



WASH Cluster
Water Sanitation Hygiene

Country Report: Central African Republic

Assessment of different levels of WASH Coordination in Humanitarian Emergencies

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Abbreviations

AA	Anticipatory action	IM	Information management
AAP	Accountability to affected populations	KII	Key informant interview
BA	Basic Assumption	GWC	Global WASH Cluster
CA	Core Action	MR	Minimum Requirement
CAR	Central African Republic	M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
CAST	Cluster Advocacy and Support Team	NCP	National coordination platform
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency	ToC	Theory of Change
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan	WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Executive Summary

A key component of effective humanitarian response is coordination, which aims to establish a coherent and complementary approach between humanitarian actors for better collective results. To assess the value-add of WASH coordination in humanitarian emergencies and the completion of the 6+1 Humanitarian Core Functions for different coordination levels, five context-specific evaluations were completed over a 6-month period to collect information on activities, outcomes, and impacts from WASH coordination platform staff (via the completion of monthly activity reports and key-informant interviews), WASH coordination partners (via key-informant interviews), and anyone self-defining as being involved in the WASH response (via an online survey).

Central African Republic was selected in partnership with the Global WASH Cluster and the national WASH coordination platform staff to account for differences in coordination levels. From November 2022 to June 2023, we collected information from:

- 1 ten monthly activity reports from Cluster staff;
- 2 five key-informant interviews with the WASH Cluster staff;
- 3 17 key-informant interviews with partners; and,
- 4 103 online surveys.

According to staff and partners, the activities the most completed by the WASH coordination platform in Central African Republic were:

- 1 the basic coordination to support delivery, including regular meetings and good communication with an information sharing platform and several communication channels to share the gaps and the updates of the response and address challenges;
- 2 the Cluster collected and analyzed data on response activity to produce several information products and to track the progress and performance of the response; and,
- 3 several guidelines and strategic documents were produced by the Cluster, with the support of different Technical Working Groups and the Strategic Advisory Group to help partners to harmonize and implement a better response.

With those actions, informants agreed to say the WASH coordination platform helped partners to make strategic decisions and identify the gaps in the response. These outcomes impacted the WASH response by providing a more effective and strategic response according to the WASH identified needs. Overall, informants reported that the WASH Cluster was meeting their expectations and evolved positively.

While some partners discussed the Cluster shared tools to conduct the monitoring and evaluation and discussed the gaps, other informants did not agree the Cluster helped them to complete the Monitoring and Evaluation or to evaluate the quality of the programs, mainly because it was something exclusively done with regular field visit that the Cluster was not able to conduct at the time of the study. Additionally, staff and partners provided recommendations to improve the WASH coordination platform in Central African Republic, including:

- 1 to improve advocacy and fund mobilization;
- 2 to organize more field visits (including with non-Pooled Funds projects) to monitor the response;
- 3 to increase the frequency of capacity-building activities;
- 4 to involve local actors more in all actions carried out by the WASH cluster in the country; and,
- 5 to get more Cluster staff at the national level to be able to work and develop all the humanitarian core functions.

Overall, this study collected rich context-specific details on the WASH coordination platform in the Central African Republic to inform WASH stakeholders on the value of the WASH coordination and efforts to complete the 6+1 Core Function, to ultimately benefit WASH partners and affected populations. These results will be compared with four other contexts to establish the value-add of coordination levels for WASH coordination platforms.

Introduction

Coordination is a key component of effective humanitarian response, with the aim to establish a coherent and complementary approach between humanitarian actors for better collective results. The Cluster approach was developed to bring together relevant stakeholders, to ultimately increase efficiency in humanitarian response. The Global Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster has been established, as well as ten other sectoral Clusters.

At the country level, the 6+1 Core Functions of a Cluster/Coordination Platform are to¹:

- 1 Support service delivery;
- 2 Inform the Humanitarian Coordinator/Humanitarian Country Team's strategic decision-making;
- 3 Plan and implement cluster strategies;
- 4 Monitor and evaluate performance;
- 5 Build national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning; and,
- 6 Support robust advocacy;

while also ensuring Accountability to Affected Populations.

