



**INTER-AGENCY Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Working
Group-Lebanon**

WASH Strategy for 2014

February 2014



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1. Introduction

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services are provided with the primary purpose of satisfying vital needs, dignity and prevention of public health risks. These three components factored into humanitarian emergency response make WASH activities complementary to the wider scope of protection for the most vulnerable.

The UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council have adopted resolutions that affirm that the human right to water and sanitation is legally binding¹. The right to water and sanitation is derived from existing human rights treaties and obligations² and is implicit in the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the right to life.

The purpose of the WASH strategy is to provide a common understanding and strategic vision to guide WASH partners towards an effective and coordinated response through prioritised interventions and targeted programs, whilst encouraging efficient and sustainable use of resources. The strategy document for the WASH sector in Lebanon shall be valid until mid 2015 and shall be reviewed in September 2014.

2. Background

Since December 2012, the increasing intensity of the Syrian conflict has resulted in a massive influx of refugees into Lebanon. By the end of January 2014, Lebanon hosted the largest number of refugees in all of the neighbouring countries, with over 900,000 registered Syrian refugees or individuals awaiting registration³. This influx is resulting in a major strain on existing resources and services and is projected to reach a total of 1,500,000 by the end of 2014⁴.

Most refugees arrive with very few belongings, and those who have been in Lebanon for up to two years are finding it harder to survive without regular work, having depleted their savings. Syrian refugees in Lebanon are from rural and urban areas, and from different economic and social backgrounds.

Refugees are currently residing in up to 1,500 different locations in a diverse variety of contexts: 62 per cent in the North and Bekaa governorates and the remaining 38 per cent in the greater Beirut area, Mount Lebanon, and the two governorates in Southern Lebanon. These areas are vastly different in terms of geography, economy, confessional communities, political affiliations, local governance, infrastructure and resources.

The Government estimates at least 1.2 million Lebanese in hosting communities are severely affected by the refugee influx, due to competition for livelihoods and public services, a figure projected to rise to 1.5 million by the end of 2014. In addition there is expected to be an estimated 100,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), up to 50,000 returning Lebanese by the end of 2014. Tensions have been growing in 2013 as Lebanese host communities and refugees compete for scarcer resources, including accommodation, food and jobs. Lebanese society is feeling increasingly insecure, adding to tensions that threaten to undermine Lebanon's fragile cohesion and political stability.

¹ United Nations General Assembly of 28 July 2010 (GA 10967) Adopts Resolution Recognizing Access to Clean Water, Sanitation as Human Right: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/ga10967.doc.htm>; Amnesty International; United nations historic re-affirmation that the rights to water and sanitation are legally binding (October 2010)

² Including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

³ UNHCR as at 31 January 2014.

⁴ 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan



3. WASH context

According to the National Water Sector Strategy⁵, Lebanon's water sector (which covers water and sanitation) is facing numerous challenges in terms of provision and management of services. The large and growing number of refugees and returnees, adding to the existing population, is significantly increasing the burden on the water sector. Some of the issues are summarised below:

- The renewable water resources per capita estimate was already slightly below the scarcity threshold before the Syrian crisis. With an approximately 20 per cent increase in the overall population in the last two years this value might now be significantly below the threshold.
- Surface water resources are largely exploited but surface storage potential is under-realised. There is a significant stress on groundwater mainly through the large number of private wells, with more constantly being developed.
- The coverage of the water supply and distribution system was 79 per cent pre-Syria crisis, however more than half of the system is past its useful life span. The continuity of the water supply is only 7.6 and 13 hours per day in high and low season, respectively, and the water system storage averages only 9.3 hours. Furthermore, 48 per cent of water across all systems is unaccounted for; compared to best practice of 10%, this is a significant loss rate.
- Irrigation for agricultural purposes is the largest water consumer (using 61 per cent, followed by 30 per cent for domestic use and 9 per cent for industrial purposes). However, agricultural usage is also largely inefficient due to the high proportion of the network being open channels.
- The quality of water in Lebanon is highly variable due to a number of factors. Bacteriological contamination is lower in rural areas but may reach as high as 90 per cent in urban settings. This is largely due to the disposal of untreated domestic sewage directly into the environment. There is a large variance in terms of chemical contamination also. High salinity and conductivity is a common problem for coastal wells caused by both seawater intrusion and overexploitation of groundwater (from excessive drilling and pumping). High nitrate levels are found in the Bekaa Valley due to the excessive use of fertilizers and unregulated application of pesticides. High levels of other contaminants are due to open dumping and direct discharge of industrial effluent into the environment.
- Pre-Syria crisis, the coverage of wastewater networks was 60 per cent but only 8 per cent of wastewater was treated.
- There is a limited user pays system for water. Only 10 per cent of connections are metered, tariffs are not based on volume and there is limited collection of fees. As a result, there is very little incentive for water conservation by consumers. Further, service providers are not encouraged to increase production and availability or to reduce losses. The tariff system for irrigation is worse, with very limited metering and collection rates again providing little incentive for conservation. There is no tariff system for wastewater and hence no corresponding deterrent for pollution.
- There is institutional uncertainty regarding accountability between the policy-maker and the service providers: the implementation of the water reform (law 221) of May 2000 has still not been fully achieved, meaning the Water Establishments are not empowered to act with administrative and financial autonomy and the Ministry of Energy and Water is not able to focus on policy making or regulation.

