

8 Practical Steps for National Action on WASH in Health Care Facilities: Resources & Country Examples

To achieve universal coverage of WASH in health care facilities, WHO and UNICEF developed the 8 Practical Steps to help guide national action. This document outlines the existing resources for each of these steps, as well as providing examples from countries who have already achieved the step.



General

- [WASH in Healthcare Facilities: Practical Steps universal access to quality care](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2019)
- [Practical Steps homepage](#)
- [8 Practical Steps Country Progress Tracker](#)
- [WHO Quality Toolkit](#)
- [Infection prevention and control in primary care: a toolkit of resources](#) (WHO, 2021)

Step 1: Situation Analysis & Assessment

Conduct situational analysis of enabling environment for WASH in HCFs (specifically health and WASH policies, governance structures, institutional arrangements, funding streams and stakeholders). Assess WASH coverage and compliance.

Resources

- [An Approach for Conducting a Situation Analysis for WASH in HCF](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2021)
- WASH FIT Assessment Tool – [Excel](#) and [Kobo Toolbox](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2022)
- National IPC Assessment: [Assessment tool of the minimum requirements for infection prevention and control programmes at the national level](#) (WHO, 2022)
- Facility IPC Assessment: [WHO Infection prevention and control assessment framework at the facility level](#) (WHO, 2018)

Country Examples

- [Ethiopia Situation Analysis](#) (2019)
- [Cambodia Situation Analysis](#) (updated 2019)
- [Serbia Situation Analysis](#) (2020)
- [Liberia Situation Analysis](#) (2016)
- [WASH Assessment in the Gaza Strip](#) (2019)
- [Using the Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool \(WASH FIT\) in Zimbabwe: A Cross-Sectional Study of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services in 50 COVID-19 Isolation Facilities](#) (2021)

Step 2: Targets & Roadmap

Set detailed targets (with a national costed roadmap) to address gaps, and estimate costs (capital investments, rehabilitation and recurrent costs). A joint WASH and health taskforce or technical working group is an effective mechanism to help set these targets and develop a roadmap.

Country Examples

- [Malawi National Roadmap](#) (2022)
- [Ghana National Strategy for WASH-IPC in HCF](#) (2020)
- [Bangladesh National Strategy for Wash in Healthcare Facilities 2019-2023](#) (2019)

Step 3: Guidelines & Accountability Mechanisms

Develop standards (a set of requirements that dictate the infrastructure and resources necessary to provide sustainable WASH services) and implement using accountability mechanisms (regulation, accreditation, licensing, community scorecards, feedback mechanisms).

Resources

- [Essential Environmental Health Standards in Health Care](#) (WHO, 2008)
- [Safe Management of Waste from Health Care, 2nd Edition](#) (WHO, 2014)
- [Overview of technologies for the treatment of sharps and infectious wastes from health care facilities](#) (WHO, 2019)
- [Interim practical manual: supporting national implementation of the WHO guidelines on core components of infection prevention and control programmes](#) (WHO, 2017)
- [WHO guidance for climate resilient and environmentally sustainable health care facilities](#) (WHO, 2020)
- [Cheat sheet on Standards and Accountability Mechanisms](#) (2019 Learning Laboratory)
- [Roadmap on developing or adapting a guideline](#) (WHO, 2022)

Country Examples

- [Tanzania National WASH in HCF Guidelines](#) (2017)
- [Zambia National IPC-WASH Minimum Standards](#) (2018) and [Guidelines/SOPs](#) (2018)
- [Ethiopia National WASH in HCF Guidelines](#) (2022)
- [Cambodia National WASH in HCF Guidelines](#) (2018)
- [Nigeria Technical Guide for WASH in Primary Healthcare Centres](#) (2016)
- [Philippines Healthcare Waste Management Manual](#) (2020)

Step 4: Infrastructure Improvements

Select, install, operate, maintain and improve WASH infrastructure, (including through use of WASH FIT) to ensure sufficient, functioning WASH services are available.

