

Background document about the Clusters and WASH Cluster projects

Background and rationale for the cluster work

The concept of global clusters was adopted by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in September 2005 in recognition of the capacity gaps which often undermine the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance delivered to communities affected by emergencies. Cluster leads were identified for nine areas of activity with UNICEF the designated global lead for the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH) sector.

The aim of the global clusters is to 'improve the predictability, timeliness and effectiveness of a comprehensive response to humanitarian crises' through strengthening partnerships between NGOs, international organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and UN agencies. At country level it is anticipated that enhanced inter agency collaboration will improve the quality of response by encouraging better prioritisation of available resources and greater clarity in defining the division of labour and the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian actors.

The various clusters are:

Agriculture	Camp Coordination/Management	Early Recovery	Education	
Emergency Shelter	Emergency Telecommunications	Health	Logistics	Nutrition
Protection	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH)			

The WASH Cluster

The development of the Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster provides an open formal platform for all emergency WASH actors and working together, the development of a workplan which addresses the key gaps as identified both by those key actors, but also verification from the field. The cluster approach presents many opportunities to bring the sector as a whole closer together in ensuring a predictable, effective, timely and coherent WASH humanitarian response.

Formal recognition of UNICEF's role as global cluster lead has also allowed the organisation to ensure dedicated resources to take up the role and to examine internal and external systems to ensure standards, systems and capacity for rapid response. Critical in ensuring participation in the WASH cluster in emergencies, is ensuring that all key WASH sector actors are fully involved at the global level.

Whilst informal networking certainly has made a contribution to the sector's response, prior to the humanitarian reform, there had never been a formal analysis of the key issues which were bottlenecks in improving the sector's response in an emergency.

The [Global WASH cluster workplan 2006/8](#) has been formulated into five strategic areas, covering outstanding capacity gaps identified by the WASH cluster working group. The five strategic areas where increased capacity is required are:

Coordination Information Management and Standards Policy Capacity for Humanitarian Response
Preparedness Best Practice and Learning

The Global WASH Cluster workplan 2006/8 has a particular emphasis on cross-cutting issues in the form of mainstreaming and the gathering and development of best practice guidance. The building of national and regional capacity and participation in emergencies has also been highlighted throughout several of the objectives within the [Global WASH Cluster Appeal and Strategic Framework](#).

Funds for the WASH cluster are channelled through UNICEF on behalf of all of the cluster organisations. The WASH cluster fully supports the distribution of funds for emergency response at the field level however, directly to agencies.

Global Cluster Lead: - UNICEF

Active Global Cluster Working Group Participants: [Action Contre la Faim \(ACF\)](#), [CARE](#), [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [Concern](#), [Catholic Relief Services \(CRS\)](#), [InterAction](#), [International Centre for Health and Migration \(ICHM\)](#), [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies \(IFRC\)](#), [International Rescue Committee \(IRC\)](#), [Norwegian Church Aid \(NCA\)](#), [Oxfam](#), [RedR-IHE](#), [UNEP](#), [UNHCR](#), [WHO](#), [World Vision International \(WVI\)](#)

Hygiene Promotion project

The Hygiene Promotion project relates to area 3, building capacity for humanitarian response. Currently, the way in which hygiene promotion is implemented varies widely within agencies and it frequently given scant attention during sector coordination meetings. It has been suggested that there is a lack of clarity within the WASH sector in relation to the purpose of hygiene promotion and its expected outcomes and that it suffers from a lack of common understanding of methods and approaches in its implementation.

The aim is to improve capacity and coordination of hygiene promotion interventions in emergencies and produce some best practice materials drawing on information from UN organizations and a number of international humanitarian NGOs.

Timeframe:

These Introductory materials were finalized in December 2007 and are being distributed in early 2008 onwards. In addition, over 2008 we will be producing a Training Package for Hygiene Promoters and for Community Mobilisers (with powerpoint and relevant handouts and resources), an

Electronic Library of Resources for Hygiene Promotion Communication: picture sets of interactive exercises appropriate for key regions; example posters; example general leaflets; example instruction leaflets.

