



WASH Strategic Operational Framework

Uganda Refugee Operations



April/ May 2017

Table of content

WASH OVERVIEW.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.	3
CONTEXT/ GAP ANALYSIS	3-4
WASH SECTOR COORDINATION	5	
WASH OPERATIONAL STRATEGY.....	6	
SECTOR OBJECTIVES.....	6
STRATEGIC APPROACH	6
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.....	6
MINIMUM WASH STANDARDS.....	7	
WATER SUPPLY	7-8
SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION	8-9
ANNEX	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.	

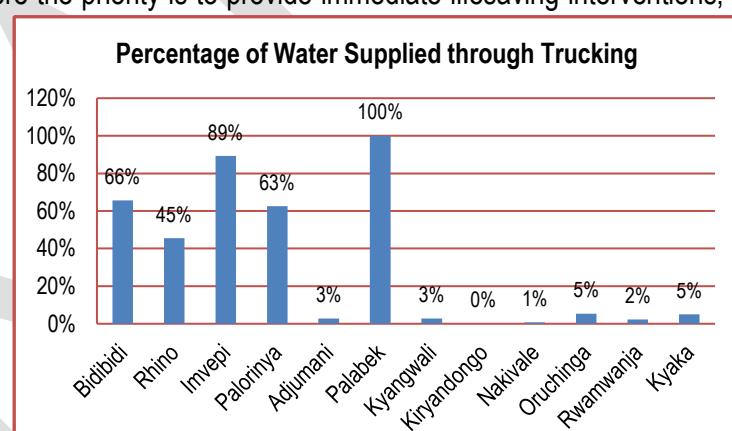
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A. WASH OVERVIEW

Uganda has had a long history of hosting refugees, providing a safe and stable sanctuary to populations fleeing from war in neighbouring countries including South Sudan, Burundi, Congo, Somalia, Eritrea, and Rwanda. Since July 2016, there has been an unprecedented influx of refugees from South Sudan. It is estimated that more than one million refugees are currently settled in 12 refugee settlements in Uganda, with majority of them (over 800,000) in West Nile region. This has resulted in exceptional constraints on capacities to deliver effective WASH services to the refugee populations, and necessitated collective action to address WASH needs. Currently, there are over 30 WASH partners working in the refugee operations in Uganda. under UNHCR's leadership, WASH sector actors aim to ensure that refugees and local populations in refugee-hosting areas in Uganda have safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene services of sufficient quality and quantity.

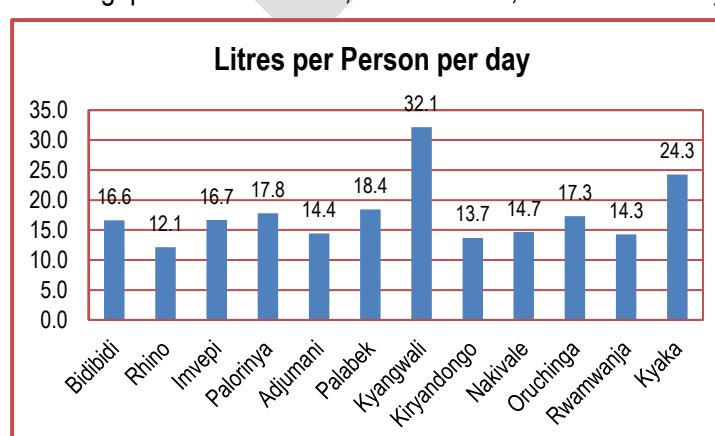
To be able to meet the minimum water needs for refugees and host populations in these areas, humanitarian actors will need to provide approximately 21,997m³ of water per day (based on the UNHCR standard of 15-20 litres/person/day). Currently, we are providing 17,970m³ of water to the populations in the settlements, which translates to approximately **16.3 litres/person/day** - which meets the SPHERE standard for water although water trucking accounts for approximately 35% of the water supplied in the settlements - 61% in West Nile region.

