

INTEGRATING CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES INTO WASH CLUSTER ACTIVITIES

**WASH Strategic Area Reference: Area 5.5 (Best Practice)
Project 11**

Phase 1 Scoping Study Report

**A Report to the Global Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) Cluster
By CARE International**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although the importance of integrating environmental issues into humanitarian response has been widely recognised and is supported by SPHERE standards and the Red Cross Code of Conduct, there is a lack of clear understanding and awareness of why and how environmental issues should be addressed during emergency WASH activities.

This scoping study – based on a combination of desk research, literature reviews and direct consultations and interviews – includes reviews of existing environmental policies, legislation, guidelines, tools and training materials relevant to WASH activities, the intention being to identify potential gaps in current practice and make recommendations to address these gaps.

The findings show that although substantial documentation exists on many potential negative environmental impacts of WASH activities and mitigation measures, and organisations are increasingly considering the environment as a priority issue in their emergency operations at headquarter-level, WASH staff are often unaware of this. Time and financial pressure may not allow them to effectively consider environmental issues from the beginning of a project.

The main recommendations to ensure more effective integration of the environment in WASH cluster activities are:

1. Develop a policy statement and include environmental indicators in existing monitoring and evaluation framework.
2. Develop cluster owned and approved “Environment in WASH” guidelines, supported by training modules and references to existing documentation.
3. Collate and promote existing tools on specific technologies where appropriate, and develop guidance where lacking.
4. Collate information on existing successful environmental initiatives in WASH projects and share good practice to increase awareness.
5. Promote partnerships and co-ordinated action across WASH cluster projects and amongst other clusters by initiating cross-cluster meetings on environmental issues.

While intended to highlight the current status of environmental considerations in WASH Cluster activities, the findings of this report also serve as a proposal for an anticipated follow-on to this work – a broader and more detailed project (Environment in WASH Phase II) that would seek to address the concerns noted below.

2. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The environment is a critical cross-cutting issue in humanitarian assistance. If environmental issues are not incorporated into humanitarian response, these efforts not only risk being less effective but also have the potential of creating additional harm to the health and livelihoods of disaster survivors as well as to recovery prospects.

This initiative was designed to help ensure that key environmental concerns become systematically identified as requiring action and fully integrated into emergency WASH Cluster activities. The aim is to ensure that the short-term benefit of a chosen emergency response is not at the detriment of the longer term impact on health and livelihoods of local or affected populations.

To allow this project to best respond to actual needs, it has been designed in two phases. Phase I was a scoping exercise to collect and assess the quality of existing materials and identify possible gaps in the tools, guidance and training information available to practitioners and decision-makers. It was conducted through a desk-study and extensive consultation (refer to Annex 1).

This report summarises key findings of Phase I and outlines considerations for Phase II of the project

3. EXISTING GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarises existing documents, guidance, tools and strategies for integrating environmental issues into WASH Cluster activities and identifies some significant gaps. It is based on the results of a desk study of available literature, web research and e-mail, telephone interviews and face-to-face consultations with a range of WASH and humanitarian practitioners, from the field level to headquarters (Annex 1). Advantage was also taken of attending one WASH Cluster meeting to present initial findings and discuss these in more detail with agency staff and field personnel.

3.1 Policy Statement / Guiding Principles

Section 8 of the Red Cross Code of Conduct states that “*We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes.*” Under the Sphere standards, environmental issues should also be addressed as an integral part of humanitarian assistance, while UN guidance on cluster activities identifies the responsibility for addressing the environment as resting with Cluster lead agencies.

Twenty-one organisations were contacted as part of this review. Of these, only two member organisations of the WASH Cluster – Tearfund and CARE International – have dedicated environment policy documents. Both documents highlight the importance of proper assessment and planning to mitigate the potential negative impact of relief operations. WASH activities are highlighted as having significant potential negative impacts. Specific impacts and mitigating measures, however, are not listed. Fifteen of the same organisations contacted state their commitment to environmental issues in general policy documents, guiding principles or other formal publications such as statutes or core values (Annex 2). These, however, are broad statements with references to the environmental impact of relief efforts in general but with no reference to WASH activities in particular.