⁵ National Water Sector Strategy, Ministry of Energy and Water, March 2012.



- The Water Establishments lack human and capital resources, particularly Beirut Water Establishment (BWE), North Lebanon Water Establishment (NLWE) and South Lebanon Water Establishment (SLWE). Their focus tends to be mostly on water, with very little attention to wastewater.
- Responsibilities for planning, financing, capital investment, operation and maintenance, service provision and administration are distributed amongst numerous stakeholders with weak coordination.
- The legal/regulatory framework needs modernising, implementing and enforcing to allow completion of the water sector reform and to allow greater involvement of private sector in capital and O&M projects.

Solid waste management practices vary in the different regions in Lebanon, according to Ministry of Environment⁶⁶ (MoE, 2005). Illegal dumping and open burning of solid waste are common where most towns or cities operate open dumps within their jurisdictions. Municipalities are responsible for collection of solid waste and usually collect solid waste from settlements, collective shelters and other locations.

4. Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made in formulating this strategy:

- A humanitarian response will be required in Lebanon until mid-2014 and likely beyond (even if the war in Syria ends during the coming months it will take some time to restore security and stability, encouraging refugees to return).
- The numbers of affected population groups projected for the end of 2014 as noted above will be realised.
- The distribution of the affected population will remain scattered across Lebanon. It is very unlikely that there will be any large-scale camps to accommodate refugees, however small-scale Formal Tented Settlements will be developed.
- There will be continued or increasing insecurity in certain areas of Lebanon due to increasing demands on limited resources and rising tensions between different groups, leading to restricted access and limiting or delaying humanitarian responses.
- There will be an increasing number of (and congestion in) settlements and buildings sheltering large numbers of affected people.
- There will be a continued reduction in the financial capacity of the affected population as savings diminish, leading to an increasing number of highly vulnerable reliant on the humanitarian community.

5. Situational Analysis

5.1. NEEDS

WASH needs have changed over time and in the current context there is need to improve the response where the overall WASH conditions are particularly poor: tented settlements, large shelters (collective centres/shelters) and small shelters (unfinished houses, warehouses, work sites, garages, apartments). There is also need to provide greater support to existing communal WASH

⁶⁶ National Physical Master Plan of the Lebanese Territory, December 2005



services such as water and sewerage systems and solid waste collection and disposal.

WASH assessments have been carried out in different parts of the country but mainly focusing on certain regions (North and Bekaa). Initial assessments highlighted the need of WASH support mainly at the household level in terms of: upgrading of sanitation facilities, support on water treatment, provision of water storage and of hygiene items. However with the increase in the number of settlements and displaced populations at the community level (in some communities displaced persons have outnumbered the local population), the shift in needs has become apparent. Recent assessments indicate that about one-third of the refugee population need support on water, sanitation and hygiene promotion. This is in line with findings from the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR)⁷. The VASyR assessment findings indicate that 30 per cent of households reported not having access to sufficient water for domestic purpose, 40 per cent of households do not have access to adequate latrines and 15 per cent of households lack access to hygiene items. Though according to the preliminary findings of the Inter Agency Nutrition Assessment 40% of Syrian refugees do not have access to soap & hygiene items. In addition low levels of hygiene awareness and practices have also been noted.

As the affected population is dispersed throughout the country in varied accommodation types needs differ depending on the circumstances:

- In settlements (informal or formal) located mainly in rural areas, there is a lack of basic sanitation facilities and access to safe water, hygienic conditions are poor, solid waste management is often negligible and there is a risk of the spread of water-borne diseases. Some are also prone to flooding in the winter. More emergency/short-term/temporary type interventions are required in these locations.
- In large shelters (housing over 6 families) and small shelters in semi-rural and urban areas there is often a lack of basic sanitation facilities, water storage capacity and solid waste management. In these locations combinations of emergency/short-term/temporary type interventions along with more permanent/sustainable type solutions are required.
- A large majority of refugees are living in overcrowded rented accommodation (around 67% live in apartments or houses)⁸ or with host families in poor urban neighbourhoods or shantytowns in Lebanon's main cities (Beirut, Tripoli, Saida and Tyre). There they are also competing for accommodation with Lebanon's poorer families and migrant workers, usually in neighbourhoods where power cuts and water rationing are the norm and where municipalities lack the capacity to collect an increasing quantity of solid waste. In these locations a greater emphasis is required on more permanent/sustainable type solutions.
- Palestinian refugees from Syria are for the most part being hosted in already overcrowded and dilapidated Palestinian refugee camps and gatherings, mainly in the Saida and Tyre areas. Chronic overcrowding and poverty in the camps, and the resultant strain on available water and electricity supplies, is also leading to growing community tensions.
- Host communities most affected by the influx of refugees and returnees are typically in the municipalities that are home to the poorest demographic⁹. In these particularly vulnerable communities the limited infrastructure and support services are stretched even further.

Inter-sectoral needs:

Public health issues related to WASH, such as skin diseases and diarrhoea have been reported

⁷ The Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees (VASyR), WFP Lebanon, December 2013.

⁸ Shelter Survey, UNHCR, August 2013.