To complete those Core Functions, the coordination platform at the national and sub-national level is facilitated by a coordination platform staff. While the staffing varies by emergency context it usually includes a national Coordinator and an Information Manager. The role of the Coordinator is to facilitate improved coordination and equal partnerships between all actors involved in the WASH response. The Information Manager collects, stores, analyzes, and shares data with stakeholders to provide an evidence-based, transparent basis for decision-making². Depending on the country's size and level of WASH needs, the coordination can be further divided into sub-national coordination platforms which can also have Coordinators and Information Managers. The number of sub-levels depends on the geography and the level of decentralization needed in each context, and sometimes include dedicated staff (focused on coordination) or double-hatted staff (working concurrent jobs).

The minimum composition of the coordination platform staff³ (number of persons, dedicated position, and contract type) depends on several criteria such as: the emergency response level, and the number of sub-national coordination and partners in-country. Despite those minimum recommendations, not all coordination platforms are fully-staffed or positions are not all dedicated.

The coordination platform operate as a partnership of national and international response organizations, host government(s), donors, relevant stakeholders, and other humanitarian coordination platforms. Partners commit⁴ to regularly contribute to key cluster core functions (Strategic Advisory Group, Technical Working Groups, sub-national) and participate in common assessments, coordination meetings, strategic planning and reporting.

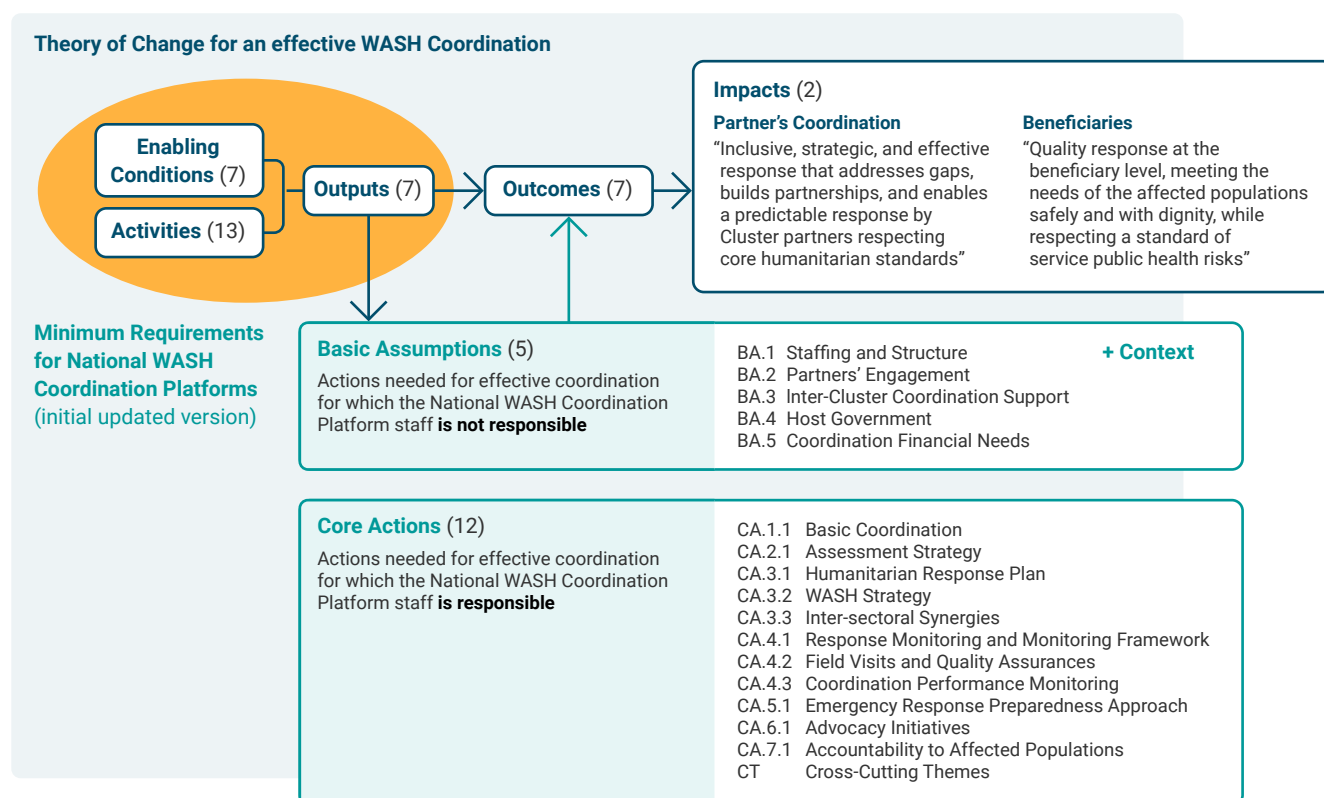
Over the past four years, Tufts University and UNICEF have collaborated to complete research to understand the value-add of WASH Coordination in Emergencies.

