

THE TRIPLE NEXUS
IN WASH
HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT PEACE



Africa 2021-22
Regional Exchange Forum
Building WASH Resilience and Sustainability



HIGH LEVEL ROUNDTABLE – REPORT
Discussion of Practice-to-Policy Recommendations

Content

Background 2

Event Rationale 2

 Event Overview 3

 High Level Roundtable Participants 4

Policy Recommendations..... 5

 1. Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction 5

 2. Coordination / multi-stakeholder engagement..... 5

 3. Building capacities for inclusive systems 6

 4. Financing 7

 5. Reinforcement of existing policies..... 7

Way Forward..... 9

Background

Humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) actors are struggling to overcome risks and to address key needs in relation to the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. Whilst HDP actors are often still working in silos, HDP outcomes are linked and require collective solutions. Emerging evidence shows that WASH resilience, sustainability and peace can only be reached through collaboration and coordination.

Under the Humanitarian WASH Roadmap Initiative 3.5, co-chaired by Global WASH Cluster, UNICEF, Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) and the German WASH Network, a “Joint Operational Framework: WASH Resilience, Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding” (JOF) is currently being developed. Stakeholder consultation is a key aspect of this process. This includes the perspective of those persons who are implementing WASH services in the HDP nexus. Therefore, WASH practitioners from Africa were invited to participate in the Regional Exchange on “Building WASH Resilience and Sustainability” to discuss the challenges they face and develop relevant policy recommendations to improve WASH service provision in contexts prone to protracted and recurrent crises.

The following graphic provides an overview of the process of developing the JOF including key informant interviews, research, global and regional consultations and peer review:

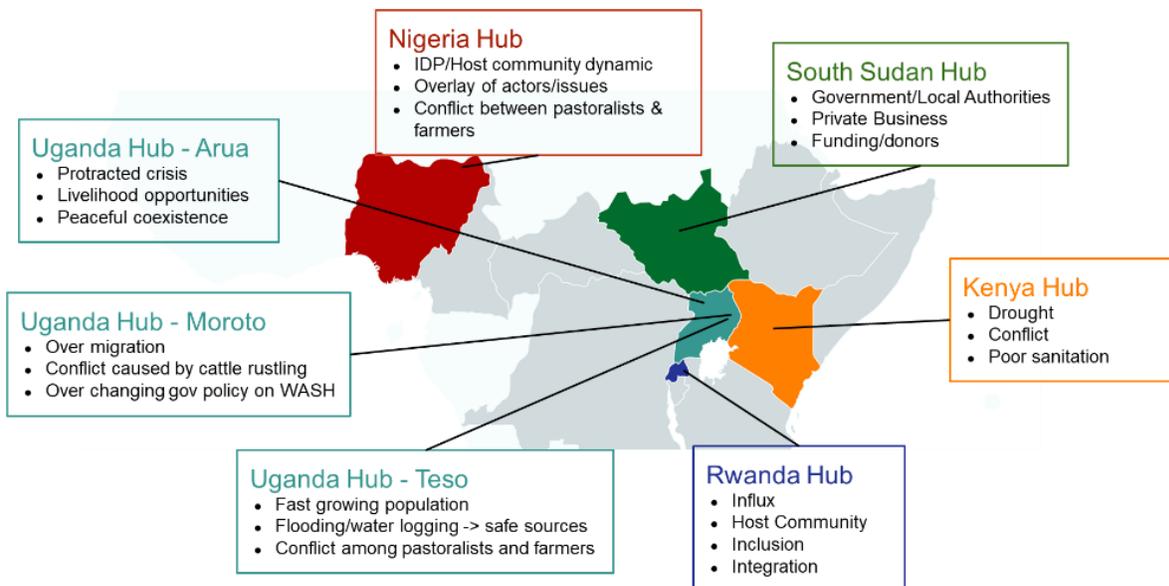


Event Rationale

The following report summarises the outcomes of the Regional Exchange Forum “Building WASH Resilience and Sustainability”. The results were used to revise the draft JOF, which is being reviewed by more than 50 sector experts from all relevant constituencies in summer 2022. It is expected to be published in fall 2022.