Agency staff members, however, are rarely aware of the existence of these documents and – based on interviews conducted as part of this review – there **appears to be little clear understanding as to how a specific or broad environmental statement at headquarter level can be translated into practical and useful action in field**

emergency operations. WASH staff are aware of potential environmental impacts of a water supply project, of the disposal of water treatment chemicals or of sanitation infrastructure in normal situations. The problem is applying this knowledge in emergency situations. **There is a lack of clear and concise information on the specific potential impacts of emergency WASH operations and, more importantly, how to mitigate these impacts.** There are no regional environmental policies specific to WASH activities.

A draft environment policy document for Emergency Shelter is currently under review within the Emergency Shelter Cluster. This text adds to broader environmental policies such as Tearfund or CARE International policies, with outline guidance of mitigation measures for shelter-specific activities. It also states that “post-disaster shelter activities should identify and incorporate analysis of environmental impact from other sectors (e.g. WASH, CCCM, Early Recovery)” and that “...cross-sector co-ordination should be formalised and a common structure for assistance is required to limit negative environmental impacts.” This creates a positive mindset for cross-sector environmental co-ordination, but is currently the only cluster developing such a document.

WASH activities could benefit from a clear, focussed cluster-agreed environmental policy statement that lists potential impacts of WASH activities and realistic mitigating factors to minimise the impacts, without impeding emergency life-saving efforts.

Topics to address in the policy statement might include the main WASH areas of responsibility – hygiene promotion, water supply, excreta disposal, vector control, solid waste management and drainage. These could be further supported by “Environment in WASH Guidelines” on how to systematically consider potential environmental impacts in emergency WASH projects and awareness-raising of existing tools (see below).

To ensure effective implementation of the WASH cluster environmental policy statement, it should be approved by all cluster members and be made widely available to all WASH staff. It should also be posted on the IASC website and other interested cluster sites. The agreed policy could be further disseminated via regional WASH advisors, WASH cluster specialist and regional training courses (see following sections). It could also be a useful input into the next Sphere revision process.

Donor agencies should be kept informed of current developments as they serve as important potential advocates for the adherence to developed policies or guidance.

Gaps/Issues

- Few agencies have environment-related policies..
- Low field awareness and implementation of existing policies
- No detail of WASH activity impact assessment or mitigation measures in policies
- No formal consideration of environmental issues in WASH project planning, monitoring or assessment in policies

Recommendations

- Develop a WASH cluster environmental policy, approved by all members.
- Disseminate via relevant websites, WASH regional advisors and WASH training courses.

3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Tools and Guidance

Recognition of the importance of environmental issues to successful humanitarian response has led to the development of a number of assessment tools specifically designed for use following disasters (see Table 1).

Table 1. Assessment tools and Guidance

Tool / Guidance	WASH topics covered	Relevance to WASH
Benfield Hazard Research Centre / CARE International (2005) <i>Guidelines for Rapid Environmental Assessment in Disaster Response</i>	Covers water supply, sanitation, waste management treatment, transport and infrastructure. Useful information but long and complex tool.	✓✓ content - practical
CARE International / UNHCR (2005) Framework for Assessing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Environment in Refugee-related operations. (Includes an abbreviated Rapid Environmental Assessment tool)	Covers: water resources, water supply, water treatment, drainage, sanitation waste management treatment, transport and infrastructure in refugee operations amongst many other. Long and complex tool.	✓✓ content - practical
DFID (2008) <i>Environmental Issues in humanitarian relief planning factsheets</i> (draft) (Solid Waste Management, Sanitation, Water)	List of issues for water supply, water treatment, sanitation, waste disposal and treatment in short and simple format	✓ content ✓✓ practical
IFRC/ProVention Consortium (2007) <i>Tools for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction – Guidance Note 7: Environmental Assessment</i>	Useful advice on environmental assessment in general – no specific WASH references	- content - practical
UNEP (2007) <i>Humanitarian Action and the Environment, IASC Leaflet</i>	Very brief outline of potential impacts of WASH activities: water use and treatment, Sanitation, Waste management.	✓ content ✓✓ practical
UNDP/Early Recovery Cluster (2008) <i>Environmental Needs Assessment in Post-Disaster Situations – a Practical Guide for Implementation.</i>	Linked to impacts of natural disasters and not to the additional impact of relief projects.	- content - practical
UNHCR (2003) Handbook of Selected Lessons from the Field: <i>Refugee Operations and Environmental Management.</i>	Useful lessons on overall environmental management. No specific guidance on WASH but guidance on dealing with local groups on environmental issues	✓ content ✓ practical
UNHCR (2005) <i>Environmental Guidelines.</i>	Chapters 6.2.3 and 6.2.4: brief lists of potential impacts of WASH activities in camps. Could be adapted	✓✓ content ✓✓ practical
USAID (2006) <i>Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale Activities in Africa, Chapter 10 : Humanitarian Response and Natural Disasters</i>	Includes comprehensive list of impacts of water supply and treatment, sanitation, waste management activities.	✓✓✓ content ✓ practical

