WASH in the Middle East and Eastern Europe region (MEER) is transitioning from primarily humanitarian and emergency programs to sustainable WASH services, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Historically, much of World Vision’s WASH work across the region has been grant-funded and focused on populations displaced as a result of conflict and insecurity, including internally displaced people, refugees in formal camps and informal tent settlements, and returnee populations. This has been the focus in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan since 2011. WASH activities supporting vulnerable populations in these countries has included camp infrastructure and storm water drainage projects, solid waste management, hygiene promotion, and WASH UP! programs at schools.

While programming will continue to serve displaced populations, other focus areas will include water security, scarcity, and conservation; water resource management; and water safety plans to address challenges associated with cyclical drought and flooding, and conflict between government and armed opposition groups.

Faith engagement is an important differentiator in this predominately Islamic region. In Afghanistan, World Vision has developed a strategic partnership with Muslim faith leaders for developing a “WASH in Islam” curriculum.

Notably, in Afghanistan, World Vision WASH programming has grown and improved significantly in the past five years due to strategic positioning of base funding and excellent leadership; and has been recognized by UNICEF at the country’s largest water NGO.

### Programming to Watch

2. In Iraq, World Vision is training communities in water conservation approaches to enhance economical water usage.
4. Rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure damaged from conflict.
Environmental Sustainable Solid Waste Management Project: Azraq Refugee Camp – Jordan

Jordan is home to more than 650,000 Syrian refugees, 18% of whom reside at formal refugee camps. Azraq camp hosts a population of 36,298. Between February 2016 and December 2019, World Vision Jordan, with funding from EuropeAid and World Vision Germany, supported the set-up of a recycling center for solid waste at Azraq Camp aimed to reduce the cost and environmental impact of solid waste and to help generate revenue through sorting and sale of recyclable materials.

Household education and awareness sessions, cash for work opportunities and the recycling center have all led to a substantial improvement of waste collection, recycling, and the overall environmental quality at the camp. Of the resident’s surveyed, 91% felt that the project improved the quality of the environment. The project was able to provide cash for work to more than 1,400 volunteers and 41% of volunteers reported an increase in income compared with the previous year, compared to 13% in a control group.