



**BECAUSE  
EVERY LAST DROP MATTERS**  
ANNUAL PROGRESS: VOLUME 2021

BRAC WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE



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**ANNUAL PROGRESS: VOLUME 2021**

**A report on WASH implementation  
approaches, progress, and achievements  
in hard-to-reach regions of Bangladesh**

**BRAC WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE**

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## **ABOUT BRAC**

The journey began in 1972 in the newly sovereign Bangladesh, and over the course of our evolution, we have been playing the role of recognising and tackling the many different realities of poverty. We have, therefore, developed support services in the areas of human rights and social empowerment, education and health, economic empowerment and enterprise development, livelihood training, environmental sustainability, and disaster preparedness across Asia and Africa.

## **VISION**

A world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination where everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential.

## **MISSION**

Our mission is to empower people and communities in the situation of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice. Our interventions aim to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programmes that enable women and men to realise their potential.

## **VALUES**

- INTEGRITY
- INNOVATION
- INCLUSIVENESS
- EFFECTIVENESS

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# ABBREVIATION

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>MF</b>     | Microfinance programme                        |
| <b>BEP</b>    | BRAC education programme                      |
| <b>HNPP</b>   | Health, nutrition and population programme    |
| <b>UPGP</b>   | Ultra-poor graduation programme               |
| <b>CCP</b>    | Climate change programme                      |
| <b>UDP</b>    | Urban development programme                   |
| <b>IDP</b>    | Integrated development programme              |
| <b>SIL</b>    | Social innovation lab                         |
| <b>DPHE</b>   | Department of public health engineering       |
| <b>DSHE</b>   | Directorate of secondary and higher education |
| <b>DGH</b>    | Directorate general of health services        |
| <b>LGED</b>   | Local government engineering department       |
| <b>UN</b>     | United Nations                                |
| <b>UNICEF</b> | United Nations Children's Fund                |
| <b>LGI</b>    | Local government institution                  |
| <b>SDG</b>    | Sustainable Development Goal                  |
| <b>RWHS</b>   | Rainwater harvesting systems                  |
| <b>WTP</b>    | Water treatment plant                         |

# FOREWORD



BRAC has always been a changemaker, creating opportunities for people living in vulnerable conditions to realise their potential. Founded in 1972, the organization specializes in curating and implementing innovations to reach and impact the lives of millions, with the aim to challenge inequity and empower people through uplifting situations of poverty.

These achievements have been made possible through community empowerment and by enlisting the support of significant forces in society including local government, educational institutions, nationwide WASH committee members, religious leaders, and other stakeholders. However, the greatest contribution has been made by the frontline field staff and the village WASH committees, and leaders that the programme helped to establish.

Under the leadership of the Government and with the support from development partners, BRAC has been working for the poor and marginalized to achieve the targets. However, a

number of obstacles are still to overcome which includes effects of climate change, natural disasters, water scarcity, inadequate financing, rapid urbanization, lack of appropriate, sustainable and affordable technologies in hard-to-reach climate vulnerable areas, etc.

The donors and partners who helped to launch and support the BRAC WASH programme are to be congratulated on their ambition and willingness to build partnerships. I would also like to thank the Government of Bangladesh for its willingness to let BRAC work alongside them. BRAC is looking forward to working together with all the stakeholders in the coming years to overcome these barriers through sharing experiences and learning from others.

**Asif Saleh**  
Executive Director  
BRAC

## MESSAGE



The BRAC Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) programme has made a critical contribution nationwide over the years. The programme has reached out across 289 upazillas (sub-districts) – about half the country. It has helped over 44.20 million people to gain access to hygienic sanitation, 2.77 million people gained access to safe drinking water, 19,036 families received water subsidies while 1,424,562 families living in ultra-poverty received WASH grants. Targeted water and sanitation financing, entrepreneurs' development and financing, loans for the poor, grants and water subsidy for the ultra-poor, along with motivation for self-financing for the non-poor have ensured equal access for all wealth categories. Over the time of 2016-2021, the programme has also conducted more than 76,442 hygiene sessions received by 3.8 million students approximately where 6,320 secondary received WASH facilities focusing greatly on gender and disability. In 2021, WASH programme campaigned for promoting protecting behaviours against COVID-19 including mask use and hand washing in the WASH working areas.

According to WHO/UNICEF joint monitoring programme (JMP) report 2021, nationally, 98% population have access to basic water services while 59% have access to safely managed water supply services. In case of sanitation,

54% population have access to basic sanitation services whereas 39% population have access to safely managed sanitation services. Only 58% population have access to basic hygiene services. It clearly shows Bangladesh still needs to reinforce and accelerate necessary actions to achieve sustainable development Goals for water, sanitation and hygiene by 2030.

BRAC expresses its gratitude to every individual who has been a part of this programme and contributed with their expertise and to the best of their abilities. This report will showcase our collective effort in the WASH sector so that a framework that has been proven to be effective can be replicated in a wider arena.

### **Md. Akramul Islam, PhD**

Senior Director  
Communicable Diseases Programme (CDP)  
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)  
Programme Integrated Development Programme (IDP)  
Humanitarian Crisis Management Programme (HCMP)  
BRAC

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



BRAC's water, sanitation, and hygiene programme started operations soon after BRAC was founded in 1972, although the official launch as an individual programme entity took place in 2006. Since then, the aim has been to provide safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services to people living in poverty and the most marginalised communities across the country with a special focus on the hard-to-reach areas. BRAC WASH programme worked alongside the government of Bangladesh to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Since 2016, the programme has aligned its objectives and shifted its focus to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which calls for improved services requiring greater emphasis on access

to safely managed water and safely managed sanitation, as well as equitable and universal coverage.

The programme has implemented an array of projects following distinct approaches and strategies such as community mobilisation, capacity building, promoting social business models, building alliances, and advocacy at different levels. Among other services, the programme has ensured safely managed drinking water and safely managed sanitation across the intervention areas including climate-vulnerable hard-to-reach areas. Special attention was paid to building gender-inclusive and disability-friendly WASH facilities.

In 2021, the programme had a presence in 88 upazilas (sub-district), mostly in climate-vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas. It has provided sustainable and inclusive access to safely managed water to more than 107,000 people. Approximately 1,840 water options were installed through revolving funds and grants support while 12,300 people living in extreme poverty from 2,659 households received free water on a daily basis. In addition to this, 3,974 WASH entrepreneurs have been developed. The Programme also developed 67 water vendors who distribute safe water at the consumer end.

So far, 3,670 latrines have been installed through loan and grant support while 18,000 people gained access to safely managed sanitation. Approximately 9,100 of the people who received these services were female (46%) and 40 were people with disabilities, as used by BRAC. A faecal sludge treatment plant was successfully operated in Jamalpur pourashava in collaboration with the municipal authority to promote citywide inclusive sanitation. In order to promote a healthy learning environment, the programme designed and installed gender-sensitive and disabled-friendly latrines in 73 schools and safe drinking water points and hand-washing facilities in 300 secondary schools.

As part of the COVID-19 response, the WASH programme conducted 13,800 hygiene education and awareness sessions at the community level and 1,170 sessions in schools. Additionally, approximately 1,750 handwashing stations were installed at the community and household level for easy access to inclusive hand-washing facilities. The intervention in the community and schools covered approximately 365,000 people.

The outcome survey revealed that 98.8% of the installed water points are safely managed and 67.2% of latrines are twin pit offset or with a septic tank and 65.6% of the households have water and soap for handwashing after defecation.

In the near future, the WASH programme plans to deepen its focus on reaching the climate-vulnerable and hard-to-reach people of the coastal areas. Activities at secondary schools will be expanded to enhance gender and disability-inclusive WASH facilities. It will emphasise advocacy and partnership with the government agencies, thus focusing on the sustainability of the achievements. Last but not least, it will integrate and collaborate more closely with other programmes of BRAC to contribute to the targets of sustainable development goal 6.



CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Clean water and hygienic sanitation are believed to be essential components in the effort to eradicate poverty. Hence it has been a prominent part of BRAC's work since the beginning. Building on its long experience of providing water, sanitation, and hygiene services in the community, BRAC formally started its WASH programme in 2006.

