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**WASH Cluster Terms of Reference**

Myanmar January 2013

1. **OBJECTIVES**

These Terms of Reference of the WASH Cluster in Myanmar detail the basic principles of cooperation between the members of the WASH cluster at country-level, as per the six cluster core functions agreed by the IASC[[1]](#footnote-1) at global level:

1. Supporting WASH service delivery
   * Provide a platform to ensure that WASH service delivery is driven by the agreed strategic priorities, the SPHERE standards and the various standards and designs defined by the WASH Cluster.
   * Develop mechanisms to eliminate duplication of service delivery and identification of gaps
2. Informing strategic decision-making of the Humanitarian Country Team for the humanitarian response
   * Needs assessment and gap analysis (across sectors and within the sector)
   * Analysis to identify and address (emerging) gaps, obstacles, duplication, and cross-cutting issues
   * Prioritization, grounded in response analysis
3. Planning and strategy development
   * Develop WASH sector plans, objectives and indicators that directly support realization of the Humanitarian Country Team’s strategic priorities
   * Application and adherence to existing national and emergency standards and guidelines, and propose new standards if needed.
   * Clarify funding requirements, prioritization, and WASH cluster contributions for the overall humanitarian funding considerations (e.g. Flash Appeal, CAP, Emergency Response Fund/Common Humanitarian Fund, Central Emergency Response Fund)
4. Advocacy
   * Identify advocacy concerns to contribute to Humanitarian Country Team’s messaging and actions.
   * Undertaking advocacy activities on behalf of WASH cluster partners and the affected population
5. Monitoring and reporting the implementation of the WASH cluster strategy and results; recommend corrective actions where necessary.
6. Contingency planning/preparedness activities in areas and situations where there is a high risk of recurring or significant new disaster.
   * Develop Emergency Preparedness Plan and Contingency Plan
   * Organize lesson learned workshop and create a database of the tools and documents developed during this emergency.
7. **SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

* **Strategy development**

1. Conduct joint sectorial assessments using common methodology and tools, involving all stakeholders and ensuring the participation of the beneficiaries.
2. Develop appropriate strategies and action plans to meet the identified needs using participatory community based approaches.
3. Ensure that humanitarian response builds on local capacities; support training and capacity building of regional authorities and civil society.
4. Include cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, age, psycho-social and environmental factors in all aspects of the response.
5. Help to ensure collective contingency planning tailored to the needs and preparedness for future emergencies.
6. Working with the WASH Cluster Coordinator to ensure proper distribution of responsibilities within the WASH cluster, and agree to act as a focal point in specific geographical and technical areas.
7. Identify geographic and thematic gaps and ensure their coverage according to strategic criteria developed by the cluster.
8. Apply lessons learned from past activities and feedback from beneficiaries to revise strategies and action plans accordingly.
9. Include early recovery as well as prevention and risk reduction in WASH planning.
10. Identify areas of advocacy (including the needs and resources) specific the WASH Cluster and contribute to develop key messages for this purpose.

* **Coordination**

1. Participate in the creation and maintenance of appropriate sectorial coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national level and, if necessary, at the local level.
2. Inform the WASH cluster coordinator of all initiatives related to resource mobilization and advocacy.
3. Provide to the WASH cluster coordinator information on the activities and results of projects on a regular basis. Share regular reports and promote effective information sharing with cluster partners and cluster coordination team, using documents and indicators.

* **Equity of the activities and respect of the standards**

1. Ensure that WASH activities are provided equitably to all affected populations.
2. Ensure both cultural relevance and quality of the WASH material supplied.
3. Ensure that WASH emergency responses follow government guidelines and technical standards defined by the cluster.
4. Ensure that adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to evaluate the impact of WASH programs and progress within the framework of the WASH Cluster strategy.



1. **STRUCTURE**

The WASH cluster is composed of:

* A **National WASH Cluster**, located in Yangon, which has the responsibility to ensure high level liaison and strategic decision-making in the preparation and emergency response. It provides the overall coherence of humanitarian action in the WASH sector. In particular, it supports cooperation with the national authorities in Nay Pyi Taw, it maintains regular inter-cluster interaction, develops and monitors the national strategy of response, sharing relevant standards and guidelines, and provides support to sub-clusters. The national cluster is responsible for taking strategic decisions and to communicate them to sub-clusters. At governmental level, the Deputy Director of the Environmental Sanitation Division of the Ministry of Health and the Director of the Department of Rural Development of the Ministry of Border Affairs are invited to participate in these meetings and to take an active role in them.
* A **SAG (Sectorial Advisory Group)**, composed of experienced members of the WASH cluster able to dedicate time to high level coordination. SAG members will be elected or chosen during WASH Cluster meeting, and will meet separately on need basis in Yangon to work on specific issues such as the definition of the strategy or other issues raised at cluster meeting.
* Two **Regional WASH sub-clusters**, located in Rakhine and Kachin. The sub-clusters are responsible for coordinating the planning, implementation and monitoring of activities in the two crisis affected states and communicate information on the activities planned and the problems identified.
* One or several **TWG (technical working groups)**, composed by voluntary members of the WASH cluster at State or Yangon level, can be activated to find solution on specific technical issues (ToR annexed to the Wash Cluster strategy)

