*Version 1, drafted 26 September 2017*

**Background**

The Violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar which began on 25 August 2017 has driven an estimated 436,000 Rohingya refugees across the border into Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. The speed and scale of the influx has resulted in a critical humanitarian emergency. Basic services that were available prior to the influx are under severe strain due to the massive increase in people in the area. In some of the sites that have spontaneously emerged, there is no access to water and sanitation facilities, raising the risks of an outbreak of disease. The Rohingya population in Cox’s Bazar is highly vulnerable for WASH, having fled conflict and experienced severe trauma, and now living in extremely difficult conditions. The influx has also increased the WASH vulnerability of the pre-existing refugee population as well as the surrounding host community.

To meet the growing needs, the WASH Sector is undergoing a massive scale-up including large numbers of new partners arriving to join the response. The WASH Coordination platform, referred from here on out as the *Cox’s Bazar WASH Sector,* has likewise under scale-up with the establishment of formal Co-Leadership arrangements between UNICEF and Action Against Hunger who represent the WASH sector in the [Inter-Sector Coordination Group.](https://cxbcoordination.org/)

Due to the complex nature of the emergency and the large increase in the number of WASH partners, there was a call in late September 2017 to establish a Strategy Advisory Group (SAG) at the Cox’s Bazar Level. The objectives and the structure of this group are outlined in this document.

1. **Primary objectives of the SAG**
2. Set prioritization of emergency WASH response in Cox’s Bazar
3. Support the implementation of WASH sector strategic framework and work plan
4. Validate technical guidelines and WASH sector standards
5. Provide guidance to ensure cross-cutting issues are mainstreamed within the WASH response
6. **Structure and Membership of the SAG**

The SAG is a unique, voluntary body within the WASH Sector in Cox’s Bazar, distinct from the WASH Sector Coordination Team (WASH Sector Coordinator, Information Management Officer, Focal Points) and any of the Sector’s Technical Working Groups.

The SAG will be formed through the direction of the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) with direct support from the two WASH Sector Coordinators (ACF and UNICEF) – with input from all WASH Sector partners. Its composition will be rigid, consistent and representative of the entire WASH sector. Representation of the SAG will include:

* + Chair - Representative from Government (DPHE) – (standing member);
  + Co-Chair - WASH Sector Coordinator (UNICEF) – (standing member);
  + Co-Chair – WASH Sector Coordinator (UNICEF) – (standing member);
  + 2 UN Organizations
  + 1 International Organization (From Red Cross/Crescent Movement)
  + 3 International NGOs
  + 2 International NGOs/ CBOs/ CSOs

SAG membership will be periodically reviewed (at least annually) attempting to maintain full active membership, with a good balance between members.

The SAG Chair/Co-Chair will maintain a full contact list of the current SAG membership.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. **Roles and Responsibilities of the SAG**

*Strategic Guidance and Sector Prioritization:*

* The SAG will formulate and validate the overall **WASH Sector Strategy** and ensure it is complementarity with plans at the national and level, updated regularly according to evolving needs and being used to hold partners to account.
* In the first stage of the crisis (first 3 months) the SAG will ensuring oversight of the WASH sector prioritization and gap analysis, actively addressing bottlenecks and resource allocation.
* The sector coordinator or co-leads will call on the SAG to support the development of key aspects of the annual Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) including define sectoral needs, developing strategy response plans, developing contingency plans and periodic monitoring reviews of sectoral progress
* The SAG will provide strategic oversight and validation of WASH humanitarian standards for Cox’s Bazar.
* The SAG is responsible for ensuring that WASH sector response priorities are based on sound needs assessment and analysis. This includes ensuring a harmonized approach to needs assessments and developing an analysis framework to prioritize the needs and vulnerabilities within the WASH sector.

*Technical Guidance:*

* The SAG will ensure appropriate technical standards and quality assurance mechanisms for WASH Sector partners are agreed, disseminated, and consistently applied. Additionally the SAG will;
* Support WASH Sector Coordinator to establish ‘Technical Working Groups’ (TWGs) as required and hold such groups accountable to Terms of Reference agreed by the SAG; ensure proper representation within such groups; ensure timely output; ensure transparent reporting; and close such groups.

*Cross-Cutting Issues*

* *The SAG is responsible for supporting various cross-cutting thematic topics. At a minimum the SAG should ensure that;*
  + *WASH Sector plan is developed for strengthening AAP*
  + *WASH Sector sets minimum standards and best practices for community feedback mechanisms*
  + *PSEA mechanism is in place*
  + *Gender, age and diversity integrated in response plan*
  + *WASH Sector contributes to achieving protection outcomes*
  + *WASH Sector supports rollout of protection mainstreaming training*
  + *Core Humanitarian Standards indicators are monitored and reported on*

*Advocacy*

* The SAG will formulate and endorse key advocacy messaging for the WASH response.

*Coordination Performance Monitoring:*

* The SAG will agree on performance indicators with in the Cluster/Sector Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) framework in order to monitor and measure the overall performance of the WASH Sector Coordination and response, and the method by which these will be measured and monitored.

1. **Transparency and Accountability**

Decisions will be taken following a transparent and inclusive process, and the SAG should reinforce and contribute to supporting the six cluster/sector core functions plus Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). In addition, the SAG will ensure transparency and accountability by;

* Ensuring effective dissemination of outputs/meeting minutes from the SAG
* Ensuring decisions made by the SAG shall be taken to the extent possible on the basis of consensus
* Ensuring that the SAG has a decision-making role only if delegated by SAG partners (through email or at meetings)
* Ensuring that all decisions from the SAG will be recorded in meeting minutes.

1. **Meeting Structure**

In the first stage of the crisis, the SAG will meet on an adhoc, needs basis. Following this, the SAG will meet monthly in Cox’s Bazar, separate from the monthly WASH Sector Coordination meetings. If there is an urgent task or decision to be taken, and ad hoc meeting can be called and members or alternates are expected to attend.

* If a SAG member cannot attend a meeting, the member is to recommend an alternative technical expert from the same agency. If no alternative technical expert is available, the SAG member to contribute by email. At least 70% of attendance for meetings is needed to form a quorum.
* Extraordinary meetings may be called by the (co-)chairs, or at the request of at least 3 other members.
* The draft agenda will be circulated to SAG members in advance of each meeting.
* Draft minutes will be shared with SAG members for their comments. Final minutes will be shared with SAG and WASH Sector members.

1. Annex 3. SAG Member Contact List [↑](#footnote-ref-1)