

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Our commitment to transformative WASH includes a commitment to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). World Vision’s GESI approach actively strives to examine, question, and change harmful social norms and power imbalances as a means of reaching gender equality and social inclusion objectives in any given context.

GESI approaches typically tackle barriers to decision-making, formal and informal systems, and participation in addition to those that hinder access and well-being by:

- Fostering critical examination of inequalities and social roles, norms, and dynamics
- Recognizing and strengthening positive norms that support equality, social inclusion, and an enabling environment
- Promoting the relative increase in position of women, girls, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups
- Changing underlying social structures, policies, and broadly held social/cultural norms that perpetuate inequalities and social exclusion

World Vision GESI continuum

Not GESI Responsive	GESI Absent	There is no consideration of gender norms and unequal power relations, or potential patterns of gender equality or social inclusion in the design or delivery of program activities. There is no discussion of the gendered or inclusive dimensions of the environment where programs may be operating in and how this may affect interventions.
	GESI Exploitative	Reinforces, uses and/or takes advantage of gender inequalities, social norms, and stereotypes.
	GESI Insensitive	Gender norms and social inequalities are acknowledged as key aspects of context but not brought into any aspects of program planning, delivery, or feedback.
GESI Responsive	GESI Accommodating/ Sensitive	Acknowledges but works around gender, disability, or other social differences and inequalities to achieve project objectives. Interventions address practical needs of vulnerable groups but not the underlying root causes of inequality or exclusion. There is a “missed opportunity” to shift norms that reinforce inequality and exclusion.
	GESI Transformative	Actively seeks to engage with and transform gender and social inequalities in the long term to achieve GESI sustainable change. Challenges or shifts gender norms, unequal power relations, stereotypes, and discriminatory practices. Promotes equitable systems.
Goal: Better development outcomes for the most vulnerable.		

GENDER EQUALITY

Lack of access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene disproportionately affects women and girls who are most affected by the consequences of poor WASH. Beyond providing solutions which target the advancement of women, involving women operationally in WASH programming is critical. Learnings of the Global Water Challenge's Ripple Effect Study show that including women and girls in WASH interventions such as water-user associations, leads both to skills development and leadership opportunities, and enhances the role and voice of women in important elements of the intervention.

Moving beyond GESI-accommodating, our programs will strive to be GESI-transformative (See Figure 18), ensuring measurement of well-being impacts disaggregated by sex and ability, influencing social norms

and traditions to ensure a more equitable society. World Vision's newly defined Gender Equality and Social Inclusion framework focuses on five domains: 1) Access, 2) Participation, 3) Decision-making, 4) Systems, and 5) Well-being. As World Vision WASH evolves into more GESI-transformative programming, we seek to address WASH issues through these five domains, both in our programming and in our staffing.

As women currently represent <20% of WASH staff globally, World Vision recognizes the need to take greater strides to increase gender parity within staffing as well as representation of females in higher level positions of leadership. World Vision WASH is addressing this gap in part by encouraging 50% participation of women in our Desert Research Institute (DRI) and Drexel University capacity building programs. We are also focused on identifying and promoting women into key leadership roles in national office WASH teams.

Strong Women Strong World

Since 2011 World Visions' Strong Women Strong World (SWSW) initiative has been bringing female financing partners together at the forefront of WASH philanthropic engagement.

Women currently hold 40% of global wealth and are involved in 90% of philanthropic donations with 93% of high net worth women reporting that charitable giving is a means to articulate their values.

Women philanthropists are strongly motivated to give to programming which impacts the lives of women and girls and recognize that involving women in WASH is an effective way to solve societal problems and address poverty.

2021-2025 key targets



4,470

Schools gaining access to improved sanitation for girls, with facilities to manage menstrual hygiene



1,540

Bathing rooms available for women in postnatal care at healthcare facilities



DISABILITY INCLUSION

People with disabilities represent some of the most vulnerable in communities due to an inability to access services and appropriate infrastructure, as well as marginalization and discrimination.

World Vision's disability-inclusive WASH programming supports SDG target 6.2 of adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene that is accessible for all, especially the most vulnerable. This includes:

- Ensuring WASH facilities at schools and HCFs are accessible and inclusive, including facilities with clear paths without stairs or steps, free of obstructions, and with guiding handrails for those with visual impairments; enough space inside sanitation facilities for a wheelchair user to enter, exit, and maneuver adequately inside; and a door handle and seat/ handrails that are within reach of children using wheelchairs or crutches.
- Actively consulting people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups during program design to ensure meaningful participation, benefit from inclusive hygiene messaging, and increased access to safe water and improved sanitation through adaptive design of water points and latrines prior to construction.

2021-2025 key targets



4,961

Schools gaining access to improved sanitation for children/ youth with limited mobility



Inclusive Sanitation: World Vision in Iraq

UNHCR estimates that only about 17% of refugees living in camps have access to safely managed sanitation. Additionally, the 3.5 million persons in camps who are living with a disability are left even further behind.

In Hasansham U2 camp in Iraq, World Vision partners with UNHCR to develop sanitation solutions for internally displaced populations living with disabilities by improving accessibility of existing infrastructure, working with local artisans to produce assistive devices, and educating the community about disability inclusion and good hygiene practices.