Who is involved:

Lead agency: Oxfam GB Steering Group: ACF, IFRC, IRC, UNICEF

Peer Review Group: CDC, Tearfund, NCA, RedR, InterAction, UNICEF, USAID, ECHO, IFRC, UNHCR, ACF/AAH, CARE, INTERACTION, WHO, WVI, Concern, CRS, UNEP, Merlin, IMC, GOAL, CARITAS

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Photos on the Introduction to Hygiene Promotion: tools and approaches

The photo of the mural illustrating the F Diagram was taken by Jane Beesley of Oxfam GB in Wajir, Kenya and she said it was lovely how the local artists created such an interest in the mural.

The photo of the young girl taking water was taken by Jean Lapegue of ACF France in the Pakistan earthquake.

GLOBAL WATER SANITATION HYGIENE (WASH) CLUSTER STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK — 2006 to 2008

WASH Cluster Goal:
Improve the predictability, timeliness and effectiveness of comprehensive WASH response to humanitarian crises

WASH STRATEGIC Area 1

WASH Sector Coordination and Advocacy

OUTPUTS

- 1.1 Dedicated global Cluster Advocacy and Support Team
- 1.2 Regular global meetings
- 1.3 Tools for advocacy and resource mobilisation - *PROJECT 8*
- 1.4 Evidence based high level advocacy paper on integrated WASH programming
- 1.5 Right to Water in Emergencies (*NEW 07/08*)
- 1.6 Cluster coordinators identified, assessed and trained and roster of potential country-level coordinators established - *PROJECT 1*
- 1.7 Resources for initial cluster coordination cell (*NEW 07/08*)
- 1.8 Dedicated Rapid Response Team (*NEW 07/08*)
- 1.9 Mapping of Roles and Responsibilities for WASH with CCCM, Education, Health and Shelter

WASH STRATEGIC Area 2

Information Management and Standards Policy

OUTPUTS

- 2.1 Standardised rapid and comprehensive assessment, gap analysis and monitoring tools. Phase II includes production, training and dissemination of information management toolkit - *PROJECT 2*
- 2.2 Standards policy guidance (*NEW 07/08*)

WASH STRATEGIC Area 3

WASH Sector Capacity for Humanitarian Response

OUTPUTS

- 3.1 Hygiene promotion— coherence, tools, guidance, training, resources and mentors - *PROJECT 3*
- 3.2 Training for capacity building - needs assessment, development and roll out - *PROJECT 6*
- 3.3 -3.8 WASH cluster agencies specific internal capacity building – covering five agencies (*NEW*)
- 3.9 Technical support services for WASH response - *PROJECT 9 (NEW 07/08)*

WASH STRATEGIC Area 4

WASH Sector Preparedness

OUTPUTS

- 4.1 WASH cluster awareness workshops (*NEW 07/08*)
- 4.2 Global WASH equipment stockpile - *PROJECT 5*
- 4.3 Interagency WASH preparedness and Contingency Planning (*NEW 07/08*)
- 4.4 Global and national capacity mapping frameworks - *PROJECT 4*

WASH STRATEGIC Area 5

WASH Sector Best Practice and Learning

OUTPUTS

Learning:

- 5.1 WASH cluster field implementation reviews and global level evaluations - *PROJECT 7*

Best Practice:

- 5.2 Review of cross cutting issues (*NEW 07/08*)
- 5.3 Best practices and guidance in WASH Programming (including cross-cutting issues and vulnerable groups), and production and dissemination of WASH publications - *PROJECT 10 (NEW 07/08)*
- 5.4 Guidance on WASH and HIV/AIDS programmes in emergencies (*NEW 07/08*)
- 5.5 Environment & WASH - Checklists, guidance & best practice: including solid waste management, coordinators training and environment advisor - *PROJECT 11 (NEW 07/08)*
- 5.6 Technical Learning - *PROJECT 15 (NEW 07/08)*
- 5.7 Development of early recovery best practice guidance and tools - *PROJECT 12 (NEW 07/08)*
- 5.8 Development of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) best practice guidance and tools - *PROJECT 13 (NEW 07/08)*
- 5.9 Guidance and tools for accountability in WASH programming - *PROJECT 14 (NEW 07/08)*