Sanitation for Millions

Sanitation for Millions is a multi-donor programme set up to provide access to adequate and equitable sanitation, with a special focus on the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Sanitation for Millions is being implemented in three countries; Jordan, Pakistan, and Uganda.

The programme strives for sustainable solutions considering the entire sanitation chain to ensure long-lasting results in line with the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The programme directly contributes to the achievement of SDG 6, SDG 4 and SDG 3. Sanitation for Millions is supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as lead donor, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK-based solidarity fund Water Unite and the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is leading the programme implementation, and cooperates closely with local partners as well as with national and international NGOs.

Sanitation for Millions in Jordan

According to official resources, more than 1.4 million refugees have fled to Jordan since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in March 2011. More than 80 percent of them live in host communities, which exacerbates existing challenges such as extreme water scarcity, and further increasing the pressure on an already strained infrastructure. Water and sanitation facilities in public institutions (i.e. schools, and worship places) are under pressure due to overuse, and access to clean and functional public toilets is very limited. Present facilities are often unhygienic, with no running water or soap and are being vandalized, thus requiring regular rehabilitation works.

Interventions of Sanitation for Millions in Jordan

Sanitation for Millions initiated its intervention in Jordan in 2017 in the capital city of Amman as well as in Irbid and Mafraq, the regions bordering Syria. The programme aims at improving access to sanitation and the hygiene situation at schools and mosques along four lines of intervention:

- Rehabilitation and construction of sanitation infrastructure at mosques, paying special attention to the needs of women and disabled persons
- Operation and maintenance of sanitary facilities through the “Facility Management & Maintenance / Hausmeister” concept in mosques
- Installation of innovative on-site greywater treatment and reuse systems in mosques
- Mobilization of innovative community champions such as the Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girls Guides

Currently, construction and rehabilitation measures are being implemented at mosques and schools with the goal to provide safe and clean toilets for more than 6,000 students and 20,000 people living in the areas of intervention. To ensure that the toilets remain functional and safe, Sanitation for Millions trains institutional staff such as Muezzins to conduct minor repairs themselves. Provided with a toolbox, the Muezzin fixes leaking pipes, installs sinks and toilets, and exchanges broken seats with new ones. For larger scale operational problems such as clogs in the pipelines, the mosques can resort to the Mobile Maintenance Units.
established under Sanitation for Millions. They consist of skilled plumbers and technicians in equipped trucks that cover 450 mosques per year.

The water used for ritual washing of believers at holy places runs into the septic tank or the sewage system, which is a waste of Jordan’s scarcest resource. Therefore, greywater treatment and reuse systems are constructed and connected to the sanitary facilities of mosques using low maintenance sand-filters, to utilize treated greywater for irrigation of adjacent public parks. With regard to improved hygiene behaviour, Muslim male and female preachers (imams and wailath) work with Sanitation for Millions to promote good hygiene practices and cleanliness among believers. Female preachers teach women within gender-segregated religious lectures about hygiene practices. Sensitive topics such as menstrual hygiene are taught at summer camps for girls. The hygiene guidebook developed in cooperation with religious leaders and the General Fatwa Department (issuing nonbinding legal opinions on Islamic law) constitutes the first manual on water, sanitation and hygiene issues from an Islamic perspective.

**Jordan – Highlights 2017–19**

- More than 600 Muezzins absoluted trainings for plumbing and received toolboxes to conduct maintenance and repairs at mosques
- 225 waïlath actively participated in hygiene workshops and acquired relevant knowledge they pass on to women and girls to ensure hygiene awareness transfer to the household level.
- Three mobile maintenance trucks have been handed over to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and are ready to conduct major repairs operations in mosques.

**Outlook**

In the long-run, Sanitation for Millions aims to open further opportunities for women, girls, refugees, and people with disabilities by providing access where there is none and ensuring public sanitary infrastructure is hygienic and safe for all users. The Islamic hygiene guidebook will be transformed into a digital tool which can be used by the blind and analphabets. The introduction of greywater treatment facilities at mosques is expected to increase the acceptance of reusing treated wastewater in communities.

Lastly, cooperation with the youth and active community champions such as boy scouts and girl guides intends to raise awareness around sanitation and hygiene issues through non-formal educational activities while contributing to community development and public services.

Being the first sanitation programme working with religious leaders in Jordan, Sanitation for Millions intends to expand interventions – also through financial contributions from other donors – to include further institutions and innovative actors such as Christian churches and authorities. The greywater treatment systems are transformative low-maintenance solutions that can be taken to scale in mosques in further governorates and can also be piloted at churches. Furthermore, the Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, being linked to the World Organization of the Scout Movement, can catalyze a global network of youth activists for sustainable development and WASH.