

UNICEF Game Plan to Reach Safely Managed Sanitation 2022–2030

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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for every child

UNICEF's Game Plan to Reach Safely Managed Sanitation will cover the eight years between 2022 and 2030

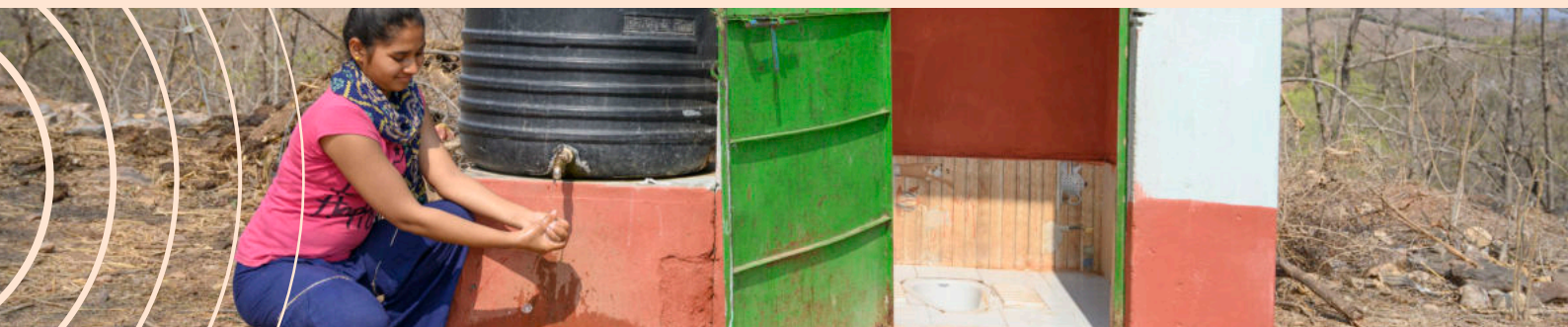


The Game Plan aims to help governments achieve safely managed sanitation for their populations and meet the sanitation target of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through the Game Plan, UNICEF will support 1 billion people gain access to safely managed sanitation, through direct and indirect support, in collaboration with partners.

To meet the criteria for a safely managed sanitation service (according to the definition used by the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for global monitoring of SDG Target 6.2), improved sanitation facilities must be used, and they cannot be shared with other households. Improved sanitation facilities are designed to hygienically separate excreta from human contact. Improved sanitation facilities include flush/pour flush toilets connected to piped sewer systems, septic tanks or pit latrines; pit latrines with slabs (including ventilated pit latrines); and composting toilets. The excreta produced should either be treated and disposed of in situ, stored temporarily and then emptied and treated off-site, or transported through a sewer with wastewater and then treated off-site.

Governments can set their own requirements, technical standards and regulations according to local physical, social and institutional conditions.



A major escalation of effort and investment is needed

Progress towards universal sanitation is alarmingly off track, unevenly distributed between countries, and inadequate to eliminate the inequalities to ensure that the most vulnerable are reached. In 2020, the JMP estimated that 3.6 billion people globally lacked safely managed services, and that the rate at which sanitation coverage was increasing would need to quadruple to achieve universal access to safely managed services by 2030.

UN-Water has developed an SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework—a unifying initiative designed to deliver fast results. UNICEF’s Sanitation Game Plan is aligned with this framework; the vision is to work alongside UNICEF’s partners to achieve the shared ambition of safely managed sanitation for all.

Substantial progress was made toward SDG Target 6.2 under UNICEF’s Game Plan to End Open Defecation

Ending open defecation is a specific priority of SDG Target 6.2. UNICEF contributed significantly to this target by helping countries prioritize national open defecation free (ODF) programmes. The Game Plan to End Open Defecation launched a series of country actions that yielded valuable lessons, such as the need to promote government leadership and political will to leverage the biggest gains. It also showcased UNICEF’s expertise in social and behavioural change (SBC) and proved that it is possible to change social norms through well-designed interventions. The last decade of work on ODF showed that UNICEF programming can help people be supported to abandon open defecation to adopt an even higher service level, ideally safely managed sanitation. UNICEF’s ODF work also highlighted opportunities to mobilize the private sector, realize investment returns and create jobs through the provision of sanitation services, including waste treatment and reuse. The Game Plan showed that coordination and collaboration are key to making the most of all opportunities to provide support.

The experience of the Game Plan to End Open Defecation was positive and inspiring. The Game Plan for Safely Managed Sanitation builds on this experience. Programming to eliminate open defecation remains an important part of UNICEF’s sanitation work; in many countries, programming is still focused on the elimination of open defecation and underpins progress towards safely managed sanitation.