The above tools contain elements that highlight potential long-term impacts of WASH projects and offer practical solutions. Awareness of these tools, however, is low and they are rarely used during WASH operations. Where awareness exists, they are

viewed as too complicated and time consuming, adding an administrative layer to projects without bringing perceived added benefits. A general concern is that these tools slow critical life-saving assistance. However, these tools contain useful aspects of impact assessment of WASH activities. The problem seems to be a combination of lack of awareness of their potential use with the fact that they are too complex for rapid referral.

Other cross-cutting issues benefit from guidance on integration into sector activities. An IASC Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action policy was accepted by the IASC working group in June 2008. IASC has issued a Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action as well as guidelines for HIV/AIDS interventions in emergency settings in the absence of national policies. No such documents exist for environment, nor do they appear to have been considered to date.

According to several people consulted in this review, a short “Guideline for Environment in WASH” booklet would help raise awareness of existing and developed tools and their limitations, and highlight the main issues associated with environment in WASH. It should:

- be aimed at WASH field project co-ordinators;
- be based on the policy paper;
- include a list of impacts and mitigation measures;
- highlight the differences between emergency non-emergency WASH activities; and
- briefly present existing tools and their possible uses and limitations in an emergency context.

The aim of the booklet would be to clearly demonstrate that considering the environmental impact of WASH project need not be complicated or detrimental to operations, and that integrating environmental issues at an early stage where possible will be beneficial to all. It could include a summary of the main relevant points from existing tools, key items such as interaction with the local community, checklists, pictures and case studies. The booklet could potentially later be integrated into a larger cluster environmental guidance publication.

Aside from highlighting the above issues in a booklet, there appears to be no need to develop further environmental impact assessment tools for WASH. It may be useful however, to consolidate the most useful sections of existing tools into a WASH specific, simple document. It is essential to include environmental indicators in existing and developing WASH cluster assessment and monitoring tools. This will help ensure that the environment is systematically considered in WASH activities.

Gaps/Issues

- No specific environmental tools or guidance exist for emergency WASH activities.
- Low awareness of parts of existing tools that are relevant to WASH activities because they are not owned by the WASH sector.
- Common perception that existing tools are too long and complicated.
- Resistance to new tools being developed.

Recommendations

- Develop guidelines for environment in WASH to support the WASH cluster environmental policy and translation into practise.
- Raise awareness of existing general environmental tools, their uses and limitations for WASH activities and consolidate the information relevant to WASH into a simple document
- Develop and integrate environmental indicators in existing and developing WASH cluster assessment and monitoring tools.

3.3 Specific technical guidance

Section 3.2 assessed existing environmental impact tools. This section deals with specific technical guidance and best practice in key areas. These key areas include WASH activities that have a potential high impact on the environment or guidance on alternative technologies.

The main areas of concern – as highlighted in some of the environmental impact tools listed in the previous section and as raised during consultations with WASH practitioners and the WASH Cluster meeting held in Oxford, UK, in June 2008 – are:

- overexploitation of water resources;
- disposal of hazardous wastes arising from WASH activities, such as expired chemicals or sludge from water treatment;
- use of bottled water in emergencies;
- septic tank use and location;
- household waste disposal / composting / biogas;
- vector control chemicals; and
- alternative technologies relevant to WASH, e.g. solar powered pumping.