The programme aims to provide sustainable and integrated WASH services in the rural areas and break the contamination cycle i.e., unsanitary latrines, contaminated water and unsafe hygiene practices, as well as ensure sustainability and scaling-up of WASH services. BRAC WASH has helped bring social transformation in areas where it has worked, especially in terms of rural sanitation for the families living in extreme poverty. During the Millennium Development Goals period, the programme covered half of the geographical areas of the country with WASH interventions and contributed substantially to achieving the national target of access to safe water and hygienic latrines. The programme closely has aligned and contributed to Sustainable Development Goal 6 and focuses on climate-affected, hard-to-reach and underserved rural and urban areas since 2016.

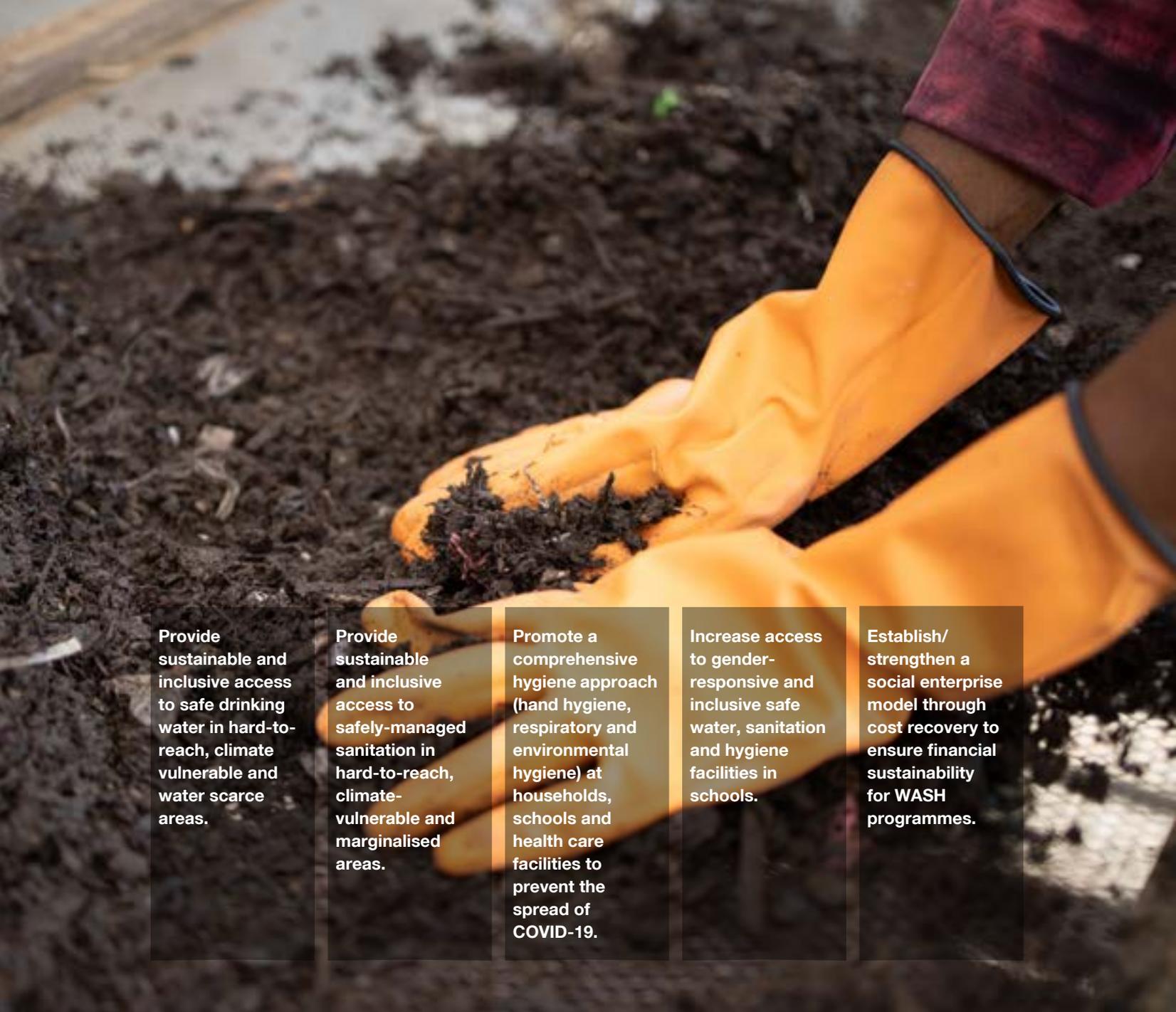
Through the implementation of its various projects, the BRAC WASH programme has given access to safe drinking water to 2.77 million people while 44.20 million people gained access to hygienic latrines. WASH facilities were established in 6,320 secondary schools and 1,424,554 sanitation grants were provided to people living in poverty and extreme poverty. In addition, 382 water treatment plants, 37 piped water networks, 20 water testing facilities and 3,974 WASH entrepreneurs have been developed.

## 1.2 Goals

The goals of the BRAC WASH programme are to improve the health and well-being of the individuals living in poverty and people belonging to the marginalised communities in the hard-to-reach and climate vulnerable areas by providing sustainable safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

## 1.3 Objectives

In the year 2021, the programme focused its objectives on the national WASH priorities, emerging situations (such as COVID-19, climate vulnerabilities etc.) and their impact. The main objectives of the programme were:



**Provide sustainable and inclusive access to safe drinking water in hard-to-reach, climate vulnerable and water scarce areas.**

**Provide sustainable and inclusive access to safely-managed sanitation in hard-to-reach, climate-vulnerable and marginalised areas.**

**Promote a comprehensive hygiene approach (hand hygiene, respiratory and environmental hygiene) at households, schools and health care facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**

**Increase access to gender-responsive and inclusive safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools.**

**Establish/ strengthen a social enterprise model through cost recovery to ensure financial sustainability for WASH programmes.**

## **1.4 Intervention Areas**

After the declaration of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), WASH programme closely aligned its targets for achieving SDG-6. Since 2016, BRAC WASH has focused on: WASH in hard-to-reach climate vulnerable areas, WASH in urban areas, Integration of WASH activities into BRAC's other programmes, WASH in schools, and Hygiene awareness including COVID – 19 pandemic prevention. In 2021, the programme mainly focused on water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in hard-to-reach climate vulnerable areas.



Kawsar Parvin, the first woman water entrepreneur in Moheshkhali, southern Bangladesh. Photo credit 2021 © BRAC





CHAPTER 2

**IMPLEMENTATION METHODS  
AND APPROACHES**

# IMPLEMENTATION METHODS AND APPROACHES

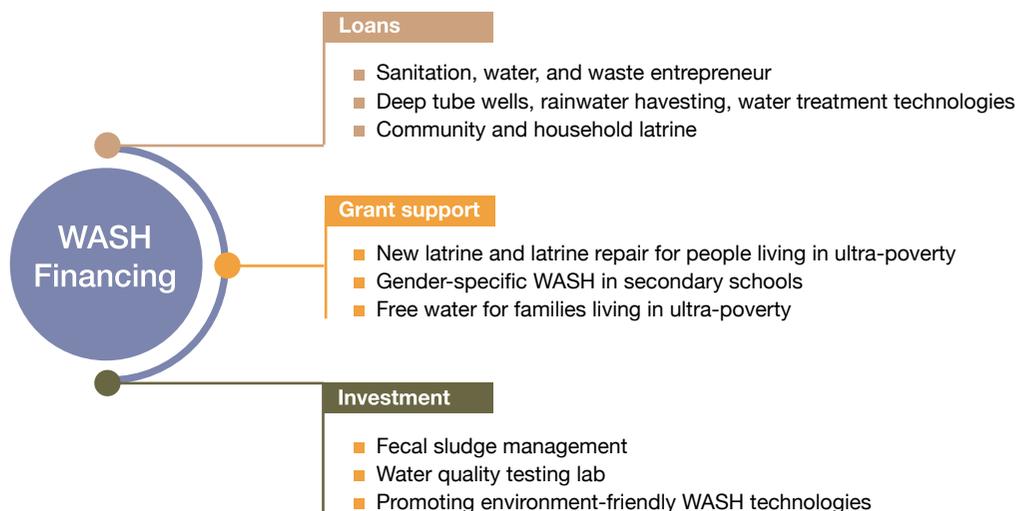
## 2.1 WASH programme implementation approaches

