**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

# CONTEXT

As of 2014, an [epidemic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epidemic) of the [Ebola virus disease](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebola_virus_disease) (EVD) is ongoing in [West Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa). The outbreak began in [Guinea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guinea) in December 2013. It then spread to [Liberia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberia), [Sierra Leone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Leone), [Nigeria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria) and [Senegal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senegal). The disease is caused by the [Ebola virus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebola_virus). It is the most severe [outbreak of Ebola](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Ebola_outbreaks) since the discovery of the virus in 1976. In Liberia, the disease was reported in [Lofa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lofa_County) and [Nimba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimba_County) counties in late March. By 23 July, the health ministry implemented measures to improve the country's response. [Ellen Johnson Sirleaf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_Johnson_Sirleaf), the Liberian president, declared a state of emergency on 6 August, partly because the disease's weakening of the health care system has the potential to reduce the system's ability to treat routine diseases such as malaria; she noted that the state of emergency might require the "suspensions of certain rights and privileges".

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly and the Security Council have approved resolutions creating the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) to contain the ongoing outbreak. This is the first time in history that the UN has created a mission for a public health emergency. The Mission will bring together the vast resources of the UN agencies, funds and programmes, to reinforce WHO’s technical expertise and experience in disease outbreaks.

In response to the Ebola outbreak in Liberia, the former Ministry of Public Work (MoPW) -led National Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Committee, was expanded in August to work using the cluster approach to coordinate and realign the priorities and focus in support of the national Ebola response. On 12 September 2014, with the approval of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, UNICEF was designated as the Co-Lead Agencies (CLAs) of the WASH Cluster.

# WASH CLUSTER MANDATE

The WASH Cluster in Liberia ensures clear leadership, predictability and accountability to the emergency by clarifying the division of labour among organizations and better defining their roles and responsibilities within the different sectors of the response. It aims to make the international humanitarian community better organised and more accountable and professional, so that it can be a better partner for the affected people, host governments, local authorities, local civil society and resourcing partners.

# AREAS OF SCOPE

* Dead Body Management
* Treatment and Management of solid and liquid infected waste, including disinfection of affected household
* Fight against cholera and other water-related diseases, hygiene and sanitation
* Analysis of risk behaviours (Public Health)
* Construction, operation & Maintenance of WASH facilities for Ebola Care facilities, and Non Ebola Health facilities
* Construction, operation and management of WASH facilities in School
* Hygiene Promotion
* Urban WASH
* Cholera Preparedness and contingency stock
* Community sensitization and mobilization

# OBJECTIVES OF THE WASH CLUSTER

The objective of the WASH cluster is to coordinate the WASH response in a consistent, efficient and effective manner to fight against the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak. This will aim to ensure that the response is based on needs assessment, an analysis of the technical and operational gaps in the sector, taking into account the sharing of resources. In order to achieve this, the WASH Cluster will:

* Facilitate effective sharing of information and data between partners WASH sector and with the other clusters, technical working groups and the Incidence Management System
* Facilitate the needs analysis to respond to hot spots either in urban and/or rural areas and ensure that immediate and coordinated responses are operationalized and implemented in a timely, efficient, cost-effective and relevant manner
* Ensure that the response plan is appropriate and support the WASH cluster partners to provide timely response to the affected population
* Ensure the mobilization and allocation of adequate resources for the WASH response and the harmonization of the implemented project in accordance with the National WASH strategy, and the National Operational Plan
* Ensure that the WASH response meets the standards, minimum requirement and technical guidelines of the response
* Monitor and document the implementation of the sector strategy and the results achieved ; recommend corrective action when needed
* Ensure strengthen international, national and local capacities , encouraging international and national partnerships
* Ensure to provide comments and recommendations to proposed strategies developed in the IMS and/ or UNMEER framework mainly and / or other cluster / working groups
* Ensure accountability to the affected population by establishing feedback mechanisms and dissemination of harmonized information
* Ensure that WASH cluster members take into account cross-cutting issues ( gender, environment, age , diversity, child protection ... ) and DO NOT HARM approach in its response
* Ensure the development and implementation of strategies for the end of the outbreak, including the level of coordination mechanisms