This is not a comprehensive list of all environmental impacts related to WASH activities, but it does reflect those issues identified as top priority matters during consultations.

Research was done on existing guidance on the above subjects to identify gaps in existing guidance and practice. A short summary of the main results can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. Examples of Existing Technical and Guidance

Subject	Example of Existing Tools / Guidance	Comments / Gaps / Recommendations
Overexploitation of Water Resources	<p>SPHERE Chapter 2, Standard 1, GN2, p.64</p> <p>Engineering in Emergencies, p.228</p> <p>UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies, p.258</p> <p>House, S.J. and Reed, R.A (2004) Emergency Water Sources: Guidelines for selection and Treatment (3rd Ed), WEDC</p> <p>Tearfund (2007) Darfur : Water Supply in a Vulnerable Environment</p>	<p>Well documented topic and part of WASH best practice: highlighted in all emergency publications. Detailed guidance and case studies are available. Lack of guidance on simple groundwater monitoring schemes. The problem is lack of time / budget / awareness of how to implement such a scheme.</p> <p>➔ Highlight issues and existing tools in policy and guidelines, share successful case studies</p>
Disposal of chemical sludge from water treatment	<p>Engineering in Emergencies, p.324</p> <p>House, S.J. and Reed, R.A (2004) Emergency Water Sources: Guidelines for selection and Treatment (3rd Ed), WEDC, p.23</p> <p>“flocculated sludge is hazardous and arrangement need to be made for proper disposal”</p>	<p>No existing guidance on best practice for disposal of water treatment chemical sludge in emergencies other than land disposal or burying. Short mention in existing publications.</p> <p>➔ Develop further guidance and highlight issues in policy and guidelines</p>
Use of bottled water in emergencies	<p>DFID (2008) <i>Environmental Issues in humanitarian relief planning fact sheets</i> (draft) (Water) : “disposal of plastic bottles can result in waste management issues”</p>	<p>Not documented in existing emergency WASH publications.</p> <p>➔ Highlight issues in policy, guidelines, indicators, and training modules</p>
Septic tank use and situation	<p>Harvey, P.A., Baghri, S., Reed, R.A (2002)., <i>Emergency Sanitation: Assessment and Programme Design</i>, WEDC</p> <p>Harvey, P. A. (2007) <i>Excreta Disposal in Emergencies : A Field Manual</i>, WEDC</p> <p>British Geological Survey (2001) <i>ARGOSS Manual - Guidelines for assessing the risk to groundwater from on-site sanitation</i></p>	<p>Well-documented topic and part of best practice. Guidelines and design tools available if needed. No need for further technical tools or guidance</p> <p>➔ Highlight issues in policy, guidelines, indicators, and training modules</p>
Household Waste Disposal	<p>Sections in SPHERE, Engineering in Emergencies, UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies, and other standard publications on basic domestic waste disposal.</p> <p>Oxfam Technical Briefing Notes on Waste Management in Emergencies : - Domestic and Refugee Camp Waste</p>	<p>Basic guidance on waste disposal is widely available. Oxfam briefs offer concise advice in a practical format.</p>

Table 2 – (contd)