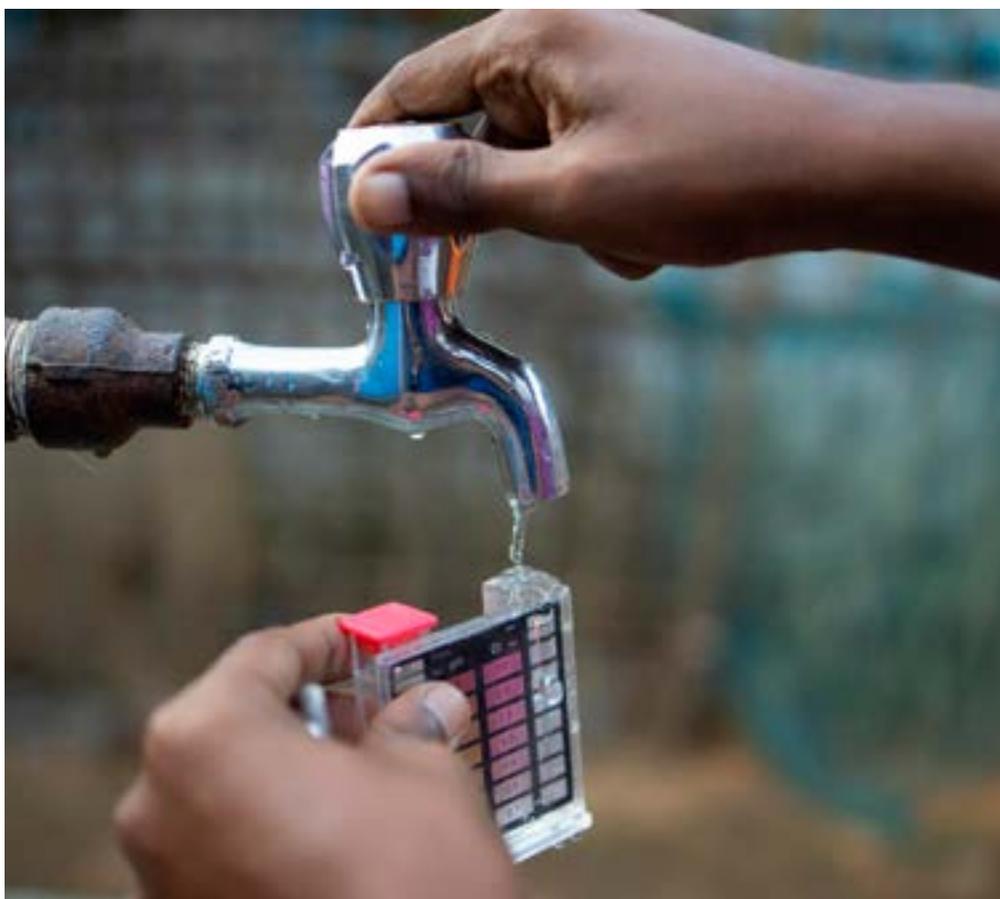
BRAC water, sanitation and hygiene programme focuses on community-based, integrated and affordable services to address water, sanitation, and hygiene needs for people living in poverty and those living in extreme poverty. The extreme climate events and the presence of contaminants in the water have made WASH service provision complicated in Bangladesh, especially in the coastal, haor (wetland region), chars (river islands) and hill tract areas. To promote sustainable, cost effective, and inclusive WASH services in climate vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas, the programme has considered an approach with four pillars:

Creating demand is the first pillar where community participation is ensured for awareness creation on safely managed water and sanitation services. After creating demand, the programme builds the second pillar by supporting the WASH entrepreneurs to ensure supply at the doorstep of the community. There is a strong focus on capacity building regarding sustainable technological solutions and on operation & maintenance (O&M). For the establishment and expansion of water businesses and installation of water and sanitation facilities at the household level, appropriate financial arrangements are made in the intervention areas. Finally, the third pillar includes the strengthening of the enabling environment through engagement of local government and other stakeholders by increasing advocacy and collaboration for smooth service delivery and resource mobilisation.

## 2.2 WASH financing model

Adopting 'Leave no one behind' as the central principle and aligning with the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the WASH Programme uses a multi-layered and multifaceted financing model to cater to people of all classes through loans, grants, and investments. The major components of the financial model are shown below:





A tool used to determine the residual chlorine percentage in water known as Pool Tester. Photo credit@BRAC

## 2.3 Programme implementation strategy

### **Promoting climate resilient and sustainable WASH services:**

The programme provides alternative resilient WASH facilities in climate-vulnerable hard-to-reach areas, which include latrines with raised platforms, deep tubewells with raised platforms, rainwater harvesting systems, and other water technologies such as piped water networks and reverse osmosis water treatment plants.

### **Ensuring access to safely-managed water and safely-managed sanitation across the project interventions:**

The programme promotes safely-managed water and safely-managed sanitation through the installation of appropriate context-specific water and sanitation technologies.

### **Supporting local government to promote city-wide inclusive sanitation:**

The programme promotes a green and clean city through the implementation of safely-managed water, safely-managed sanitation and solid waste management including fecal sludge management in municipal towns in collaboration with local government institutions.

### **Encouraging a healthy learning environment at educational institutions and investing for the future:**

BRAC WASH promotes hygiene education at secondary schools and catchments, constructs gender-specific and disabled-friendly latrines for students with menstrual hygiene management

facilities for girls, separate hand washing and drinking water stations, water treatment facilities, and waste management to ensure healthy learning environment at schools.

**Promoting social business models through the development of WASH entrepreneurs:**

One of the most important strategies is to develop local entrepreneurs for the purpose of providing efficient and cost-effective WASH services at the doorstep of the community. The programme provides technical and financial support to entrepreneurs.

**Mainstreaming gender and inclusion in WASH programme interventions:**

The programme pays particular attention to ensuring gender and disability inclusiveness in the delivery of every service as well as monitoring the activities with a gender-inclusive lens. It also designs and installs gender-sensitive and disabled-friendly WASH facilities at communities and schools.

**Ensuring and conducting water quality monitoring and surveillance in every water point:**

The programme conducts water quality testing in the installation of each water point to ensure the quality of the supplied water. In addition, monitoring of water quality to guard against the presence of bacteria (TC, FC), arsenic, iron, salinity, manganese, etc is also promoted.

**Building alliances and advocacy at different levels:**

The programme actively participates in different WASH forums and platforms, collaborates with local government (union/upazila Parishad, pourashava, city corporation), government departments and ministries for advocacy on GoB policy and replication of best practices.

**Emergency WASH response:**

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, considering its deltaic formation and geographical location. The country faces recurring natural disasters every year. That is why the programme has considered WASH responses in emergency situations and provides WASH services to affected people in collaboration with the government agencies and local government institutions.



A monthly meeting among the village WASH committee in Moheshkhali, southern Bangladesh, Photo credit 2021 @ BRAC





CHAPTER **3**

**PROGRAMME  
ACHIEVEMENTS**

# PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS

## 3.1 Summary of the Achievements

In 2021, the WASH programme concentrated most of the project interventions in hard-to-reach, climate-vulnerable and water-scarce areas. The main focus was to provide safely-managed water and sanitation services, strengthen social enterprise models, and promote hygiene education and behaviour change among students including the installation of gender-specific and disabled-friendly WASH facilities in secondary schools, COVID-19 awareness raising activities and installation of hand-washing stations at public places etc.

### **The core achievements of the programme for 2021 are summarised below:**

BRAC WASH programme provided sustainable and inclusive access to safely-managed water to approximately 107,700 people against a target of 111,271 people. Approximately 1,800 water options were installed through revolving funds and grants support. The water options included 79 water treatment plants, 959 deep tube-wells, and approximately 410 rainwater harvesting systems (RWHS). Approximately 12,300 people living in extreme poverty from 2,659 households received free water everyday. The programme also developed 67 water vendors who distribute safe water at the consumers end.

