



Planning and
Development



WASH CLIMATE NEXUS



WASHNET conducts 2nd WASH sector lateral learning event for TMAs

Message from the IDS Chief



Selected Tehsil Municipal Administrations (TMAs) attended the second WASHNet coordination meeting at the Planning & Development Department, jointly organized by UNICEF, WASHNet, and P&D. Chaired by Mr. Hamza Abbas, Assistant Chief (IDS), the meeting emphasized learning from TMA experiences to enhance planning and service delivery.

Speaking at the meeting, UNICEF WASH Specialist Mr. Farooq Khan Abbasi said that strong institutional arrangements, community participation, regular water quality testing, and the use of technology are essential for improving WASH services at the tehsil level. He added that TMAs are the frontline institutions for providing safe water and sanitation services.



WASHNet marks a significant step toward strengthening coordination and capacity across the WASH sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As the implementing partner,

IDS is committed to ensuring that this platform serves as an effective space for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and innovation. We appreciate the leadership of ACS and the support of UNICEF in making this initiative possible. We look forward to working closely with all stakeholders to drive sustainable and climate-resilient improvements in WASH services across the province.

Dr. Ehtisham ul Haq, Chief IDS

The meeting discussed good practices including Social Mobilization Units for sanitation awareness, SCADA-based water supply monitoring, water quality testing laboratories, and solid waste management initiatives. Issues related to low water tariffs, plastic waste management, and the need for improved enforcement mechanisms were also raised.

Signed Resolution of TMAs

JOINT RESOLUTION

On Restoration of Special Magistrate Powers for Plastic Ban Enforcement and Collective Commitment to Open Defecation Free (ODF) Sustainability

Whereas, the Tehsil Municipal Administrations (TMAs) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are constitutionally and administratively mandated to ensure municipal sanitation, environmental protection, and public health at the grassroots level; and

Whereas, achieving and sustaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status is a shared provincial priority and a non-negotiable prerequisite for healthy, dignified, and resilient communities; and

Whereas, plastic pollution particularly the manufacture, sale, and use of prohibited plastic items continues to damage sanitation infrastructure, block drainage systems, contaminate water sources, and erode ODF gains across tehsils; and

Whereas, the absence of immediate enforcement authority at the TMA level has significantly weakened compliance, delayed action, and reduced the effectiveness of municipal operations;

Now, therefore, be it jointly resolved that:

- All undersigned Tehsil Municipal Administrations unanimously request the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to restore Special Magistrate powers to designated TMA officers for the enforcement of plastic ban laws and related environmental regulations.
- The restoration of these powers is essential to:
 - Take immediate action against violations;
 - Impose fines and penalties as prescribed by law;
 - Confiscate banned plastic materials; and
 - Protect municipal sanitation systems critical for ODF sustainability.
- The undersigned TMAs collectively reaffirm their full commitment to achieving, maintaining, and scaling ODF status, through strengthened enforcement, improved solid waste management, community engagement, and inter-tehsil coordination.
- This joint resolution represents a unified municipal stance, recognizing that sanitation challenges do not respect administrative boundaries and therefore require coordinated, empowered, and decisive local governance.
- This resolution shall be formally submitted to the Local Government Department, Planning & Development Department, Environment Department, and other relevant provincial authorities for immediate policy and administrative action.

Adopted and Endorsed Jointly By:

TMA Nubot Ahmad
 TMA Khanpur
 TMA Dama Adam Khel
 TMA Bazar
 TMA Mankera Malic Farid
 TOR TMA CHB
 TMA TMA Achwan
 Supdt TMA Lachi
 TMA TMA Lachar
 M. Rehman Chitak
 M. Arshad
 TMA TMA
 TMA TMA
 Rahman Shau
 USMAN Ali

Editorial Board

Dr Rashid Rehan
NIUIP

Hamza Abbas
IDS P&D

Tahira Yasmeen
Local Government

Muhammad Waseem
PHED

Nosheen Malik
Chief Editor



Advancing Groundwater Sustainability in Peshawar: Progress on Comprehensive Modelling Study



The National Institute of Urban Infrastructure Planning (NIUIP), UET Peshawar, with funding support from UNICEF and in close collaboration with WSSP, is undertaking a comprehensive groundwater modelling study to strengthen sustainable water management in Peshawar. The initiative aims to provide scientific evidence for improved groundwater governance and long-term urban water security.

