practical guide for those new to Systems Strengthening is *Strengthening Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Systems: Concepts, Examples, and Experiences* available at https://washagendaforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/20190516_agenda_for_change_joint_principles_revised.pdf (French, Spanish and Portuguese versions also available).



Social behaviour change communications

Access to improved water, sanitation and hygiene facilities does not, on its own, necessarily lead to improved health and there is clear evidence showing the impact of hygienic behaviours on health. Concern recognises this and therefore hygiene promotion will remain a key part of all our WASH programmes. Concern has made considerable progress in moving from more traditional hygiene education consisting of didactic training and advice to a Designing for Behaviour Change approach to improve the impact of our hygiene promotion activities.

The following principles should be followed should be included in all Concern campaigns, regardless of the approach used.

- **Interventions should be based on formative research** – this could be a systematic barrier analysis exercise, a series of focus groups or another method – to help ensure that the design of behaviour change campaigns is appropriate to the context and cultural and social norms and to help design specific activities and tailored messages will be created that will resonate with people’s emotions and other motivators of human behaviour

- **Behaviour change interventions should – if possible – focus on a single behaviour** (e.g., handwashing) to maximise results. This can be challenging when attempting to integrate hygiene promotion with other programmes such as nutrition and health, so compromises may have to be made
- **Hygiene promotion must provide the targeted population with** a realistic path to improving their situation through ‘**small doable actions**’ (SDA). Achieving a fully hygienic home environment will be unrealistic for many due to a lack of resources, so setting out actions which are achievable for everyone is essential.
- Alongside hygiene promotion interventions, **Concern should take steps to strengthen the enabling environment for hygiene promotion**. This could include working to raise hygiene as a political priority at the district level - helping to secure budget allocations for ongoing hygiene promotion – or building the capacity of local officials to design and implement behaviour change campaigns.

Within these principles, the choice of behaviour change approach and specific activities used will be best determined by those closest to the communities involved. But it is envisaged that a combination of CLTS and Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) will continue to form the basis of much of Concern’s behaviour change programming. While there is good evidence that these interventions work, Concern must continue to review and adapt interventions as necessary, based on latest best practice in the WASH sector and monitoring the outcomes of behaviour change activities to ensure that they are leading to the desired changes. Concern will also continue the use of Children’s Hygiene and Sanitation Training (CHAST) through WASH and education programmes. This should form a systematic element within WASH or education programmes, rather than through one-off hygiene promotion days or activities.

Box 11 Special Focus: BabyWASH

An area of increasing focus for Concern will be BabyWASH. This should not replace WASH interventions but complement them with more targeted interventions for mothers and young children within the first 1,000 days of life. The key aims of BabyWASH interventions should be:

- 1) **environmental hygiene in community and households** to reduce faecal-oral exposure in the first 1,000 days
- 2) **clean birth** at health facilities
- 3) **Reduced WASH-related workload** for mothers during pregnancy

Achieving this will require integrated actions across multiple sectors: WASH, maternal new-born and child health (MNCH), nutrition and early childhood development (ECD). The first step in the process should be conducting assessments to collect insights on the BabyWASH situation in your context (as for all behaviour change activities) followed by a workshop with different partners and local authorities to design integrated activities for BabyWASH

Concern is already implementing the BabyWASH methodology in Niger, South Sudan, Sudan, DRC, Chad, and it is expected that more country programmes will adopt the BabyWASH methodology during the lifetime of this strategy.

Whatever the methodology used by Concern WASH programmes, it is essential that it is carried out to the highest quality. Interventions such as CLTS and PHAST are now well established in the WASH sector and many staff and partners may feel they are familiar with the intervention and

how to implement it. Even if this is the case regular refresher training should be held to ensure a consistently high-quality implementation of behaviour change activities.

Box 12 Concern Behaviour Change Communications Resources

- *Hygiene promotion technical brief, 2017*
This provides full technical guidance on all the elements which should be included in hygiene behaviour change programmes along with links to in-depth resources on specific methodologies such as PHAST.
- *Golden rules for designing new behaviour change support materials*
A simple one-page guide on what should (and shouldn't) be included in new behaviour change support materials.

Water safety

Historically programmes extending access to drinking water in low-income countries have focused on the provision of an 'improved' water source, with the assumption that the appropriate physical protection of a water source will deliver safe water to users. However, even when water is taken from well-constructed improved water sources – such as hand pumps – there is a risk that water can be contaminated either at the point of supply or the point of consumption, undermining the potential health gains.

