**Disaster Risk Reduction in WASH sector**

Across the world, UNICEF is supporting governments to achieve The Millennium Development Goals, which include increasing access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. Ensuring Sustainability of resources through water, sanitation and hygiene

(WASH) programmes is key to UNICEF’s work. However, the actual and potential impacts of climate change on water resources are becoming abundantly clear and will impact WASH and other Programs. In order to assess these risks, UNICEF has developed An analytical tool assessing hazard, vulnerability and risk, As well as developing strategic action plans to respond to these Risks. Prioritizing the most vulnerable countries, UNICEF is currently Carrying out country assessments, which include facilitated **Risk workshops** to analyze the vulnerability to climate change of

The WASH sector, current WASH programmes and country office Capacity. These assessments will be rolled out across all 101 Countries with UNICEF supported WASH programs, focusing initially on the 60 priority countries.

**Emergency response in WASH sector**

As disasters cannot be eliminated, coping with the consequences is reality for a large part of the world population. In the last decade of the 20th century Almost two billion people – one-third of humanity – were affected by natural disasters, 86% of them by floods and droughts. Each disaster can pose its unique set of threats; flooding for example, increases the ever-present health threat from inadequate drinking-water and sanitation systems and water supplies can become contaminated by lack of sanitary facilities as well as household or industrial waste. These factors all aggravate the situation for vulnerable people, and the largest sufferings originate from common illnesses, such as diarrhea, made life-threatening by crisis conditions.

**Priorities in emergency response**

Three top priorities in emergency response are

1. Provision of sufficient quantities of safe water
2. Arrangement of basic sanitation facilities
3. Promotion of good hygiene behaviors.

Responses can include e.g. provision of clean drinking-water or purification mechanisms, construction of temporary sanitation infrastructure and conduction of hygiene trainings. Response programmes of most agencies range from rapid and limited interventions in acute emergencies to comprehensive long-term interventions in complex emergencies.

**Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative council**

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) is a global multi-stakeholder partnership and membership organisation that works to save lives and improve livelihoods. It does so by enhancing collaboration among sector agencies and professionals who are working to improve access for the 2.5 billion people without safe sanitation and the 884 million people without clean drinking water. Through its work, WSSCC contributes to the broader goals of poverty eradication, health and environmental improvement, gender equality and long-term social and economic development. WSSCC has coalitions in 35 countries, members in more than 160 countries, and a Geneva-based Secretariat hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

**Floods, droughts, hurricanes, earthquakes and even civil conflicts cause large-scale human dislocations, exposing thousands to life threatening conditions.**

**Plans for emergency provision and response must be in place to maintain human well-being and dignity in times of crisis. In a disaster situation, the provision of safe water and sanitation solutions, and especially hygiene promotion are vital to reduce the spread of epidemic diseases such as cholera.**

Disasters seriously disrupt the lives of individuals, and the functioning of entire communities or even whole societies. Resulting widespread human, material, economic, and environmental losses stress existing infrastructure and leave individuals in states of shock and despair. Rebuilding damaged infrastructures, such as sewage systems and water supply, not only help to restore a sense of normalcy, but also arrest the spread of disease.

The first goal of emergency response is to prevent outbreaks of waterborne diseases, caused by malfunctioning water supply, various point pollution of water resources, and lack of sanitation facilities. Top priorities for immediate response are provision of sufficient quantities of safe water, arrangement of basic sanitation, and promotion of good hygiene behaviour.

Emergency preparedness is just as important. The incorporation of disaster scenarios in the planning of infrastructure and institutional, community, and societal response is a critical step towards risk management, which will reduce a population’s vulnerability during and after a disaster.

**Guide lines for Disaster risk reduction & emergency response for WASH**

1. **Planning of infrastructure and institutional elements**

Incorporation of disaster scenarios and aspects in planning of infrastructure and institutional elements of water supply and sanitation systems is an important step towards disaster risk mainstreaming, while correct maintenance of systems is another important point to increase sustainability and reduce the vulnerability in case of a disaster.

1. **Words into Action**:

Inter-institutional cooperation on WASH issues. A national-level working group should be established to review existing knowledge and explored gaps related to disaster risk reduction. This creates awareness and increased political commitment to integrate these issues into the water and sanitation sector. Thus the sector’s needs and priorities for disaster risk reduction have been identified and modification of regulations, elaboration of disaster management guidelines and institutional analysis can be conducted.

1. **Advocacy compaign:**

Advocate for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to help ensure better health and quality of life for all people. The impact of using basic sanitation, safe drinking water, and improved hygiene practices extends beyond the convenience of simply having facilities. WASH services make a major difference particularly in health, education and socioeconomic development.. Educating community about water hazards, many of which are potentially threatening sustainable functioning of water supply and sanitation systems. Glossary and tools such as a questionnaire for disaster risk reduction potential and quick risk appraisal.

1. **Cluster Approach**

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is one of the clusters, with UNICEF as the global cluster lead and further relevant UN agencies and organizations and international NGOs as partners. The global WASH cluster approach is being replicated at country level. The national WASH coalition in the Philippines participates in a national-level cluster handling WASH issues in emergency situations, and has contributed to setting national standards and elaborating guidelines.

1. **Climate change and WASH**:

Climate change is a major factor which must be included in Pre-disaster risk assessment

WSSCC has initiated a **Working Group on Climate Change and WASH** together with other key sector actors, such as IRC, WIN, Tearfund, and WaterAid. Hosted by WSSCC, the group shares experiences and explores climate change adaptation measures that serve to reduce the vulnerability of affected communities in relation to access to WASH services and their broader water management activities.

The working group aims to:

* act as a platform for knowledge sharing on climate change in the WASH sector
* develop advocacy messages for effective adaptation approaches to climate change
* provide information and knowledge services on the issue, both at the practical and strategic level

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