PROGRESS ACHIEVED SO FAR

- 560 out of 731 **Earth Resistivity Survey** (ERS) points completed
- 70 private borehole records collected and integrated for validation
- Additional strata charts and tube well **data** incorporated
- 14 water level monitoring **sensors** and flow meters installed
- 55 groundwater monitoring locations actively providing data
- Canal and **bore** drilling records integrated to ensure full coverage

The numerical modelling phase is currently underway, integrating geophysical, hydrogeological, and monitoring datasets to simulate aquifer behavior under varying abstraction and recharge scenarios. The outcomes will provide a strong scientific foundation for climate-resilient groundwater management and long-term water security planning in Peshawar.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Identification** of recharge potential and infiltration capacity
- **Mapping** of aquifer depth and hydrogeological characteristics
- **Assessment** of groundwater flow directions
- **Identification** of water-stressed zones
- **Determination** of sustainable extraction limits





Planning and
Development



UNICEF Strengthens Sanitation & Waste Management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



IRRC PROJECT LAUNCHED IN KOHAT AND HARIPUR

The UNICEF has signed a two-year agreement with the Akhtar Hamid Khan Memorial Association (AHKMA) to operationalize and sustain Integrated Resource Recovery Centres (IRRCs) in District Kohat and District Haripur. The initiative is being implemented in close coordination with the Local Government and Rural Development Department (LG&RDD), Water and Sanitation Services Company Kohat, Water and Sanitation Services Company Haripur, and the respective Tehsil Municipal Administrations to ensure long-term sustainability.

Objectives

- Operationalize and sustain two IRRC facilities with door-to-door waste collection
- Promote waste segregation, composting, and recycling
- Strengthen institutional capacity of WSSC Haripur and WSSC Kohat
- Introduce user-fee and revenue-generation mechanisms
- Create green jobs with gender equity safeguards



SUSTAINABLE WASTE SOLUTIONS

The initiative reflects a strong commitment to improving waste management systems, promoting recycling and composting practices, and strengthening community engagement. Stakeholders emphasized that coordinated action and sustainable approaches are essential to building cleaner, healthier, and more resilient communities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.





Planning and
Development



Municipal Citizens Academy: Pakistan's First Structured Civic Engagement Institution Launched in Takhtbhai



Recognized as the first structured civic engagement platform of its kind in Pakistan, the Municipal Citizens Academy provides organized sessions, workshops, and interactive dialogues that educate citizens about municipal services, sanitation systems, encroachment regulations, environmental protection, and community development strategies.

A UNIQUE CIVIC PLATFORM

The Academy bridges residents and municipal authorities through workshops and dialogues, educating citizens about municipal services, sanitation, environmental care, and development strategies.

MODEL PROJECTS & OUTREACH

Model Village Takkar and Model Bazar demonstrate better planning, infrastructure, and citizen engagement. Awareness campaigns in schools, mosques, hujras, and public spaces promote civic responsibility.

COMMUNITY-LED SANITATION

Village, neighborhood, and tehsil committees now work with municipal teams to manage waste, improve sanitation, and monitor local projects, increasing public participation and accountability.

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

Village, neighborhood, and tehsil committees now work with municipal teams to manage waste, improve sanitation, and monitor local projects, increasing public participation and accountability.

Progress and Impact of Social Mobilization Units (SMUs)



The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), in collaboration with UNICEF, has strengthened sanitation and hygiene practices through Social Mobilization Units (SMUs) in TMA Haripur and TMA Mansehra. These units raise community awareness, promote positive hygiene behavior, and complement infrastructure investments to improve public health.



30 School WASH Clubs

80,000 People Reached

200+ Men & Women Trained

30 Villages Declared ODF

These efforts have significantly reduced open defecation, increased use of hygienic toilets, and strengthened community-led sanitation management. The SMU model is now being considered for expansion to other areas across KP, ensuring sustained impact on public health and hygiene.



Driving Reform: A New Era for Local Governance in KP

Under the leadership of Zafar Ul Islam, Secretary of Local Government, the department has entered a renewed phase of strategic reform and institutional strengthening. Supporting this transformation is the Local Government Reforms and Monitoring Unit (LGRMU), led by Director Reforms Afaq Ahmed, advancing efficiency, climate resilience, and evidence-based governance across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



POLICY & LEGISLATIVE ALIGNMENT

Efforts are focused on notifying the official Water and Sanitation Policy and securing a specialized WASH section within the upcoming LG Act.