Subject	Example of Existing Tools / Guidance	Comments / Gaps / Recommendations
Composting of household waste or excreta for use as Fertiliser	<p>Although composting schemes have been used in the field post-conflict and after natural disasters (Gaza, West Indies, Bangladesh), there is little readily available technical guidance or assessment of the success of these projects.</p> <p>UNHCR Environmental Guidelines</p> <p>Oxfam Technical Briefing Notes on Waste Management in Emergencies : Composting and Recycling in Emergencies</p> <p>WHO Technical Note for Emergencies No. 7: Guidance on solid waste management in emergencies</p>	<p>Lack of detailed technical guidance or case studies for WASH staff</p> <p>➔ Develop WASH specific guide on composting in emergencies including case studies</p>
Recycling and re-use of commonly used materials	<p>Oxfam Technical Briefing Notes on Waste Management in Emergencies : Composting and Recycling in Emergencies</p> <p>WHO Technical Note for Emergencies No. 7: Guidance on solid waste management in emergencies</p>	<p>Certain WASH activities can involve a small amount of construction; there is very little available guidance on how to ensure sustainable practices.</p> <p>➔ Develop WASH specific guide on sustainable construction techniques and recycling of materials used in WASH including case studies</p>
Biogas schemes using domestic waste, manure, or combined systems	<p>Seen as inappropriate to emergencies by a majority of WASH staff. However, biogas schemes have been used in the field in camps and after natural disasters (Rwanda, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka,). There is little readily available technical guidance or assessment of the success of these projects.</p> <p>UNHCR Environmental guidelines</p>	<p>Lack of detailed technical guidance or case studies for WASH staff</p> <p>➔ Develop WASH specific guide on the appropriate use of biogas in emergencies including case studies</p>
Solar Pumping	<p>Seen as inappropriate to emergencies by a number of WASH staff. However, solar pumping has been used successfully in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Senegal in post-conflict situations.</p> <p>Technical documentation available.</p> <p>Brikké, F., Bredero, M. (2003) Linking Technology Choice with Operation and Maintenance in the Context of Water Supply and Sanitation, WHO</p> <p>ITDG Practical Brief on Solar Pumping</p> <p>Baumann, E., Erpf, K (2005) Handpumps, Mechanised Pumps, Surface Water – Technology Options, SKAT</p>	<p>Technical guidance available. Lack of information on suitability to emergencies.</p> <p>➔ Develop a collection of case studies of use of solar pumps in emergency WASH</p>

Table 2 – (contd)

Vector control chemicals	<p>Lacarin, C.J. and Reed, R.A. (1999) Emergency Vector Control Using Chemicals, WEDC</p> <p>Oxfam GB Policy on Spraying for Fly Control (2007)</p> <p>Several others including WHO and MSF-B references</p>	<p>Available papers but need for common cluster position</p> <p>➔ Develop common position paper on vector control</p>
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Table 2 highlights the fact that although guidance is available on specific technical issues, doubt remains as to whether these technologies are relevant to emergency WASH operations. It also shows that they are spread out need to be consolidated. Clear information sharing of case studies would enable the WASH Cluster to develop a common position paper on the above technologies, which could then also be included in the WASH environmental policy paper and guidelines.

Output 5 in the proposal was to “clearly define the WASH Cluster’s responsibility / accountability in relation to solid waste”. However, this was outside the scope of the present scoping study but should be addressed in the anticipated follow-up work. According to recent documentation, the WASH cluster takes a “co-ordinating role” with regard to municipal and domestic waste. **Construction waste and medical waste fall under Shelter and Health clusters, respectively, and are widely documented.** Certain other areas of waste management, such as disposal of water treatment chemicals and rubble associated with water treatment, supply, or drainage infrastructure construction works are, however, also the responsibility of WASH staff.

<p>Gaps/Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of consistent awareness of how to avoid overexploitation of water resources in emergencies. • Concern that inappropriate siting of septic tanks occasionally occurs. • No specific guidance on disposal of chemical sludge from water treatment in emergencies. • Bottled water too frequently used in emergencies, with negative impacts, lack of agreed policy • Lack of simple guidance on groundwater monitoring schemes • Lack of specific guidance on recycling, composting or biogas use in emergencies. • Doubt as to appropriateness of solar pumping in emergencies. • Need of support in vector control policies. • Lack of awareness of successful initiatives in the above areas. <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the following issues in WASH environmental policy and guidelines: overexploitation of water resources, bottled water, septic tank use and location. • Develop WASH specific technical guidance, drawing from existing documentation and case studies on disposal of chemical sludges, recycling and reuse of materials, composting and biogas. • Compile a collection of case studies of solar pumping in emergencies. • Develop a common cluster position paper on vector control.
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3.4 Training

No current agency training courses include specific training modules on environmental issues associated with WASH activities. As a result, awareness and understanding of why and how to integrate environment issues into emergency WASH projects remain low. This was also reflected in discussions during the environment section of the WASH Cluster meeting held in June 2008.

