



Sanitation for Millions – Pakistan

SUSTAINABLE SANITATION FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Background

Sanitation for Millions is a global programme improving access to safe sanitation and hygiene with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. More than two million people have already benefitted directly from the project's measures. *Sanitation for Millions* builds female-friendly and inclusive sanitary facilities at schools, healthcare facilities, and faith-based institutions, trains local professionals to operate and maintain them, and promotes safe hygiene practices through targeted campaigns and knowledge transfer.

Sanitation for Millions was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in 2016. With the BMZ as the lead donor, *Sanitation for Millions* has received additional funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Water Unite, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, the Inter-American Development Bank, and share GmbH. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH executes the global programme in close cooperation with local partners in Colombia, Jordan, Pakistan, and Uganda.

Sanitation Challenges in Pakistan

The situation in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector in Pakistan is precarious. Only 66% of the population have access to even basic sanitation services, far from fulfilling the ambition set by SDG 6. 12% of the population still practise open defecation.

The situation is worst in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), where around 73% of schools lack any sanitary facilities. The net enrolment in schools drops from 72% at primary level of boys and girls to 32% at high school with boys' enrolment generally being higher than girls' enrolment. In Pakistan, the



The main structure of new toilets and handwashing facility is ready



Engineers standing on newly constructed DEWATS (Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System)



Girl practising handwashing with water and soap

Health Management Information System does not cover the WASH situation in basic health care units, which is even worse than in schools.

The precarious WASH situation in Balochistan and KP is aggravated by the constant influx of refugees from Afghanistan. As of June 2023, approximately 1.3 million registered refugees live in Pakistan, about 320,000 in Balochistan, and more than 700,000 in KP. Water scarcity in the region and inappropriate budgets for the provision of WASH services exacerbate the problem.

Intervention of Sanitation for Millions in Pakistan

Sanitation for Millions initiated its interventions in refugee hosting and low-income communities in Balochistan in 2017 and expanded to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in 2021. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is leading the programme implementation and cooperates closely with local partners such as the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), SABAWON, and with international NGOs such as the Bremen Overseas and Research and Development Association (BORDA) and German Toilet Organization (GTO). The programme cooperates with the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC), Ministry of Health (MoH), and the Departments of Education and Health of the provincial governments of Balochistan and KP.

Sanitation for Millions Pakistan aims at improving access to safely managed sanitation in public schools and health care facilities along the following lines of intervention:

- Construction of safe sanitary facilities incl. operation and maintenance system, with special attention to the needs of women and girls and people with impaired mobility, awareness creation on safe hygiene and menstrual health.

- Localization and implementation of the Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool (WASH FIT) in health care facilities.
- Upscaling of the 'Toilets Making the Grade® (TMG)' school competitions.
- Establishment of a concept for decentralised wastewater treatment systems (DEWATS) to efficiently reuse wastewater.

Currently, measures are implemented in communities with low-income households in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Sanitation for Millions* applies appropriate, low-cost technologies to improve access to safe sanitation and hygiene in public schools and health care facilities, taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Sanitation for Millions has developed its own concept for introducing and mainstreaming menstrual hygiene management in schools and expanded it to health care facilities and other sectors. At schools, WASH Clubs have been revived and Parents Teachers' School Management Committees established to sustain the measures and assure safe sanitation and hygiene. Furthermore, *Sanitation for Millions* advises the government on an enabling environment for safe sanitation and hygiene and supports a multi-stakeholder approach with relevant government departments.

Sanitation for Millions has established a secretariat to strengthen the provincial menstrual hygiene management working group of Balochistan and intends to replicate the same model in KP. The programme also collaborates with the private sector for joint ventures on menstrual health and its related environmental issues.

The approach of reusing wastewater was promoted by the construction of six decentralised wastewater treatment systems in Balochistan and KP, e.g., at public schools, universities, and hospitals with the technical support of Bremen Overseas Research and Development Association (BORDA). The approach is upscaled in collaboration with the governments of Balochistan and KP and the private sector.



Awareness creation and behaviour change activities on Menstrual Hygiene Day

Sanitation for Millions in Pakistan - Highlights 2017-2023

- Provision of access to safe sanitation and hygiene in 137 public schools and 74 health care facilities benefiting more than 1.4 million people (50% female).
- Training of more than 300 teachers and lady health care workers as master trainers on menstrual hygiene management.
- Establishment of a knowledge hub on DEWATS and introduction of the technology at schools, universities, hospitals, and community level.
- Successful revision and implementation of the Parents Teachers Councils (PTCs) guidelines for Education department of KP for improved WASH services in public schools.
- Launch of the WASH FIT change group with partner organizations and policy makers to operationalize WASH FIT in health care facilities at national level.

Outlook

Based on success stories from other implementing countries, *Sanitation for Millions* intends to expand its measures in KP, focusing on health care facilities and schools. Furthermore, *Sanitation for Millions* continuously supports the MHM working group and the government of Balochistan in the development of the provincial policy for menstrual health and hygiene management, as well as the operationalization of WASH FIT in all health care facilities of Pakistan.



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