The first piece of research⁵ summarized the outcomes and impacts of WASH coordination in humanitarian response by collating information from the literature, UNICEF documents, and UNICEF key informant interviews. The results were used to develop a Theory of Change for the WASH coordination to explain how activities conducted by the WASH coordination platform should produce a series of outputs, outcomes, and impacts that contribute to achieving the intended impact on partners and affected populations (Figure 1).

- 1 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). *Guidance: Cluster Coordination at Country Level*; 2015. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2020-11/Reference%20Module%20for%20Cluster%20Coordination%20at%20Country%20Level%20%28revised%20July%202015%29.pdf> (accessed 2022-08-22).
- 2 Price, G. WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook, 2009. https://www.susana.org/_resources/documents/default/3-4213-7-1617720285.pdf.
- 3 UNICEF. Recommended Good Practices for the Minimum Structure of Coordination Teams at Country Level for UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency, 2021. <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Human%20Resources%20Decision%20Tree.pdf>.
- 4 GWC (Global WASH Cluster). *Global WASH Cluster: Minimum Requirements for National Humanitarian WASH Coordination Platforms*; 2023. <https://washcluster.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CTK/pages/10787765/Coordination+platform?preview=/10787765/2397077505/GWC%20MRs%20for%20coordination%202023%20-%20FINAL.pdf> (accessed 2023-09-19).
- 5 Yates, T.; Zannat, H.; Khandaker, N.; Porteaud, D.; Bouvet, F.; Lantagne, D. Evidence Summary of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Coordination in Humanitarian Response. *Disasters* 2021, 45 (4), 913–938. <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12463>.

This Theory of Change was strengthened in a second piece of collaborative research by Tufts and UNICEF⁶. Key-informant interviews and surveys with WASH coordination platform staff and partners in three contexts (Cox's Bazar Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Yemen) were conducted to consider the perspective of direct stakeholders. The results of this work identified a key set of tools, activities, and products that assisted partners to reach humanitarian WASH outcomes. Identified key contextual factors enabling outcomes were: having a stable staff, cooperation with partners, and context-specific tools. Additional activities, outcomes, and enabling conditions for effective coordination were identified as critical for effective WASH coordination and were added to the Theory of Change (Appendix A).

Figure 1
Development of the Theory of Change and the initial updated version of the Minimum Requirements to achieve and assess the intended impact on partners and affected populations. The Theory of Change was used to update the Minimum Requirements.



⁶ Heylen, C.; Yates, T.; Topper, L.; Bouvet, F.; Porteaud, D.; Ramos, M.; McCluskey, J.; Lantagne, D. Realtime Assessment of WASH Coordination in Three Humanitarian Emergencies. *PLOS Water* 2022, 1 (11), e0000047. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pwat.0000047>.

⁷ Previous version of the Minimum Requirements: GWC (Global WASH Cluster). *Global WASH Cluster: Minimum Requirements for National Humanitarian WASH Coordination Platforms*; 2017. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-wash-cluster-minimum-requirements-national-humanitarian-wash-coordination> (accessed 2022-08-22).

The Minimum Requirements can be used as a guide for national coordination platform and are complementary to the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) survey and workshop, which is a country-led exercise to assess the Cluster's performance against the Core Functions completed by partners and staff.

In this third research collaboration between Tufts University and UNICEF, we aim to assess the outcomes and impacts of WASH coordination platforms with different coordination levels. This is to establish the value-add of well-staffed WASH coordination in humanitarian emergencies.

The WASH Cluster sometimes conducts field visits to projects funded by the Humanitarian Pooled Fund to assess partners' interventions and meet directly with them. The Coordinator then shares a transparent report with recommendations, which helps evaluate and improve project quality.