During the reporting period, 3,670 latrines have been installed through loan and grant support; 18,000 people gained access to safely-managed sanitation against a target of 19,236 people. Among the total participants 9,100 participants were female (46%) and 40 were people with disabilities (PWD).

Approximately 13,800 hygiene education and COVID-19 awareness sessions were conducted at community level and 1,170 sessions at schools. In addition, 1,750 handwashing stations were installed at the household level for easy access to inclusive hand-washing facilities. The intervention both in community and schools covered around 365,000 people.

As part of promoting gender equality and inclusiveness, the programme designed and installed disabled-friendly latrines at the community level and in 73 schools. It also provided gender-sensitive and disabled-friendly safe drinking water points and sanitation facilities in 300 secondary schools. In addition, the programme also conducted sessions on menstrual hygiene management and napkin donation drives at 180 schools.

The programme developed 288 WASH entrepreneurs by providing technical and financial support. This intervention provided cost effective and inclusive WASH services and covered approximately 125,750 people in 55 upazilas. This also created the scope of self-employment and livelihood for 288 people.

The programme developed various documents such as WASH progress report, WASH book, capacity statement on WASH in School and WASH programme, several fact sheets, etc. It also initiated and conducted 2 (two) evaluations for documenting the impacts of the project interventions by hiring consultants.

## 3.2 Project achievements

In 2021, the WASH programme implemented different activities under 8 (eight) projects for the promotion of safely-managed water and safely-managed sanitation as well as hygiene practices in the climate-vulnerable hard-to-reach areas. These projects were of different sizes considering the budget allocation, coverage of population and geographical areas. The performed activities and achievements in the different projects are briefly described in the following section.

### 3.2.1 WASH in hard-to-reach rural areas

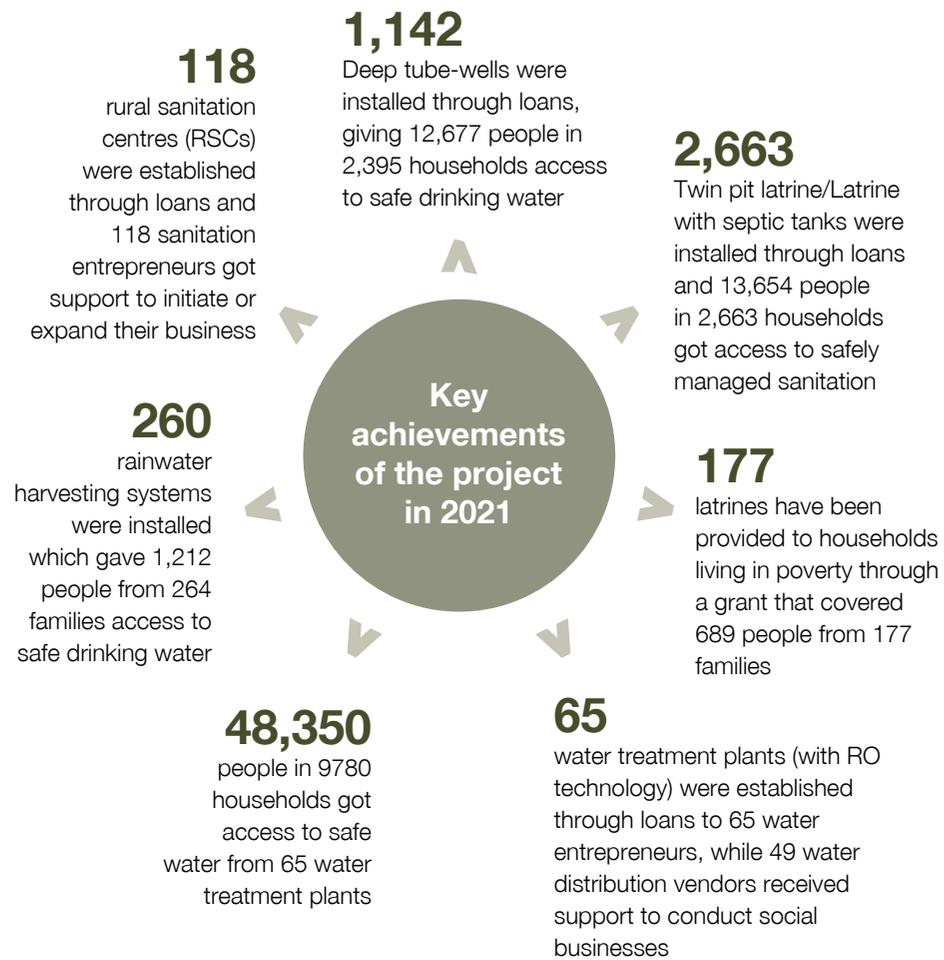


A latrine in the making in a WASH-funded sanitation center. Location: Cox's Bazar city. Photo credit@BRAC

The project launched in 2016 with the aim of providing context-specific, sustainable and inclusive safe water and sanitation services in the climate vulnerable hard-to-reach rural areas. Envisioned to contribute to the spirit and motto of SDGs i.e., “leaving no one behind”, the project interventions have been operating in 55 Upazilas in 15 districts of coastal and haor (wetland region) areas.

The key activities of the project were to develop WASH entrepreneurs with the aim of providing cost effective services through a social enterprise model and the installation of climate resilient technologies. It provided flexible loan support to the non-poor households and grants to the households living in extreme poverty for the installation of context specific WASH facilities. The project provided loans to the local entrepreneurs as seed money to strengthen the water and sanitation businesses, thus ensuring the smooth supply of WASH services at the community level. The project also addressed gender and equity through the installation of gender and disabled-friendly WASH technologies and provided safe drinking water to households living in poverty.

In addition, it built the capacity of the entrepreneurs and community groups as well as organised awareness campaigns through the observation of national sanitation month and international days e.g. World Water Day, Global Hand Washing Day, MHM day, etc. in collaboration with the government departments and other stakeholders.



### 3.2.2 WASH in urban areas



Since 2016, the BRAC WASH programme has been implementing the project 'WASH in urban areas' in 38 small towns especially in climate-vulnerable coastal areas. The main objective of the project is to provide sustainable and integrated WASH services in selected urban areas as well as to create an enabling environment through collaboration and strengthening partnerships with local government authorities and other stakeholders. Considering the availability of funding, the project areas (municipalities) were reduced gradually and various interventions were implemented in 20 pourashavas under nine districts in 2021.

## The major activities implemented under the project are

**i**

Installation of context specific and sustainable water technologies such as deep tube wells, rainwater harvesting systems and water treatment plants through loan support

**ii**

Developing water entrepreneurs and water vendors to provide cost-efficient services at the doorstep of the community

**iii**

Developing solid waste entrepreneurs alongside water entrepreneurs to facilitate clean city and reduce surface water pollution

**vi**

Faecal sludge management with its full value chain including the operation of fecal sludge treatment plant in Jamalpur pourashava

