4 ASSESSING NEEDS AND ON-GOING MONITORING

Chapter Four relates to the **following WCC responsibilities**:

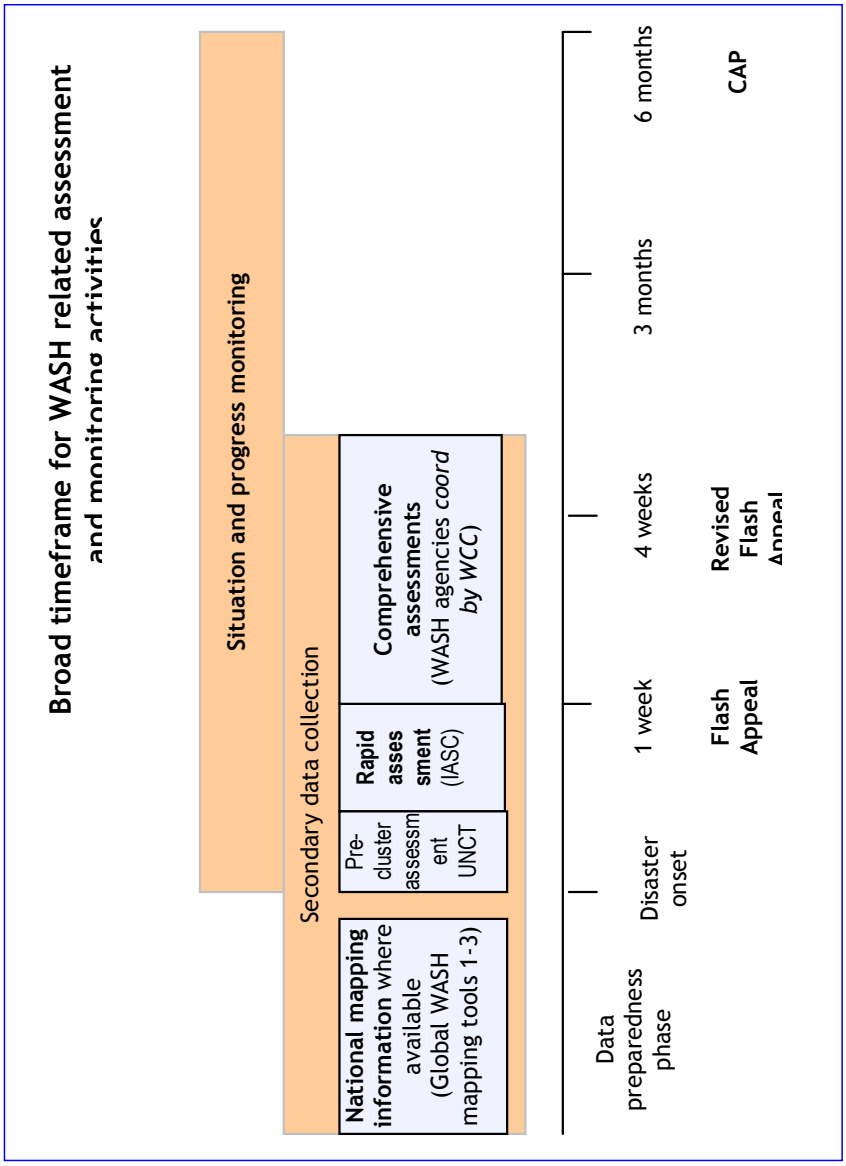
- ✓ Assessing needs;
- ✓ Avoiding gaps and duplications.

The chapter is split into the following **two sections**:

4.1	Assessment of the emergency situation	▪ An overview of the needs assessment processes ▪ Purpose of a rapid assessment ▪ Outline process for rapid assessments ▪ Preparation for rapid assessments ▪ Data collection, processing, and analysis ▪ Comprehensive assessments ▪ Outline process for comprehensive assessments
4.2	On-going monitoring and assessment	▪ Purpose of monitoring WASH interventions ▪ Coordination of on-going monitoring and assessment ▪ Reviewing WASH Cluster progress and results

4.1 Assessment of the emergency situation

4.1.1 An overview of the needs assessment processes



A continuous process of needs assessment, analysis, and monitoring is required throughout the early response stages of a rapid-onset disaster, as illustrated above. A similar on-going process is used in complex emergencies.

i) Within the first 1-2 days following a rapid-onset disaster…

A (pre-Cluster) assessment may be undertaken by whoever is on the ground at the time. This is likely to be before the WCC arrives and probably undertaken by the government, or RC and existing UN Country Team (UNCT).

An assessment at such an early stage would draw information from satellite over-flights, anecdotal evidence, secondary data, and possibly a visit to the affected area, e.g. if the affected area is in close proximity or a large urban area has been affected.

Spontaneous mobilisation and self help among the affected populations will continue with limited external intervention other than immediate search-and-rescue operations.

This is also the stage that a decision will be taken whether to adopt the Cluster Approach or not.

ii) Within one week of a rapid onset disaster…

A Flash Appeal will need to be prepared.