To address the risk of **contamination at the point of supply** Concern WASH programmes should include actions which help to ensure the water source and area surrounding it remain free from contamination. As a minimum, this should include a basic sanitary survey undertaken along with community members, but in contexts where the local WASH system is stronger a water safety planning approach - a proactive intervention to ensure water safety through good management of the complete water supply system – should be adopted.

Contamination at the point of use arises when clean water is re-contaminated during transport, storage or use. To help minimise this risk Concern WASH programmes should include activities which help users to maintain a safe water chain wherever appropriate.

Risk assessment and risk reduction

Concern has organisational expertise and experience in disaster risk reduction (DRR), working with communities and partners to improve communities and individuals' resilience to future shocks by minimising hazards and reducing vulnerability. In the context of WASH this means:

- Reducing the likelihood of WASH services being disrupted by future shocks.
- Increasing the ability of communities and authorities to reinstate WASH services after they have been disrupted.

Resilience to future shocks will be underpinned by ensuring that any WASH infrastructure constructed as part of Concern WASH programmes is of excellent technical quality, and likely to be sufficiently robust to withstand hazards typical of that context. All technical WASH work will be preceded by technical feasibility assessments¹⁴ and risk analysis to improve all engineering designs by taking the prevalent hazards into account when designing infrastructure. This must include a specific focus on climate-related risks and the resilience of WASH interventions to these. Where finances permit, WASH infrastructure must be designed to peak hazard intensity i.e., they are resilient to the strongest foreseeable natural hazards wherever possible. Other factors will be taken to consideration such as other uses of water (e.g., agriculture and

¹⁴ This could include, hydrogeological studies, topographic profiling, hydraulic analysis, and environmental impact assessments

industry), aquifer yields and hazards (including earthquake, landslide) and conflict risks. Risk analysis of each individual installation can help avoid issues like siting wells in areas that will lead to an increase in gender-based violence or other conflicts.

Increasing the ability of communities to recover is part of Concern's commitment to strengthening WASH Systems: if local institutions and communities have the capacity and resources to sustain WASH services over the long term, this will include the ability to recover from periodic and predictable shocks. Specifically, Concern will integrate key principles of DRR into work on strengthening the *planning* building block. Concern will also ensure the inclusion of WASH in governance bodies (e.g., Disaster Management Committees (DMCs)), using its cross-sectoral work on DRR as an entry point¹⁵. This will primarily be at the community level, but also when possible at the district and national levels. This will contribute to ensuring that WASH structures are resilient, and that WASH gets good prioritisation in disaster events.

Integrated WASH programming

Concern recognises that poverty, inequality and risk and vulnerability are root causes and consequences of poor health and wellbeing. Disease is often one of the causes of vulnerability which in turn can be caused by poor WASH services. Lasting improvements in health can therefore only be achieved through a multidisciplinary approach, tackling many of the root causes of poverty and developing stronger links with other sectors. Concern has WASH programmes which are 'stand-alone' – that is, despite being located in the same area as other sectors, there is limited integration of activities and programmes – but increasingly the preference for Concern WASH programmes to be implemented as part of a multi-sectoral development or resilience-building programmes. This includes integrating WASH with nutrition, health, education, agriculture, natural resource management and DRR.

Integration of WASH can take several forms. This could be the provision of water and sanitation infrastructure for health care facilities (HCFs) to complement ongoing health and nutrition programming based in HCFs to ensure that safe water and sanitation is accessible to staff and patients, or the inclusion of high-quality sanitation and hygiene messaging (in line with the interventions above) delivered as part of nutrition, health or education programmes. Integrating hygiene messaging into the routine work of community volunteers or other community workers can be an effective way of extending the reach of Concern's WASH work within current programme plans and budgets. Where this is done it is important to ensure that appropriate WASH technical expertise is included in the design and implantation of behaviour change interventions to ensure that they are of high quality.

Ensuring quality in WASH programming

Concern is committed to delivering the highest quality WASH programming possible. Whilst this applies to all aspects of WASH programming it is particularly relevant to any work involving the construction or rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure. When done correctly this can provide the basis for long-term sustainable WASH services. When done poorly, poor-quality or unreliable infrastructure can fatally undermine the sustainability of WASH services,

¹⁵ E.g., Even where there is no dedicated WASH programming, any Concern work on DRR should include WASH perspectives.

leaving communities with little or no provision: the ability of a community of service provider to manage infrastructure can only be as good as the initial build quality.