Partner informant



Methods

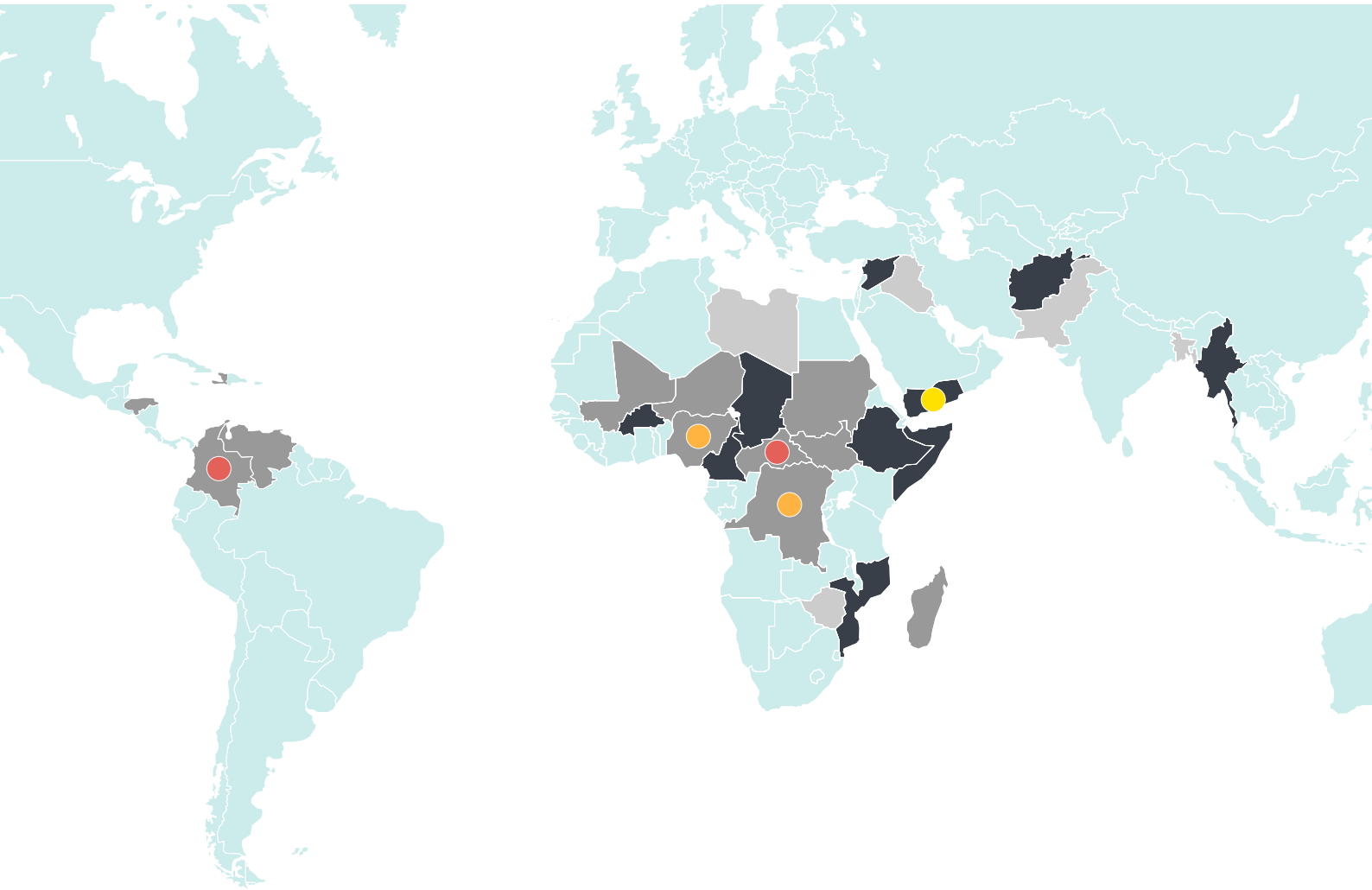
This work was approved by the Social, Behavioral, and Educational Research Institutional Review Board (SBER IRB) at Tufts University (STUDY00002894). No local ethics approval was needed, as all human-subject interactions were conducted remotely.

Five contexts were selected in collaboration with the Global WASH Cluster (GWC) to represent different humanitarian WASH coordination levels at the time of the study (**Figure 2**), including: Colombia and Central African Republic (low-staffed); Democratic Republic of the Congo and Northeast Nigeria (medium-staffed); and Yemen (high-staffed).