In order to do this, a minimum level of disaggregated assessment data is needed to help inform:

- ***The nature and scale of the emergency and its impact.***
- ***The size, location, and characteristics of the affected populations.***
- ***The location of affected areas.***
- ***Immediate needs and priorities.***
- ***Information gaps that need to be filled.***
- ***Principle stakeholders and information sources.***
- ***Immediate resource requirements.***

This data will normally be gathered through a rapid assessment process, which may be an inter-Cluster assessment coordinated by the HC / UNOCHA, or a rapid assessment within the WASH Cluster based largely on meta-analysis of disaggregated assessment information provided by WASH Cluster actors. Broad timings for the process are:

1-2 days *- to agree baselines, tools, indicators, etc.*
1-3 days *- organisation and briefing / training of assessment teams*
1-3 days *- data collection in the field*
1-2 days *- data processing and analysis*

The type of rapid assessment will depend on the nature and scale of the emergency, the degree of existing emergency and data preparedness in the country, and the presence and capacity of agencies on the ground before the disaster.

Information generated from a rapid assessment is often unreliable but should lead to a 'common overall assessment' of the facts among the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

Outcomes from the rapid assessment will form the basis for initial WASH Cluster response planning, and by this stage WASH Cluster actors will already have begun to mobilise and intervene. Access to assessment data is therefore critical in undertaking a reasonable analysis of the situation and mitigating the risk of duplication and life-threatening gaps in response.

iii) Within 2-4 weeks of a rapid onset disaster…

Many WASH agencies will be undertaking their own comprehensive WASH sector-specific assessments, and the emphasis of the WCC role is in getting a coordinated approach to:

- *how the assessments are carried out, e.g. common indicators,*
- *what data is shared,*
- *a process for central analysis, including identification of duplication and gaps, and reporting of that data.*

At this stage, the focus of assessments will be at sub-national rather than national level, demanding an effective WASH Cluster coordination structure at sub-national level and good communications between the national and sub-national level Cluster coordination structures (see *section 1.2* for further details).

A coordinated process for comprehensive assessments is likely to take 4-6 weeks, with the following broad timings:

***4-7 days** - to prepare*
***1-2 weeks** - in the field*
***1-2 weeks** for data analysis*
***up to 1 month** from the start for final reporting*

Initial findings from the comprehensive assessment process should feed into a Revised Flash Appeal four weeks after the emergency onset.

iv) From one week to six months after a rapid onset disaster

There will be an on-going process of assessment, and situation and progress monitoring. During this process there may be a range of detailed assessments within different Clusters, and joint assessments coordinated by the HC / UNOCHA.

On-going monitoring and assessment will remain focused at field level and should inform a continuous process of reviewing the WASH Cluster response plans.

In large-scale disasters, where the emergency response is expected to continue beyond 6 months, a Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) will be initiated approximately six months after the emergency onset. See *section 6.1* for further details.

v) Complex and on-going emergencies

The pattern of assessments in on-going emergencies will be determined largely by changes in the context. If there is a rapid deterioration in the situation then a rapid assessment of the new situation may be needed.

Otherwise, it will generally be comprehensive assessments that are undertaken in particular locations or in relation to particular problems brought about by the impact of the emergency. These will be timed, where possible, to feed into the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) which is compiled annually in November.

An on-going process of assessment and monitoring will take place in the same way as outlined for rapid-onset disasters.

Challenges in coordinated rapid assessments

It took 16 days to plan and roll-out the joint rapid needs assessment during the Pakistan flood response of 2007, and a further ten to collect, collate, and analyse the data. Given that the 'Flash Appeal' – the main reason for conducting a 'rapid' assessment in the first place – is supposed to be launched seven days after the onset of crisis, this could be considered a bit slow. In fact, by the time of the Appeal's launch, donors had already made their funding decisions independent of either a consolidated evidence base or sector-specific Cluster input, thereby negating the point of the exercise.

During the cyclone Sidr response in Bangladesh later that year, the WASH Cluster included its sector-specific questions in the rapid assessments of other Clusters, only to find that the agencies conducting those assessments found it difficult to release the findings quickly – in the case of livelihoods security, some two months later.

The aim of a 'rapid' needs assessment is to 'triangulate' as much relevant primary or secondary data as possible, to provide evidence on which to base response planning. To enable this, a simple, two-page questionnaire with three questions from each relevant sector should be used. Data can be centrally collated, but each Cluster should undertake its own sectoral analysis and use the findings for planning and resource-mobilisation.

Examples provided by James Shepherd-Barron, Emergency Shelter CC in Pakistan, Yogyakarta, and WASH CC in Bangladesh and Georgia.

4.1.2 Purpose of a rapid assessment

A rapid assessment provides a quick overview of an emergency situation and assists in identifying the response priorities for the first 1-2 months.