⁹ UNICEF estimated that 86 per cent of the registered refugees and more than 66 per cent of the vulnerable Lebanese were concentrated in 225 of 1,561 cadastres.



among the Syrian refugee population. According to the preliminary findings of the Inter Agency Nutrition Assessment 25% of children recorded cases of diarrhoea over previous two weeks¹⁰.

The influx of refugees, almost half being children, has overloaded the existing school system with some schools more than doubling their student population and, in turn, increasing the need for the rehabilitation of existing WASH facilities or the development of new facilities. Even though significant numbers of refugee children have been integrated into the school system, many cannot access the public system therefore child friendly spaces and temporary learning spaces are being established which also require WASH support. Further, the lack of adequate WASH facilities in schools is a barrier to enrolment for Syrian children, especially for girls.

Water and sanitation facilities need to be installed or upgraded in many of the large and small shelters to agreed minimum standards and with cooperation of landowners and municipalities.

Strong coordination with the shelter sector is required to meet these needs and ensure ongoing operation and maintenance of facilities and appropriate hygiene promotion activities are incorporated from the beginning.

Finally, there are particular WASH needs relating to protection that should be considered such as: separate washing facilities/latrines for women/children where necessary; lighting, security and privacy particularly for women and girls; WASH committee representation for women, girls, elderly and disabled; access to WASH facilities for people with pre-existing, severe physical, neurological or mental disabilities or disorders, as well as persons suffering from chronic illness.

5.2. RESPONSE

In 2012, in line with the needs highlighted above the focus of the WASH response was on supporting those who live in rented or hosted accommodation through: upgrading sanitation facilities at the household level, distribution of household water filters, installation of storage tanks and distribution of hygiene and baby kits. In the first half of 2013 with the mushrooming of tented settlements (where living conditions are particularly poor), the focus shifted to prioritise those informal settlements. The WASH response, however, has been implemented across a range of contexts as indicated below.

In settlements, the WASH response activities have included the construction of latrines, installation of solid waste bins and water tanks, water trucking, desludging of latrine pits, distribution of water filters, water quality testing, hygiene promotion and distribution of hygiene and baby kits. The installation of more permanent WASH facilities such as communal water storage and distribution and construction of septic tanks is often resisted by the landlords and the local authorities.

In large and small shelters response activities to date by Shelter and WASH Sector partners have incorporated rehabilitation of toilet and shower facilities and installation of water tanks, along with all the associated plumbing works. To complement this hygiene promotion activities and operation and maintenance of facilities have been scaled up by WASH partners.

WASH support to host communities has mainly been through small infrastructure projects involving the rehabilitation and extension of existing water schemes, repair and replacement of pumping station equipment, refurbishment of chlorination systems and installation of new wells.

WASH partners have distributed hygiene kits and baby kits to registered refugees on a monthly basis as well as to unregistered refugees. However, the coverage of WASH partners support to unregistered refugees with the distribution of the kits is not exactly known.

The WASH response in institutions has mainly been undertaken in the learning environment as part of an ongoing school rehabilitation program lead by the Education sector with support from WASH

¹⁰ Inter-Agency Nutrition Assessment, Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, UNICEF Lebanon, January 2014.



partners.

5.3. GAPS

Limited understanding of Needs:

There are significant gaps in the understanding of WASH needs, specifically:

- Limited information regarding needs of all beneficiary groups, including: those not willing or unable to register, Lebanese returnees and affected host communities.
- Limited information on needs across all contexts, such as in small shelter units and for those renting or living in /hosted accommodation.
- Lack of relevant, consistent and detailed information.
- Lack of up to date information.

Partial WASH Coverage:

Water and sanitation facilities upgraded by partners in large and small shelters and in individual households do not always cover other WASH needs such as hygiene promotion, solid waste management and operation and maintenance of WASH facilities such as desludging and water supply.

The distribution of hygiene kits has been widespread but has been undertaken with poor consideration to ensuring awareness of health risks and knowledge/practices to maintain hygiene and ensuring access to associated WASH facilities. Hygiene promotion activities are also implemented in a very limited manner with a one-off promotion session sometimes considered sufficient. There has also been a lack of a coherent and systematic approach to hygiene promotion.

Water Quality Testing and Treatment:

To date, bacteriological and chemical water quality monitoring have not been emphasised enough. Tests on the bacteriological quality of water have been performed, however, they have not been performed systematically or to acceptable standards. There have been very few samples tested for very few chemical water quality parameters. Nonetheless, the test results show high levels of contamination (as high as 10 times WHO guideline values for some chemicals).

Partners providing health interventions are attributing high instance of diarrheal diseases to the consumption of poor quality water, noting particular concern for pregnant and lactating women, and for children under the age of five. Of further concern is the flow-on effect of diarrheal diseases which heightens vulnerability to malnutrition.

Wastewater Management:

Collection of wastewater is through pits, holding/septic tanks or existing sewer networks. The majority of wastewater is discharged directly into the environment: mostly into the sea, streams and rivers, or direct infiltration into the subsoil. In the areas where there is no sewer network, latrine pits/septic tanks are used to contain effluent and are periodically emptied by desludging trucks, mainly using private companies. The lack of wastewater treatment facilities and limited wastewater collection systems, particularly in poorer less serviced areas, poses a very big risk to public health. However the involvement of the WASH sector in the rehabilitation or development of wastewater infrastructure has been negligible so far due to the complex, time consuming and expensive nature of the work.