WASH partners continue to engage in water trucking especially in the new refugee settlements in West Nile region. In an emergency context where the priority is to provide immediate lifesaving interventions, more efforts have been dedicated to emergency water supply at the expense of planning for long term water infrastructure which requires time to implement. Transition from this costly intervention towards more sustainable water supply infrastructure has been slow due to: a) limited funding; b) the continuous influx of refugees that has increased water demand; c) prioritization of quick-fix response actions; d) poor ground water potential



There are a total of **67 motorised water systems** (high yielding boreholes/ piped networks); and **927 hand pumps** installed in the refugee settlements currently. These do not however address the water access gaps estimated at 10,376m³ overall, which is currently partly addressed through water trucking. It

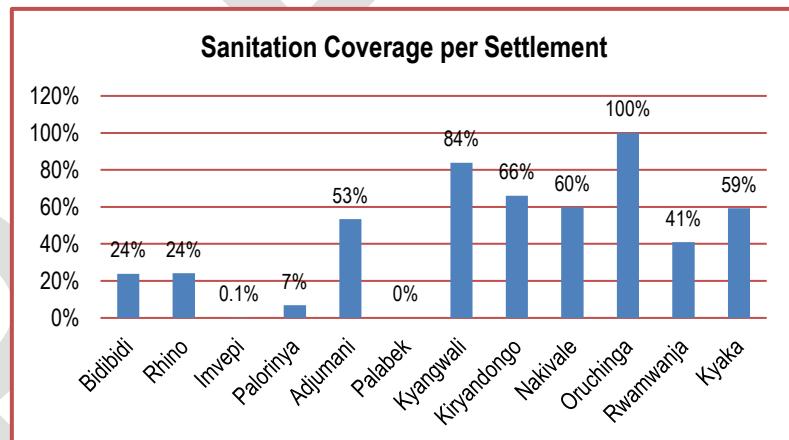
is worth noting also, that the measurement unit for water access is based on water production (vs population) rather than household water consumption. This often does not reflect the water systems in the refugee settlements serve both refugees and host population - indicating that the water gap could be even higher since the current water coverage only takes into consideration the refugee population.



Scattered settlement patterns, lack of clarity on where population would be settled, unverified population figures in some settlements, and self-relocation by refugees also further distorts WASH indicators and affects the response type. Statistics from the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE) shows a borehole drilling success rate of 60% in this region - and estimate that the net balance of water supply infrastructure breakdown equals the numbers installed (both in the refugee settlements and host areas). Some of these are due to vandalism e.g. of electrical components in the solar pumps; or general lack of maintenance. Minimal participation of communities in the implementation of WASH interventions and on operation and maintenance issues.

In some of the older settlements, a user fees of UGX 500 - 2,000 per month is paid per household to support operation and maintenance of the water systems. It has also been reported that local communities living around newer settlements have been abandoning boreholes constructed by the government/development actors facilities where they are expected to pay fees for maintenance (1000-2000 UGX per household per month) - in favour of the free water provided for the refugees. Whereas there are visible efforts to improve water coverage for the local communities (drilling works), frequent breakdowns and non-functionality of boreholes continue to undermine these efforts. Even though the government has trained numerous pump mechanics in the area, very few of them are active. They are unable to operate without incentives (financial) - and generally would not be able to effectively do so in the absence of: tools, transport, and lack of spare parts stocks in the area. The water user committees in the host and refugee areas are also inactive.

Currently, there are **80,085 household latrines** in place, which works out at **36% latrine coverage** overall. Kyangwali has the highest household latrine coverage at 84%, while Imvepi and Lamwo have almost no household latrines since these are relatively new settlements and as construction of communal latrines is the focus currently.



In total, 9,950 communal latrines have been constructed to date in the refugee settlements, with an average user ratio of 32 people per latrine. The decommissioning filled-up communal latrines is however still a challenge. This is also the case for the **1,964 institutional latrines** that are currently in place. This year, a total of 27,947 household latrines, 1,802 communal latrines, and 123 institutional latrines are planned - which still leaves huge gaps in latrine coverage.

Throughout the settlements, it has been observed that people are progressively constructing household latrines. However this is hindered by the slow supply pipeline, lack of prioritization of community mobilization efforts, formation (e.g. Rhino), the lack of latrine construction materials, and population composition for the new refugee settlements (mostly women and children) causing a lag in the progress of household latrine constructions. Currently, the ratio of hygiene promoter to households stands at an average of 1:685 with plans to recruit and train 832 hygiene promoters this year - leaving a gap of an additional 678 hygiene promoters required.

B. WASH SECTOR COORDINATION

Early this year, UNHCR, in consultations with the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE), UNICEF, and other WASH partners, established a National WASH Humanitarian Coordination Platform - anchored under the Ministry of Water and Environment's department of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, with co-lead arrangements with UNHCR, who are responsible for coordinating WASH interventions in refugee contexts in Uganda; and UNICEF supporting WASH coordination in non-refugee contexts. At district and settlement-level, the local/ district authorities either lead or co-lead the WASH Coordination platform.