Figure 2
Selected contexts for this study with coordination level and WASH Coordination priority

● low-staffed	● high priority
● medium-staffed	● medium priority
● high-staffed	● low priority

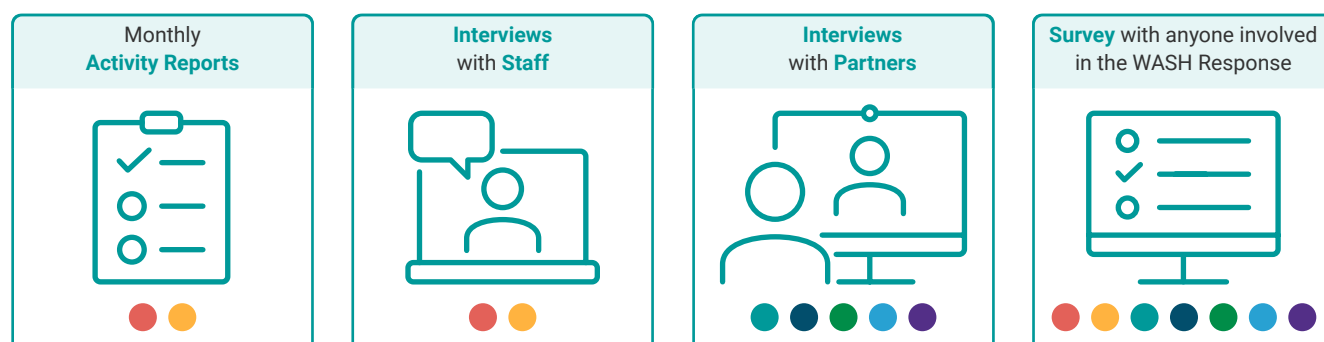
at the time of the study (figure updated from the GWC website⁸)



Context-specific evaluations were completed at two-time points over a 6-months period to account for coordination variability using a mixed-methods protocol, including (Figure 3):

- 1 **Activity Report:** A survey was created and distributed via a web-based survey platform (Qualtrics, Provo, USA) to collect monthly activity reports. This included information on: WASH coordination platform functionality with detailed tracking of staff availability, support received, core functions developed during the month, and outcomes reached during the month. Every month, from November to April 2023, an email was sent to the national WASH coordination platform staff (and to the sub-national level if relevant in the context) to ask them to fill out the activity report.
- 2 **Key-informant interviews with WASH coordination platform staff:** The goal was to recruit at least the national Coordinator and the Information Manager twice over the course of the study to conduct a key informant interview. The interview explored: the context, basic assumptions, core functions and outcomes of the coordination platform, and barriers, impact, and evolution of the coordination. Other members of the staff (including the national co-Coordinator and Coordinators from the sub-national levels) were recruited according to the context and their presence on the contact list shared by the Coordinator.
- 3 **Key-informant interviews with WASH coordination platform partners:** The goal was to recruit between 10 to 20 individuals per context to interview twice over the course of the study (at 1-month and 6-months, respectively). Interviews explored similar themes as the interviews with WASH coordination platform staff (except the basic assumptions). To recruit study participants, emails addresses were randomly selected from the updated contact list used by the coordination platform staff to conduct the CCPM, based on their role (international organizations (INGO), national organizations (NNGO), government, donors, and others) to obtain a representative sample of the groups making up the WASH coordination platform. The goal was to have at least 3 participants from national and international organizations, and at least one government and one donor. If the initially selected partners did not show interest in the second interview, new persons were randomly selected and recruited from the same coordination platform contact list.
- 4 **Online survey with anyone self-defining involved in the response:** The goal was to recruit as many people involved in the response as possible to collect quantitative information on core functions and outcomes, barriers to coordination, and the impact of the WASH coordination. The survey was developed in a web-based survey platform (Qualtrics, Provo, USA) and distributed (in English and a locally appropriate language) by sharing the link through the contact list. The same survey was distributed twice over the 6-month study, in conjunction with each round of key informant interviews.

Figure 3
Mixed-methods protocol illustrating the four data collection components and stakeholders involved in data collection



Key informant interviews were intended to last about one hour, were conducted in the appropriate language (English, French, or Spanish), were audio recorded, and then were transcribed using Temi software (San Francisco, US), Zoom software (San Jose, US), or by hand. The activity reports and online surveys were individually downloaded from Qualtrics.

To complete the research goals and to assess the outcomes and impacts of the WASH coordination platform with different coordination levels, the initial updated Minimum Requirements framework was followed (**Figure 1**). All material was uploaded on a qualitative and mixed-methods research software program (NVivo, Doncaster, Australia) to analyze unstructured text. The research team first classified the information by context, basic assumptions and core actions from the initial version of the Minimum Requirements, outcomes from the Theory of Change, and impact themes. Then, for information related to the context and the basic assumptions (actions for which the WASH coordination platform staff is not responsible), the information was stratified by 'facilitator', 'barrier', and 'priorities and recommendations'.