Resources

- [WASH FIT 2.0 guide & training manual](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2022)
- [WASH FIT technical fact sheets](#), including a focus on [safe plumbing](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2022)
- [WASH FIT Q&A](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2022)
- [Assessment tool of the minimum requirements for infection prevention and control programmes at the national level](#) (WHO, 2021)

Country Examples

- [Case studies of WASH FIT implementation](#) (2022)
- [Vanuatu WASH in Heltkea Fasiliti Toolkit](#) (2019)
- [WASH FIT in Bhutan](#) (2021)

Step 5: Monitor & Review Data

Track the status or progress of WASH interventions by monitoring and reviewing indicators on a regular basis, including through national health monitoring information systems.

Resources

- [Core Questions and Indicators for Monitoring WASH in HCF in the SDGs](#) (JMP, 2018) – page 17
- [Indicators and questions for monitoring WASH and related infection prevention and control in delivery rooms](#) (JMP, 2019)
- [Hand Hygiene Self-Assessment Framework](#) (WHO, 2010)
- [Assessment tool of the minimum requirements for infection prevention and control programmes at the national level](#) (WHO, 2021)

Country Examples

- [Ghana HMIS Integration](#) (2022)
- [Uganda HMIS Review Report](#) (2018)
- [Implementation of hand hygiene in health-care facilities: results from the WHO Hand Hygiene Self-Assessment Framework global survey](#) (2019)

Step 6: Develop Health Workforce

Invest in a well-trained and well-supported health workforce to enable health systems to perform well and to respond appropriately to challenges.

Resources

- [Template for developing an aide memoire](#) (WHO, UNICEF, from 2019 Learning Laboratory at Zambia global meeting)
- [Multimodal Improvement Strategy for Hand Hygiene](#) (guide to implementation, WHO, 2009)
- [WASH FIT Technical Fact Sheet 5: Hand Hygiene: A Multimodal Approach](#) (WHO/UNICEF, 2022)
- [Best Practice for Environmental Cleaning in Healthcare Facilities in Low-Resource Settings v2](#) (CDC, 2022)
- [TEACH CLEAN package for training cleaners](#) (SoapBox Collaborative/LSHTM, 2017)
- [Global Competency and Outcomes Framework for Universal Health Coverage](#) (WHO, 2022)

Country Examples

- [Zambia IPC-WASH Training Manual](#) (2018)
- [Uganda: Approaches to health care waste management: Health workers guide](#) (2013)

Step 7: Engage Communities

Give community members and organizations agency in decision-making and management of services to ensure that health care facilities provide the level of care that citizens deserve and expect.

Resources

- [How to Engage Communities for WASH in HCF](#) (2019 Learning Laboratory)
- [Community Engagement: Systems Mapping Exercise](#) (2019 Learning Laboratory)
- [WHO Hand Hygiene Campaign resources](#) (WHO)
- [WHO community engagement framework for quality, people-centred and resilient health services](#) (2017)
- [Minimum quality standards and indicators in community engagement](#) (UNICEF, 2020)

Country Examples

- [Focus Group Discussions in Indonesia](#) (WHO, 2021)
- [Achieving quality universal coverage through better WASH services in Ethiopia](#) (WHO, 2017) - page 23

Step 8: Operational Research & Learning

Generate evidence to understand the problem and what to do about it and scale-up proven improvement approaches.

Resources

- [WASHinHCF.org: WHO/UNICEF WASH in HCFs Knowledge Portal](https://washinhcf.org/)
- [Synthesis and Literature Review of WASH in Healthcare Facilities Research](#) (WASH in HCF Initiative, 2019)

Country Examples:

- [Implementing the Clean Clinic Approach Improves Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Quality in Health Facilities in the Western Highlands of Guatemala](#) (2020)
- [Hygiene During Childbirth: An Observational Study to Understand Infection Risk in Healthcare Facilities in Kogi and Ebonyi States, Nigeria](#) (2019)
- [The Clean pilot study: evaluation of an environmental hygiene intervention bundle in three Tanzanian hospitals](#) (2021)