Existing and developing WASH Cluster training courses (Annex 4) are currently being piloted and include a five-day training course for WASH specialists. Regional training is also being developed although detailed information on regional training was not available at the time of writing this report. Current cluster modules do not, however, include environmental issues. Consistent integration and mainstreaming of environmental concerns and issues in all WASH cluster training courses for all levels (headquarters, field staff, national staff) with a clear and simple message of key environmental considerations would raise awareness and understanding and promote efficient integration of environmental issues into WASH activities. Integrating environmental modules into existing training rather than creating a separate training event would ensure that WASH staff consider the environment as an integral part of WASH activities.

Solid waste management is not consistently included in any of the current training courses.

The following recommendations are provided for consideration:

- Integrate specific environmental awareness and technical modules into the five-day RedR training for WASH specialists.
- Develop a short awareness raising module to include in half-a-day or one day RedR training sessions.
- Integrate environmental modules into Regional WASH training as it is developed.

Training modules that could be developed in follow-up work to this review would be based upon and supported by the WASH cluster environmental policy statement and WASH environment guidelines.

Gaps/Issues

- The absence of any environmental module in existing WASH cluster or agency training is resulting in low general understanding and awareness of how to approach environmental issues in emergency WASH activities.
- Waste management is currently not included in cluster training courses (but is planned under the Training for Capacity Building cluster project).

Recommendations

- Develop short environmental awareness raising modules to include in current half and full day WASH cluster training.
- Develop a longer module on environmental awareness, environmental impact and mitigation measures for WASH activities to include in WASH specialists training.
- Develop waste management module in conjunction with Training for Capacity Building project.

3.5 WASH Cluster Environmental Experts Roster

The Emergency Shelter cluster is developing and training a roster of environmental experts that can be called upon for advice after an emergency. To assess whether this would be useful for the WASH cluster, agencies were asked whether they engage or whether they have considered engaging external environmental expertise for any of their projects.

Few of the agencies interviewed have used or felt the need for external environmental expertise for WASH activities. Two agencies have used external consultants for groundwater monitoring and mass balance calculation purposes and one has used waste disposal experts. Interviewees agreed that it would be preferable to raise awareness of issues and provide tools and training to existing WASH staff – which reinforces the needs identified above with regards awareness raising and training. Agencies would continue to use specific external advice according to specific needs, such as groundwater mass balance calculations. Training WASH staff in basic environmental issues as outlined above should, however, enable them to identify priority areas, identify and access existing tools and guidance materials, and assess whether additional support is needed.

Gaps/Issues

- No identified need for a WASH environmental expert roster.

Recommendations

- Concentrate on training existing WASH staff on environmental issues and provide access to guidance materials, tools and other resources.

3.6 WASH Cluster Projects

Existing and ongoing WASH cluster projects present opportunities to re-inforce integration of environmental issues in the WASH sector (see Table 3)

Table 3. Areas of Potential Integration of Environmental Issues in Cluster Projects

WASH Cluster project	Areas of potential integration of environmental issues	Recommendations
1. Cluster co-ordination	WASH Cluster Co-ordinator training WASH Cluster Co-ordinator Handbook	Share project outputs as they are developed to ensure consistency. (e.g. env. training modules / guidelines).
2. Information Management	Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) GAP analysis tool	Review tools and suggest environmental indicators where appropriate
3. Hygiene promotion	-	Hygiene promotion project in final stages

Table 3 (contd)

WASH Cluster project	Areas of potential integration of environmental issues	Recommendations
4. Capacity mapping	Identification of potential gaps in environmental capacity such as trained or experienced specialists in the sector.	Share project outputs to ensure consistency
5. Emergency WASH materials	Environmental impact of emergency materials and transport	Review list and make suggestions from an environmental point of view where relevant (integrate with Logistics Cluster environment proposal)
6. Training for capacity building	Environmental awareness / solid waste training modules	Integrate developed environment / waste training modules in future and pilot training courses
7. Learning	Recommendations and comments on cross-cutting issues	Learning review report recommendations considered during Phase I.
8. Advocacy for the WASH sector in Emergencies	Environmental advocacy	Share project outputs
9. Technical support service	Environmental technical support	Feed into interim report with recommendations
10. Best Practice in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	Environmental impact mitigation measures	Ensure mitigation of environmental impact of WASH projects are highlighted in Best Practice
11. Environment and WASH	-	-
12. Early Recovery and WASH	Environmental issues are key to early recovery	Coordinate with project lead as it develops
13. Development of DRR best practice guidance and tools	DRR tools and guidance. Environmental assessment as a potential tool for mainstreaming DRR	Share project outputs
14. Guidance and tools for accountability in Emergency WASH programming	Systematic approach to the environment by all organisations, donors, authorities UNICEF Guidelines for advocacy in Emergencies	Share project outputs
Rapid response team (RRT)	Materials, tools and training provided to RRT	Share all project outputs