Solid Waste Management:

Municipalities are responsible for collection and disposal of solid waste. However in settlements, collective shelters and other locations, due to the increased number of refugees and limited capacity



of municipalities, solid waste is often piled up or collected less frequently creating a health hazard, as well as public nuisance and therefore increasing complaints. The main gaps in terms of solid waste collection are lack of solid waste bins, garbage trucks, fuel to run trucks and proper final disposal / treatment sites.

Vector Control:

Leishmaniasis cases, which are caused by a sandfly bite, have been reported particularly in settlements. According to WHO, the breeding site of sand flies is not known, but it is thought that all cases found in Lebanon were contracted in Syria and experts do not recommend spraying of insecticides to control sand flies in Lebanon. Malaria is not endemic in Lebanon, though, mosquitoes are present. Hence, in terms of vector control, preventative measures such as proper disposal of solid waste and wastewater should be promoted in order to discourage breeding sites.

Environmental Controls:

The main environmental concerns are inappropriate disposal of solid waste and wastewater as mentioned above, pollution of groundwater as a result of use of pesticide and fertilizer, and over-exploitation of groundwater sources without proper monitoring of the long-term impact.

5.4. CHALLENGES:

The challenges for the WASH response under the current situation are as follows:

- **Geographic spread:** Currently refugees live in up to 1,500 locations around the country. This makes it difficult to identify and respond to needs, which are different in each location, as it requires considerable time and resources.
- **Continual influx:** The ongoing influx and movement of refugees between different areas makes it challenging to keep information on needs and gaps up to date as well as to respond to the increasing needs.
- **Coordination:** The coordination system and mechanisms are evolving and being developed as the emergency grows - often in a reactive way rather than in anticipation, which means activities are often implemented in a haphazard way before they can be effectively coordinated.
- **Insecurity:** The security situation in Lebanon has deteriorated over the past months and tensions are building at the community level. As a result, activities at field level are often suspended due to threats and security risks.
- **Limited capacity of Lebanon Water Sector:** Water Establishments and municipalities lack capacity (human and financial resources) to deal with the increased demand for water, sanitation and collection and disposal of solid waste.
- **Lack of funding:** Lack of sufficient funding has been an ongoing challenge. This has affected the WASH response in terms of scaling up to meet the needs and delivering services in a timely manner.
- **Responding in settlements:** In many sites providing basic WASH facilities and ensuring a sustainable hygienic environment is difficult due to lack of official approval from landowners and local authorities and the risk of flooding during winter.
- **Lack of existing infrastructure and services:** Poor water and sanitation networks in much of rural Lebanon, lack of wastewater treatment, and the lack of solid waste collection and land fill sites are among the key challenges increasing the need for emergency/short-term interventions.

6. Objectives

6.1. OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE



The overarching objective of the WASH Sector in Lebanon is:

To mitigate the risk of WASH related mortality and morbidity through provision of and access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene to the agreed minimum standards for the affected population.

6.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The following are the specific objectives for the WASH Sector, based on the Sphere standards and adapted to the context of the Syrian crisis response in Lebanon.

Water Supply

- Affected populations have equitable access to a sufficient quantity of water for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene to agreed minimum standards and public water points are sufficiently close to households to enable use of the minimum water requirement.
- Water is of sufficient quality to be used for all purposes without causing risk to health. Taste is accepted by beneficiaries.
- Affected populations have adequate facilities to collect, store safely and use sufficient quantities of water for all purposes.

Sanitation

Excreta disposal

- The living environment and surroundings of drinking water sources are free from human faecal contamination.
- Affected populations have adequate, appropriate and acceptable toilet facilities, sufficiently close to their dwellings, to allow rapid, safe and secure access at all times, day and night.

Solid Waste Management

- The affected population has an environment not littered by solid waste and has the means to dispose of their domestic waste conveniently and effectively.

Runoff- and waste-water management

- Affected people have an environment in which health risks and other risks posed by uncontrolled wastewater, standing water and stormwater are minimised.

Vector Control

- The environment where the affected people are located does not expose them to disease-causing and nuisance vectors, and those vectors are kept to a reduced level where possible.

Hygiene Promotion

- Affected women, children and men of all ages are aware of key public health risks and are mobilized to adopt measures to prevent the deterioration in hygienic conditions and to use and maintain the facilities provided.
- The affected populations have access to and are involved in identifying and promoting the use of hygiene items to ensure personal hygiene, health, dignity and well-being.

7. Guiding Principles

Humanitarian principles and standards of conduct for humanitarian workers have been developed over the past several years, based largely on international humanitarian law, the work of the ICRC and many others. The core humanitarian principles are the humanitarian imperative, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The following additional principles are also considered: do no/less



harm; equity; accountability; prioritisation and cost-effectiveness; appropriateness and reliability; inclusiveness (representation and participation of affected populations); evidence-based decision-making; and sustainability.

This set of guiding principles has been adopted by the WASH Sector and are expressed in more detail, including their particular relevance to the WASH response, in Appendix A.