The Game Plan to Reach Safely Managed Sanitation presents approaches and interventions designed to build on UNICEF’s broad experience and reach in the sanitation sector.

The Game Plan to Reach Safely Managed Sanitation is designed to be relevant to, and used in, all UNICEF programming contexts

The Game Plan will ensure that the progressive attainment of universal, safely managed sanitation receives the deliberate and sustained attention it requires within UNICEF. It focuses on household sanitation in urban and rural contexts, and covers the entire sanitation service chain. It is aligned with UNICEF’s organizational focus on climate change through an emphasis on climate-resilient sanitation. It also includes sanitation in public places and the disposal of children’s faeces. It encourages UNICEF country offices to take advantage of the opportunities to include sanitation in both disaster preparedness and post-disaster recovery, working at the humanitarian-development nexus.

Sanitation in institutions, such as health care facilities and schools, is also essential, where the principles of safe management of excreta along the sanitation service chain are the same. UNICEF interventions in these institutions are articulated in complementary UNICEF strategies.

Principles of UNICEF's sanitation programming under the Game Plan to Reach Safely Managed Sanitation

UNICEF's approach under this Game Plan can be articulated through several key principles:

- **Think big and work at scale:** Promote sanitation as a public good, requiring public investment and government oversight, working at the country, district and city levels.
- **Focus on equity and inclusion:** Champion sanitation solutions for everyone: rural, urban, poor, non-poor, men, women, children, people with disabilities, the displaced and refugees, and be true to UNICEF's commitment to leave no one behind.
- **Look for resilient, green, sustainable solutions:** Adapt sanitation service delivery approaches that are climate-resilient, part of the circular economy and supportive of disaster risk reduction.
- **Work across humanitarian and development contexts:** Leverage UNICEF's experience within humanitarian and development contexts to 'build back better'.
- **Work with all stakeholders:** As well as engaging government, work with civil society, donors, development banks, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), academia and private sector (at all levels), and champion coordinated, collaborative solutions, with clear accountabilities.
- **Choose interventions consistent with UNICEF's comparative advantage, mandate for children, and privileged position working directly with government:** UNICEF will determine the most strategic interventions in each context, collaborate with others undertaking related interventions, develop greater expertise and capacity where needed, and be clear what UNICEF will not do, but look to partners for complementary interventions.



The Game Plan is aligned with the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework

Under the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework,¹ five accelerators have been identified to support the achievement of SDG Target 6.2:

- Governance and policy;
- Financing;
- Data and information;
- Capacity development; and
- Innovation

The five accelerators provide a valuable framework for achieving accelerated, coordinated progress on sanitation, and the Game Plan is aligned with them. **Each accelerator is a 'pillar' within the Game Plan, with programming approaches related to each.** The collaborative nature of the acceleration framework is reflected in the Game