Co-ordination with other ongoing WASH cluster project leads will ensure that environmental issues are consistently integrated where appropriate in Cluster activities.

It is estimated that it would take an environment specialist one day a week for the duration of the Environment in WASH project to co-ordinate with other cluster project co-ordinators and to review existing and ongoing projects outputs and ensure integration of environmental issues in all WASH cluster projects.

<p>Gaps/Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment is not currently integrated in WASH Cluster project outputs. <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing coordination with WASH cluster project leads to ensure mainstreaming of the environment. • Review existing and future WASH cluster tools for gaps

3.7 Other Clusters

Environmental issues and concerns are not consistently dealt with in each cluster. The scope of this study was insufficient to investigate the effectiveness of each cluster’s approach to the environment, but some initial observations are made in Table 4, based again on consultations and personal involvement by CARE/ProAct Network in certain clusters.

Table 4. Environmental Considerations in other Clusters

Cluster	Environment
Agriculture	No formal cluster set-up although environmental considerations are integrated into nearly all activities. Cluster lead provides advice on “do no harm” standards and practices and there are many guidelines to support this.
CCCM	Environmental issues are integrated into some of the main intended outputs – assessment forms and a guideline on camp closure and phase out.
Early Recovery	The early recovery cluster aims to mainstream the environment (and other cross-cutting issues) in all responses and a formal focal point (UNEP) has been identified. The Early Recovery Cluster has developed an Environmental Needs Assessment, as part of the Post Disaster Needs Assessment.
Education	No information received
Emergency Shelter	The Emergency Shelter Cluster is supporting a project entitled “Integrating Critical Environmental Issues into Emergency Shelter Cluster Activities”. Outputs will include a cluster environmental policy, training modules, environmental specialist roster, training and specific technical guidance notes.
Emergency Telecommunications	No information received
Health	Environmental issues are considered mainly in disposal of healthcare waste. Extensive documentation exists on the topic and is used by member organisations. No specific cluster guidelines are available.
Logistics	The environmental impact of transport and packaging is an increasing concern. This has not yet been specifically addressed within the Logistics Cluster although a separate proposal has been made to develop guidance on Green Procurement. No formal guidelines are available.
Nutrition	No information received
Protection	No information received

Outputs from this project (WASH Project 11) such as a WASH cluster environmental policy statement; Environment in WASH Guidelines and training modules are likely

to be very relevant to other clusters. They will serve as an example and can be adapted to suit each cluster's environmental needs.

Ongoing communication and co-ordination between clusters and environment focal points, where they exist, will help ensure a more consistent yet flexible approach to dealing with environmental issues as a cross-cutting issue.

A cross-cluster meeting on current environmental initiatives would help raise awareness of good practice across the sectors. Suggestions are to include WASH and Shelter cluster members initially as these two clusters are following a similar initiative with respect to integrating the environment in their activities.

Gaps/Issues

- There is no consistent approach to environmental issues and concerns across the clusters or how to mainstream and integrate them into cluster activities

Recommendations

- Support a cross-cluster meeting on exchange of successful environmental initiatives in the WASH and Shelter clusters.
- Continue to liaise with other clusters and other cross-cutting issues to ensure a consistent yet flexible approach to the environment as a cross-cutting issue.

3.8 Climate Change

“Observed records and climate projections provide evidence that freshwater resources are vulnerable and have the potential to be strongly impacted by climate change, with wide-ranging consequences for human societies and ecosystems.”