8. Achieving Objectives

8.1. APPROACH

Achieving the overarching and specific objectives will require a three-fold approach by the WASH Sector:

- Firstly, it is essential to include a continued emphasis on short-term emergency interventions which are typically life saving and temporary in nature.
- Secondly, it is increasingly necessary to adopt longer-term solutions that focus on sustainability and cost effectiveness, which typically add value to and extend existing service provision.
- Thirdly, continued preparedness activities are required to be able to respond rapidly and adequately to significant changes in needs such as those arising from a mass influx of refugees or disease outbreak.

8.2. TARGETED RESPONSE

The WASH response should be targeted towards meeting the needs of the most vulnerable first. This can be achieved by using the following criteria to prioritise WASH activities:

- Focus on geographical locations with the highest concentration of affected people and with no/poor water and wastewater services. Useful tools to help with this include the mapping of the most vulnerable cadastres (worst quintile), refugee population data and mapping, and Water Establishment data on water and wastewater services.
- Focus on the type of shelter/context, where refugees are accommodated, in the following order:
 1. Camps (if approved by the Government),
 2. Informal Settlements (largest and most poorly serviced first),
 3. Formal Settlements,
 4. Collective Shelters,
 5. Collective Centres,
 6. Small and individual shelters.
- Focus on vulnerable groups, households and individuals (i.e. newly arrived refugees, female/child headed households, elderly or disabled persons and minors) using various vulnerability criteria. For example, using VASyR vulnerability criteria for targeting of vulnerable households for distribution of hygiene and baby kits to refugees.

8.3. UNDERSTANDING NEEDS

A standardised assessment methodology for rapid, in-depth and continuous WASH assessments has been developed and incorporated in the WASH Sector Assessments Guideline. When



planning for and undertaking assessments, all WASH partners are strongly encouraged to refer to those guidelines to improve the comparability of data enabling a more systematic and standardised analysis and presentation of findings.

A greater understanding of WASH needs is required to better inform the response. This should include the collection of relevant, consistent and more detailed information across all affected population groups and all accommodation contexts/situations. Proper monitoring and updating of needs is critical in this emergency due to the increasing/changing numbers of affected people and their locations. Furthermore, a greater knowledge of the existing water and wastewater services is required as this is baseline from which the water and sanitation needs are measured.

8.4. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE & COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE

A comprehensive WASH response should be provided by any WASH partner operating in its specific geographical area, regardless of the context (i.e. in settlements and/or small shelters, etc.). Over time partners will develop an intimate knowledge and understanding of the area and build relations with the local authorities, communities and beneficiaries. This should allow for a quicker and easier response when meeting ongoing, changing or increasing needs in terms of growing numbers of affected people in locations and growing number of locations in these areas. This will also simplify coordination between partners and allow new partners to focus on remaining gaps.

A comprehensive WASH response ensures that all inter-related WASH needs (i.e. water, sanitation and hygiene needs) are fully met in a short timeframe with a consistent methodology. This will minimise thematic gaps in the response. For example, a partner should ensure access to a sufficient quantity of safe water for a family of refugees in conjunction with ensuring their needs are met in terms of sanitation and hygiene.

Capacities and mandates of partners need also to be taken into consideration and if the above approach is not possible then strong coordination with other partners is required.

8.5. EMERGENCY VS SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

The following strategic priorities focus on immediate and more sustainable mechanisms. Standards and further guidance related to implementation of the strategic priorities can be found in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Technical Guidelines.



WATER**Immediate priorities**

Supply of enough water for drinking and domestic use.

Providing new and good quality of water storage containers and tanks in addition to awareness sessions on their maintenance (Existence of lids, cleaning, etc.).

Bacteriological water quality monitoring to be regularly undertaken at source and household level.

Distributing treatment materials such as aquatabs and filters and an explanation on the instructions of use.

Water efficiency awareness to be increased amongst communities particularly in water scarce areas.

Mapping of water scarce areas: working with water establishments and municipalities to ensure sufficient capacity and resources available to enable rapid water supply to affected refugees.

Mapping of flood risk areas: working with Shelter sector, Water Establishments, municipalities and sector partners to identify areas of historic or high propensity for flooding.

Sustainable priorities

Enhancing water efficiency at household level.

Improve connections, yield and protection of existing water sources through simple rehabilitation works to benefit the wider community.

Safe water treatment to be extended to community level.

Promote community/municipality ownership through operation and maintenance of water supply and storage systems.

Extended water quality monitoring to review chemical parameters, and improve overall water quality to potable standards.

Rehabilitate and/or extend existing distribution systems in cooperation with Government authorities.

Rehabilitate and/or construct communal storage facilities and water sources in cooperation with Government authorities.

SANITATION, WASTEWATER AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**Immediate priorities**

Provision of safe latrines and bathing areas for use both day and night.

Provision of accessible latrines to disabled, elderly and infirm.

Preventing the spread of vector-related diseases, by eliminating open defecation.

Preventing the spread of vector-related diseases, through removal of stagnant/waste water and solid waste.

Protecting beneficiaries from public health diseases through rapid decommissioning of full/unsafe latrines.

Sustainable priorities

Improving sanitation and drainage network connections.

Enhancing menstrual hygiene management provision in all facilities.

Improve municipal waste collection services through provision of additional large standard waste collection bins and transportation means.

Where feasible (dependant on landowner approvals) design and construct wastewater systems to mitigate disposal of wastewater into environment/public areas.