Core action information (actions for which the WASH Coordination Platform staff is responsible) was stratified into 'doing/doing well', 'not doing/not doing well', and 'priorities and recommendations'.

Results were provided by theme (context, basic assumptions, core actions, outcomes, and impact) for each data collection type (activity report, key-informant interviews with coordination platform staff, key-informant interviews with coordination platform partners, and online survey) with the number of mentions. Note that the number of mentions should not be compared by data collection type because of the question type (closed questions in activity report and survey listing specific activities and outcomes, against opened questions during the key-informant interviews). Therefore, quantitative information on outcomes from the survey is provided in this report, while qualitative information from activity reports and key-informant interviews helps to build an understanding of the actions and outcomes of the WASH coordination platform. **Note that the 2023 Minimum Requirements have been slightly amended and this country report does not tackle the latest revision of the Minimum Requirements.**



Results

Results are described for **Central African Republic** by theme (context, basic assumptions, core actions, outcomes, and impact) for each data collection type (activity report, key-informant interviews with coordination platform staff, key-informant interviews with coordination platform partners, and online survey) with the number of mentions.

A **joint report** has also been developed to compare the five WASH coordination platforms with different levels of coordination.

Figure 4
Presentation of the results,
following the Minimum
Requirements and
the Theory of Change



1 Data collected

Over the 6-month data collection, we collected information from (Figure 5):

- 1 **Activity Report:** We collected 10 activity reports between November and April 2023, including 6 from the national Coordinator and 1 from the co-Coordinator at the national level, 2 from different sub-national Cluster Coordinators (1 in November, 1 in January) and 2 from a co-Coordinator at the sub-national level (in November and January).
- 2 **Key informant interviews with Cluster staff:** We recruited 8 different people from the Cluster staff contact list and 5 key-informant interviews were conducted in French with the Cluster Coordinator (Rounds I and II), with the Information Manager (Round I), with the co-Coordinator from the government (Round I), and with one sub-Cluster coordinator (Round I).
- 3 **Key-informant interviews with Cluster partners:** We recruited 55 people from the Cluster contact list (58 contacts) and 17 key-informant interviews were conducted in French (16) and English (1) with 14 different people. Among them, 6 were conducted with partners from international and national NGOs, 4 with government, and 1 with donor and other partner (Observer).
- 4 **Online survey with anyone self-defining involved in the response:** The online survey was sent to the broad Cluster contact list (383 contacts) and filled out 103 times. 52 surveys were filled out by partners from national NGOs and 41 by partners from international NGOs. Additionally, 93% of the surveys were completed in French and 7% in English.

Figure 5
Total number of data
collected by data collection
and stakeholder types

	 Monthly Activity Reports	 Interviews with Staff	 Interviews with Partners	 Survey with anyone involved in the WASH Response
Coordination Staff (national level)	6	4		2
Coordination Staff (sub-national level)	4	1		1
National Organizations			6	52
International Organizations			6	41
Government			3	2
Donor			1	1
Other (UN, Observer, etc.)			1	4
	N = 10	N = 5	N = 17	N = 103

2 Context

In 2023, an estimated 3.4M of people were in need of humanitarian assistance in the Central African Republic⁹. The effects of repeated armed conflicts, accompanied by serious human rights violations, population displacement, epidemic and natural disaster, were identified as the most pressing problems contributing to the need for humanitarian aid. An estimated 3M people were in need of WASH assistance and services and the humanitarian response cycle targeted 1.1M in WASH need and 27M in financial requirement (revised with the Sudanese crisis).

The objective of the WASH Cluster in 2023 were to:

- i Provide equitable and protected access to a WASH package to 0.8M people affected by shocks;
- ii Provide sustainable, equitable, and protected access to WASH services to 0.3M people affected by protracted displacement or impacted by crises;
- iii Provide access to a WASH/Nutrition package for 10,000 children suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM); and,
- iv Integrate and strengthen protection, gender, accountability to affected people, PSEA, inclusion, GBV prevention and risk reduction in WASH programs.

Additionally, the most vulnerable populations affected by the crisis in Sudan were targeted to meet their most urgent needs, in particular access to drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. Interventions are aimed at rehabilitating existing infrastructures and building new ones where standards are not met.

