

# Thematic area 4: Ensuring water, sanitation, and hygiene services in health care centres, schools, and public places at scale

## Background

Following on from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in 2015 the United Nations adopted the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” for the period 2016-2030. They are a global call to action to eradicate poverty, protect the Planet and ensure that all human beings live in peace and prosperity by 2030.

Among these goals, SDG 6, targets 6.1 and 6.2, aim to universal and equitable access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030. “Universal” means all settings, including households, schools, health care facilities, workplaces and public spaces. Many African governments have aligned themselves with this Sustainable Development Goal by developing and adopting national strategy documents in line with the SDG 6 targets, reforms and policy updates. However, progress is still too slow, and many good ideas and solutions have not borne fruit.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), through the WHO/ UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) are responsible for monitoring the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets related to WASH. Data<sup>1</sup> for households, schools and health care facilities in Africa are summarised as follows:

- 39% of the population use safely managed drinking water, 27% use safely managed sanitation and 37% use basic hygiene in 2020
- 47% of schools have basic drinking water, 54% have basic sanitation and 38% have basic hygiene services in 2019

- 46% of health care facilities have basic water services, 29% have basic sanitation services and 40% have basic health care waste management services

These figures show us that there is still much to be done to achieve SDG 6 by 2030 (universal and equitable access). With this in mind, IRC is organising an “All Systems Go Africa!” symposium in Accra, Ghana from October 19-21, 2022. The symposium will bring together over 150 thinkers and doers from the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and other sectors to discuss among others the thematic “ensuring water, sanitation, and hygiene services in health care centres, schools, and public places at scale”.

## Concept

Access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services outside the household is also a human right and behind every trusted WASH service is a complex network of people, processes and organisations working in synchrony to keep it all running. This is true in relative stability or even in very fragile contexts. Beyond the investments that are important to provide basic WASH services in public places, schools and health centres, many of the WASH facilities built for these institutions are inadequately managed, fail prematurely, poorly regulated, and underfunded.

All Systems Go Africa is a symposium completely dedicated to strengthening these water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) systems. It will provide a platform for systems thinkers, private sector and public experts to connect and challenge each other in order to identify ways to ensure water, sanitation, and hygiene services in health care centres, schools, and public places.

1. Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in Africa 2000-2020: Five years into the SDGs. New York: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO), 2022.

## Scope and Objectives

### Scope

Achieving SDG 6 by 2030 means that institutions (schools, health care facilities, and other living spaces) also have access to basic WASH services. This will only be possible if these institutions are high on the agenda of stakeholders. As part of this theme “ensuring water, sanitation, and hygiene services in health care centres, schools, and public places at scale”, three sessions will be held:

- Session 1: scalable models for realising safe WASH services in health care facilities: challenges, successes and pathways to country wide application
- Session 2: safe, usable and profitable toilets: systems, management, institutions, and regulatory frameworks for safe toilet management in public places
- Session 3: chlorine production and water quality control: Ensuring safe services through systems for treatment and monitoring in Ghana

### Objectives

- Session 1:
  - To determine the impact of WASHFIT interventions on WASH and IPC improvement in health care facilities (HCF) in Kabarole district, Uganda
  - To explore the acceptability of WASHFIT as part of the formation of five model health care facilities in Kabarole district, Uganda
  - To strengthen WASH systems to improve WASH & IPC in HCFs sustainably
  - To understand the crucial role of the enabling environment (leadership) for the sustainability of WASH in HCF services when using the Clean Clinic Model
  - To define the key considerations and actions for long term sustainability
  - To analyse the potential barriers and solutions to sustainability.

- Session 2:
  - Financing sanitation to reduce open defecation
  - Opening eyes about professional public sanitary facilities, how to run it! How to keep it running!
  - Identifying the kind of hazards the emptiers are exposed to due to their nature of work, health and safety practices performed by emptiers, the barriers to health and safety practices among emptiers and the effect of health and safety measures on pit and septic emptiers.
- Session 3:
  - To share observations from field monitoring visits
  - To deliberate a roadmap for wider introduction of Aqua Research STREAM Chlorine Generator in Ghana and to establish partnerships with other organisations to achieve the objective
  - To highlight current trends in water quality in the various communities
  - To provide information to inform policy.