Currently, there are over 30 WASH partners working in the refugee operations in Uganda. Some of the partners include: Oxfam, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Uganda Red Cross Society, Samaritan Purse, MSF, World Vision International, CARE, CRS, ADRA, WHH, Here is Life, UNICEF, Water Mission, Plan International, Africa Director, ACF, Peace Winds Japan, LWF, IAS, ZOA, Malteser International, CEFOD, ArLDG, American Refugee Council (ARC), Caritas, Plan International, AAH (Action Africa Help), HIJRA, Nsamizi, IOM. The WASH coordination platforms brings together different agencies active in humanitarian response in water, sanitation and hygiene promotion in Uganda. It aims to achieve a more co-ordinated and integrated approach in implementing WASH emergency interventions in Uganda - particularly in refugee-hosting areas, ensuring more focused, proactive, and participatory organ that upholds the principles of accountability, complementarity, and efficient delivery of humanitarian WASH assistance..

The key objectives of the National WASH Humanitarian Coordination Platform are:

1. Ensure **co-ordination** of WASH interventions in refugee operations and other emergencies.
2. Develop adequate **preparedness** measures for water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion.
3. Co-ordinate the mobilisation and utilisation of **resources** for humanitarian WASH assistance.
4. Maintain a comprehensive **database** of WASH operations in the country for effective co-ordination.

The key functions of the national level humanitarian WASH coordination platform includes:

- a) Developing guidelines (standard setting) for WASH interventions in emergency contexts
- b) Acting as a technical resource pool for WASH and other actors involved in humanitarian operations in Uganda, including the establishment of a web-based platform which will act as an online resource centre for the sector
- c) Supporting WASH coordination at settlement and district levels, ensuring the quality of humanitarian WASH actions through evidence-based planning (gap analysis)
- d) Ensuring emergency preparedness in the WASH sector to respond to both refugees influxes and other emergencies (water supply equipment, sanitation policies, staffing)
- e) Development and implementation of effective monitoring and evaluation tools; facilitating assessments of WASH situation and needs, with an emphasis on prioritising critical areas.
- f) Promoting innovations through research, lessons learning and experience sharing in the sector
- g) Capacity development for humanitarian WASH actors (identifying resources to reinforce technical capacity)
- h) Advocacy for resource allocation in WASH, and follow-up on commitments of WASH actors
- i) Supporting the vetting process (led by OPM) of WASH agencies involved in refugee interventions
- j) Identifying linkages with long-term/ development policy actions and broader partnerships for the sector

The following technical working group are established under the WASH coordination mechanism to support the national WASH coordination platform to develop technical guidelines on specific technical issues: i) Water Supply; ii) Sanitation and Hygiene; iii) WASH Data Management/ Assessments. The TWGs are led by Oxfam GB, NRC and MoWE respectively.

C. WASH OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The objectives/ commitments set for the WASH sector in the refugee operations in Uganda include:

1. 100% coverage of safe water supply in adequate quantities (15-20l/p/d) within 1km walking distance
2. Elimination of dependency on water trucking operations - post-emergency
3. 85% coverage of households with appropriate drop-hole latrines
4. 80% communities practice positive hygiene behaviours incl. hand-washing with soap/ ash
5. 80% participation in community management systems for water supply facilities
6. Functional WASH sector coordination structures to support delivery of effective WASH services to refugees and host populations

Strategic Approach

- a) **Coordination:** Strengthen field and national sector coordination to ensure quality WASH service delivery through collaborative partnerships. Link more the WASH coordination to the governance system (with more District base coordination); and Support government structures to integrate data on water facilities in the refugee settlements in the existing systems (BH coding); Strengthen other WASH-related data collection internally (water-point mapping)
- b) **Evidence-based planning:** Improved evidence-based planning to highlight gaps in the WASH sector and inform decisions on resource allocation for the response.
- c) **Harmonize approaches:** Develop or adopt technical guidelines/ Standard operational Procedures across the refugee settlements - ensuring that they take into consideration best practices and are aligned to both UNHCR and national standards and policies
- d) **Capacity development:** Assess capacity gaps and support capacity development efforts for national/ local WASH actors in relevant technical areas through formal/informal trainings; online courses; and technical learning resources
- e) **Broaden partnerships** to allow room for innovation, research and learning in the WASH sector e.g. seconding government staff to our operations; working with academic/ research institutions; and working with private sector actors to encourage innovative thinking in the design of facilities and approaches used in WASH services - and collaborate in research in the sector
- f) **Inter-sectoral integration:** Identify areas of synergies with other sectors (Shelter, Livelihood, Health and Nutrition) for integration and joint planning
- g) Align WASH interventions in refugee-hosting areas - with **long-term development actions** including district development plans considering that the water infrastructures will be handed over to the government