Rehabilitation and extension of wastewater



Prevention of groundwater contamination ensuring systematic desludging, use of impervious holding tanks and use of septic systems where possible.

Ensure wastewater is collected and disposed of in nearby sewage treatment plants.

Appropriate excreta management for communities in areas at risk of flooding.

networks.

Working with Water Establishments and municipalities to boost capacity and resources available for improving wastewater management.

HYGIENE PROMOTION & COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

Immediate priorities	Sustainable priorities
<p>Consultation with beneficiaries before project implementation.</p> <p>Hygiene awareness raising and practical exercises during distribution of kits and WASH resources.</p> <p>Menstrual hygiene management included in campaigns, messages and surveys.</p> <p>Gender-balanced WASH Committees activated to obtain optimum community participation in order to ensure understanding of public health practices along with maintenance of WASH infrastructure.</p> <p>Work with health sector on prevention & management of diarrhoea and communicable/skin diseases especially among children.</p> <p>Baseline studies and motivation and barrier analysis – include FGDs and direct observation to tailor appropriate and cultural sensitive hygiene messages, methods and materials.</p> <p>Distribution of vouchers, hygiene kits, baby kits, HHWT and hand washing points.</p>	<p>Hygiene promotion through multiple communication methods; hygiene promoters, schools, women’s groups, youth groups, mass media campaigns.</p> <p>Multi-sector planning and delivery: education, health, child protection, livelihoods and NFIs.</p> <p>Increase beneficiary participation and decision making through community led behaviour change methods.</p> <p>Focus on child-centred approaches including training children to carry out HP activities.</p> <p>Integrated health/education WASH disease monitoring and awareness campaigns.</p> <p>Support and strengthen WASH committees and health clubs.</p> <p>Monitoring and impact assessments feeding back into programme planning.</p>

8.6. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Crosscutting themes focus on particular areas of concern and address individual, group or general vulnerability issues. It is necessary to address these concerns by integrating into the WASH response (assessments, planning and programming, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation) some specific measures. The follow is a list of the key themes and their relevance to WASH.

- Children form a large proportion of the affected population with specific vulnerabilities and capacities. Providing WASH response in schools and child friendly spaces are examples of ensuring this.



- Disaster Risk Reduction is the concept and practice of minimising the likelihood and/or consequence of disasters. Reducing exposure to and thus consequences of hazards such as flooding, storms and draughts, needs consideration in the planning, design, implementation and management of the WASH response.
- Protection and management of the environment is essential to prevent its over-exploitation, pollution and degradation. Some examples are increasing the adoption of environmentally friendly materials and eliminating or reducing the use of environmentally harmful materials and chemicals in the WASH response.
- Ensuring full consideration of gender through consultative processes so that the different needs, vulnerabilities, interests, capacities and coping strategies of women and men, girls and boys of all ages are incorporated allowing for a more effective WASH response.
- Awareness of HIV prevalence and understanding of related vulnerabilities and risks is necessary to not increase people's vulnerabilities and risks to HIV.
- Elderly people play an important role in their communities, but may at the same time be disproportionately affected. A number of factors such as physical weakness, isolation and loss of support structures compound to increase their vulnerability. Special efforts must be made to identify and reach elderly people and households headed by older people.
- Persons with disabilities should be considered in the design, operation and management of the WASH response.
- The WASH response should endeavour to coordinate early interventions to alleviate additional burdens and deliver services in a manner that is compassionate, promotes dignity, enables participation and respects the importance of religious and cultural practices.

8.7. EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A key element of the WASH sector approach is emergency preparedness through contingency planning. A number of possible emergency scenarios have been considered and are documented in the Inter-Agency and in the UN Country Team Contingency Plans.

The most high-risk scenarios that require the WASH Sector attention are a mass influx of refugees and WASH-related disease outbreak. A WASH Sector Contingency plan is therefore required. This will be kept up to date and the related preparedness activities followed up in a timely and effective manner in close coordination with other sectors such as shelter, health and protection.

Contingency stocks should hold supplies for a minimum number of beneficiaries (whilst maintaining the ability for rapid importation of stock to meet the needs of an additional agreed number) in the event of a mass influx of refugees. Key partners should maintain this stock in in warehouses in Beirut and field areas.

Training and capacity building for emergency response will also be an integral part of emergency preparedness for both agencies and government counterparts.

8.8. EXIT STRATEGY

Under the guiding principle of sustainability, when conceiving any WASH intervention, its consequences for the long term as well as an appropriate exit strategy must be thoroughly analysed.

Also, in order to avoid any disruption in service provision when a partner pulls out from its WASH interventions, an adequate and timely handover strategy must be planned. Other partners that



can take over (be it humanitarian organisations, local authorities or beneficiaries) should be transparently informed of all contractual and/or financial implications and responsibilities that they are expected to assume. In principle, no changes that would negatively impact on the satisfaction of needs should occur.

Beneficiaries must be kept informed on such changes, in order to get their collaboration and to drive the process smoothly.

9. Training and capacity building

Identification of training and capacity building needs is the responsibility of all sector partners. UNHCR and UNICEF, as lead agencies of the sector have an added responsibility for providing guidance and technical support to WASH partners through training and capacity development opportunities. Sector partners that have a strong capacity in certain areas should also endeavour to provide training in these areas so that others can build their capacity.