1. **ROLE AND RESPONSABILITIES OF THE WASH CLUSTER COORDINATOR**
2. Manage the coordination at national and sub-national levels: Identify and ensure cooperation and appropriate collaboration between all relevant humanitarian partners (UN agencies, national and international NGOs, the Red Cross / IFRC / ICRC and other international organizations, local civil society and academic institutions), as well as national authorities and local structures, in accordance with their respective mandates.
3. Ensure the set up and maintenance of appropriate sectorial coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national level and, if necessary, at the local level.
4. Secure commitments from partners to meet the needs and gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities, with the identification of focal points for specific issues where necessary.
5. Promote and encourage participants to work together, ensuring the complementarity of the different actors involved.
6. Ensure that the priorities of WASH cluster are represented with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) / Humanitarian Coordinator, government representatives, donors and other key agencies on priorities, resource mobilization and advocacy.
7. Call, organize and facilitate meetings.
8. Ensure effective linkages with other sectors.
9. Ultimately ensure that the WASH Cluster accomplished its planed objectives and activities.

The WASH cluster coordinator does not represent the interests of UNICEF, but of the WASH cluster, represented by all WASH partners involved in the response.

1. **INTERNAL FUNCTIONING AND ORGANIZATION**

* The WASH Cluster coordination will be led by the WASH Cluster lead agency, UNICEF. The national WASH Cluster coordinator is based at the UNICEF office in Yangon. UNICEF has one international WASH expert in Sittwe (Rakhine) and Myitkyina (Kachin) who will co-ordinate WASH response at the state level. Furthermore UNICEF support WASH monitor teams in Rakhine and Kachin respectively
* Regular meetings of national WASH cluster members will be organized in Yangon once a month, resulting in a written minute widely disseminated. The meetings are chaired by the WASH Cluster Coordinator. Extraordinary meetings may be convened as required. Each cluster member specifically designates a focal point within its organization to attend meetings, centralize all information and disseminate internally. Efforts should be made by the members to have the same person representing each agency at each cluster meeting. Venue of the meeting can be UNICEF office, or in other agencies premises
* Decisions will be taken by the WASH cluster members during WASH cluster meetings, or by the SAG, by reaching consensus. In the case that no consensus can be reached, decisions can be taken through a voting system.
* WASH sub-clusters at State level will meet on regular basis in the field
* Inter-cluster coordination between Health, WASH and Shelter will be ensured, each cluster meeting being attended by representative of other cluster members (ideally cluster coordinators), or inter cluster meetings.

1. **Information management and COMMUNICATION**

* UNICEF has one Information Manager (IM) based in Yangon. There are 4W[[2]](#footnote-2) matrices already created, uploaded on the MIMU hosting the Wash Cluster webpage. These needs to be updated regularly and all members of the WASH cluster are requested to provide all relevant data at least every month to the State WASH Cluster Coordinator, who will then forward them to the IM n Yangon.
* The IM will contact the MIMU to create relevant maps from the 4W matrices every month. Maps will also be published on MIMU.
* In addition to the 4W matrices which are reporting on activities realised and planed, agencies needs to provide a monthly update of their current and planned funding, in order for the cluster coordinator to evaluate the overall funding gap as compared to the need and pledged funds, and be able to advocate towards donors for this gap to be filled.
* All WASH Cluster related information is available to the public through the MIMU, including the weekly situation reports and meeting minutes.
* The sensitivity of both Rakhine and Kachin situations leave WASH issues to the mercy of rumours and speculation. False claims of cholera and poisoned water have beset the sector, even before the cluster was activated. Issues of outbreaks and contamination should be reported to the appropriate authorities, either directly to the relevant State Health Department (SHD), or through the cluster co-ordinator. Cluster members are encouraged not to speculate on rumours, but rely on facts when they are available. The WASH cluster co-ordinator will circulate all pertinent information regarding contamination, disease out-break, and other WASH related issues to the relevant cluster members as soon as it becomes available. Cluster members are requested to avoid speculation and direct questions of contamination to the relevant authorities, the WASH Cluster Coordinator or UN-OCHA.

1. Inter-Agency Steering Committee [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Who is doing What Where and When [↑](#footnote-ref-2)