Implementation Strategy

- **Hydrogeological prospection** (including remote sensing for hard rock areas in the settlements) should be carried out to identify potential locations where high yielding boreholes can be drilled
- As an **exit out of water trucking**, develop sustainable water supply systems (motorization of high yielding boreholes with piped water networks) and Rehabilitation works on existing water systems
- **Operation and Maintenance:** Community-based management systems is the preferred option for the O&M of rural water facilities in Uganda. Communities are responsible for management of their water facilities - which includes payment of fees for maintenance and repair. Consider O+M issues in the plans for sustainable water supply systems (10% capital cost, Training and equipping pump mechanics, water user committees)
- Development of small water dams where possible to provide **additional water points** that could be used for other purposes (cleaning, livelihood activities) to take pressure off drinking water sources
- **Social Mobilization:** Investments in community mobilizers (public health motivators/mobilizers) to achieve sanitation and hygiene promotion goals in refugee settlements and host populations.
- **Sanitation options:** Provide different option for sustainable latrine superstructure and slabs (e.g. dome-shaped latrines). Training is required to ensure that the latrine options are structurally correct.

D. MINIMUM WASH STANDARDS

WATER SUPPLY

The minimum standard for water supply in refugee settlements set up by the WASH Sector Coordination in Uganda is 15litres/person/day for drinking and domestic use during emergencies (based on SPHERE standards); and 20litres/person/day post-emergencies (UNHCR standards). Seasonal effects on water availability will be considered as this affects water availability.

- For new refugee sites in Uganda, hydrogeological studies will be carried out during the initial assessments to understand the ground water potential and increase drilling success rates
- Water trucking should be regarded as an alternative option for emergency water supply when other, more sustainable sources cannot be found. To all extent possible, water trucking should be avoided as it is a highly expensive, an unsustainable intervention and difficult to manage, implement and monitor. However as a last resort and in the absence of alternative water sources, water trucking may be considered as the appropriate alternative to safeguard human lives and livelihoods.
- WASH partners should make efforts to drill boreholes with yields of 5m³/hour or more so that motorized pumps and a piped distribution system can be installed. Emphasis will be put on supervision of boreholes development and pumping test. Borehole logs will kept for each borehole drilled. The contractors will be required to produce drilling reports. In areas where host communities keep livestock, borehole designs will cater for livestock (cattle troughs to be included on the platform).
- High yielding boreholes will be solar motorised in refugee settlements with high population density. Depending on the borehole yield, and for contingency purposes the WASH sector recommends a hybrid pumping system.
- Rehabilitation of existing boreholes around or within the settlement should take into consideration the government directive that GI pipes be changed to stainless steel or PVC pipes.
- WASH partners should consider construction of small reservoirs within or close to the boundary of the settlements to relieve stress on drinking water supplies. Additional studies are required however to determine water retention capacity before embarking on constructing reservoirs.
- For sustainable water supply systems, pump mechanics will trained on boreholes Operation and Maintenance, and after receiving training, they will be equipped with tools for repair and maintenance of boreholes.
- The quality of water delivered should be monitored regularly according to the requirement established by UNHCR/ WHO - ensuring that chlorine residual of 0.5mg/l is maintained at water points and turbidity is below 5 NTU.
- Regular and effective ground water levels monitoring system should be put in place in all boreholes. Boreholes that are not functional because of low yield should be considered for groundwater monitoring points - depending on location. The groundwater monitoring system should be developed in consultation with the District Water Office.

Water Supply Standards and Indicators:

Standard I: Ensure refugees have safe and equitable access to a sufficient quantity of water for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene.

Indicator: During the initial response, average water use for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene in the households is at least 15 litres per person per day. This amount will be increased to 20 litres per person per day once the situation stabilizes.

