Global WASH Cluster

Minimum Requirements for National Humanitarian WASH Coordination Platforms:

A practical framework for monitoring the core coordination functions and accountability to affected populations at the country level

The Strategic Advisory Group of the Global WASH Cluster (GWC) has defined a set of Minimum Requirements (MRs) for country level coordination based on the IASC core functions for cluster coordination and commitments for accountability to affected populations (AAP).[1] The MRs are considered the basic package required to achieve effective WASH humanitarian coordination at the country level. [2]

What are the Minimum Requirements for?

The Transformative Agenda strived to mainstream accountability into all levels of the cluster system and encourage the same in other sector platforms while at the same time ensuring that clusters avoid becoming overly process driven. In line with this, the MRs are designed to provide a light-approach mechanism to monitor WASH humanitarian platforms (clusters or sectors) at the country level, providing crucial insight into the needs for capacity building, training and global support.

At the country level, cluster coordinators and the CLA will use this information to highlight trends in cluster functionality as well as identifying specific core functions that need support. At the Global Level, the Cluster Advocacy and Support Team (CAST) of the GWC will utilize the monitoring of MRs to inform policy development, strategic planning and the design of field support to individual countries.

How do we monitor the Minimum Requirements?

The MRs are just one component in the overall monitoring framework developed by the GWC. The MRs intended to compliment other monitoring initiatives such as the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM), WASH funding analysis, and the full cluster diagnostic tool.

The countries to be monitored are determined by the *priority country list* that is annually updated by the GWC. As of 2017 there are 42 countries with emergency WASH humanitarian platforms, 24 of them with activated clusters. The MRs are monitored through the Cluster Description Mapping exercise lead by OCHA on an annual basis. The CMD exercise is carried out at the national level in countries with formally activated clusters as well as countries with clearly define sectoral humanitarian coordination platforms.[3] The GWC is responsible for collecting, analysing and disseminating the results from the CDM to be included in GWC reports.

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[1] IASC Cluster Coordination Reference Module, 2015 & IASC AAP Operational Framework
[2] The minimum requirements apply to both cluster and sector led WASH humanitarian platforms.
[3] OCHA Global Overview of Coordination Arrangements in 2016 (analysis from the Cluster Description Mapping exercise) http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/global_overview_coord_arrangements_06.10.2016_0.pdf

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The Minimum Requirements

Core Function 1: To support service delivery by:

	Minimum Requirements
– *Providing a platform that ensures service delivery is driven by the Humanitarian Response Plan and strategic priorities.* – *Developing mechanisms to eliminate duplication of service delivery.*	– Cluster/sector at national level is adequately staffed and is proportional to the size of the needs for coordination
	– Cluster/sector at national level has a Term of Reference outlining the structure, architecture, roles and responsibilities and minimum participating requirements of the platform
	– Cluster/sector meetings organised WITH minutes and action points and frequency and structure of meetings is in-line with needs for coordination
	– Strategic decisions for the cluster / sector are taken by a group of partners representing the interest of all the WASH Stakeholders involved in the response (for instance, a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG))
	– When Sub-national clusters/sector platforms ARE established, there are clear focal points or sub-national coordinators in place
	– Information sharing platform established (website, file sharing or humanitarianresponse.info)
	– Activity reporting form is established (4W or something similar)
	– Information management capacity exists to produce mapping/information products for operational presence and activities of partners

Core Function 2: To inform the HC/HCT's strategic decision-making by:

	Minimum Requirements
– *Preparing needs assessments and analysis of gaps (across and within clusters, using information management tools as needed) to inform the setting of priorities.* – *Identifying and finding solutions for (emerging) gaps, obstacles, duplication and cross-cutting issues.* – *Formulating priorities on the basis of analysis.*	– Standard WASH indicators have been agreed by cluster/sector partners and have been integrated into various multi-sector data collection initiatives (DTM, CCCM tracking, SMART Surveys)
	– There is a cluster/sector mechanism or protocol in place to collect assessment data from partners.
	– Cluster/sector partners are regularly submitting activities data (4Ws)
	– Analysis highlighting geographic or programmatic gaps is regularly updated, easily accessible, and discussed during coordination meetings

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Core Function 3: To plan and implement cluster strategies by:

	Minimum Requirements

– *Developing sectoral plans, objectives and indicators that directly support realization of the overall response's strategic objectives.*
 	
– *Applying and adhering to common standards and guidelines.*
 	
– *Clarifying funding requirements, helping to set priorities, and agreeing cluster contributions to the HC's overall humanitarian funding proposals.*
	– A WASH response plan[4] has been jointly agreed addressing priority needs identified during data review. At a minimum the response plan will include;
	
	   – priorities (geographic, activity, etc.),
	
	   – key strategic indicators and
	
	   – funding requirements
	
	– WASH standards and guidelines for humanitarian response have been developed and agreed by partners and are based on national standards where applicable (or global otherwise) with consideration made for the local context

Core Function 4: To monitor and evaluate performance by:

	Minimum Requirements

– *Monitoring and reporting on activities and needs.*
– *Measuring progress against the cluster strategy and agreed results.*
– *Recommending corrective action where necessary.*
	– Regular communication / information product are distributed covering:
	
	   – tracking of progress against strategic plan / indicators
	
	   – tracking of funding status of overall cluster / sector
	
	   – Mechanism in place to monitor the quality of WASH services delivered to the affected population against established standards (relevance, quantity, quality, continuity of WASH services)

Core Function 5: To build national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning

	Minimum Requirements
– *Emergency response preparedness (ERP) is dependent on country-level coordination structure and risk level[5]*	– Hazard identification, risk Assessment and risk monitoring is undertaken as part of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle or on a needs basis. – Contingency plans exists for high risk or recurring disasters (flooding, cholera outbreak, mass displacement etc)

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[4] It is recognized that response planning is an OCHA driven process as part of the Humanitarian Program Cycle and that this minimum requirement is most of the time achieved through the completion of the Humanitarian Response Plan
[5] Refer to the IASC Cluster Coordination Reference Module, 2015 for more information on ERP and cluster coordination.

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Core Function 6: To support robust advocacy by:

	Minimum Requirements
– *Identifying concerns, and contributing key information and messages to HC and HCT messaging and action.* – *Undertaking advocacy on behalf of the cluster, cluster members, and affected people.*	– Critical WASH issues are identified and brought to the attention of the relevant stakeholder – Advocacy initiatives are undertaken when required to communicate these WASH issues to key stakeholders (HCT, Donors, CLA, Government etc.)

Accountability to Affected Populations

	Minimum Requirements
Ensuring that women, men, girls and boys of all ages and diversity backgrounds, affected by a crisis have equitable and meaningful access to: – *Appropriate, relevant and timely information* – *Two-way communications channels that facilitate feedback and complaints and provide redress for complaints.* – *Means to participate in decisions that affect them, including fair and transparent systems of representation; and* – *Active involvement in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the goals and objectives of programmes.*	– WASH cluster/sector has conducted a training or workshop on AAP within the past year or AAP is a standing agenda item during coordination meetings. – WASH cluster/sector specific policy or guidance for the minimum level and means of communication with affected communities – When relevant and feasible, cluster/sector reporting data is disaggregated by sex, age, geographical areas or ethnic groups – Specific cluster/sector focal points for cross-cutting issues have been identified

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