**v**

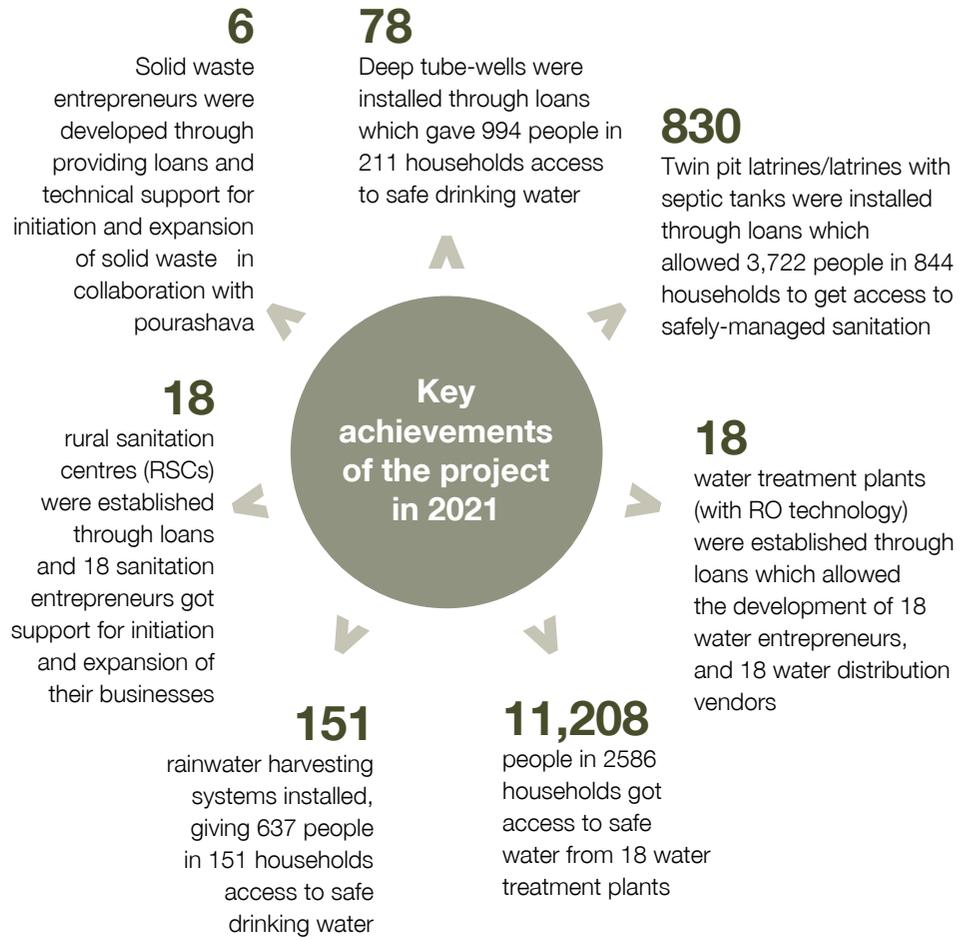
Installation of twin pit latrine/septic tank along with the conversion of unhygienic latrines to hygienic ones to ensure safely managed sanitation

**vi**

Carry out social mobilisation through the urban WASH committee (UWC) and organising mass campaigns

**vii**

Strengthening collaboration and coordination with the government agencies and other stakeholders



### 3.2.3 Increasing access to improved water, sanitation and hygiene services in Bangladesh

Since 2017, the WASH in Schools (WinS) project has been implemented to achieve universal and equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation at secondary schools. The project operates with four approaches, namely provision for safe drinking water, hand-washing stations, gender sensitive and disability-inclusive latrines, menstrual hygiene management and hygiene education. In 2021, the school project provided gender sensitive and disability inclusive WASH support to 180 secondary schools following comprehensive selection criteria such as MPO listed girls' and co-education secondary school, inadequate WASH facilities (latrine to student ratio is high, no running water supply, etc.), willing to share the cost for improvement of infrastructure and committed to ensuring proper O&M (operation & maintenance) of installed WASH facilities.





### **Key activities implemented under this project:**

**i**

**Orientation of the school management committee (SMC), formation and orientation of Student Brigade in each school**

**ii**

**Design and installation of appropriate water options and separate drinking water corners for boys and girls (deep tube-well, IRP/AIRP, etc.)**

**iii**

**Construction of separate hand-washing facilities with a piped network for boys and girls (each station caters to at least three students at a time)**

**iv**

**Separate latrines with running water facilities for both girls and boys. The latrines are made to be inclusive of people living with disabilities as well as maintain the ratio of latrine: to student**

**v**

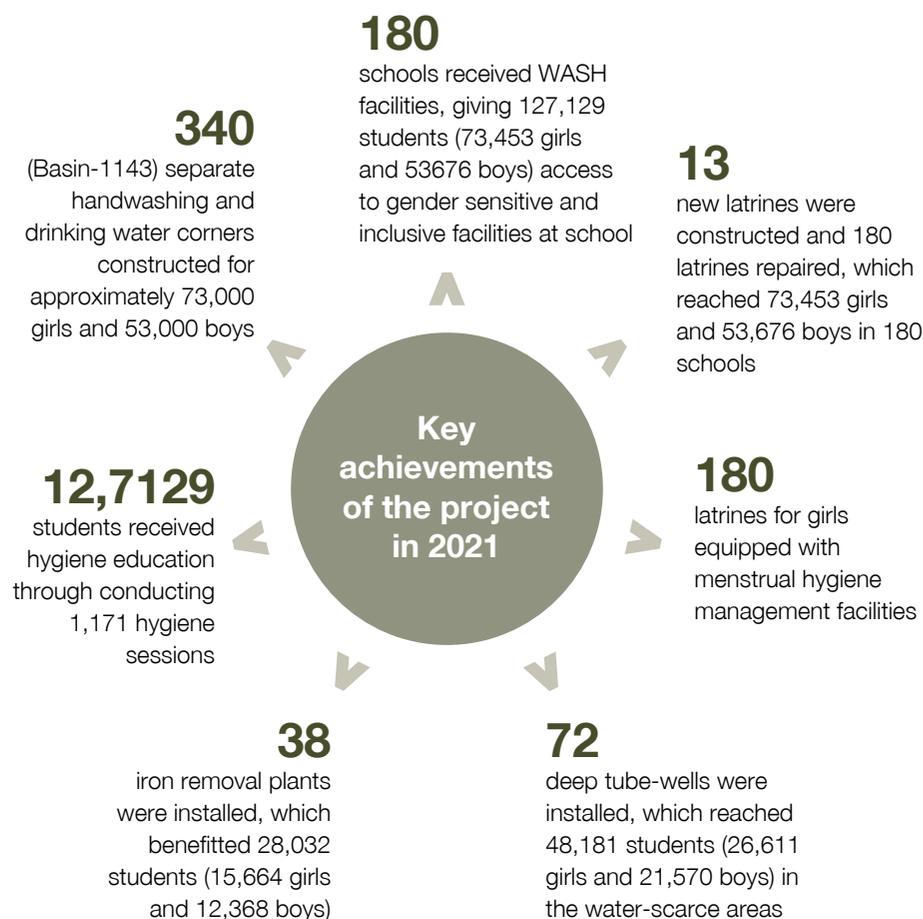
**Promotion of gender inclusiveness and provision for menstrual hygiene management, covered waste bins at girls' latrines, while a dumpster is placed outside to ensure proper disposal of sanitary napkins and pads**

**vi**

**Campaigns on the promotion of handwashing with soap and menstrual hygiene management such as 'Soap Drive' and 'Napkin Drive' are organised annually**

**vii**

**Conducting hygiene education for developing appropriate WASH behaviours among students at schools and carrying the acquired knowledge to their families and communities**



### 3.2.4 Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition (HBCC)

With the ever-increasing spread of COVID-19, BRAC WASH programme implemented the project titled 'Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition (HBCC)' in collaboration with BRAC Social Innovation Lab, BRAC Institute of Governance and Development and BIT from May 2020 to September 2021. The project aimed to install hand-washing stations in public places and COVID-19 preventive hygiene behaviour amongst people in rural and urban areas. The objective of this project was to combat information gaps and rising stigma surrounding COVID-19, and encourage people to adopt healthier hygiene and environmental practices by sharing targeted awareness and behaviour. It also aimed to accelerate and amplify clear and fact-based behaviour change messaging through BRAC network, focusing on specific target groups such as low-income and low-literacy communities, urban slums, school children and youth, and disseminating information that people can trust and believe in to form healthier hygiene and environmental habits. The project was implemented in 20 upazilas (sub-districts) under 10 districts.

## The key activities of the project were:

**i**

Installing 1,000 handwashing stations at relatively crowded public places such as bus stations, markets, mosques etc.

**ii**

Orienting people to practise COVID-19 prevention measures and O&M (operations & maintenance) of the handwashing stations, especially the local government and other stakeholders such as bazar committee members, managing committees of mosques, madrasas, schools, colleges, etc.