Standard II: Public water points are sufficiently close to households to enable easy access to water point

Indicator: The maximum distance from any household to the nearest water point is 1km during the emergency phase, which is reduced to 300 metres post-emergency with a queuing time of no more than 30 minutes

Standard/Objective IV: Ensure water quality is maintained at the water points and at household level

Indicator: Water treatment will be undertaken to ensure that chlorine residual of 0.5mg/l is maintained at water points and turbidity is below 5 NTU.

Standard III: Ensure that reasonable number of people access a water point

Indicator: Maximum of 250 people per tap based on a flow of 7.5 litres/minute; and 500 people per hand pump based on a flow of 17 litres/minute

Standard/Objective V: Ensure that refugees have adequate facilities to collect, store and use sufficient quantities of water for domestic use.

Indicators: Each household has at least two clean water collecting containers of 10 - 20 litres, one for storage and one for transportation; and that water collection and storage containers have narrow necks and/or covers for buckets or other safe means of storage, for safe drawing and handling.

SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION

- During the early phase of an emergency (if possible, before the refugees arrive), WASH partners should construct communal latrines (emergency/ trench-latrines) at 1:50 latrine to user ratio spread around the settlement sites - including at the reception and food distribution centres - with hand-washing facilities and bath shelters.
- To take into consideration protection concerns, Sanitation facilities will be separated for females and males - positioned distance apart.
- WASH partners should liaise with the district health office, and district education office to identify gaps and provide support on relevant WASH infrastructure for health and school institutions respectively. All schools will be considered complete if they have adequate number of pit latrine in line with UNHCR and the government of Uganda standards. A special unit/drop hole will be designed to cater for the needs of pupils/teachers living with disabilities. Pupils/teachers with disabilities will be involved in deciding the design and location of VIP latrines in order to ensure easy access and usage. Special unit for Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) for girls in the relevant age group will be provided to ensure that girls are protected while in schools.
- In the transition phase after the emergency, refugees should be encouraged and supported to construct their own household (pit) latrines. WASH partners (UNHCR as lead) will support the refugees with slab and treated logs, a digging kit for every 10 households. Plastic slabs should also be provided, but WASH partners are encouraged to explore sustainable sanitation options - such as dome-shaped latrine slabs and durable superstructures (mud-bricks?).
- Hygiene promoters are a critical resource in reinforcing behavior change messages. Sensitization on the public health risks associated with open defecation, importance of use of provided temporary communal latrines/bath shelters and importance of washing hand at critical times. The selection of hygiene promoters should therefore be done as part of the initial response including training and facilitation; and the use of various IEC means to dissemination key messages.
- To protect environment, WASH partners should ensure that refuse pits at the reception centres and Transit centres/ registration centres/community centres are dug and communities will be encouraged to use them.

Sanitation Standards and Indicators:

Standard I: Ensure that refugees have access to communal latrines in the first three months on arrival.

Indicators: One temporary pit latrine per 50 people in the refugee settlements

Standard/ Objective II: Ensure that excreta disposal is done in such a way that the households and public centres - including around drinking water sources are free from human faecal contamination.

Indicators: All excreta containment measures, i.e. trench latrines, pit latrines and soak-away pits, are at least 30 metres away from any groundwater source, and the soak-away pit base is at least 1.5 metres above the water table.

Standard III: Ensure that latrine and/or bathing facilities are available at schools, Health centres, and transit / entry points and at the reception centres/registration centres/community centres; also that latrines are sited in such a way as to minimize security threats to users, especially women and girls

Indicators: One temporary pit latrine/bathing shelter for 50 people during the emergency phase (Toilets are no more than 50 metres from transit centers). For schools, ensure at least 1 latrine per 50 children. This means that > 1 latrine per 30 girls and >1 latrine per 60 boys; and 1 latrine per 20 males and 1 latrine per 20 females for health facilities.

Standard IV: Ensure that Solid waste is well managed at all times in the settlements

Indicators: During the first two weeks of an emergency, ensure at least one refuse pit for 10 Households; transitioning to one refuse pit per each household; and one Rubbish bin per 100 persons in public places; and Two refuse pits at Health centres, reception Centre and transit centres

Standard V: Ensure adequate access to key hygiene information to refugees at household level

Indicator: One Hygiene promoter per 500 persons

E. ANNEX

1. ToR National WASH Sector coordination platform
2. WASH Minimum Standard and requirement in Camps (UNHCR)
3. Water Trucking Guidelines (DRAFT)
4. Case Study: Water user fees in refugee settlements
5. WASH Contact list (3W)