Risk managing infrastructure interventions

Core to ensuring quality infrastructure is managing the risk along all-steps of the process: from assessments, planning and design, through to tendering and construction and final commissioning and post-commissioning support. Risk should be considered in the broadest sense here but includes:

- The direct risk to individuals working with contractors or communities, if construction work is not carried out safely.
- The risk to the future sustainability of services if construction work is not of high quality.
- The reputational risk to Concern arising from being associated with poor quality infrastructure or dangerous working practices.
- The financial risk to Concern if there is a need to undertake remedial work arising from poor quality construction.

How best to manage risk will depend on the arrangements for implementing WASH infrastructure work – both in terms of how the Concern WASH programme is structured and the legal and contractual situation in the country of operation, but the ultimate responsibility for managing the risk should always lie with Concern.

Where Concern is directly managing construction activities – including directly contracting, for example, drilling contractors – there must be sufficient engineering expertise in the Concern country and field office to quality assure the construction activities. The individual staff responsible for managing construction contracts must have previous experience of managing contracts of a similar nature and scale. Whilst support can (and should) be obtained through the use of drilling supervisors or similar, this does not remove the need for in-house engineering expertise.

The situation may be more complex when Concern is implementing through partners – either civil society or the local government. Concern may delegate day to day activities to partners – for example, the design of infrastructure or managing contractors – but this can only be done following a process of due diligence to ensure that partners have the skills and capacity to undertake this work. There must also be a clear agreement between Concern and the partner with regards to the responsibilities of each party. Where partners lack some skills or capacities alternative arrangements must be put in place, or appropriate support provided to partners to ensure they can fulfil the role.

Part of managing risk is ensuring that the scope and complexity of the activity fall within the competencies of Concern, and the staff available to manage the activity. Concern's HQ WASH engineering advisors should be informed of all WASH infrastructure work as much in advance as possible – preferably at the concept note or proposal stage. This will allow an assessment of the complexity and risk entailed by the proposed work, and additional support (such as external support from engineering consultancies) can be facilitated if appropriate. Work which is beyond Concern's expertise and competence and presents a level of risk which exceeds the organisational risk appetite will be advised against.

Standard operating procedures

Concern has now established a series of standard operating procedures (SOPs) and engineering guidelines for WASH implementation (see Box 13). These provide detailed guidance on the minimum standards and process which apply to Concern's WASH interventions. These SOPs must be followed where Concern is directly managing WASH activities. Where Concern is managing activities through partners, the SOPs should be used as a strong guideline for how activities are implemented. Where there is a divergence from the SOPs there should be a clear rationale for this, and advice should be sought from Concern HQ WASH Engineering Advisors as appropriate.

Box 13 Concern WASH Engineering resources

The following documents include guidelines and standards on all aspects of WASH engineering interventions and should be used by Country Offices throughout design, planning and implementation of any WASH activities involving construction or rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure.

- Engineering SOPs
- WASH Engineering – Minimum Requirements & Standards
- Concern's WASH & Engineering Library

Resources are available from the WASH technical support team.

Target groups

Concern is committed to focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable contexts and – over the course of the 2016-20 strategic period - has continued a gradual shift to work in a greater number of fragile states. WASH programmes will continue to target people living in extremely vulnerable contexts, with weak government capacities, affected by frequent natural hazards, conflict and instability, and often living in isolated, under-resourced locations in which other WASH actors may not engage. This includes fragile and failed states, where government supports to WASH are minimal or non-existent and where conflict has directly impacted on access to WASH through destruction and damage to WASH infrastructure.

In line with Concern's commitment to leave no one behind in the achievement of SDG6, in most contexts, the priority groups for WASH interventions should be those with no existing access to services. Ensuring that everyone has access to at least a basic service for water, sanitation and hygiene must be achieved before progressive action can be taken to improve the standard of service people can use. This might include isolated and vulnerable communities (in rural or urban areas) who are excluded by geography or socio-economic status from accessing formal WASH services, or populations displaced to an area with either no WASH services or services insufficient to meet the needs of the increased population.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Monitoring WASH programmes

Concern's WASH programmes are developed and led by Concern Country offices – there is considerable diversity in programme design and implementation. The nature of the programmes implemented, the local context, and local government and donor requirements

will inform the detailed design of monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks. As guidance for WASH programme planning and monitoring

Concern has identified a set of Standard WASH indicators (part of the Programme Quality Guide), to measure progress against key WASH outcomes. Country programmes are encouraged to use these indicators to allow for increased comparability in data between country programmes, and alignment with sector benchmarks for water and sanitation. Additional indicators should be developed and aligned to the specific intended outcomes for each WASH programme, and for WASH activities which are not covered by the Standard Indicators. For example, it may be necessary to identify indicators which accurately capture the systems strengthening, gender, and climate change related activities which are included in WASH programmes.