INSTITUTIONAL SYNERGY

A landmark strategy to merge the WASH-related sectors of the PHED and LG Department is being finalized to ensure unified policy and implementation.

EVIDENCE-BASED SERVICE DELIVERY

A comparative study is underway to identify the most sustainable model for water and sanitation services, evaluating outsourcing versus TMA/WSSC operations to guide policy and RFP decisions.

BENCHMARK FOR PERFORMANCE

The department is launching a mechanism to tailor international WASH standards to the KP context, ensuring service providers are tracked against localized, high-performance KPIs.

CENTRALIZED OVERSIGHT

The establishment of a dedicated WATSEN and WASH Audit Cell under the LGRMU for centralized policy guidance and monitoring.

GREEN GOVERNANCE

The creation of a Climate Resilient Fund operating under Green Public Financial Management Framework to ensure all investments prioritize climate innovation and resilient rehabilitation.

Delivering Results: WSSCM Performance 2025



In 2025, the Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSSCM) delivered significant improvements in waste management, drainage maintenance, water supply, and revenue performance across 14 union councils in Mardan.



WSSCM collected 49,537 tons of waste, desilted 653 km of drains, installed 290 manholes, and supplied 787 million gallons of clean water. Complaints were resolved at a 99% rate, improving city cleanliness and responsiveness.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE & SERVICE DELIVERY



Planning and
Development



The PHED plays a pivotal role in ensuring access to safe and clean drinking water for the people of KP

During the fiscal year, substantial progress was made in the completion of development sub-schemes across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A total of 8,282 sub-schemes were undertaken province-wide, out of which 5,110 schemes have been successfully completed, reflecting strong implementation momentum.

IN A SNAPSHOT

Merged Areas (MA)

In the Merged Areas (MA), 437 sub-schemes were undertaken, with 69 completed so far, including 11 completed during the current financial year.

Accelerated Implementation Programme (AIP)

In the Accelerated Implementation Programme (AIP) areas, 1,832 sub-schemes were initiated, of which 903 have been completed. Out of these, 308 were finalized during the current financial year.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) overall, 6,013 sub-schemes were initiated, with 4,138 completed. Additionally, 438 schemes were completed under the Current Financial Year (CFY), demonstrating continued progress in ongoing projects.

Rehabilitation and Revitalization of Existing Drinking Water Supply Schemes in Tribal Districts (AIP)



DWSS Sara Gala AIP



PHE Division Khyber

Construction, Rehabilitation & Solarization of Drinking Water Supply Schemes in Merged Districts



DWSS Bughdai
Malangano AIP



OHR Warsak Jamal AIP
210601



PHE Division TSD Darra
Adam Khel



Clean Drinking Water Crisis: A Growing Threat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

“Most of our area is hilly, and 3,000 to 4,000 households are struggling just to get drinking water,” says Jahangir Khan, a resident of Mazdoor Abad village in Tehsil Takht Bhai, Mardan. *“A water scheme was launched here in 2017 and at that time it was enough for the area, but now the population has increased and the water level is falling day by day. The problem is getting worse.”*

A Village Near the City, Yet Thirsty for Decades

Mazdoor Abad, a village located just one kilometer from Tehsil Takht Bhai and only six kilometers from Mardan city, presents a painful paradox. Despite its proximity to urban centers, the residents say they have been deprived of clean drinking water for the past 22 years.

Local people say that for more than two decades, they have been forced to carry water on their heads from nearby villages. Women, children, and elderly residents bear the daily burden of fetching water, turning a basic human need into a relentless struggle.

Considering the gravity of the problem, residents, with the help of influential members of the village, launched a self-help initiative to distribute water free of cost from house to house. However, villagers stress that this arrangement is temporary and cannot replace a permanent water supply system.



Forced Migration and Poverty-Driven Compulsion

The water crisis has already changed the social fabric of Mazdoor Abad. According to residents, many families have migrated to other areas in search of a better life and access to clean water. Yet, poverty has trapped a large number of people in the village, leaving them with no option but to survive under these harsh conditions.

