

**CLUSTER WORKING GROUP ON
WATER AND SANITATION**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Selection and Key Areas of Responsibility of the Lead Agency

UNICEF was nominated by the cluster working group as the lead agency for water and sanitation in emergencies for internally displaced populations on the basis of its global network of operations and partners, resources and recognised role in the field of emergency water and sanitation interventions.

Summary of Recommendations

- 1:** A water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster group should be established to improve the sector response in emergencies and meet basic needs as quickly as possible. The group will meet two/three times a year with conference calls organised on a more regular basis. Focal groups will be developed with full involvement of cluster group members to address sector capacity building, surge capacity; strengthening coordination, supplies and equipment; monitoring and advocacy.
- 2:** UNICEF should lead the WASH cluster group and the membership should be open to both IASC participating agencies and others that are actively engaged in supporting water, sanitation and hygiene in emergencies including the NGO inter-agency group chaired by Oxfam.
- 3:** The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster should be served by a small, dedicated *Secretariat or Working Team* located at UNICEF, New York. Capacity to support the CWG should be developed at central and regional level to support both emergency preparedness and response.
- 4:** At the outset of a major emergency response, the Lead Agency shall be responsible for recruiting a dedicated senior coordinator. If the emergency response is a relatively small one, or if funds are not available for a dedicated coordinator, the Lead Agency shall identify a suitable coordinator from within its own staff or those of other agencies.
- 5:** During emergencies, additional staff dedicated to an **inter-agency WATSAN Rapid Response Team (WRRT)** should be considered. Members will have the prior agreement of their supervisor and will have been required to participate in joint training exercises with other team members.
- 6:** A **centralized expert database/roster** should be established; where major actors involved in the WATSAN sector can browse through it. The roster can include private consultants who would be trained jointly with the UN, NGO and bilateral technical experts.
- 7:** The lead agency will play a major role in providing emergency supplies to implementing partners that do not have sufficient capacity of their own, subject to funding availability.
- 8:** The lead agency will have a responsibility as a provider of last resort for emergency water and sanitation provision, subject to funding on the basis of additionality.
- 9:** Agreement on a set of standards dealing with different aspects of water and sanitation in emergencies is urgently required. **The Minimum Standards in Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion set through the Sphere project provides an excellent basis.** The cluster working group should review these standards, endorse them and establish effective systems to ensure that these are adhered to across the board in emergencies.

10: The Cluster Working Group should formally start to function as from October 2005 with an initial three month phase to develop core commitments, more detailed implementation plan, resource mobilisation plan and put a small team in place to serve the CWG.