Recognising the challenges of sustainability facing the WASH sector Concern continues to plan to increase the number of programmes which include a Post-Implementation Monitoring element. This allows a greater understanding of whether communities and individuals continue to be able to access WASH services, or whether behaviour change has been maintained. Whilst securing funding for this can be difficult, wherever possible, Post-Implementation monitoring should be included in donor proposals.

Monitoring this strategy

This strategy includes a results framework (see Annex 3) comprising the outcomes defined under each strategic objective, indicators, targets (for the end of the strategy period) and the means of verifying whether targets have been met. The results framework will be monitored on an annual basis through the development and monitoring of annual milestones (to be developed). This annual review will be the responsibility of the Concern WASH technical support staff.

THEORY OF CHANGE

To contribute to the achievement of health and wellbeing for the extreme poor within the context of the water, sanitation and hygiene related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6).

To support and contribute to improvements in livelihoods, nutrition, education and health provision through effective integration with other programmes and sectors

Improved and equitable access to sustainable quality and affordable WASH services

Improved access to WASH services including affordability for the poorest.

Increase sustainability of WASH interventions and services.

Ensure that WASH services are resilient to emerging climate-related hazards

Positive social and behaviour changes in hygiene practices and demand for WASH services

Formative research identifying key barriers.

Key messaging based on barriers and motivators.

Messages relayed by multiple channels.

Consistent monitoring, reviewing and revising.

Contributing to strong WASH systems at local and national level

Develop, influence and guide local WASH policies and plans.

Work alongside local government to strengthen the weakest building blocks of the WASH system.

Create opportunities for private sector involvement.

Involve and support the community using participatory approaches.

Ensuring that all WASH activities are of the highest possible quality

Build Internal Capacity

Upskill in systems strengthening approaches

Increase collection and sharing of lessons learnt

Improve ability to implement gender transformative WASH

Build expertise in urban WASH programming

ANNEXES

Annex 1: WASH-related Sustainable Development Goals and Targets

The WASH Sustainable Development Goal is to *'Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.'* The associated targets are listed here.

- 6.1:** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
- 6.2:** By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations
- 6.3:** By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally
- 6.4:** By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity
- 6.5:** By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate
- 6.6:** By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes
- 6.a:** By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies
- 6.b:** Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management

Annex 2: Concern's WASH portfolio

Table 1: Concern's WASH portfolio

Context	Country
Development	Bangladesh Korea (DPRK) Democratic Republic of Congo Ethiopia Haiti Kenya Liberia Malawi Niger Rwanda Sierra Leone
Rehabilitation	Afghanistan Burundi Chad Iraq Pakistan Republic of Sudan Somalia,
Emergency	Central African Republic South Sudan Lebanon Turkey/Syria.