It should answer the following questions:

1. **What has happened?** Is there an emergency situation and, if so, what are its key features?
2. **How many people have been killed, injured, affected and where are they?** Who is most vulnerable and why?
3. **Where did it happen?** Identify the geographical areas and environmental conditions.
4. **What is the extent of damage?** What impact is this having on people's ability to survive?
5. **What interventions are required?** What are the priorities for action to prevent further harm or loss of life, and the necessary resource requirements for an immediate short-term response?
6. **What resources and capacities are already present** and what are the immediate capacity gaps?
7. **What are the emerging threats?** For example renewed conflict, landslides after flooding.
8. **What are the key information gaps?** What follow up is needed and what is the process for on-going monitoring and assessment?

4.1.3 Outline process for rapid assessments

a) Inter-Cluster rapid assessment

Following the decision by the HC / RC, UNCT, and national government to conduct a joint rapid assessment, they will assign a national-level coordination team involving representatives from government, the Clusters involved, and other key actors in the response.

The process should take between five and ten days and feed into the Flash Appeal process.

Coordination will also be needed at field level to organise the assessment teams, and this will be managed through the different Clusters involved.

The main stages in the process are set out in the table below, and comprehensive details are set out in the **IRA Guidance Note.**

An **Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) tool** has been developed to provide a basis for joint rapid assessments involving the Health, WASH and Nutrition Clusters. Comprehensive details can be found in *section 3.2*.

IRA steps	By whom
Outline assessment requirements 1. Develop IRA tool – country edition 2. Collect, process, and analyse disaggregated secondary data 3. Selection and formation of field assessment teams 4. National-level coordination 5. Reporting and dissemination of IRA findings	HC/RC and National-level coordination team (inc. WCC)
Organisation of field assessments 1. Identify, brief / train assessment teams 2. Outline fieldwork plans and organise logistics 3. Organise a mechanism for processing and analysis of data	Field-level coordination team (inc. WCC / WASH Cluster support team and Cluster actors)
Field level data collection 1. Verify secondary data 2. Collect disaggregated primary data 3. Reporting	Field assessment teams
Data processing / analysis Reporting to national-level coordination team	Field-level coordination team

The WCC role is to:

i) represent the WASH Cluster within the task force and in consultation with Cluster partners:

- ✓ agree which Clusters participate and the role of government,
- ✓ provide the WASH input for the joint rapid assessment tool and indicators,
- ✓ agree on methodologies and advise on methods required for the WASH sections,
- ✓ agree who will supply resources, e.g. survey team members, transport, funding for the assessment,
- ✓ agree on the provisions for Information Management.

ii) support the inter-Cluster task force and facilitate the involvement of WASH Cluster actors in:

- ✓ selection and training of assessment team members (particularly when non-WASH cluster personnel or government officers will be covering WASH sections of the survey),
- ✓ coordinate the collection, processing, and analysis of disaggregated data from field assessment teams.

b) WASH Cluster rapid assessment

A WASH Cluster rapid assessment follows a similar process, with the national-level coordination undertaken by the Cluster steering group.

As assessments will probably already be underway by some WASH sector actors, the national-level coordination function will include a meta-analysis of on-going assessment findings, in addition to coordination of field assessments conducted using the same assessment criteria (e.g. between three and five standard indicators, common survey questions, etc.) and tools.

A **Rapid Assessment Tool (RAT)** has been developed to facilitate rapid assessments in WASH. See *section 3.2* for full details plus examples of a number of rapid assessment tools developed in the field.

4.1.4 Preparation for rapid assessments

a) Outlining the WASH requirements for a rapid assessment

Coordination of the overall assessment process will be easier to manage through a smaller steering group within the WASH Cluster. This group can also liaise and maintain regular communication with the HC, government, national-level coordination team (in the case of joint Cluster rapid assessments), and WASH Cluster participating agencies.

Based on available pre-crisis data, secondary information, and experience from similar emergencies and contexts (e.g. from the EmergencyInfo database under Resources below), build up a picture of the anticipated situation on the ground. Then detail the disaggregated information needed to get a more complete understanding:

- ✓ Define the broad scope of assessment: geographical coverage, timing, number of assessment teams, key information needs, and information sources.
- ✓ Clearly define common standards, objectives and three to five indicators, taking into account:
  - Access to and availability of safe drinking water and water storage,
  - access to and availability of water for personal hygiene / household use,
  - access to and means of excreta and solid waste disposal.
- ✓ Ability to practice safe hygiene practices (knowledge and resources).
- ✓ Outline anticipated strategies for the WASH response.
- ✓ Ensure that the information provided takes account of, and complements assessments planned by the government and / or other Clusters.

b) Collection of secondary data

Secondary data comprises pre-crisis and in-crisis data collected primarily at national-level. Begin collection as soon as the WASH Cluster is formed, using government, UN, and in country NGO sources.