To ensure sustainability, viability and participation in the WASH response training and capacity building should be extended to local partners, Government authorities, and beneficiaries where possible.

10. Coordination and information sharing

To meet the objectives, a coordinated approach between all partners within the WASH sector is critical. In addition, inter-sector coordination is essential, particularly with the Shelter, Health and Education sectors and should be systematically improved. Furthermore, liaison with donors, non-WASH sector actors and various important Government institutions has so far been weak and should be enhanced.

Coordination currently takes place at two levels:

- National level – primarily high-level liaison, strategic decision-making, technical guidance, advocacy activities and contribution to overall coordination and coherence of the response.
- Field/Governorate level – primarily for coordination of detailed planning and implementation of activities, who is doing what where, monitoring and evaluation and community mobilisation.

A number of mechanisms/tools/systems (e.g. Activity Info, thematic maps, technical working groups, ToR of the sector) have been employed to aid coordination at both these levels. Partner involvement in the development of these tools and mechanisms is essential as well as their commitment to a coordinated approach requiring sharing of information and contribution to the sector response as a whole.

Inter-sectoral partnerships

Information sharing between other sectors is critical to understanding the needs of the population to allow the provision of services in a holistic and systematic manner. Particular linkages with the health sector are essential to monitor epidemiological data, especially morbidity rates for communicable diseases, and develop appropriate and referral systems that link with hygiene promotion and outreach programs within both host and refugee communities. Equally the WASH sector will continue to work with education, health, shelter and protection sectors to provide a holistically designed response to ensure that the affected populations needs are met in a systematic manner.



11. Advocacy and resource mobilization

In order to effectively achieve the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the WASH sector strategy, a number of different engagements and systematic approaches with WASH stakeholders, and multi-sector counterparts need to be activated and sustained:

Government of Lebanon:

- The appointment by the Government of Lebanon of a dedicated ministry and focal point to liaise directly with the WASH Sector to expedite the support required by the humanitarian community to enhance service provision, especially where public services are under the most pressure. The overarching justification is to urgently mitigate health risks to the affected population, including Lebanese communities.
- Support is urgently requested from the Government to permit basic life-saving WASH services to the affected population in informal settlements to ensure sanitary conditions and prevent public health diseases and outbreaks.
- Support is requested from the Government to enhance service delivery to the most vulnerable communities through increased waste collection and wastewater desludging services.
- The humanitarian WASH sector will endeavour to support the municipalities and/or Water Establishments to achieve increased levels of service through direct infrastructure support. Operation and maintenance must be included in any agreements with local authorities.
- Visa approvals have notably reduced, and duration for issuance of permits has substantially increased. It is requested that visas to allow entry of experienced humanitarian emergency personnel be expedited in order to enable UN and NGOs in country, the ability to respond professionally and rapidly to a burgeoning crisis. This will, in turn, aid local national counterparts and locally employed staff by increasing their capacity for the continuation and scale up of the humanitarian response.

Water Establishments and Municipalities:

- The appointment by Water Establishments at municipality level of a focal point to liaise directly with the WASH Sector and identify areas most under-served or with insufficient infrastructure services or resources to serve the host and refugee population.
- Engagement with other municipal sectors for a holistic approach in particular health and community services.

Donors:

Greater resources are required to provide sustained safe water, sanitation and hygiene to a substantially increasing refugee population.

- Greater engagement in WASH sector meetings and workshops in order to identify key areas requiring enhanced support and further advocacy.
- Greater support to municipalities and Government to develop more robust infrastructure systems to manage the influx of refugees in congested and highly under-resourced areas.
- Funding for activities and initiatives that contribute to minimising the likelihood or impact of draught conditions, flooding, winter snow and cold (disaster risk reduction).



- Funding for holistic service provision to refugees at greatest risk from lack of basic services and resources.

WASH sector:

- Increase engagement with Government authorities and advocate for a line ministry to coordinate with the sector at the National level.
- Engagement with unions of municipalities and municipalities must be a priority to enhance collaboration and allow for WASH services and installations to be permitted in settlements.
- Collate information pertaining to WASH and protection issues, liaising with relevant sectors to expedite resourcing and reducing risk to women and children.
- Collate and disseminate information to UNHCR and the Ministry of Social Affairs regarding areas of potential relocation with existing WASH services available, for populations at risk of, or currently under eviction.
- Continue to seek guidance and information from Health sector regarding settlements and areas identified with life-threatening illness from unsanitary conditions and communicable or water borne diseases, especially among children.
- Inclusion of WASH strategy priorities within multi-sector working group(s) operations to guide holistic and aligned response systems (winterisation, ITS action plan, Cash Transfer Programme Working Group, etc.).
- WASH potential and existing partners to share results of WASH assessments with WASH sector (national and local level).
- Engagement with development donors and stakeholders to reinforce linkages between humanitarian relief and development for more sustainable wider support to host urban populations.
- Broaden the WASH sector fundraising strategy to occur over a longer timeframe to capture wider cross-sectoral and sustainable support to the host population and municipalities.