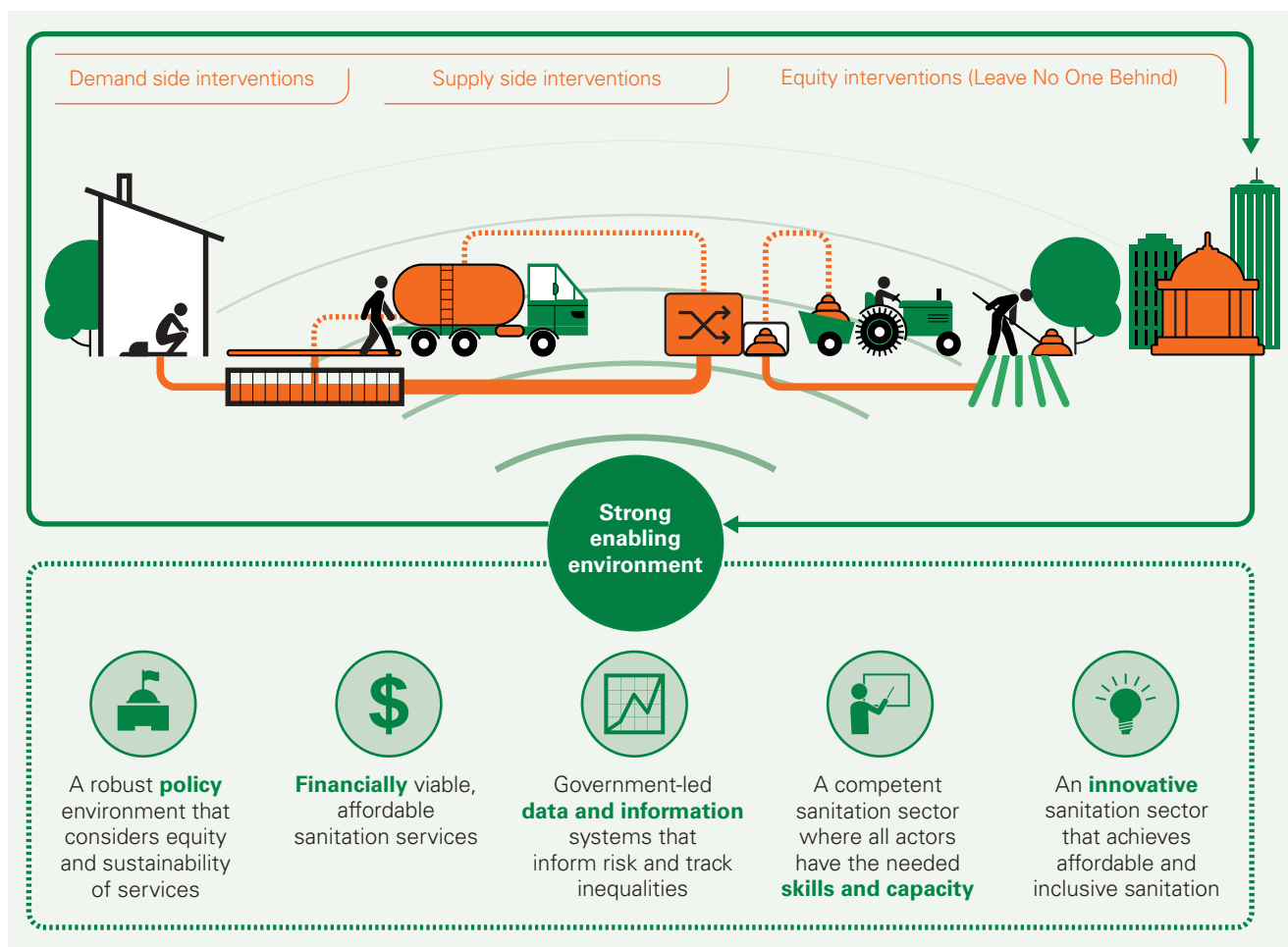


Plan; UNICEF action will rely on partnership, collaboration and leveraging resources to achieve ambitious sanitation targets. The pillars are heavily interconnected and linked; work under one may overlap with others.

The choice of implementation approach and priority interventions will be based on a thorough understanding of the local context, including the levels of capacity and resources available, and UNICEF's comparative advantage.



¹ <https://www.unwater.org/publications/the-sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>



Governance and policy

UNICEF will support government to create a robust policy environment that leads to sustainable and equitable, safely managed sanitation solutions for all.

UNICEF’s status as a trusted advisor of government, and the United Nations agency leading sanitation, means it is well placed to convene and coordinate sector stakeholders. UNICEF’s global reach and links with key United Nations organizations are a powerful advantage. UNICEF can use its size, scale and mandate to advocate at national and global levels, promote at-scale capacity-building, and coordinate across sectors and actors. Under the Game Plan, country offices will identify interventions that foster leadership, identify and strengthen institutional accountabilities, support policy development, and assist and encourage coordination.



Finance

UNICEF will support government to achieve a fully-funded, financially viable sanitation sector that provides affordable, safely managed services for everyone.

UNICEF champions the public nature of sanitation and the need for equity in financial flows to the sector. UNICEF has experience assisting governments in tracking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) financial flows using the TrackFin methodology or the creation of budget briefs to advocate for safely managed sanitation. Many country offices have supported opportunities in access to finance for vulnerable people, particularly using microfinance and revolving funds. UNICEF country offices can support funding and financing strategies, assist with tariff and subsidy design, support microfinance and revolving funds and establish tracking of WASH sector financial flows.



Data and monitoring

UNICEF will support robust, government-led monitoring of progress towards safely managed sanitation, along the entire sanitation service chain, with a focus on identifying exposure risks and tracking the elimination of inequalities.

UNICEF can draw upon its engagement with and understanding of the JMP, including the use of high-quality data, and standardized definitions, methods and tools for collecting representative data for target populations. UNICEF has experience working with governments to develop and strengthen national monitoring systems for decision-making, particularly tracking risks along the entire sanitation chain and monitoring climate-resilient sanitation. Also, many UNICEF country offices have supported coordinated monitoring through platforms such as Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs). UNICEF country offices can establish and strengthen national monitoring systems and assist governments in tracking risks along the sanitation chain.



Innovation

UNICEF will support government to create a vibrant and innovative sanitation sector in which new ideas, methodologies and products that facilitate the achievement of affordable and inclusive safely managed sanitation are fostered.