Jahangir Khan explains that the village's mostly hilly terrain makes water access even more difficult. He reiterates that while the 2017 water scheme initially fulfilled local needs, population growth and declining groundwater levels have overwhelmed the system, intensifying the crisis.

Nowshera's Silent Struggle for Safe Water

The crisis is not limited to Mardan. In Nowshera district, residents are facing similar hardships. Naz Gul, a woman from the Ghari Momin area of Nowshera, paints a disturbing picture of daily life without safe drinking water.

“There is no clean drinking water in our area,” she says. “The water we drink is not fit for consumption, but we do not have enough money to buy mineral water.”

She explains that residents rely on water pumps that were submerged during the devastating floods of 2022. *“We use water from those same pumps. The water is very dirty, but here people do not even have money for food, so how can they buy clean water?”*

Naz Gul adds that during the flood days, clean water was available for some time, but once the emergency phase ended, authorities stopped paying attention. *“Children and women fall sick almost every day because of dirty water, but no one has a solution,” she says.*



Bottled Water: An Unsafe Alternative

For those who attempt to avoid contaminated sources by purchasing bottled water, the situation is equally alarming. A recent testing report by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Authority revealed that more than 40 percent of bottled water used in the province is substandard and unsafe for human consumption.



Planning and Development

The authority's Provincial Food Testing Laboratory and Center for Research tested 156 water samples from 61 local and international companies. These included 1.5-liter, 300 ml, 19-liter, and 500-liter bottles. The samples were collected during a campaign conducted between August 23 and September 19, 2025. Along with bottled water, samples from water sources were also tested.

According to official figures, "More than 419,000 liters of bottled water are produced daily in the province, out of which over 117,000 liters were found to be substandard."

Rising Diseases and Medical Warnings

Medical experts warn that the consequences of consuming unsafe water are already visible across the province. Dr. Shehzad, a medical specialist from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, says, "Drinking unsafe water can cause cholera, typhoid, diarrhea, dysentery, and many other diseases, which can prove fatal. At present, these diseases are becoming dangerously common in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to contaminated water."

Data from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department reinforces these concerns. From January 2025 to November 2025, the province reported 1,746,280 cases of diarrhea, 15,019 cases of acute watery diarrhea, 138,651 cases of dysentery, and 131,688 cases of typhoid.

A Nationwide Water Emergency The water crisis extends far beyond Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Asian Development Bank's Asian Water Development Outlook report, published in December 2025, revealed that more than 80 percent of Pakistan's population does not have access to safe drinking water.

The report states that Pakistan is facing an acute water crisis, with rapidly depleting water reserves. Per capita water availability has fallen sharply from 3,500 cubic meters to just 1,100 cubic meters. Excessive groundwater extraction has led to the spread of toxic arsenic, while climate change, population growth, and poor water management continue to worsen the situation.

The agricultural sector has been identified as the largest source of water consumption and wastage.

Weak Implementation and Massive Funding Gaps

According to the report, water security is essential for economic development. While Pakistan has water-related policies in place, their implementation remains weak and slow. Severe shortages of financial resources persist, and large-scale reforms and investments in the water sector are urgently



Floods, Droughts, and Economic Losses

The Asian Development Bank also highlights that the 2022 floods displaced millions of people across Pakistan, and the risks of floods and droughts remain high. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will require annual funding of \$12 billion.

Due to inadequate water supply and sanitation, Pakistan suffers an estimated annual economic loss of \$2.2 billion. Urban flooding and the discharge of untreated wastewater are identified as major challenges.

The report further notes that rural areas face limited access to water, persistent contamination, and weak monitoring systems. Urban water infrastructure remains fragile, with untreated wastewater being discharged directly into the environment.

A Crisis Demanding Urgent Action

From Mazdoor Abad in Mardan to Ghari Momin in Nowshera, the struggle for clean drinking water is no longer just an inconvenience, it is a public health emergency. Communities are forced to rely on unsafe sources, bottled water is often unaffordable for consumption, and preventable diseases are spreading at an alarming rate.

Without urgent investment, effective governance, and sustainable water management, the voices of people like Jahangir Khan and Naz Gul will continue to echo unanswered, while millions remain trapped between thirst, disease, and poverty.

Khalida Niaz
Executive Editor | Pakistan