**iii**

Distribution of hygiene materials (soap and toilet cleaners) among the community people and mobilising them to encourage people to wash their hands with soap

**vi**

Regular demonstration of the correct method of washing hands with soap at handwashing stations and motivate others to use the stations

**v**

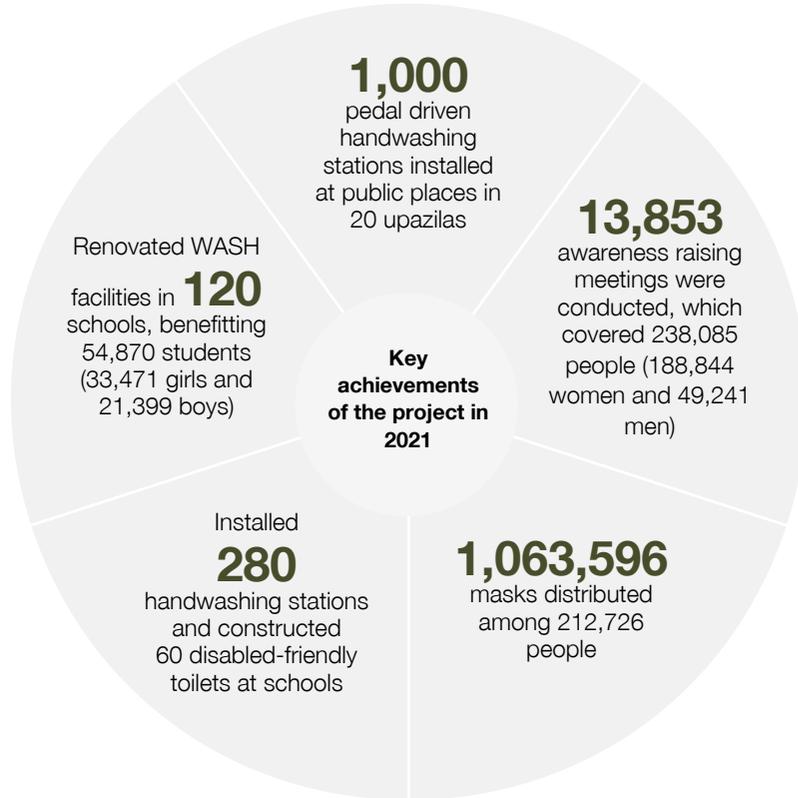
Organise campaigns for increasing awareness on adopting the key hygiene practices to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. Hygiene promotion sessions were conducted with various demographic groups in the community

**vi**

Conduct in-person demonstrations on hand-washing practices

**vii**

Involve WASH entrepreneurs within the implementation areas to disseminate hygiene awareness-raising messages to their customers



Pedal driven handwashing station installed during Covid-19, 2021



Awareness raising meetings held at community level

### 3.2.5 Safe Water for All: a new Partnership for growth in Bangladesh

With the support from Danida Market Development Partnership (DMDP), the project was launched in July 2021. It combines the expertise and experience of BRAC (the UK and Bangladesh), Grundfos and Hydro Industries to create a sustainable business for the treatment of industrial effluent in the RMG sector, and provision of clean water in communities in Bangladesh. The development objective of the project is to create inclusive and sustainable economic growth, increased income through 669 jobs and income opportunities in water treatment and distribution (SDGs 1 and 8), and to increase access to safe and affordable drinking water for 204,000 people in Bangladesh (SDG 6) - tackling the impact of Covid-19 and supporting with economic recovery in the coming years. The business objective for Grundfos and Hydro, to create a commercially viable business partnership model (SDG 9) for cleaning industrial effluent (SDG 12), reducing the harmful impacts of effluent on people and the environment (SDG 3) and delivering safe drinking water (SDG 6) whilst creating green jobs and additional income (SDG 8) for the sector in the process. The project has been implemented in the industrial areas of Dhaka and Gazipur for the installation of effluent treatment plants in RMG and textile factories and water treatment plants in the climate-vulnerable water-scarce coastal areas.





Safe Water for All a new Partnership for growth in Bangladesh

## The key activities of the project were:

**i**

Consulting firm NewVision Solutions Limited was hired to maintain the organisational procedure to conduct a feasibility study for the development of a viable business model for water treatment plants and effluent treatment plants

**ii**

Relevant departments and divisions were consulted for the development of gender, safeguarding, communication work plan and risk register for the project

**iii**

Initial meetings were held with the Department of Environment, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association and BRAC Bank high officials to initiate discussion for future collaboration

**iv**

A physical workshop/meeting with the members from administrative partners (BRAC UK), implementation partner (BRAC Bangladesh) and commercial partners (Grundfos) held in Dhaka to finalise the work plan

## Key achievements of the project in 2021 (July to December)

**i**

The consulting agency has shared the first draft of the final report on the feasibility study for review by the consortium partners

**ii**

Draft of risk assessment register, log frame, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, gender, safeguarding, communication and work plan for the project have been developed

**iii**

Although final selection of the intervention areas will be made based on the findings of the feasibility study, to better understand the situation of climate-vulnerable water-scarce areas which includes the main challenges, willingness to pay and business viability, 107 meetings were held with community members of those areas

**iv**

All offices are set up and the required number of staff are recruited and onboarded at respective locations to carry out the project activities

### 3.2.6 Clean Water for All

The Clean Water for All project is implemented through a partnership with “Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G)” and Hydro Industries Limited. The aim is to pilot a sustainable social business (revenue and technology) model to deliver safe water, at high volumes, and at an affordable price in areas of very high-water contamination (arsenic, iron, salinity or chlorinate, and manganese bacteria) in Bangladesh. It also focused on introducing an environment-friendly technology that reduces the use of groundwater and water waste.

Most of the available and widely used water treatment technologies in Bangladesh are based on ground water sources (mostly RO technology). In RO technology, a significant portion of water is waste (50 – 60%) and discharged with high pollutants in nature. This project aimed to introduce surface water purification technology that reduces the wastage of water and less risk of environmental pollution. It also aims to establish a sustainable and viable water business model in the water scarcity areas. The project is implemented in Morrelgonj, a sub-district under Bagerhat District.



During the reporting period, major activities implemented under this project are (i) installation of a surface water-based water treatment plant (Electro Coagulant – 100 technology) with technical support from Hydro Industries Limited, (ii) extension of building water treatment plants for setting up the auto-filling machine and WQ testing laboratory, (iii) receive approval from the government agencies (BSTI, Department of Environment) for the sale of water (iv) participate in the P4G family gathering and summit, (v) commissioning the water treatment plant and distribution of safe water at the doorstep of consumers through 5 (five) water distribution vendors.

## Key achievements of the project in 2021:

**i**

A surface water-based Water Treatment Plant (EC – 100 technology) was installed successfully with the technical support from Hydro Industries

**ii**

Got the approval from the government agencies (BSTI, Department of Environment) for sale of water

**iii**

Reached 15 villages of Morrelgonj Upazila and covered 1,015 people with safe drinking water

**iv**

5 Water Distribution Vendor (micro-enterprise) developed through technical and financial support

### 3.2.7 Safe Water for All in the Coastal and Offshore islands of Bangladesh (supported by PepsiCo)

Safe Water for All in the Coastal and Offshore Islands of Bangladesh project was implemented in Moheshkhali and Kutubdia upazila in Cox's Bazar district in southeast Bangladesh from March 2021 to March 2022 to increase access to safe water through its innovative water entrepreneurship model. The overall objective of the project is ensuring access to safe drinking water for 1,200 underserved households (equivalent to 5,200 individuals) across 10 communities.