# CORE FUNCTIONS

| **RESPONSABILITIES** | **ACTIVITIES** |
| --- | --- |
| Coordination of WASH response | 1. Coordination: Organize and facilitate meetings to exchange and coordinate, disseminate minutes of meetings, follow up of the decisions and recommendations and ensure the participation of key players in the decision making process. 2. Promote economy of scale and sharing resources. 3. Mapping: Identify actors implementing WASH response to the current EVD outbreak, their intervention areas, means and actions planned (mapping of actors and interventions) 4. Information: Develop and disseminate a list of contacts to connect the cluster members, informing them about the situation in their respective areas of intervention, ensuring the sharing of information and documents between actors and between local, regional, national and international, etc.   Liaison: Liaise with national and local authorities, public institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors ( international forces through appropriate mechanisms put in place as part of the humanitarian response ) |
| Information to decision making | Follow the evolution of the humanitarian situation by establishing and maintaining a network of regular communication with key WASH sector actors , within and / or outside the Cluster  Ensuring WASH partners agree on assessment tools and approaches (i.e. core indicators, vulnerability criteria, compatible assessment processes and analysis) through consensus-building mechanisms;  Providing comprehensive analysis of needs, response and gaps to support operational decision-making and advocacy;  Needs Assessment: Facilitating joint field missions including multi assessments and / or sectoral support the evaluation design and analysis tools needs and ensure the documentation and provision of those - one.  Mapping expertise and resources of the actors for the implementation of assessment work. ( Mapping , Technology ... )  Support the collection and analysis of existing secondary data.  Training and support of the WASH actors on these tools of analysis and needs assessment  Analysis & Recommendations : Identify and regularly update the priority areas for intervention and gaps overlap and inform all stakeholder |
| Capacity building on the preparedness and response to an EVD outbreak | Training: on the 'cluster' approach , on the WASH response situation and the standards to be achieved  Operational assistance: on needs analysis , planning and implementation of the response, the pre-positioning of stocks , advocacy and resource mobilization  Involvement of local authorities and expertise: Define the technical and operational capacity of local authorities and organization , and define an action plan for their capacity building and monitoring  Funding Mechanisms : Will be responsible for validating the proposed funding requests for humanitarian fund if existing , or at the request of other donors and based on predetermined by cluster partners criteria |
| Strategic Planning | Develop a strategic plan, including cross-cutting themes such as gender, protection, disability, if necessary and appropriate.  Establish programmatic link between the actors of the emergency response and those of early recovery / development to allow continuity in achieving the needs  Promote programmatic integration with other actors and clusters in order to better meet the needs of beneficiaries. |
| Compliance with international standards and national strategies for WASH in EVD outbreak/public heath crisis | Set the standard for the WASH response , making it accessible to all members and adapt in concert based on feedback from the field  Promote complementarity and harmonization of approaches and interventions  Ensure that humanitarian responses support and strengthen local initiatives and capacity |
| Monitoring and evaluation of interventions and their effects | Define some relevant key indicators jointly defined (including the mobilization of financial resources) and mechanisms to regularly inform , analyze data , evaluate interventions to promote and disseminate the findings, recommendations and best practices  Periodically assessing the performance of the cluster through the utilization of the Cluster Performance Monitoring Tool and ensuring that the information generated is then shared with partners for further learning and knowledge management |
| Contingency Plan | 1. Develop contingency plans based on identified and defined jointly risks, make it accessible to all members and adapt if relevant based on feedback from the field   Facilitate the pre-positioning of stock   1. Drawing lessons learned from past activities and revising strategies accordingly; 2. Providing contingency-planning scenarios for the WASH security cluster; 3. Developing mechanisms to enhance capacity building through in-country trainings and online learning packages. |
| Coordinating the activities of members of the WASH cluster with other active clusters | Meet regularly with other clusters (Nutrition, Health, Logistics etc.), UNMEER and IMS (update on the activities, resources mobilized, external communication, harmonization of strategies and interventions, sharing resources etc.) |

