

# Factsheet: Urban WASH

## Our Vision

Traditionally, developmental water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has focused on the needs of rural communities. Our efforts in urban contexts are limited. However, 54% of the world's population live in urban areas, so there is a need to expand the focus. Our vision is a Red Cross Red Crescent Movement able to provide water, sanitation and hygiene promotion services in urban areas, in collaboration with other partners.

## What we offer

We are a partner that:

- ✓ is a global organization, with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 192 countries
- ✓ is present before, during and after disasters
- ✓ is very often the first to respond to any disaster, from the small- to the large-scale
- ✓ is an auxiliary body to government with privileged access to government
- ✓ has a strong volunteer base, with more than 97 million volunteers worldwide, and is very well connected to communities
- ✓ has access to a wide range of data and information available from our local networks
- ✓ has technical expertise to complement local water and sanitation service providers
- ✓ knows how to work in post-emergency settings, fragile states and complex settings.

## What we can do

### 1. Establishment of strong connections and solid relations with urban communities

- ✓ Focus on low-income communities and the most vulnerable.
- ✓ Advocate for national and local pro-poor policies and practices.
- ✓ Establish connections/partnerships in WASH with local community-based organizations.

### 2. Empowerment and investment in stronger service providers/utilities

- ✓ Emphasize the importance of good customer services.
- ✓ Support to manage non-revenue water to provide better levels of service to poor communities.
- ✓ Support to extend the scope of local service providers to include the full sanitation service chain, potentially including low-cost low-tech faecal sludge-management and solid waste management.

### 3. Improvement in regulatory oversight for provinces/countries

- ✓ Guide (local) governments in the development of regulations and operator licencing systems that ensure a good quality of affordable services for poor communities and people living in informal settlements.

### 4. Strengthening of cooperation between communities and service providers/utilities

- ✓ Complement utilities and extend their mandates to implement to the household level, with proper household connections.
- ✓ Engage with regulators to influence tariff policies so that they truly serve the interests of low-income communities and people living in informal settlements.
- ✓ Build trust between poor urban communities and utilities so illegal connections and water pollution through unsuitable water sources are reduced.

### 5. Implementation of effective behaviour change strategies

- ✓ Promote safe WASH behaviour using strategies that specifically adapt to urban contexts.
- ✓ Support community-led decision-making processes; mobilize communities, listen to their concerns, and ensure community participation at all stages.
- ✓ Involve vulnerable groups, such as women, children, minorities, migrants, refugees, older people and people with disabilities, so their needs are taken into account.
- ✓ Support the implementation of technologies that are low cost for operation and maintenance.

### 6. Disaster response and preparedness

- ✓ Respond to disasters and emergencies when they occur, focusing on market-based response and cash and voucher assistance.
- ✓ Engage with governments, authorities and service providers on contingency planning for urban disasters, to increase their preparedness and readiness.
- ✓ Advocate for a risk-based approach with urban authorities, communities and service providers.
- ✓ Promote increased investment in climate resilient WASH infrastructure and green technology.
- ✓ Engage utilities and service providers in epidemic preparedness and response.