

Water and Sanitation Initial Needs Assessment Checklist

Sphere Project

General

1. How many people are affected and where are they? Disaggregate the data as far as possible by sex, age, disability etc?
2. What are people's likely movements? What are the security factors for the people affected and for potential relief responses?
3. What are the current or threatened water- and sanitation-related diseases? What are the extent and expected evolution of problems?
4. Who are the key people to consult or contact?
5. Who are the vulnerable people in the population and why?
6. Is there equal access for all to existing facilities?
7. What special security risks exist for women and girls?
8. What water and sanitation practices were the population accustomed to before the emergency?

Water

1. What is the current water source and who are the present users?
2. How much water is available per person per day?
3. Is the water available at the source sufficient for short-term and longer-term needs for all groups in the population?
4. Are water collection points close enough to where people live? Are they safe?
5. Is the current water supply reliable? How long will it last?
6. Do people have enough water containers of the appropriate size and type?
7. Is the water source contaminated or at risk of contamination (microbiological or chemical/radiological)?
8. Is treatment necessary? Is treatment possible? What treatment is necessary? Is disinfection necessary, even if the supply is not contaminated?
9. Are there alternative sources nearby?
10. What traditional beliefs and practices relate to the collection, storage and use of water?
11. Are there any obstacles to using available supplies?
12. What are the key hygiene issues related to water supply?
13. Do people have the means to use water hygienically?

Excreta disposal

1. What is the current defecation practice? If it is open defecation, is there a designated area? Is the area secure?
2. What are current beliefs and practices, including gender-specific practices, concerning excreta disposal?
3. Are there any existing facilities? If so, are they used, are they sufficient and are they operating successfully? Can they be extended or adapted?
4. Is the current defecation practice a threat to water supplies (surface or ground water) or living areas?
5. Do people wash their hands after defecation and before food preparation and eating? Are soap or other cleansing materials available?
6. Are people familiar with the construction and use of toilets?
7. Are people prepared to use pit latrines, defecation fields, trenches, etc.?
8. Do current excreta disposal arrangements encourage vectors?
9. Are there materials or water available for anal cleansing? How do people normally dispose of these materials?
10. How do women manage issues related to menstruation? Are there appropriate materials or facilities available for this?

Vector-borne disease

1. What are the vector-borne disease risks and how serious are these risks?
2. What traditional beliefs and practices relate to vectors and vector-borne disease? Are any of these either useful or harmful?
3. If vector-borne disease risks are high, do people at risk have access to individual protection?
4. Is it possible to make changes to the local environment (by drainage, scrub clearance, excreta disposal, refuse disposal, etc.) to discourage vector breeding?
5. Is it necessary to control vectors by chemical means? What programmes, regulations and resources exist for vector control and the use of chemicals?
6. What information and safety precautions need to be provided to households?

Solid waste disposal

1. Is solid waste a problem?
2. How do people dispose of their waste?. What type and quantity of solid waste is produced?
3. What is the normal practice of solid waste disposal for the affected population? (compost/refuse pits. collection system. bins.)

Drainage

1. Is there a drainage problem (e.g. flooding of dwellings or toilets, vector breeding sites, polluted water contaminating living areas or water supplies)?
2. Do people have the means to protect their dwellings and toilets from local flooding?