Barriers related to the context emerged during the key-informant interviews with Cluster staff and partner informants, as well as during the online surveys.

Table 1
Barriers specific to the Context that
affect the efficacy of the WASH Cluster

Activity Report (no information)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 3 informants, 60%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 12 informants, 71%)	Survey (from 42 informants, 42%)
Barriers	– High turnover of partners involved in the WASH Coordination (2, 40%). – Low capacity of partners (2, 40%). – Lack of access to areas because the country is big (1, 20%). – Lack of funding for the WASH response, ‘forgotten crisis’ (1, 20%). – No many donors present in-country (1, 20%).	– Insecurity and access to some areas that impacts the WASH response but also the creation of UNICEF sub-level of coordination (8, 47%). – High turnover of partners involved in the WASH Coordination (3, 18%). – High corruption and vandalism (1, 6%). – Donor space is shrinking (1, 6%). – Low capacity of partners (1, 6%). – Poor internet network services that impact communication and information sharing (1, 6%).	– Lack of funding for the WASH response (21, 20%). – Insecurity and access to some area (14, 14%). – Road network degradation (4, 4%). – Low capacity of partners (2, 2%). – Language barrier (1, 1%).

⁹ OCHA. *Plan de Réponse Humanitaire : République Centrafricaine*; 2023.
<https://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/republique-centrafricaine-plan-de-reponse-humanitaire-2023-janvier-2023>. + addendum

3 Basic Assumptions

Basic Assumptions include the actions needed for effective coordination that the National WASH Cluster staff is **not** responsible for. Five basic assumptions were identified in the Minimum Requirements.

Staffing and Structure (BA.1)

- The national-level and sub national NCP staff is adequately staffed, with low turnover, and funded.
- Sub national-NCPs are functional as needed and referenced in the national Terms of Reference.
- Strategic decisions are regularly taken by a group of partners and local actors (e.g. Strategic Advisory Group) representing the interest of all the WASH stakeholders.
- Technical Working Groups are functional as needed.

UNICEF is the Cluster Lead Agency for the WASH sector and supports the WASH Cluster in CAR. This basic assumption also includes any support received from UNICEF in terms of support, and by extension, any support received by the Global WASH Cluster.

In 2023, the WASH Cluster had three levels of coordination. At the national level, there were a dedicated WASH Cluster Coordinator (UNICEF) with a 2-year position, a dedicated co-Coordinator government counterpart (Local Government), a dedicated Information Management Officer (iMMAP) with short-term contract, and a dedicated Information Management Officer government counterpart (Local Government). According to the guidance on good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams at country level¹⁰, the recruitment of a dedicated P5 Cluster Coordinator and a P4/NOD Information Management Officer on fixed term contracts is recommended. However, the chief of WASH at UNICEF in CAR was P4 at the time of the study so it might not be realistic to have a P5 and P4 Coordination and Information Manager, respectively. To our knowledge, there were no position changes among national staff over the course of the study but the Information Manager Officer from iMMAP left after the second round of data collection of this study. The Cluster staff has Terms of Reference available for their positions. Additionally, there were 4 hubs at the sub-national level of coordination with double-hatted Coordinators (UNICEF). Lastly, the provinces were coordinated by 'Working Groups' lead by double-hatted staff (from international or national organisations or from the government).

We already have the six core functions, and on top of that we're expected to cover accountability, climate change, the Nexus, and more. We are not a team of 14 people, we do as much as we can, but there has to be some realism. If we a're expected to take on all these emerging priorities, then either additional staff are needed, or funding must be provided to recruit them. It's simply about having the human resources required for the workload.

Staff informant

Additionally, the WASH Cluster has a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and four Technical Working Groups (TWiGs) on menstrual hygiene, governance, inundation, and WASH in Nutrition (Nut). The rotation of the SAG membership was held in December 2022.

Several facilitators, barriers, and recommendations on 'Staffing and Structure' emerged from the Cluster staff and partners interviews and the survey.