12. Annexes

- Guiding principles

13. Other relevant WASH documents and resources

- Sector ToR
- Technical Guides for water, sanitation and hygiene
- WASH Assessments Guidelines
- WASH Contingency plan / IA contingency plan & UNCT contingency plan
- GoL MoE&W Water Strategy
- UNHCR Web Portal – finalised maps, documents, reports, assessments, etc.
- WASH Sector Drop Box – draft and working documents, resources and tools.



ANNEX A

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Humanitarian imperative

Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found, with particular attention to the most vulnerable in the population. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings. The humanitarian imperative implies a right to receive humanitarian assistance and a right to offer it.

- Neutrality, Impartiality and Independence

Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.

Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.

- “Do no/less harm”

Avoid exposing people to further harm as a result of your actions: actors must strive to “do no harm” or to minimize the harm they may be inadvertently doing simply by being present and providing assistance. To minimize possible longer-term harm, stakeholder should provide assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development.

Potential consequences if this principle is underestimated may be tensions/conflicts on communities sharing the same (scarce) resources, as well as water and environmental reserves being put at risk if over exploited.

- Equity

Beneficiaries must be granted with access to WASH services while prioritising assistance to those most in need. Measures are taken to ensure that women and girls access services as effectively as men and boys, the elderly as well as the young, and that access is facilitated for those with disabilities (physical and economic access). Special assistance including cash assistance or waiving of fees are established for vulnerable affected people in order to access services equitably. Efforts are made to identify and lessen the effects of stigmatisation of any individuals.

- Accountability

To ensure accountability it is required to: i) clearly articulate and document roles, responsibilities, commitments, and expectations of all stakeholders; ii) promote and deliver programs where all stakeholders are accountable to each other and operate in a transparent manner, and: iii) evaluate the capabilities and capacity of the consumers, community, and service providers when determining their roles in ongoing service delivery.

There are four stakeholders in the provision of aid assistance: the beneficiary community; the national/local authority; the donor and the aid agency. Within this relationship, international aid agencies shall hold themselves accountable to both the beneficiary communities (that their needs for assistance and protection are met, with dignity) and the donors (that assistance is provided for the proposed purpose). Coordination among organizations is thus a key part of this



principle. National/local authorities, on their part, shall hold themselves accountable for the protection, safety and well-being of populations living in areas over which they claim control.

- **Prioritisation and cost-effectiveness**

Priorities are set for the identification and use of clearly defined quality and cost-effective WASH services. The WASH sector takes into consideration value-for-money by comparing costs of delivering similar services carried out by different providers through multi-stakeholder analysis. The rationalisation of services is supported by identifying and supporting a selected number of quality WASH service providers when the national infrastructure is not sufficient. Whenever possible limiting the number of potential service providers enhances cost-efficiency and effectiveness, and allows more manageable monitoring, evaluation and quality control.

Taking into consideration the resources available, priorities are set up in order to satisfy first the direst needs. In order to do that targeting the beneficiaries in most vulnerable or in at-immediate-risk situations is an essential pre-condition. Largest target groups should be assisted first. In order to harmonise interventions specific priority criteria must be jointly established, preferring the greatest impact with the least investment. Cross-sectorial implications must be taken into consideration, especially when related to protection, public health and shelter.

- **Appropriateness and reliability**

WASH services should be appropriate and provided according to the context. This includes ensuring and facilitating access to minimum essential services in the emergency phase. Continuity of services in the durable solution scenario is essential. Services should be similar to those provided in the country of origin and host country. However, minimum essential services must be given in all situations regardless of availability in host communities. If not available in the latter, the WASH sector must advocate for their provision and provide such services to the surrounding community within its means to do so.

- **Inclusiveness (representation and participation of affected populations)**

Beneficiaries should be empowered at all stages to participate in decisions that affect their lives, such as policy making, programme planning, design consultation, and implementation and evaluation. Equal representation of women, older people and those with disabilities is promoted in all programmes. Build on capacities in the affected population and develop effective communication tools serve to improve access to essential services, to ensure information accessibility and to eventually improve the status of affected populations. Communication strategies ensure beneficiaries and key services providers are aware of rights and obligations, as well as opportunities and services that are available to them.

Purpose of above is the respect for culture and custom: understanding local habits and traditions is important in understanding local values when connecting them to internationally recognized human rights. While local culture and customs vary, human rights are universal and applicable to all human beings, no matter what the cultural setting, and must be paramount.

- **Evidence-based decision-making**

WASH programmes are planned and evaluated based on the availability of quality data. By using standard surveys and needs assessments all WASH actors collect, exchange, interpret and consolidate data through the WASH sector coordination platform. The use of national and international guidance, best standards and practices and lessons learned is promoted and contributes to the formulation of these standards, thus promoting quality of services. Both facility-based and community-based surveillance and surveys are employed to give a clearer picture of WASH situation and needs, and how services are being accessed. Effective monitoring and evaluation enables better technical planning and improved advocacy around clear objectives.



- Sustainability

Delivery of safe WASH services must strive to produce high-quality, lasting benefits to beneficiaries. All WASH stakeholders including development organizations and national/local governments must collaboratively align their efforts to develop solutions that are equitable, environmentally-friendly, and well-suited to the specific needs and long-term operations and maintenance capabilities of the local community and authority.

Full life-cycle risks must be assessed with special reference to O&M criticalities, and appropriate risk mitigation strategies identified. And the long-term education, capacity-building, and training needs of stakeholders must be considered.