Pre-crisis data is needed to:	**In-crisis data** assists in establishing:
✓ Provide a baseline for WASH; ✓ Identify pre- crisis vulnerabilities; ✓ Outline demographics of the affected population ; ✓ Identify requirements from national legislation, policy, and standards ; ✓ Identify geographical, political, social, and cultural factors which can influence access, vulnerability, resource availability, etc.; ✓ Identify national response capacities.	✓ The nature, scope, and extent of the emergency; ✓ The most affected areas and groups; ✓ Suitable sites; ✓ In-country and national and local response capacities; ✓ The main stakeholders; ✓ Physical, security, and logistical constraints.

c) Adapting assessment tools and methodologies

The WCC and WASH Cluster have a role in advising what information is needed for the WASH response. Agree on indicators and information needs with WASH Cluster partners (and other relevant Clusters if a joint rapid assessment is not being undertaken).

The ***Rapid Assessment Tool*** (RAT) provides a one-page checklist of questions to guide rapid data collection for the WASH sector. Inputting the data collected into the ***Comprehensive Assessment Tool*** (CAT) database will then enable the Cluster to analyse and generate standardised assessment reports very quickly. Details of both tools can be found under *section 3.2.*)

Quick tips for rapid assessment surveys

- ✓ **Focus on the critical issues** and keep the survey short and simple.
- ✓ **Pose questions carefully** to ensure that the answers are useful and can be effectively analysed.
- ✓ Field **test the survey** to ensure that the questions can be understood.

The survey questions will determine the information sources required and the assessment methodologies needed, e.g. questions about household water use and hygiene practices might be addressed through household-level interviews or a transect walk, with women.

- ✓ Consider the anonymity and safety of all information sources.
- ✓ If possible, use participatory methodologies.
- ✓ Select methodologies which are feasible within the timeframe.
- ✓ Try to reach agreement on common information sources and methodologies across the Clusters.

d) Establishing assessment teams

One of the most time-consuming parts of preparation for an assessment will be the selection and training of assessment teams, particularly when they are made up of generalists with little or no WASH-sector experience. This can take up to a week.

Desirable assessment team characteristics

- Generalists with experience of qualitative, participatory research methods.
- Gender, age, and ethnicity balance.
- Representation of international, national, and local actors.
- Objectivity and neutrality.
- Sound local knowledge, language and local reputation.
- Multi-agency representation.
- Previous experience of similar disasters.

Generally there will be between two and five assessment team members per team, depending on the number and size of sites, availability of skilled assessors, and available resources.

The WASH Cluster will need to agree which representatives participate in the assessment on its behalf. As time in the field will be limited, ensuring that assessment team members have clear and specific roles and responsibilities will help to get the most out of a rapid assessment.

e) Planning fieldwork and logistics

A field work plan is useful in outlining:

- ✓ allocation of assessment teams to specific locations;
- ✓ site details, e.g. location, GPS coordinates, and sequence of visits;
- ✓ means of travel, time allowed, and fieldwork time at each location;
- ✓ frequency and form of reporting;

- ✓ arrangements and equipment for eating, drinking, sleeping;
- ✓ access, security, and communications arrangements.

Selection of areas for assessment should be broadly based on:

- Locations of perceived greatest need (from two-thirds to three-quarters of assessment sites);
- Locations of medium need;
- Unaffected locations (10 per cent) to provide a basis for comparison if secondary information is considered insufficient for this;
- A range of locations representative of different affected groups, e.g. pastoralists, agriculturalists, urban dwellers, IDPs, refugees, host communities, etc.;
- A focus on under-assessed areas.

Detailed site selection is better decided by the assessment team leaders once they are in the field, based on their initial findings.

4.1.5 Data collection, processing, and analysis

Data will be collected through a combination of focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and observation.

It also pays to consider the potential impact of the assessment on the longer term relationship with affected communities.

- ✓ On arrival, meet with local and traditional authorities or leaders. This also provides an opportunity to gather background data.
- ✓ Take care not to raise community expectations about the level of support that might be provided.
- ✓ Use participatory approaches where possible, but at least with a sample of sites or households.
- ✓ Provide feedback to local and traditional authorities before leaving.

Key points for effective data collection and processing

- ✓ Use **purposeful sampling** if there is a significant difference between households;
- ✓ **Disaggregate** data by age and gender;
- ✓ **'Triangulate'** - verify data collected from three different sources or people;
- ✓ Consider **disaster impacts** - at household, community, and society levels;
- ✓ **Highlight bias** - in information, methodologies, and findings;
- ✓ Look out for **inconsistencies** – the unexpected or emerging trends.

a) Data processing and analysis

Data processing should be managed by the IM focal point, including other expertise as required, e.g. early-recovery specialist. Where communications allow, sending summary assessment data back from the field on a daily basis will help speed up the overall assessment process. This will also allow for more objective 'external' analysis.