UNICEF's global leadership and respected position facilitate the sharing of learning around innovation and influences other sector partners to adopt, helping take innovation to scale. UNICEF's Supply Division has assisted with market-shaping to support innovation, focusing on innovation to benefit vulnerable groups. UNICEF country offices can strengthen the enabling environment for innovation in sanitation, assist with developing innovative sanitation approaches and infrastructure, and support the use of mobile-enabled services in the sanitation sector.



Capacity development

UNICEF will support government to build a proactive, competent sanitation sector in which all actors have the skills and capacity needed to play their roles.

UNICEF has experience supporting government organizational development, including at the subnational level. UNICEF brings strong skills and experience in training, including experience with developing high-quality materials and resources for capacity development. UNICEF has partnerships and links with academic institutions that can be drawn upon, and experience with learning exchanges and South-South collaboration. UNICEF country offices can support the assessment of technical and human resource needs, support organizational development, contribute to human resource development, and support research and education at academic institutions.



Each UNICEF country office will be encouraged to develop a country-level Game Plan that describes UNICEF's support for the achievement of safely managed sanitation for that country

There is a way for all countries (fragile, low-, middle- and high-income) in all settings (both emergency and long-term development) to plot a course to achieve safely managed sanitation, regardless of their starting point in terms of sanitation coverage, economic status, institutional environment or capacity.



The interventions UNICEF will support will depend on whether a country (or a region within a country) is starting from an emergency footing (with temporary facilities), a situation of widespread open defecation, or a foundation of basic sanitation. In some countries, different regions might require different pathways. In each situation, country offices will define the unique pathway to achieve safely managed sanitation over time, considering the existing context, including capacity, resources, demographics and other factors.

Each country-level Game Plan will describe the foundational interventions that underlie UNICEF’s programmatic approach, common to all contexts. These will be related to policy, strategy, regulation, funding, financing, data and capacity development.

Foundational interventions at national and sub-national levels will underpin all pathways to safely managed sanitation

In all countries, no matter what the starting point, UNICEF can help ensure government policy and strategy is geared towards the achievement of safely managed sanitation, including consideration of the entire sanitation service chain.

UNICEF’s foundational interventions will include:

- **Support to political leadership:** High-level advocacy and dialogue.
- **Institutional accountability:** Strengthened institutional accountabilities for sanitation through approaches such as WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tools (WASHBATs) and JSRs.
- **Policy for safely managed sanitation:** Establishing or improving policy, with definitions and targets for safely managed sanitation.
- **Data systems:** Strengthening systems for collecting and analysing data on safely managed sanitation.
- **Capacity:** Strengthening human resource and institutional capacity to achieve safely managed sanitation.
- **Financing:** Ensuring budgets and financial mechanisms support the achievement of safely managed sanitation and equitable access to services.
- **Innovation:** Strengthening the evolution of financial, market and methodological innovations to meet service gaps.



Taking the Game Plan Forward

Support will be provided to UNICEF country offices by regional offices and the WASH Section team at UNICEF headquarters in New York. For example, a roster of consultants with expertise in sanitation systems strengthening has been developed to respond to regional and country demand for support in reviewing and updating sanitation policies, supporting financing models, and building capacity. The initial priority for the consultants in the roster is to support countries implementing the African Sanitation Policy Guidelines (ASPGs).

Country offices will also be encouraged and supported to integrate the Game Plan into UNICEF Country Programme Documents (CPDs). During the CPD development process, there will be opportunities and entry points at which Game Plan strategies and the ambition of achieving safely managed sanitation may be introduced.

To act as a learning organization and build new competencies, UNICEF will establish a global learning network, spearheaded by the team in New York and supported by the regional offices, to allow for the exchange of experiences and learning. The network will use virtual forums such as global webinars to encourage dialogue across countries. It will also support peer-to-peer learning and twinning exchanges between and within countries to foster cross-fertilization of learning, inspire local leadership and scale-up of programmes.

Tracking progress towards milestones and targets

Sustained momentum over the entire eight years of the Game Plan is essential for UNICEF to realize the goal of supporting 1 billion people to gain access to safely managed sanitation, through direct and indirect support, in collaboration with partners. A range of information will be collected to monitor the Game Plan, including direct and indirect beneficiaries, and qualitative data on the nature and quality of systems strengthening work conducted at the country-level. UNICEF's monitoring system will be crucial in allowing the implementation of the Game Plan to evolve and increase in effectiveness over time, while also measuring performance against the stated objectives.

Resourcing the Game Plan through partnerships with bilateral donors, foundations and corporations

Bilateral donors, foundations and corporate partners will provide support through funding and advice, as they are often knowledgeable and experienced in the sanitation sector. UNICEF seeks to foster long-lasting relationships with donors who understand the need for a shift towards upstream, policy-based work, emphasizing collaboration and partnership.

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