Safe Water for All in the Coastal and Offshore Islands of Bangladesh (supported by PepsiCo) - Water Entrepreneur

## The project's key activities are

**i**

Install 10 water treatment plants through local entrepreneurs and operate under the social business model, where BRAC provides loans to entrepreneurs to set up the water treatment plant

**ii**

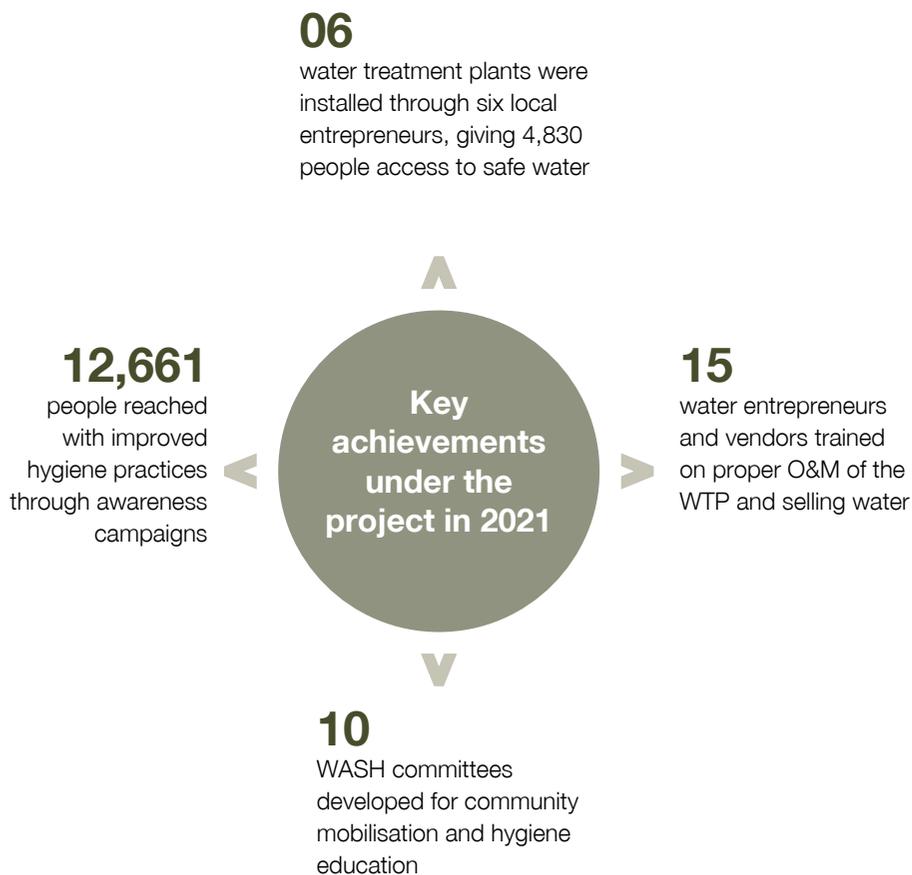
Organise training for the WTP entrepreneurs and water vendors

**iii**

Develop village WASH committees (VWC) which are working to raise awareness on using safe water and hygiene practice among the neighbouring households

**iv**

Conduct project baseline and end line survey



### 3.2.8 Safe Water Supply for All in Coastal and Offshore Islands in Bangladesh (supported by edotco)

“Safe Water Supply for All in Coastal and Offshore Islands in Bangladesh” was implemented by BRAC WASH Programme from October 01, 2021 – to November 30, 2021. The project was funded by edotco limited. Under this project, a water treatment plant (RO based) was installed at Shyamnager upazila of Satkhira district. The project was designed with the expectation that the provision of safe water supply can enable people to make more productive use of their time and yield significant health benefits. The water treatment plant (WTP) management committee has taken responsibility for ensuring the operation and maintenance of the plant.



Safe Water Supply for All in Coastal and Offshore Islands in Bangladesh (supported by edotco). Location: Moheshkhali, Cox Bazar's district. Photo credit@BRAC

#### Key implemented activities of the project are

**i**

Installing one Water Treatment Plant (RO based technology) for the supply of safe drinking water to the orphanage and surrounding communities

**ii**

Water quality testing of the selected parameters

**iii**

Formation and orientation of WTP operation and management committee

**iv**

Handed over the WTP to the operation and management committee

## Key achievements of the project in 2021

**2,200**

people (1,320 male and 880 female) of 500 households, including 200 students, have gained access to safe drinking water from the water treatment plant

**10**

households living in extreme poverty are receiving safe water free of cost from the water treatment plant

**15**

people received training and orientation on proper operation and management of WTPs

### 3.3 Crosscutting Components

#### 3.3.1 Gender

For gender mainstreaming, WASH programme set a target of reaching at least 45% female participants through its interventions. To emphasise the participation and empowerment of women, the programme takes suggestions and preferences from them regarding the location where the facilities should be established (within household premises). In addition, they are educated about hygiene behaviour, including practising proper menstrual hygiene management. The WASH in School project put special focus on ensuring MHM friendly latrines at schools, separate latrines for boys and girls and hygiene awareness among school students and beyond. It also provides special attention to ensure active participation while developing the village WASH committee and student brigade at the school level. In the year 2021, BRAC WASH has provided 10 latrines for girls with menstrual hygiene management facilities, celebrated a soap and napkin drive in 180 schools and built 300 separate handwashing and water points for girls and boys.

WASH MIS always generates gender segregated data for understanding the impact level better.

**Initiative to ensure gender responsive workplace:** With the collaboration with GJ&D programme, all WASH staff both in field and head office received training on gender issues such as supportive supervision and gender mainstreaming. Also, female staff received customised training on developing their leadership and capacity in the workplace. Overall, WASH programme is committed to ensuring a gender responsive workplace and promoting leadership among women.

### 3.3.2 Climate Change

Following the organisational and programmatic strategies, the WASH programme has been working in the climate-vulnerable areas providing resilient WASH services with the aim of promoting appropriate technologies that can bring positive change among the vulnerable people by 2025. WASH programme has installed 5,437 water and sanitation facilities with elevated platforms in climate-vulnerable and disaster-prone areas. In 2021, WASH installed a modern water treatment technology (Electro Coagulant- 100) based on surface water sources which produces a relatively small amount of waste water that goes back to the environment. In similar ways, WASH aspires to promote environment-friendly technologies in the WASH sector replacing the traditional ones. It always focuses on ensuring the maximum utilisation of available natural resources, such as promoting rainwater harvesting systems, using surface water, etc. In addition, producing organic fertiliser from domestic waste through co-composting with faecal sludge is also an innovative initiative that operated in Jamalpur municipality.



Cross cutting components- Climate change

### 3.3.3 Disability Inclusion

Inclusiveness and equity being two of the major focus areas of WASH interventions, disability inclusion has been an important element for a long time. WASH in school projects ensure each and every water point and sanitation facility are disabled-friendly (with ramp, rail and other facilities) and can be used by all students. In 2021, 300 schools received water points with handwashing stations and 73 schools received disabled-friendly toilets for students. At the household level, at least 40 sanitation facilities were constructed by ensuring access to differently abled family members (toilet with ramp and railing, attached toilet, etc.).



Cross cutting component - Disability Inclusion

### **3.4 COVID-19 challenges**

Due to the pandemic lockdown and related restrictions, WASH programme adopted work from home and conducted meetings, workshops and training sessions via an online platform, measures which continued in 2021. Considering the lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions, the programme introduced WASH loan instalment payment through bKash Wallet. In 2020, more than 70% of loan installments were collected through bKash, although some participants appeared less interested in paying through the online platform. In addition, WASH programmes in collaboration with Social Innovation Lab supported the operation and maintenance of 1,000 hand-washing stations to prevent COVID-19 transmission at the community level.

### **3.5 Working with the government**

WASH in hard-to-reach areas as well as WASH in school interventions require close collaboration with the government of Bangladesh's education department and local government bodies. All the interventions are designed to support the government to achieve its development priorities in the WASH sector. BRAC WASH actively participates in various WASH forums with the government agencies, NGOs and INGOs, bringing the opportunity for greater networking, knowledge sharing and innovation. As a result, WASH programmes always look to promote appropriate and innovative technologies in their interventions. WASH itself also proactively shares its acquired knowledge of working in the WASH sector since 2006 with other stakeholders. Close collaboration with the relevant government agencies such as department of public health, directorate general of health services, local government engineering department, department of public health engineering, and directorate of secondary and higher education are effectively maintained.

The programme organised an online workshop titled "Experience sharing workshop on WASH: achieving SDG 6 and way forward" in early 2021 to share BRAC's experiences in the implementation of WASH interventions. The participants of the workshop from the government agencies, I/NGOs, UN agencies, and donors provided feedback and suggestions for the achievement of SDG 6. In addition, the staff also participated in an international event on "WASH in School", along with the relevant government departments, UNICEF and other organisations. BRAC is working as the secretariat of WASH in School forum of Bangladesh. WASH Programme staff are also members of different WASH-related technical working groups and provide inputs in the formulation of WASH policy, strategy, and guidelines.