# WASH Cluster Roles and Responsibilities

* As stated in General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991, paragraphs 3 to 5, national authorities have the primary responsibility for taking care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring in their territory[[1]](#footnote-1).
* At the IASC Infrastructural Architecture level, the UNICEF Country Representatives are ultimately accountable to the Resident Coordinator for carrying out their Cluster Lead Agency responsibilities (as specified in the November 2006 IASC ‘Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response’ and Annex 1, ‘Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level’).
* Concept of “last resort provider " As agreed by the IASC Principals , UNICEF, as a sector lead, will act as the provider of last resort subject to the conditions of access to affected populations , security personnel and property as well as the availability of funding. Responding to agreed priority needs, UNICEF will have the support of the relevant coordination body in its efforts to mobilize resources.
* The Liberia WASH Cluster Coordinator is the neutral representative of the cluster as a whole and is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and facilitation of the work of the cluster.
* At the operational level, the WASH Cluster is chaired by representatives from the Ministry of Public Works with the support of the cluster coordinator as well as ideally a member of the International NGO Community (to be identified).
* Cluster Partners drawn from international and national agencies (UN, NGOs, Government, representatives of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) commit to the minimum participation in clusters, as defined by the IASC Coordination Reference Module (See Annex XX). Specifically, WASH Cluster partners commit to be proactive in assessing needs, sharing information, developing appropriate strategies and plans for the Food Security sector, and implementing agreed priority activities;
* Provision is also made in the Cluster for those humanitarian actors who may wish to participate as observers, including donors, mainly for information-sharing purposes;

# Methods of Work

* From September to December 2014, the WASH cluster will meet every weeks and on an *ad hoc* basis as needed;
* Technical working groups have been established to develop technical guidance to specific areas of scope. Each TWIG has a separate ToR, and could have different chairing body depending of the roles and responsibilities of each organization.
* Coordination mechanisms at county level will be established to ensure coordinated response at county level, and ensure that the operational is implementing to the nearest affected population. Sub-national coordination structures should facilitate decentralized decision-making and shorten response time. They are also in a better position to
* Adapt standards to local circumstances.
* Work closely with local authorities and international, national and local NGOs.
* Implement the strategic plan, and cross-cutting and multidimensional issues.
* Strengthen accountability to affected people.

Assessment and strategic planning should start at sub-national level is essential to implement the 5 pillars of the EVD strategy. Different regions may have different needs and therefore different prioritization.

* Partners commit to updating the 4 Ws and to providing regular updates on their activities. A reporting template will be sent to WASH partners requesting an update of their current and planned action (eg – planned assessments/ trainings/ gaps and challenges). This information will be summarized and included in the humanitarian update. All updates received will be circulated to partners in advance of the meeting. This will allow time in the meetings for provision of further details and suggested solutions to challenges.

# Transition process: Ensuring the continuity of coordination

The WASH cluster will gradually and progressively start the process of transitioning from WASH cluster coordination to national WASH coordination mechanism, back to the NWSHP Committee, and continue to build the capacity of national governments to deliver effective WASH coordination, preparedness and response. Government ownership offers greater potential for synergy with the wider WASH sector, allowing for meaningful dialogue on resilience and risk reduction across sectorial investments. Trigger will be defined with the cluster members as well as the lead agencies. A proper framework and workplan will be developed by the key stakeholders and endorsed by the humanitarian community to ensure that the coordination services transitioned smoothly back to the former NWSHP Committee.

# Principles of Partnership

To uphold spirit of collaboration, strengthen participation communication within (and outside) the HHP and to adhere to the following **Principles of Partnership:**

**Equality:** Equality requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The HHP partners respect each other’s mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other’s constraints and commitments. Mutual respect however will not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.

**Transparency:** Transparency is achieved through dialogue between all partners on an equal footing, with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communication and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.

**Result-oriented approach:** Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires result-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.

**Responsibility:** HHP partners have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They will commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills, and capacity to deliver on their commitments.

**Complementarity:** The diversity of the HHP partners is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other’s contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, HHP partners, particularly UN and International NGO-s will strive to make it an integral part in emergency response.

1. “*Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory. Hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.’*

   *‘The magnitude and duration of many emergencies may be beyond the response capacity of many affected countries. International cooperation to address emergency situations and to strengthen the response capacity of affected countries is thus of great importance. Such cooperation should be provided in accordance with international and national laws. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations working impartially and with strictly humanitarian motives should continue to make a significant contribution in supplementing national efforts.’*

   *‘States whose populations are in need of humanitarian assistance are called upon to facilitate the work of these organizations in implementing humanitarian assistance, in particular the supply of food, medicines, shelter and health care, forwhich access to victims is essential.”* Operational Guidance Note of Working with National Authorities, IASC, 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)