

WASH in the DRC and around the world



The case for WASH:

Every \$1 invested in WASH has an average return of \$4 in increased productivity ¹

Improved WASH access reduces gender inequities, increases time spent by girls in school, and economically empowers women

Safe WASH prevents childhood malnutrition and stunting, which can cause lifelong chronic health burdens

Autonomous, decentralized systems of water supply and waste management reduce community vulnerability

What is WASH?

1. Access to safe drinking water close to home, free of contamination and preferably on-premises.
2. Equitable access to sanitation facilities within and outside the home, and services for the safe management and disposal of human waste.
3. Equitable access to effective personal hygiene, especially for women and girls. Safe water and sanitation is a vital component of this.

When households have a clean water supply, it is easier to prevent WASH-related diseases through improved hygiene practices.

Unsafe management of human waste is the primary cause of water contamination.

Hand washing with soap is the most cost-effective way to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases associated with poor WASH.

WASH in Kinshasa now and in the future:

Kinshasa is situated on the banks of the world's 2nd-largest river, yet nearly 70% of its 12+ million residents lack access to safe water or sanitation services.

REGIDESO, the public water utility, is only able to supply 60% of the city's daily water requirement and holds a near-monopoly on urban water provision and funding.

By 2030, Kinshasa is expected to become the largest city in Africa. It is currently growing at a rate of over 500,000 per year.

Decades of political inaction, conflict, and uncontrolled urban expansion have created a slow-moving crisis. Successfully improving WASH access in Kinshasa has the potential to drastically improve millions of lives. ²

The new Water Law, ministry, and water minister will provide a consolidated institutional framework for improving access to safe drinking water

Community-based co-ops are being established to foster growth of the private sanitation service sector

As REGIDESO increases its production capacity, it has also lost its nation-wide monopoly on urban water provision and government funding, opening up the market to supply-side competition

Investments in flood-prevention infrastructure for neighborhoods with recurrent flooding will reduce the pattern of post-flood cholera epidemics

WASH in Schools (WiS) is focussing on health education and improved bathroom facilities for girls: a significant cause of the educational gender gap

1. UNICEF. (2015). Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: The Case For Support
2. World Bank. (2017). WASH Poor in a Water-Rich Country