Annex 3: WASH STRATEGY RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Annex 3: WASH STRATEGY RESULTS FRAMEWORK				
	<p>Strategic Goal: To contribute to the achievement of health and wellbeing for the extreme poor within the context of the water, sanitation and hygiene related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6).</p>			
<p>Strategic Objective 1: Achieve lasting improvements in access to sustainable basic WASH services for those living in extreme poverty.</p>	<p>Outcome</p>	<p>Indicator(s)</p>	<p>Concern Global Target</p>	<p>Means of verification</p>
	<p>1.1 Concern WASH programmes lead to improved access to safe drinking water for the extreme poor.</p>	<p>Number of programme who are reporting improved access to safe drinking water for the extreme poor.</p>	<p>Baseline (2021)+ 10 %</p>	<p>Baseline/endline surveys</p>
	<p>1.2: Concern WASH programmes lead to improved access to safe and hygienic sanitation facilities for the extreme poor.</p>	<p>Number of programme who are reporting improved access to safe and hygienic sanitation facilities for the extreme poor.</p>	<p>Baseline (2021)+ 10 %</p>	<p>Baseline/endline surveys</p>
	<p>1.3: Concern WASH programmes lead to effective adoption of sound hygiene practices for the extreme poor.</p>	<p>Number of programmes who report effective adoption of sound hygiene practices for the extreme poor.</p>	<p>Baseline (2021)+ 10 %</p>	<p>Baseline/endline surveys</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 2: Implement WASH programmes which are gender transformative.</p>	<p>Outcome</p>	<p>Indicator(s)</p>	<p>Concern Global Target</p>	<p>Means of verification</p>
	<p>2.1: Concern WASH programmes demonstrate that steps are taken to take account of the WASH needs of women and girls.</p>	<p># Concern WASH programmes which use an explicit gender lens, and which incorporate gender-transformational WASH</p>	<p>At least, 2 Concern WASH programmes are using an explicit gender lens that which incorporate gender-transformational WASH</p>	<p>Programme reports</p>
	<p>2.2: Concern WASH programmes contribute to transforming harmful gender norms and improving the status of women and girls in their local communities.</p>	<p># Concern WASH programmes which can demonstrate improved gender outcomes (metric dependent on context)</p>	<p>At least, 2 Concern programmes can demonstrate improved gender outcomes (metric dependent on context)</p>	<p>Programme reports Baseline/endline surveys</p>

Strategic Objective 3: Work towards strengthening the enabling environment for WASH by helping to build strong systems at a district and national level.	Outcome	Indicator(s)	Concern Global Target	Means of verification
	3.1: Concern WASH programmes contribute to stronger district-level WASH systems through the adoption of a systems strengthening approach for WASH	# of Concern WASH programmes where systems strengthening is the primary focus of at least one donor-funded project.	At least, 2 Concern WASH programmes are developing a donor funded project where systems strengthening is the primary focus	Programme reports
	3.2 Concern WASH programmes contribute towards necessary changes in the national enabling environment for WASH through effective evidence-based advocacy	#of examples where Concern has directly contributed to changes in national level enabling environment changes.	At least, 1 Concern WASH programme has directly contributed to changes in national level enabling environment changes.	Programme reports and evaluations
	3.3 Concern secures long-term, flexible funding for WASH systems strengthening activities.	# of multi-year WASH funding opportunities secured where Concern has flexibility over programme activities.		Programme and fundraising reports
Strategic Objective 4. Contribute towards the climate resilience of those living in extreme poverty and ensure that WASH programmes do not have a negative environmental impact.	Outcome	Indicator(s)	Concern Global Target	Means of verification
	4.1: Concern WASH programmes lead (directly or indirectly) to more climate-resilient WASH services	# WASH programmes which include climate-sensitive activities and monitor the impact on climate change resilience.	At least, 2 Concern WASH programmes include climate-sensitive activities and monitor the impact on climate change resilience.	Programme reports
	4.2 Concern WASH programming supports cross-sectoral climate resilience work.	# Concern WASH programmes or proposals which address climate change and are fully integrated with another Concern sector.	At least, 2 Concern WASH programmes develop proposals which address climate change and are fully integrated with another Concern sector.	Programme reports and proposals
	4.3 Concern's WASH programmes have a minimised negative effect on	# Concern WASH programmes which have actively taken steps to	At least, 2 Concern WASH programmes have actively taken steps to manage water	Programme reports

	the availability of freshwater resources	manage water resources, and monitored water resources	resources, and monitored water resources	
Strategic Objective 5. To improve the capacity of Concern and partners to achieve the strategic objectives for WASH.	Outcome	Indicator(s)	Concern Global Target	Means of verification
	5.1: Concern staff have increased capacity to plan, implement and monitor WASH programmes in line with this strategy.	# of Concern staff who have participated in training aligned to the interventions and objectives in this strategy.		Advisors/results of other indicators
	5.2 Concern WASH partners have increased capacity to implement programme activities and make a contribution to a strong WASH system.	# of national WASH partners who have the capacity to lead substantial WASH programmes		Programme reports Advisors

