



WASH OBJECTIVES

- 1 Adequate, acceptable, safe and dignified life-saving water supply and sanitation services
- 2 Refugees have access to information for promoting hygiene in their communities
- 3 WASH assistance is sustainable and cost-effective, incorporating environmental protection

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ **349,303** refugees in 14 camps reached with UNHCR supported WASH activities
- ✓ **150,000 and 140,000 people reached** with a large centralized and multiple small-capacity fecal sludge treatment plant respectively
- ✓ **17 solar power based** chlorinated large water networks completed with others under construction in Kutupalong. **02 large and 36 small** water treatment plants are operational in Teknaf

PROGRESS

UNHCR and partners developed WASH facilities while dealing with a very challenging topography and the initial acute emergency needs of the response. Improvements made over the past two years included upgraded latrines with larger volume pits to last longer; a large-capacity fecal waste treatment plant (in partnership with Oxfam) to serve 150,000 people; and a move towards supplying surface water supply through a chlorinated water networks to support both refugees and the host community. 55 networks are now completed with others under construction. UNHCR is continuing to closely monitor groundwater resources to ensure their sustainable use. Water purification tablets and containers for collection and storage of water were distributed to refugees. In the water scarcity areas, in Teknaf, where surface water is the only option, currently 38 small water treatment plants are running from surface water sources. Several numbers of temporary dam re-construction are ongoing to secure water for next dry season.

Along with regular WASH intervention in response to COVID-19, hygiene promotion activities are being prioritized. For instance, 1898 hand washing devices are installed in different public places like distribution centers and HP volunteers are disseminating COVID messages during distribution of soap at distribution points. Apart from this, installation of WASH facilities – latrines, bathing cubicles, water network, black and grey water network - in six isolation and treatment centers are nearly operational.

Hygiene promotion activities remain in critical need and are being boosted to avert public health incidents. WASH staff are developing new modalities to deliver unified public health messages with health teams working in the settlements. This combined programme aims to prevent dengue fever and AWD outbreaks.

WASH is working closely with UNHCR protection unit to define and deliver hygiene kits, including menstrual hygiene kits; these continue to be distributed to girls and women across the camp.

CHALLENGE

Need for long-term planning for WASH interventions, requiring commitments for multi-year funding, greater involvement of development actors, and agreement of authorities;

Sanitation management challenges for Kutupalong settlement due to large population size, congestion, topography, and unavailability of land;

Lack of easily reachable groundwater in Teknaf area and brackish quality of water in river requires alternative approaches, including introduction of catchment reservoirs.

WAY FORWARD

To address acute water needs in Teknaf, an upgrade of surface and groundwater resources serving both refugees and host communities is planned with the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) and the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE).

A site was identified and permission granted to construct a large new water reservoir at Domdomia in Camp 27.

The lack of sanitation treatment and de-sludging capacity poses a significant public health risk in all camps. A committee of RRRC, UN agencies (including UNHCR), DPHE and others has been formed to identify appropriate land for faecal sludge management, with a number of sites now having been identified and proposed to the local government. One plant planned near Camp 2E will be built in the next couple of months by MSF with UNHCR's assistance and support. Other few potential sites have been identified in southern part of mega camp and also in Teknaf area.

