

TITLE VII

# Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

Minimum Requirement F.Y. 2022

**\$540 million**

F.Y. 2021 Enacted

**\$450 million**

For every dollar invested in water and sanitation, there is a **\$4.30 return** in reduced health care costs and increased productivity.

## DESCRIPTION

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programming is a critical intervention that alleviates poverty and improves human health. Per U.S. law and policy, program implementers target their work to the lowest-income countries with the greatest need.

## WHAT DOES IT BUY?

Funds provide access to safe drinking water, toilets, and handwashing stations in schools, as well as healthcare facilities and education for communities about the importance of handwashing and using a toilet to protect health and safety. In addition, through improved fiscal and governance policies, WASH programs strengthen countries' capacity to maintain and deliver domestic water and sanitation services.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- In F.Y. 2018-2019, WASH activities in 51 countries helped **11.6 million people** gain access to improved water and 10.6 million gain access to improved sanitation.
- For every dollar invested in WASH, there is a **\$4.30 return** in reduced health care costs and increased productivity.
- **2.2 billion people**, or one in three, still lack access to a safely managed water source, forcing many to drink dirty water.
- **2 billion people** do not have a decent toilet of their own, and **nearly 10%** have no choice but to defecate in the open. Open defecation is an affront to dignity, a safety issue for women and girls, and a risk to children's nutrition and community health.
- Globally, **31% of schools** don't have clean water, and 37% lack decent toilets, which has devastating impacts on a child's ability to learn and stay in school, particularly for menstruating girls.
- Access to safe WASH can prevent **6.3% of deaths** worldwide and 9.1% of the global disease burden.

- WASH, including handwashing, is critical to preventing infectious disease outbreaks, such as the flu, Ebola, and coronaviruses.
- Each year, improved WASH could prevent nearly **830,000 deaths**—297,000 in children under five—from diarrheal diseases.

## WHY SHOULD AMERICANS CARE?

- Investment in WASH programming enhances U.S. national security by working to prevent infectious disease outbreaks that can become pandemics, as well as combatting the rise of antimicrobial-resistant pathogens, which kill more than **35,000 Americans** every year.
- Climate change negatively impacts global access to water resources and knows no borders. Droughts, floods, and rising demand threaten access to water resources and lead to increased migration and conflict. A **report** by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence provides that “water problems will contribute to instability in states important to U.S. national security interests.”

## COVID-19 IMPACTS

- Sanitation and access to clean water and soap for handwashing and cleaning remain one of the simplest yet most effective methods of curbing the transmission of COVID-19.
- Equally as important as addressing the immediate impacts of COVID-19 on WASH programs, the secondary effects caused by the pandemic include the solvency of water utilities.
- Ensuring services such as water and sanitation and access to soap and cleaning supplies are continuously available during this pandemic is critical to the safety of health workers and patients in healthcare facilities; the reopening of economies, businesses, and schools; and preventing development backsliding.

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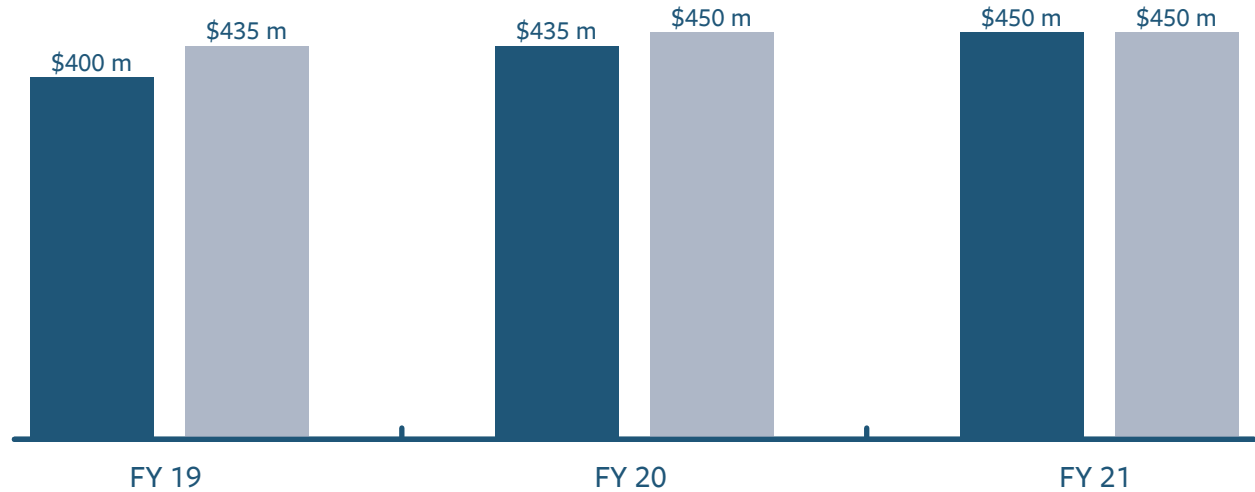
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## WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE?

- Additional investment could ensure service continuity and improve service delivery and access, building developing countries' capacity to transition away from donor dependence.
- Targeted investments could amplify the impacts of cross-sectoral work USAID is doing in other areas related to WASH, including maternal and child health; food security and agriculture; livelihoods; economic development; and nutrition programming.

## FUNDING HISTORY



■ House ■ Senate

*Funding levels may not exactly reflect those in the appropriations bills and/or reports due to rounding*

