

Under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025

Kingdom of Morocco



Ministry of
Equipment and Water

Lessons Learned from the WASH for Healthy Lives Project: Addressing Climate-Induced Water Scarcity and Improving Water Resource Management in Rural Nigerian Communities

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Introduction

In rural Nigeria, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) practices are critical determinants of both health and environmental outcomes.

Poor WASH behaviors contribute to high rates of waterborne diseases, environmental contamination, and overall community vulnerability.



Methodology and Approach

- The WASH for Health Lives (W4HL) project conducted a longitudinal study to understand how households perceive and practice WASH
- This was done using Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) assessments.
- The assessment will provide an evidence base to guide the design of interventions that are culturally appropriate, scalable, and sustainable.



Key Issues Addressed



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This study was undertaken to identify and address critical challenges which includes:

- Climate-Induced Water Scarcity
- WASH Vulnerabilities
- Need for Evidence-Based Interventions
- Community resilience and adaptation



Results



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The findings from our study revealed the following:

- **Evidence of Climate Impact:** Findings confirm that climate change is driving water scarcity, forcing households to rely on unsafe sources in both intervention and control areas.
- **Improved Access Through Intervention:** In intervention areas, reliance on surface water dropped from 24.1% to 9.55%, while use of safer sources like handpumps/boreholes increased from 33.3% to 47.74%, showing progress in water resource management.
- **Persistent Vulnerabilities:** Despite improvements, some communities still depend on unprotected wells and surface water, especially in flood-prone zones, highlighting ongoing contamination risks.
- **Health and Resilience Implications:** Continued reliance on unsafe sources in climate-sensitive areas underscores the need for climate-resilient WASH strategies to prevent waterborne diseases..



Other Lessons learned



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The findings from our study revealed that for future Interventions: Scaling safe water infrastructure and integrating flood-risk mitigation are critical for sustainable water security in rural Nigerian communities.



Conclusion

The WASH for Healthy Lives project demonstrates that climate-induced water scarcity significantly affects rural communities, driving reliance on unsafe water sources.

The findings highlight that addressing water scarcity requires not only improved resource management but also targeted interventions for vulnerable communities to ensure sustainable health and environmental outcomes.



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