Several WASH member organisations are already engaged in the issue of climate change. How to address climate change in practical terms in emergency work is still unclear. This is a subject that still needs to be addressed across the clusters.

A common understanding of climate change issues and language required needs to be developed between existing climate change groups, disaster risk reduction initiatives and the emergency sector.

There is a lack of knowledge of the potential/real impacts of climate change on WASH activities and water resources in particular, and understanding how to adapt planning and responses accordingly. Developing a short, concise collection of case studies and existing good practice of WASH adaptation to climate change would address this lack of general awareness and provide a first step towards understanding how climate change can affect WASH activities. Sharing information on ongoing parallel developments across the clusters and providing analysed feedback to the WASH Cluster would help the cluster develop a strategy for addressing climate change issues in WASH.

The general opinion of those people interviewed as part of this review was that the humanitarian community should start by setting an example by taking steps to reduce its own impact. For example office practices, sustainability and the quality of materials used, as well as transportation arrangements, fuel and packaging need to be reviewed. This, however, was outside the scope of the present study.

Gaps/Issues

- Real impact of climate change on emergency WASH activities is unclear.

Recommendations

- Develop a short collection of potential impacts and existing good practice of WASH adaptation to climate change and make available on website.

4. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy

- Develop a WASH cluster environmental policy, to be approved by all members.
- Highlight the following issues: overexploitation of water resources, bottled water, septic tank use and location.
- Disseminate via relevant websites, WASH regional advisors and WASH training courses.

Guidelines

- Develop guidelines for environment in WASH to support the WASH cluster environmental policy.
- Highlight the following issues: overexploitation of water resources, bottled water, septic tank use and location.
- Raise awareness of existing general environmental tools, their uses and limitations for WASH activities and consolidate the information relevant to WASH into a simple document

Assessment and monitoring indicators

- Develop and integrate environmental indicators in existing and developing WASH cluster assessment and monitoring tools.

Technical guidance

- Develop WASH specific technical guidance, drawing from existing documentation and case studies on disposal of chemical sludges, recycling and re-use of materials, composting and biogas.
- Compile a collection of case studies on solar pumping in emergencies.
- Develop a common cluster position paper on vector control.

Information sharing

- Support a cross-cluster meeting on exchange of successful environmental initiatives in the WASH and Shelter sectors, initially.

Training

- Develop a short environmental awareness raising module to include in current half and full day WASH cluster training events.
- Develop a longer module on environmental awareness, environmental impact and mitigation measures for WASH activities to include in WASH specialists' training.
- Develop a waste management module in conjunction with Training for Capacity Building project.

Co-ordination with WASH cluster projects and other clusters

- Ongoing co-ordination with WASH cluster co-ordinators to ensure mainstreaming of environmental issues and concerns.
- Continue to liaise with other clusters and other cross-cutting sectors to ensure a consistent yet flexible approach to the environment as a cross-cutting issue.

Climate Change

- Develop a short collection of potential impacts and existing good practice of WASH adaptation to climate change, and make available on website.

5. CONCLUSION

Although the importance of integrating environmental issues into humanitarian response has been widely recognised, there is a lack of clear understanding and awareness of why and how environmental issues should be addressed during emergency WASH activities. Although substantial literature exists on certain aspects of the environmental impact of WASH activities, awareness is low and training modules do not adequately address environmental issues within WASH programmes.

This scoping report has provided an outline of gaps and recommendations on how to address the above issues.

The above recommendations form a compact and concise package to ensure the integration of environment in WASH cluster activities, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Develop a policy statement and include environmental indicators in existing monitoring and evaluation framework.
2. Develop cluster owned and approved Environment in WASH guidelines, supported by training modules and references to existing documentation.
3. Collate and promote existing tools on specific technologies where appropriate, and develop guidance where lacking.
4. Collate information on existing successful environmental initiatives in WAS projects and share good practice to increase awareness.
5. Promote partnerships and co-ordinated action across WASH cluster projects and amongst other clusters by initiating cross-cluster meetings on environmental issues.

These small first steps will contribute significantly to promoting the integration of environmental issues in WASH activities.