The Regional Exchange Forum “Building WASH Resilience and Sustainability” consisted of a “practitioner stream”, feeding its results into a “high level roundtable event”. The practitioner stream was hosted and facilitated by Sign of Hope (German WASH Network member) with the support of the German Federal Foreign Office. The practitioner stream was a consultative process, involving 35 practitioners from five countries (Nigeria, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and South Sudan) via four preparatory meetings. Based on case studies and context presentations, the practitioners identified common challenges and good practices in relation to the HDP nexus. The participants of the practitioner stream developed five prioritized practice-to-policy recommendations. These were presented by designated spokespersons of the practitioner stream to a roundtable of 11 policy and decision makers from the region at a final event, held online on 2 March 2022. This high-level event was convened by the German WASH Network and strongly supported by UNICEF and its Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO). 104 Participants attended the event with the following mix of stakeholders: 50% CSO, 23% External Support, 8% Government , 9% Private Sector, 8% Research & Learning, 2 Utilities/Operators. The event agenda and a list of roundtable participants can be found on page 4. This report presents the 5 key recommendations and consolidates the feedback provided by the High-Level Roundtable.

A detailed report including full documentation of the Practitioner Stream can be downloaded [here](#).



“Nexus Hubs” participating in the Practitioners Stream and their key challenges

Event Overview

The final event was introduced with welcome remarks by Sareen Malik (Executive Secretary of the African Civil Society Network for Water and Sanitation (ANEWS) and Vice Chair of the SWA Steering Committee), a thematic input on the triple nexus and the JOF ([download](#)) as well as four case studies presented by practitioners. After the roundtable discussion, the event was closed with final words from Dr. Jose Schulz, Head of Division of Humanitarian Assistance - Operations, German Federal Foreign Office.

 Intro & Rational	 Four Cases	 HL Roundtable	 Conclusion
<p>Intro Thilo Panzerbieter (German WASH Network)</p> <p>Welcome Remarks Sareen Malik (ANEW & SWA)</p> <p>WASH triple nexus: what's it all about? Tim Grieve (German WASH Network)</p>	<p>R-WASH Steven Mudhuviwa (UNICEF/UNHCR)</p> <p>Gisenyi Hub & Kigali Hub, Rwanda Augustin Habimana</p> <p>North East Nigeria Hubs & Arua Hub, Uganda Aisha Hamza</p> <p>Teso Hub Uganda & Moroto Hub, Kenya Hub Daniel Akudo</p>	<p>Practice to policy – Five Recommendations ESA Nexus Hubs</p> <p>Operationalise the WASH Triple Nexus High-Level Roundtable</p> <p>Facilitated by Sam Godfrey (UNICEF)</p>	<p>Closing Remarks Dr. José Schulz (GFFO)</p>

High Level Roundtable Participants

The multi-stakeholder round table consisted of high-level representatives from the East and Southern Africa region, targeting all constituencies (government, external support, financing institutions, CSO, utilities, private sector as well as research & learning). The high-level roundtable was facilitated by Sam Godfrey, Regional Advisor WASH, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO).

Dr. Callist Tindimugaya	Commissioner, Directorate of Water Resources Management, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda
Neil Cole	Executive Secretary, Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI)
Barbara Schreiner	Executive Director, Water Integrity Network
Dr. Tanko Yussif Azzika	Senior Policy Advisor, African Ministers` Council on Water (AMCOW)
Damien Blanc	Regional WASH and Shelter & Settlements Coordinator, ECHO Nairobi
Rebecca Gilsdorf	Water & Sanitation Specialist, World Bank
Steven Mudhuviwa	Programme Manager Regional Open WASH Program (R-WASH), UNICEF
David Githiri Njoroge	Senior Technical Coordinator for Uganda, UNHCR
Tadesse Kebebew	Researcher, University of Geneva, Geneva Water Hub
Fabrizio de Georgio Ferrari Trecate	Regional Advisor West Africa, Focal Point Systems Strengthening

Policy Recommendations

1. Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Spokesperson from the practitioner stream: Philip Obaate (Teso, Uganda, District)

Issue: Whilst the importance of Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is widely acknowledged, practical guidance on risk mitigation, standards and associated budgets are missing and/or not sufficiently adapted to specific contexts. A lack of inter-sectoral & inter-agency coordination for DRR weakens the preparedness of communities, especially in crisis-prone regions.

Policy Recommendation 1

Establish platforms for coordination and joint inter-sector programming on CCA & DRR and strengthen the integration of CCA, DRR and environment conservation in the management of WASH facilities (and ensure actors understand the relation to peace).