### 3.6 Highlights of events in 2021

BRAC WASH programme organised several events in collaboration with government agencies, stakeholders and BRAC's other programmes which are briefly described below:

#### i

##### **Experience sharing workshop on WASH:**

The BRAC WASH Programme organised a national workshop on January 19, 2021. The workshop focused on sharing the achievements toward SDG 6 and the way forward as well as sharing lessons learnt, challenges on water, sanitation and hygiene interventions. The eminent professionals and experts of the WASH sector were invited to attend as panellists to provide their opinion and recommendations. The key national level stakeholders from the concerned government departments, external support agencies, UN agencies, I/NGOs, private sector, and academia participated in this workshop.

#### ii

##### **Observing Global Hand Washing Day:**

The programme took various steps to celebrate Global Handwashing Day in collaboration with its partners. In the last five years, WASH programme has arranged handwashing campaigns in more than 6000 schools. Global handwashing Day is celebrated every year on the 15th of October to raise awareness about the necessity of handwashing. In 2021, the world was still in the grip of the pandemic. The programme developed an engaging handwashing video, [“Our Life is in Our Hands”](#) demonstrating why proper handwashing is an essential for a healthy life. The video is available in the BRAC WASH webpage and social media.

The programme organised events in schools to commemorate this day with children. In collaboration with Dettol and Lifebuoy, activities were conducted in 800 schools. BRAC WASH Programme and Dettol organised activities in 100 BRAC schools. Students were given Dettol soap, Harpic, Lizol, and Dettol liquid to encourage good hygiene practices. Lifebuoy, in partnership with BRAC, organised a campaign called “H for Handwashing”, consisting of engaging school activities, for a week. Through these activities, 3.5 lakh children were taught about the steps of proper handwashing. The activities were conducted in 700 schools. In addition, 5 tons of bleaching powder, donated by ACI, was distributed to BRAC schools and all secondary schools in Mymensingh and Sylhet.

### iii

#### **Observing World Toilet Day:**

In 2021, the WASH team organised an online quiz contest for all BRAC staff to ensure maximum participation. Five quiz winners from other BRAC programmes received Aarong gift cards of Taka 2000. The quiz contest was an effective way to convey sanitation-related information to everyone, with the participants learning the correct answer through the contest. Along with the quiz contest, a blog was published on the website named “Everyone needs access to a toilet. How can we ensure that?” detailing the five initiatives that supported improvements to sanitation, in both big and small ways.



World Toilet Day 2021 quiz winners, organised at BRAC Head Office





আপনার শহর পরিচ্ছন্ন রাখুন।

আপনার শহর পরিচ্ছন্ন রাখুন।

# মানব বর্জ্য পরিস্কার করার গাড়ি

স্বাস্থ্যসম্মত উপায়ে স্বল্পতম সময়ে ল্যান্ডফিল সিটি/সেপটিক ট্যাংক পরিস্কার করা হয়

যোগাযোগ :- ০১৭৪৩-৩০৭৬৪০, ০১৭২৮-০৫২৮৯৩



Jamalpur Municipality

 brac



CHAPTER 4

# LESSONS LEARNED AND WAY FORWARD

# LESSONS LEARNED AND WAY FORWARD

## 4.1 Major outcomes of the programme

In 2021, BRAC WASH programme organised and conducted an outcome survey in different intervention areas in order to assess the outcome of implementing different activities at the community level. The assessments were done based on a set of indicators aligned with the SDG 6 indicators. The results of the outcome survey are briefly described below.

### Major outcomes in the promotion of safely-managed sanitation interventions:



**67.2%**

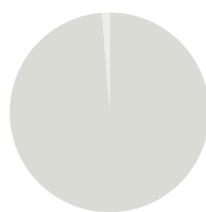
latrines are twin pit offset or with a septic tank



**64%**

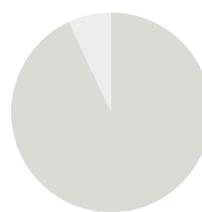
of latrines are safely managed. i.e latrine is not shared with other HH, excreta is safely disposed of in situ, and hand-washing facilities with soap and water are available

### Major outcome in the promotion of safely managed water interventions:



**98.8%**

installed water points are safely managed. i.e. source is improved, located at premises and available when needed and free from contamination



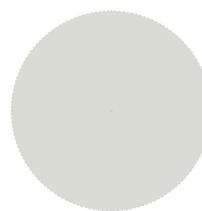
**93%**

tube-wells' platform is raised and resilient from the flood and tidal surge



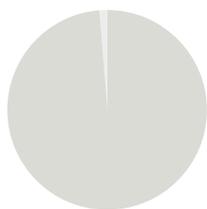
**86.4%**

tube-wells have a concrete base for sanitary protection and 77.8% tube-wells drainage system is in good condition



**100%**

tube-wells located at users' yards and households can collect water round the clock

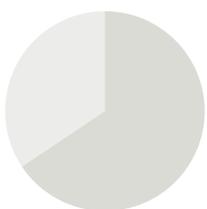


**98.8%**  
water points can deliver  
water throughout the year

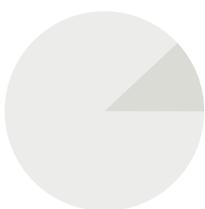


**29.6%**  
deep tube-well  
water quality was  
tested

### Major outcome in the promotion of basic hygiene practices:



**65.6%**  
households have  
water and soap for  
washing hands after  
defecation



**12%**  
households have  
only water for  
washing hands  
after defecation

## 4.2 Key lessons learned

BRAC WASH programme organised several events in collaboration with government agencies, stakeholders and BRAC's other programmes which are briefly described below:

- Electro Coagulant (EC-100) technology was used in the installation of a water treatment plant in Morrelgonj which is an alternative solution of RO technology but the spare parts of the machine must be available in the local market for easy operation and maintenance of the plant. Some parts of the technology used in this plant were not readily available in Bangladesh, especially near the project location. This led to the commissioning and repair to be delayed.
- Despite the ongoing pandemic situation in 2021 and related restrictions, WASH programmes continued to carry out all the planned interventions and the accomplishment rate was better than the last few years.
- WASH entrepreneurs, especially the water entrepreneurs, faced difficulty in carrying on their business running the water treatment plants and the distribution of free water to the households living in extreme poverty during the lockdown.
- The schools remained closed most of the time and therefore soft activities such as orientation, training, hygiene awareness sessions could not be conducted as per work plan. It is important to develop online hygiene promotion apps to continue the activities in any adverse situation.
- Loan realisation and overdue collection faced substantial challenges. The loan realisation could not be done as per the target, which resulted in an increase of the overdue amount of WASH loan.

- The programme took different strategies to avoid the problems and continue the activities with the best possible quality. The programme placed emphasis on collection of WASH loan instalments through Bkash wallet, continuously orienting the borrowers to familiarise them with the digital (Bkash) platform.
- It also works to connect local community people and school management committee members to monitor the quality of interventions at the community level and school level respectively.
- It is important to develop local entrepreneurs with the aim of providing smooth and cost effective services. It may be better to work with technology providers who have local technical support providers so that the project can run smoothly in case of travel restrictions or other obstacles.

### 4.3 Way forward

In 2021, BRAC WASH programme organised and conducted an outcome survey in different intervention areas in order to assess the outcome of implementing different activities at the community level. The assessments were done based on a set of indicators aligned with the SDG 6 indicators. The results of the outcome survey are briefly described below.

#### i

The programme is placing special focus on reaching the climate-vulnerable hard-to-reach people of the coastal areas, which will also continue in the coming year due to the increasing vulnerability in the coastal areas

#### ii

Gender and disability-inclusive WASH activities at secondary schools will be expanded and more schools and students will be covered through inclusive WASH services

#### iii

The programme will prioritise advocacy and partnership with the government agencies, thus focusing on the sustainability of the achievements. Partnership with the Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation is a priority issue in the coming years. Closer collaboration with the department of public health engineering and local government agencies will also be a target

#### iv

More integration and collaboration with other BRAC programmes will also be on the priority list in the coming year. WASH and Microfinance will jointly deliver WASH services in some new areas using the WASH business model

#### v

Existing MIS and monitoring system will be enhanced and the software and tablet-based information and data management system will be introduced



Dried waste screening at a FSM plant based in Ukhiya refugee camp, Cox's Bazar district. Photo credit@BRAC



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An overview of news, blogs, resources, and videos of BRAC WASH Programme can be found here:

<http://goo.gl/dSlwxO>





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