Data analysis should be undertaken by the Cluster steering group (or national-level coordination team for joint Cluster assessments). The assessment data from different locations can then be compared and reviewed, drawing on:

- *secondary pre-crisis data for conditions in the same locality / nationally and for similar vulnerable groups,*
- *secondary in-crisis data to check for bias and ensure triangulation,*
- *data from other assessments and clusters,*
- *national and international benchmarks for similar crisis situations.*

The summary information generated from this process should **answer the key questions posed at the start of this section**, and identify any further risks to the affected populations.

Outputs from processing and analysis of the initial assessment data should include preliminary qualitative findings, followed by a brief Initial Rapid Assessment Report.

b) Reporting and dissemination of assessment findings

The main principles underlying rapid assessment reporting are **speed**, **brevity**, **transparency,** and **focus on concrete recommendations.**

Tips for assessment reporting

- ✓ Keep reports **short and simple**.
- ✓ **Tabulate** information where possible.
- ✓ Outline assessment **methodology**, highlighting any gaps, bias, assumptions, and limitations.
- ✓ Present **clear, evidence-based conclusions**; explain the problems, impact, needs, and recommended actions.
- ✓ **Disseminate promptly and widely,** and publicise findings in local languages and at community level.

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Numberir

Presentation of information in a coherent and consistent manner will strengthen the analysis of humanitarian needs and improve opportunities for advocacy and mobilizing funding.

4.1.6 Comprehensive assessments

By the 2-4 week stage of the response there may be numerous assessments underway, and effective sub-national level WASH coordination will be key to getting some level of consistency in the way they are being undertaken, and in capturing, analysing, and disseminating the data collected.

Individual WASH agencies may undertake assessments that are specific to particular sub-sectors of the WASH response, particular locations, or particular issues or concerns in relation to the emergency. The information gathered is critical in understanding the changing emergency situation and informing on-going developments and adjustment of WASH Cluster response plans.

To facilitate this, **the WCC role is to** :

- Facilitate WASH Cluster agreement on **what assessment and monitoring data needs to be shared** and how to do this;
- Facilitate agreement to **common standards for assessments** so that the data generated can be usefully compared and analysed;
- Establish an **appropriate monitoring system** and tools;
- Establish **coordination mechanisms at sub-national level** for the compilation, analysis, and reporting of relevant assessment and monitoring information;
- Undertake a **meta-analysis of assessments** carried out by Cluster partners to guide more detailed response planning and input to the revised Flash Appeal (see *section 6.1*). This may be done four to six weeks after the disaster began.

Challenges and strategies for coordinating assessments

Challenges	Strategies for coordination
× Many agencies will use their own tools, hindering coordination of assessment approach and useful analysis of findings.	✓ Establish common standards, inc. indicators, information needs and questions, and methodologies. The CAT provides a good basis for doing this.
× It may be difficult to get Cluster partners to focus on the need for coordinated assessments, rather than coordinated relief.	✓ Fully inform and involve Cluster partners in the Cluster response planning and review process so that they see how coordinating assessment information will enable coordinated relief.
× There may be limited available expertise and capacity for assessment design and analysis.	✓ The CAT tool provides overcomes the need for this level of expertise.
× Time and effort can be wasted	✓ Focus on the information content

on trying to reach consensus on an assessment methodology.	(indicators, questions, etc.) rather than the tool. Highlight how agency time and resources can be saved using a common database like the CAT.
× Agencies may be unwilling or slow to share findings, or they are presented in a different format.	✓ As above: demonstrate how important this information is for a coherent WASH response, and encourage use of the CAT.
× There may be delays in dissemination of data from joint assessments or other agencies.	✓ Establish a mechanism for centrally collating, analysing, and disseminating data. This will save agency time and can overcome delays. However, significant data-entry capacity may be needed at sub-national Cluster level to do this.

Points in advocating for coordinated assessments

- ✓ Improved cooperation and coordination between WASH Cluster partners in planning and implementation,
- ✓ better targeting of response plans,
- ✓ more effective use of agency resources in undertaking assessments,
- ✓ reduction in risk of assessment fatigue among affected communities.

4.1.7 Outline process for comprehensive assessments

The WASH Cluster process for comprehensive assessments focuses mainly on coordination and data processing and analysis, as the data is collected independently by individual WASH agencies. As such, the WASH Cluster has little involvement in the selection of assessment teams or planning of field visits, however, there is a significant role in coordination of these activities at sub-national level.

A comprehensive assessment will generally:

- ✓ **Cover additional sites** and go into greater detail than a rapid assessment;
- ✓ Focus more on the **medium-term WASH response** (3-4 months);

- ✓ Facilitate more **active involvement of affected communities**;
- ✓ Take detailed **account of cross-cutting issues** in the health, nutrition, protection, CCCM, and emergency shelter Clusters, and fully address cross-cutting concerns such as gender, age, HIV/AIDS, and the environment.
- ✓ Guide on-going **advocacy, media, and fundraising** activities;
- ✓ **Build capacity** of national and local actors through facilitation of needs assessment and analysis activities.

Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)

The Comprehensive Assessment Tools has been developed by the Global WASH Cluster to assist in facilitating this process. It is broken down into seven key sub-sectors of WASH, with a range of indicators within each sub-sector that can be selected as appropriate to a particular context, location, or problem. Standardised assessment templates can then be generated based on the indicators selected.

The Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) is intended to:

- Help WASH agencies identify critical problems / risks being faced by the disaster-affected populations, using a standard set of indicators,
- Record needs and priorities for their interventions, in order to address these problems.

There are also a series of flow charts for each WASH sub-sector, to assist in interpreting the data generated and guide subsequent decision making. Further details of the CAT can be found under *section 3.1*.

Resources

- WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook, Summary of **Data Collection Tools**
  Outlines a range of data collection methodologies
- Global WASH Cluster **Rapid Assessment Tool (RAT)**
  A one-page checklist to guide the design of rapid assessments for the WASH sector.
- IFRC (2008), **Guidelines for Assessments in Emergencies**
- WFP **Food Security Assessment Handbook**, 2005
  Comprehensive guidance on different assessment methodologies for use in rapid assessments
- IASC (2002), **Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions** in Humanitarian Settings, Action Sheet 2.1 '*Conduct a coordinated rapid situational analysis'*
- Sample - Govt of Lao PDR, **Rapid Assessment - village checklist**, 2008
- Sample – UNICEF Timor Leste, **Rapid Assessment Tool**, Feb 2007
- Sample – Initial **Rapid Assessment - Village level**, Georgia, 2008
- Sample – ACF WatSan **checklist for rapid assessments**.
- Sample – Tripartite Group, Post Nargis **Joint Assessment**, August 2008 – *Refer to section 2.4.2/ p. 15 for WASH; sections 4.3 / 4.3 for early recovery and disaster preparedness considerations*

- http://www.devinfo.info/emergencyinfo/
  Emergency Info is part of the DevInfo database. It helps to bridge information gaps within the first 72 hours of an emergency and provide support for rapid data collection, situation assessment, standard monitoring reports, and disaster preparedness.

4.2 On-going monitoring and assessment

4.2.1 Purpose of monitoring WASH interventions

The purpose of monitoring is to:

1. track changes in the emergency situation and evolving needs
2. assess the progress of the WASH Cluster response
3. assess the impact of the response
4. facilitate upward and downward accountability to stakeholders (see *section 7.3*)
5. highlight achievements and lessons learnt (performance) to inform on-going decision making and future Cluster interventions

Considering all monitoring requirements from the start can save time and reduce duplication in data collection, analysis, and reporting. The WASH Cluster assessment and monitoring tools (see below) have the scope to do this.

a) Monitoring process

Monitoring is generally needed **more frequently at the start** of an emergency (weekly), and less frequently as the situation improves (monthly).

Indicators are 'signals' that show whether a standard or objective has been attained. They provide a way of measuring and communicating the progress, results, and impact of WASH interventions, as well as guiding the process or methods used.

The indicators may be qualitative or quantitative and should be SMART (see section 5.2 for further details).

e.g. Qualitative indicator:
Programmes include an effective mechanism for representative and participatory input from all users at all phases, including the initial design and location of facilities.

e.g. Quantitative indicator:
Number of approved packs of sanitary materials and underwear distributed to target population, being x women, and y children.

Indicators taken from WASH Cluster Monitoring Tool

However, monitoring impact indicators in the early stages will be difficult, as will active participation by affected communities. Even as the response progresses, the implementation of household surveys for impact monitoring is unlikely to be done more than once every one to two months.

The sub-national level Cluster structure will be vital to effective monitoring. **Good organisation at sub-national level,** e.g. through District Focal Points and involving local authorities, will help to facilitate coordinated disaggregated data collection, analysis, and reporting. Along with follow up of those agencies who fail to provide regular information.

Involvement of community representatives and / or local authorities in situation and progress monitoring can assist in building local capacity, and in complementing WASH agency capacity.

As highlighted in *section 1.4*, giving the community and local actors a stake in the monitoring process helps to improve accountability by quickly highlighting those agencies who are not performing, or not monitoring their work effectively, among local-level stakeholders.

b) Weakness in WASH Cluster monitoring

WASH Cluster experience to date[12] has indicated weaknesses in the monitoring function. This varies between on-going emergencies where there is limited IM capacity, to rapid-onset emergencies where IM support is in place but there are limited or unreliable data due to a weak sub-national Cluster structure.