Response of policy makers:

The effects of climate change transcend administrative boundaries. The need for CCA & DRR coordination platforms at different levels (national, subnational, local) must be recognized. These platforms should have an impact beyond coordination to facilitate joint programming and “action on the ground”.

Standards for climate-resilient WASH infrastructure are urgently needed, in order to mitigate risks and to withstand potential future crises. These standards should take different climatic conditions into account.

Governments must plan and prioritise investments in climate resilient infrastructure, monetising and budgeting for the costs, compared to those for non-climate resilient infrastructure. Proper consideration of risk in design remains an iterative process, requiring repeated re-design. Mixed finance mechanisms – loans and grants – can pose an option for covering the resulting costs.

Establishing monitoring systems with governments and having early warning systems in place can help to unveil the interconnectedness of risks, crises, and responses and increase preparedness.

2. Coordination / multi-stakeholder engagement

Spokesperson from the practitioner stream: Andrew Boku Dibo (Northern Kenya Hub, INGO)

Issue: Competing priorities, lack of coordination, missing sharing of information and insufficient awareness of different actors/methodologies result in gaps in WASH service delivery and technical implementation obstacles, especially in protracted crises or when transitioning from humanitarian to development and vice versa.

Policy Recommendation 2

Strengthen mechanisms and earmarked budgets for coordination between humanitarian, development and peace actors (both state and non-state) through an inter-sectoral WASH coordination platform to harmonize HDP WASH assessments, planning, financing, implementation and monitoring.

Response of policy makers:

Uganda offers good practice and lessons learnt of ongoing HDP nexus coordination, which is guided by the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. There is close collaboration of the Government with humanitarian and development partners to include refugees in national/government-led WASH systems.

Flexibility is a key issue in aligning humanitarian and development actors. More flexible and less earmarked development funding could address this need for adaptability in implementing the nexus. Especially financially strong development donors should include unmarked amounts in their financial planning as a contingency reserve for emergencies.

Coordination needs to be funded properly and on all relevant levels. Coordination should begin at the outset of every programme to fully make use of synergies. Too often organizations duplicate assessments and fail to share information. ToRs should therefore be shared before an assessment.

3. Building capacities for inclusive systems

Spokesperson from the practitioner stream: Abubakar Ngulde (Northeast Nigeria, local NGO)

Issue: Learning across regions, sectors and stakeholders is limited to date, as demonstrated by insufficient connectedness of WASH programs, projects and service delivery. WASH systems are often not resilient enough to cope with sudden change in population and thereby exclude certain groups.

Policy Recommendation 3

Promote national WASH systems to provide sustainable WASH services at scale, even in protracted situations or in the event of risks, thereby integrating WASH solutions for displaced and host communities and all vulnerable groups. Coherent technical standards for WASH infrastructure across HDP are required, prioritising local (or contextualised) solutions over international ones.

Response of policy makers:

A better integration of water, sanitation and climate change mitigation and adaptation plans is needed, particularly as funding is required on both sides. The Ministry mandated on climate and the ministry mandated on WASH are often not the same, leading to challenges with regard to climate resilient WASH infrastructure. Where good climate change adaptation funding is available, budget tracking may still be a challenge, if it is available through separate funding streams.

The development of long-term institutional capacities at the local level – where government is often weak – is a fundamental building block in WASH systems, in order to break out of the cycle of crisis response, financing and firefighting. It does come with a strong need for improved governance and planning at the national level.

Without adequate data, policy planning is impossible. Most countries face challenges in terms of capacity of tools, systems, and knowledge of what data to collect and how to disaggregate it. Only 38 out of 55 African countries are able to provide data on WASH. Inventories of existing assets and knowledge on risks related to climate or resilient design are often lacking. Better, disaggregated data must also be collected on the

users and their hygiene behaviours – to allow for better planning and design for inclusive infrastructure. All vulnerable groups must be targeted in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination.

4. Financing

Spokesperson from the practitioner stream: Abubakar Ngulde (Northeast Nigeria, local NGO)

Issue: The available funding and related donor requirements still push many actors to work in silos. Funds are not flexible enough to allow for swift adaptation when oscillating between HDP sectors, crisis phases and responding to risks.

