



## CARE Haiti: Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

Across the world nearly 1.1 billion people around the world do not have access to safe drinking water and 2.6 billion people live without adequate sanitation. It is a silent crisis, because it affects primarily those who have the least power to speak up: women, children, and those living in extreme poverty. Every year, 3.4 million people die from illnesses related to unsafe water and poor sanitation, and hundreds of millions of children miss school as a result of being ill. Adults also miss work through illness, and women are forced to spend hours hauling water from unsafe water and remote water sources. Improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene is crucial for human and economical development.

Haiti places last on the global water poverty index which measures access to water, water quality and variability, water for food, environmental aspects and capacity to manage water. In a country of 10.1 million people, over 4 million Haitians lack access to safe water and 7 million have no access to a toilet. Increasing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene remains the cornerstone of CARE Haiti's WASH strategy which advocates for sustainable sanitation, community lead water systems and hygiene programs. This process of empowerment not only strengthens a community's resilience and preparedness for future emergencies but also sets the groundwork for their own developmental needs.

### CARE WASH activities:

- Delivering water, sanitation and hygiene services in emergencies
- Providing WASH facilities and hygiene promotion to schools in CARE's Education program
- Supporting 2010 earthquake returning communities with latrines and hygiene promotion
- Empowering vulnerable populations in community water management decisions
- Supporting gender equality in WASH related discussions and decision making

CARE Haiti's WASH team focuses on long term solutions as well as emergency preparedness...continuing to support emergency response needs, develop partnerships and promote local capacity to ensure sustainable access to safe water, improved sanitation and hygiene for all Haitians. In neighborhoods of return, this includes supporting the government in their goal of increasing water and sanitation coverage.

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**Water** Immediately following the 2010 earthquake, CARE Haiti's WASH team ensured access to safe, clean water in 23 camps. WASH teams also monitored vulnerable sites and organized the distribution of aquatabs to prevent diarrhea and other water-borne diseases. After the cholera outbreak of October 2010, CARE extended WASH activities to the departments of Upper Artibonite, North-west and Grande Anse, improving access to safe water through aquatab distributions, water trucking and chlorination of well water. CARE has since transitioned from emergency water delivery to longer-term solutions led by communities and local leaders. CARE's WASH team works with communities in the rehabilitation and construction of water sources at the local level, in schools and health centers. Most importantly, CARE works with communities in establishing and training community members in the maintenance of water and sanitation facilities, thus working to ensure sustained access to safe water and improved sanitation.



**Sanitation** To prevent the spread of disease and improve basic hygiene in crowded regions of Port au Prince, CARE is constructing latrines, hand-washing facilities and public showers in neighborhoods of return. CARE's sanitation activities have since expanded into the construction of shared household latrines as well as sanitation facilities at schools and health centers in the West and Grande Anse regions of Haiti.

**Hygiene Promotion** Where water and sanitation facilities are constructed, improving access to facilities is only the beginning. CARE's hygiene promotion teams work with communities to improve hygiene behavior such as the importance of hand washing with soap to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases such as cholera. CARE works with community members to improve understanding of the connection between improved hygiene and disease prevention thus improving quality of life...Care also works with communities in properly disposing of waste. CARE trains teachers to provide hygiene promotion in schools, health professionals in health centers, conducts household visits, develop radio public service announcements and hygiene workshops as additional means of outreach.

*CARE projects aim to contribute to a reduction in morbidity and mortality related to water-borne disease through improved access to proper sanitation and good hygiene measures for vulnerable populations in Haiti.*



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