Common shortfalls in monitoring	Strategies to overcome them
× Tendency to focus on situation and progress monitoring, rather than outcomes and impact.	✓ Use of the CAT and Monitoring tool. ✓ Consider progress as a % of assessed need.
× Poor linkage between situation and progress monitoring so focus is on completion of planned activities, without reference to the changing emergency context.	✓ A structured review process (see below)
× Inadequate participation of WASH stakeholders and affected communities in the process.	✓ Formation of a working / sub group and use of national / local monitoring teams.
× Duplication in collection of information and information	✓ WASH Cluster agreement to use standardised information needs,

[12] WASH Cluster evaluations from Yogjakarta, DRC, Uganda

overload.	sources, and indicators, and keeping surveys short and simple.
× Difficulty in getting agreement to use common monitoring tools and approaches.	✓ Cluster partner involvement in the design of systems and tools (through a sub-group) and sensitisation of all actors to the benefits.
× Collection and adoption of the wrong – or inadequate – baseline information preventing effective assessment of change and impact.	✓ Adequate attention to pre- and in-crisis data at the preliminary and rapid assessments stages (see *sections 3.1 and 4.1*)
× Poorly defined inadequate or too many indicators to guide monitoring of all aspects of the WASH response (see *section 5.2*).	✓ A structured response planning and review process which clearly outlines the problems to be addressed and objectives and standards needed to address them, with key indicators to measure achievements made towards this.
× Failure to monitor targets / indicators as they are not linked to broader strategic / funding targets	✓ Developing overall WASH Cluster strategy around a national strategy i.e. government response or Humanitarian Action Plan (see *sections 5.1 and 6.1*)

4.2.2 Coordination of on-going monitoring and assessments

The coordination of on-going assessment and, situation and progress monitoring will also be centred on the sub-national level where activities are taking place.

This process is important in providing timely alerts to changing needs or circumstances, and facilitates tracking of progress and performance.

The WCC has responsibility for:

- ✓ Monitoring the implementation and impact of WASH Cluster Response plans.
- ✓ Ensuring that adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place for all actors.
- ✓ Soliciting the necessary IM support, e.g. through a dedicated Information Manager and / or OCHA (see section 3.3).
- ✓ Making adequate financial provisions for on-going monitoring at sub-national level.

a) Gaining partner commitment

Gathering data from Cluster partners, and convincing them to gather data that does not relate directly to their own programmes, is likely to be a challenge. Some partners will see coordination as an opportunity for them to learn what is happening elsewhere without a genuine understanding or commitment to providing information themselves. Others may have practical time, cost, skill, or technology constraints which make it difficult for them to support a coordinated monitoring effort.

Coordination will involve allocating monitoring responsibilities to particular agencies for particular locations. This may mean asking an agency that is only implementing sanitation, to monitor both water and sanitation in their location.

Use of common monitoring tools

Agreement to use a common monitoring tool / framework may be difficult to achieve, particularly in the early stages of an emergency.

1. **Take steps** towards this through focusing on agreement to common objectives, indicators, and information and reporting requirements as a starting point.
2. **As trust builds** within the Cluster, further consensus on monitoring and reporting tools and formats may be achieved.
3. **Guard against** insisting on the use of WASH Cluster tools. Cluster implementing agencies may already have onerous monitoring and reporting requirements to their own donors and organisations.
4. **Show flexibility** and consideration for their situation by exploring ways to build on what they are already required to do, while making the best use of standard tools already developed for the WASH Cluster.

Set out the principles of collaborative monitoring and reporting in initial expectations of the WASH cluster (see *section 1.4*), and endorse them through broad agreement on Cluster principles and policies (see *section 7.1*).

Advocate for this by **highlighting 'what's in it for them'**, including:

- ✓ Obligation to monitor and report on pooled funding, e.g. CERF, CAP;
- ✓ Saves money and resources, e.g. through shared household surveys in the same community;
- ✓ Provides strong evidence (data and narrative) for reporting to other donors and supporters;
- ✓ Provides a sound basis for advocacy and mobilising further resources including funding, as donors use reports to monitor changes in the situation, and targeting of their own and other donor's funding;

- ✓ Provides opportunity to draw on a wider range of expertise in data collection and analysis, including IM;
- ✓ Promotes capacity building between more and less experienced cluster partners;
- ✓ Strengthens accountability to affected communities through their participation, and more comprehensive monitoring and reporting;
- ✓ Improves the effectiveness of the Cluster response, as ability to see 'the wider picture' enhances decision making and prioritisation.

A useful strategy in facilitating joint or coordinated monitoring is through the establishment of a dedicated working group. This has been done in both DRC and Sri Lanka. Similarly, use of an **Integrated Monitoring Matrix** (see *section 3.2*), as adopted in Pakistan and Myanmar, has significant value for both the WCC and Cluster partners and can assist in advocating for a coordinated approach.

b) WASH Cluster monitoring and assessment plan

A shared *Assessment and Monitoring Plan* and a dedicated working or sub-group can help to facilitate systematic collection of data, assessments, and monitoring for the WASH Cluster.

Assessment and monitoring plan

Monitoring/assessment activity	Month 1					Month 2					Month 3				
One-off surveys / assessments															
Preliminary assessment	x														
IASC rapid assessment				x											
CCCM detailed assessment						X									
On-going monitoring															
Regular field monitoring (hub)		x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x
Health/ WASH / Nutrition Cluster collaborative morbidity surveillance		x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x
Evaluations / reviews															
WASH Cluster Performance Review										x					
M&E capacity building															
Assessment methodology training	x		x	x								x			
Partner data collection															
OXFAM comprehensive assessment				x	x	x	X								
Meta-analysis of WASH cluster partner assessments								x	X	X					
Major events															
Deadline for the CAP											x				

Adapted from: UNICEF Emergency Field Handbook, 2005

Similarly, close collaboration with UNOCHA and Information Management Working Group (through the WASH Cluster IM focal point), to promote use of common standards and indicators across the Clusters and government response efforts, can help to build donor confidence and generate support for funding the response.