Policy Recommendation 4

Make the funding more flexible between HDP sectors for swift adaptation between responding to crisis and preventing risks; and allow for easier funding access for local stakeholders.

Response of policy makers:

WASH budgets are constrained. Many governments have not been able to mobilise the financial resources required for large infrastructure, let alone for operation and maintenance. National plans should cover both. The public finance principle is clear: someone always pays, either the taxpayer, or the user.

A different perspective on public finances is needed. It is not about privatization, but about partnerships. Public-private partnerships or more complex consortia require coverage of operations and maintenance costs and a return on investment. This comes with the need to leverage innovative financing, which is different from what many civil servants have been taught. It is about learning the language, reducing time spent on procurement and placing more emphasis on planning, cost reduction and good contract management over a long period of time. Public money and external support need to be used in a strategic way. Research shows that subsidies are massive, but often not visible. The question should always be: what needs to be changed to find sustainable ways of financing? Should it be the private sector (e.g. private loans) or the public sector who should do the financing and which incentives attract private money?

To make best use of the available funding, two main problems need to be addressed: 1) the poor capacity to spend money effectively and to manage implementation properly and 2) the issue of corruption and integrity failures. Therefore, institutional capacities must be strengthened. Transparent tracking of funding is needed to reduce corruption, particularly if the flexibility and alignment of various funding streams is to be increased.

When introducing payment by the users, consultation is key. Insufficient consultation can undermine the whole process by leading to protests and tensions between stakeholders. It should be realised that WASH is not only a service from the consumer point of view; it is also a source of income generation and jobs.

5. Reinforcement of existing policies

Spokesperson from the practitioner stream: Philip Obaate (Teso, Uganda, District)

Issue: Whilst different policies are already in place, their implementation remains a challenge. In many contexts, this results from an absence of associated budgets or policy implementation/action plans. In other cases, pertinent

stakeholders are not aware of the policies or of who is responsible for their implementation, responsible actors do not have sufficient influence to enforce policies, policies are insufficiently translated into national/regional frameworks or are simply too generic or inappropriate in the prevailing context. This leads to scepticisms among practitioners if policies are able to change and improve the situation at all. Although this is not specific to the HDP nexus, non-implementation of existing policies leads to increased probability of HDP-related challenges.

Policy Recommendation 5

Reinforce existing WASH, Climate Change & environment related policies in humanitarian, development and peace sectors and assure incorporation of HDP-nexus related aspects, including outlining potential risks related to silo-based implementation of WASH humanitarian or WASH development policies.

Response of policy makers:

The recommendations are strong with regard to interconnectedness, integration of WASH services, empowerment of local ownership and provision of space for local actors. Indeed, multi-stakeholder engagement is essential at all stages – from planning to funding to implementation. Particularly in protracted contexts, it requires a transition from a needs-based to a human rights-based approach. Host communities and all other vulnerable groups need to be involved. The role of public participation in WASH-related decision-making processes and provision of services should be increased.

The human rights on water and sanitation are an important tool, placing pressure on governments and other actors and holding them accountable. Public awareness of the rights should be increased, in order to encourage citizens to start demanding realisation of the rights from their local authorities. The promotion of inclusion and the incorporation of international standards at the domestic level is essential.

What is missing in the policy recommendations?

- The inclusiveness of the beneficiaries of the services should be strengthened and guaranteed
- Accountability and awareness about legal rights: The rights to water and sanitation are recognized as human rights. Including this aspect in a policy recommendation would give us an additional tool for organizations to put pressure on governments, to encourage actors to ensure enhanced service delivery and put structures in place. It is crucial to use the available legal frameworks.
- Public participation in decision making and provision of services should be considered in one of the recommendations
- Include or define the role of international law in relation to the national law: Incorporation of international obligations at the domestic level is the first stepping stone to ensure practical implementation of obligations. In this sense, the promotion of inclusion and incorporation of international standards at the domestic level is needed and public awareness of these rights should be increased in order to encourage people to start demanding these rights from their local authorities

Way Forward

The policy recommendations formulated by the practitioners were met with strong interest by the policy makers during the high-level round table. The reflections and validated elements of the recommendations will feed into the Joint Operational Framework. Further consultation and a replication of this process in other geographic regions presents a huge potential for mutual learning and will hopefully strengthen the operationalisation of the HDP nexus and the WASH sector at large.

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