Annex 5: Viewing WASH through an extreme poverty lens

	Assets	Inequality	Risks and Vulnerability
Individual and community level	<p>Good current health status is an important human asset (alongside natural, physical, financial, social, and political assets) to ensure people can live productive lives.</p> <p>The availability of and access to and clean, affordable and consistent supply of water, contributes to a good health status.</p> <p>Access to sanitation facilities that are well constructed and maintained which have handwashing facilities will contribute to good health status. Knowledge of hygiene behaviours which are put into practice are also an asset.</p> <p>Living in a clean unpolluted environment is also essential for good health.</p> <p>Health status relating to WASH often depends on the availability of other assets such as financial assets to construct a latrine or purchase water or natural assets such as having a water source. However, WASH services can also bring financial assets to vulnerable people by allowing income generating activities (e.g. waste disposal, selling water).</p>	<p>Access to WASH facilities are often not equal. This may be due to geographic factors, demographic factors (e.g. dispersed population), health and environmental policies that do not recognise barriers to access, income poverty, lack of education, poor awareness of rights and entitlements, dynamics of power and decision-making in the home, among others.</p> <p>Inequalities may exist in terms of access to water (e.g. if someone can't pay, or are coerced for sexual and other favours for access to water), access to sanitation (e.g. if someone is physically unable to construct a latrine), and access to a clean environment (e.g. if a government fails to provide waste disposal services in a slum).</p> <p>Water services are frequently managed at community level by a water management committee. Inclusion of women on these committees, particularly in a position of responsibility is a way to increase women's involvement in decision making.</p> <p>Inequality drives and maintains people's vulnerability and the set of assets they have at their disposal.</p> <p>Women and girls are primarily the water collectors in the household often having to</p>	<p>The risk faced by an individual or community is determined by the existing or potential hazards in their immediate environment and the current vulnerability of the individual or community (risk=hazard x vulnerability).</p> <p>Conflict or natural disasters which cause people to move from their homes or destroys infrastructure typically has a huge impact on peoples access to water and sanitation leading to a high risk of disease outbreaks during these emergencies.</p> <p>Women can be at risk of attack if forced to collect water or find a private place for the toilet in an unsafe environment (e.g. at night in poorly lit IDP camps). Women may also be more vulnerable due to lack of privacy and lack of menstrual hygiene management facilities.</p> <p>Those with disabilities or illnesses such as HIV may be more vulnerable to infectious disease and have an increased requirement for water along with a reduced ability to collect that water.</p> <p>Risks and vulnerabilities can change over time and may intensify and change dramatically, particularly during emergencies.</p>

		walk long distances for water. They are also generally responsible for cleaning latrines and looking after children's hygiene.	People's vulnerability is generally determined by their lack of assets and return on assets as well as discrimination/unequal access to services and resources.
Aim	A central aim of Concerns' programmes is to improve, restore or maintain good health through WASH which will increase an individual's set of assets and the return they experience on all the assets they possess (i.e. help them to live more productive lives).	WASH programmes aim to reduce inequalities by improving access to water and sanitation services and reduce the societal barriers to water, sanitation and hygiene services among vulnerable or under-served populations.	The aim of WASH programmes is to improve communities and individuals' resilience to future shocks by minimising hazards, and reduce vulnerability. In general, this will be done as part of a multi-sectorial programme.
Actions: How Concern programmes could help to address the three dimensions of poverty	<p>Solid contextual analysis will ask and answer key questions around a population's health status and access to WASH services particularly the extreme poor.</p> <p>Design programmes in an integrated fashion to be sure all the drivers of poor health across the six asset categories are addressed, and monitor and evaluate improvements.</p>	<p>Solid contextual analysis will help us understand the source of these inequalities and the power dynamics that drive them.</p> <p>Design programmes to improve access of disadvantaged groups to services and resources and address underlying social dynamics that maintain these inequalities. Collect data that allows disaggregation to monitor inclusion and outcomes of women and children from households identified as the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised.</p> <p>It is important to engage men in the process of women's empowerment as they are frequently the critical decision makers.</p> <p>Advocate for governments to improve their policies and strategies to include hard-to-</p>	<p>Existing and potential risks must be assessed, anticipated and well understood through contextual analysis and other means to design effective programmes.</p> <p>The key approach is resilience-building and a disaster risk reduction approach to reduce vulnerability.</p> <p>In emergencies, we should track and anticipate changes in key risks identified (e.g. is cholera endemic), and work to reduce risk and vulnerabilities and plan for appropriate responses. At the time of an emergency a well time and effective response will be necessary.</p>

		reach communities and individuals, and to fairly distribute resources.	
--	--	--	--