This was the experience in DRC, where the WASH Cluster monitoring system and tools were aligned with those for the Humanitarian Action Plan. As a result there was strong relevance and coherence to WASH projects submitted for funding, resulting in a significant increase in funding support.

c) WASH Cluster Monitoring Tool

The monitoring process and tools should build on the standards used for rapid and comprehensive assessments; working with the same information sources, questions, and indicators, so that meaningful comparison can be made with the original baseline data.

Global WASH have developed a standard WASH Monitoring Tool for use by Cluster partners. Data collected can be analysed, and reports generated, using the Data Collection and Reporting Tool in the same way as is done for rapid and comprehensive assessments (see *section 3.2* for further details).

This tool is intended to assist WASH Cluster partners in tracking the progress and impact of their interventions at field level. It is designed for use by WASH specialists.

Strategies used in Uganda to improve monitoring and reporting

Responsibility for data collection in each sub-county was **assigned to one lead agency**. In sub-counties where lead agencies could not be found, UNICEF **paid the local authorities** to carry out the task. Initially there were some **concerns about the quality and consistency of data,** but this could be addressed through checking the consistency of monitoring forms being used. There were also **concerns about the cost of data collection:** several days of staff time plus a vehicle were needed to cover each sub-county.

A **Monitoring, Mapping and Reporting Sub-committee** was established, with a focus on geographic and management information systems. Data were shared within the sector and used in reporting. WASH actors felt **it had some influence on donor decisions** and that **monitoring information improved** over time.

Source: Review of the WASH Cluster in Uganda, Nov 2007

4.2.3 Reviewing WASH Cluster progress and results

a) Joint reviews

Periodic joint review of the WASH Cluster plans and strategic frameworks are critical as a 'check' on the objectives and priorities of the WASH response. This requires analysis of both situation monitoring and progress monitoring data and should be managed by the Cluster steering group.

Provided WASH Cluster actors and affected community representatives are actively involved, joint reviews can also serve to strengthen team working and collaboration in the Cluster and contribute to better accountability.

The frequency of reviews will depend on the context, but may be conducted every two to three months in the initial response period.

Key questions to guide a review :

- What is the overall progress in relation to response plans, and to what extent is this on target?
- What are the main variations from the response plan and the reasons for these?
- How does the allocation of resources (funds, materials, staff) compare with progress achieved, what are the cost-benefits, and are these comparable with similar emergencies and in line with targets?
- What changes have occurred within the emergency context or in relation to available capacity?
- To what extent do the original assumptions and priorities still apply, e.g. numbers affected, primary needs.
- To what extent have the expected outcomes or results been achieved, and are these having the required impact?
- What are the unexpected or negative impacts of the WASH intervention to date?
- What adjustments to objectives, strategies, or inputs are required?

b) Inter-agency reviews

WCC and WASH Cluster input will be required to periodic inter-Cluster reviews such as the Mid Year Review for the Consolidated Appeals Process. Further details can be found at:
http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/webpage.asp?MenuID=7890&Page=1371.

Resources

- IFRC (2000), **Disaster Assessment Guidelines**
- The **Sphere Project** (2004) Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, **Common Standard 2**, Chapter 2, inc. Appendix 1 Water Supply and Sanitation Initial Needs Assessment Checklist.
- **Initial Rapid Assessment** (IRA) **Tool Guidance Notes**, IASC Health, Nutrition and WASH Clusters, 28 Oct 2008
  Provides guidance / sample format for rapid assessment reporting.

- UNICEF **Emergency Field Handbook**, 2005
  Refer to Parts 1 and 3 for guidelines on Initial Assessments and Assessments and Monitoring respectively.
- UNHCR, **Tool for Participatory Assessment** in Operations (2006)
  Comprehensive tools and tips on participatory approaches to assessments
- Benfield Hazard Research Centre & CARE International (2005), **Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment** in Disaster Response
  Provides useful checklists to guide analysis of environmental issues during WASH assessments.

- WASH **Cluster Monitoring Tool**
- UNOCHA **Integrated Monitoring Matrix**, Myanmar, 2008

- http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/resources/publications.asp
  IFRC website disaster preparedness and assessment publications
- http://www.benfieldhrc.org/rea_index.htm -
- *Benfield Hazard we-site with useful information and resources about mitigating environmental threats and environmental impact in emergencies.*
- http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/who_Technical_notes_for_emergencies/
  WEDC website with a range of technical resources to support emergency WASH programming from assessment to evaluation.