¹⁰ UNICEF. Recommended Good Practices for the Minimum Structure of Coordination Teams at Country Level for UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency, 2021. <https://www.washcluster.net/sites/gwc.com/files/2022-09/Human%20Resources%20Decision%20Tree%20%281%29.pdf>

Table 2
Facilitators, Barriers, Priorities and Recommendations for the 'Staffing and Structure' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 14 informants, 82%)	Survey (from 103 informants, 100%)
Facilitators	– Terms of Reference for National and Sub-national Cluster. – Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) is active (work on the HNO/HRP and on the election of the future members in November. SAG members changes, TdR review and 2023 workplan in January). – Menstrual Hygiene Technical Working Group (TWiG) is active (revision of assessment tools in November, protocol and survey design in January, launch of survey in April). – Inundation TWiG is active (revision of assessment tools in November, – Governance TWiG exists (members change, TdR review and 2023 workplan in January; validation of the workplan. – Activation of the WASH in Nutrition TWiGs with action plan in January and workplan in February. – Cluster staff receives support from UNICEF in terms of funding for the WASH response, to work on technical documents, government advocacy, inter-cluster meetings, meeting room, etc.) – Cluster staff receives support from GWC (Snapshot, menstrual hygiene survey, workshop, assessment strategy, etc.).	– Good relationship and working environment between the Cluster staff (3, 60%). – Detailed Terms of Reference for UNICEF/iMMAP Staff (2, 40%). – Coordinator and Information Management Officer position funded for the next 6 months (1, 20%). – The TWiG on inundation was reactivated and reorganization of the TWiGs to be more active (1 in Round II, 20%). – UNICEF accepts to provide some support (logistic, administrative, and funding for coordination) when request (2, 40%). – The Cluster receives support from the Global WASH Cluster (bimonthly meetings to address challenges, advocacy, need assessment, Cluster skype, IM, etc.) (2, 40%). – The GWC organizes training on the coordination and workshops for the Cluster staff (2, 40%).	– Qualified staff with expertise and proactive (6, 35%). – TWiGs exist that work on strategies (inundations, survey on menstrual hygiene, etc.) (4, 24%). – The SAG helps to provide strategic document and analysis on the WASH response (3, 18%). – There is the inclusion of local NGOs in the SAG (3, 18%). – UNICEF support the Cluster (logistic and meeting room) (2, 12%). – The Cluster staff is neutral (1, 6%). – Terms of Reference for the Cluster and coordination (1, 6%). – UNICEF improves relationship with the government (1, 6%).	– TWiGs exist (64, 62%). – Terms of reference exist (53, 51%) and describe the role, responsibilities and activities the Cluster or technical working group should accomplish. This document has been presented to partners. – SAG exists (44, 43%), include a diversity of partners, and produced several documents (TdR, standards, etc.).

Table 2 (continued)

Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 14 informants, 82%)	Survey (from 103 informants, 100%)
Barriers	– Coordination not always active at the sub-level of coordination, partially because of double-hatted staff (3, 60%). – Lack of staff to improve the level of coordination (co-facilitator) (3, 60%). – High turnover among the staff (IMO leave in June 2023 and no replacement) (2, 40%). – No support or good management of UNICEF for the WASH Coordination (2, 40%). – No vision on governmental co-Coordinator contract and turnover (1, 20%). – Lack of participation of the SAG members (1, 20%). – Poor participation of some TWiGs (1, 20%). – No understanding of the goal of the coordination by some UNICEF members (1, 20%). – Long time to recruit new staff (1, 20%).	– High turnover among the Cluster staff and lack of staff members to improve the level of coordination (5, 30%). – Coordination not always active at the sub-level of coordination (3, 18%). – Cluster staff does not have enough technical expertise (2, 12%). – Lack of participation of the SAG members so it takes time to make decision (quorum needed) (1, 6%). – The SAG is not always proactive (1, 6%). – Lack of participation of members of the Technical Working Group (1, 6%). – No engagement of UNICEF in the Cluster (1, 6%). – It took a few months for a new partner to understand sub-national coordination level existed (1, 6%).	– Coordination not always present or qualified at the sub-level of coordination (4, 4%). – Unfairness/complicity of the Cluster staff with some international organizations (1, 1%). – Cluster staff does not have enough technical expertise (1, 1%). – Cluster staff tends to be a little bit autocratic and does not allow partners to be part of the SAG (1, 1%).
Priorities and Recommendations	– To get more Cluster staff (IM and co- Coordinator) (4, 80%). – To reduce staff turnover (1, 20%). – To organize capacity-building activities for Cluster staff (1, 20%). – To have a non-UN co-Coordinator to keep neutrality (1, 20%). – To keep continuity of the SAG and change half partners only each year (1, 20%). – To have more regular meetings with the Global WASH Cluster (1, 20%). – To improve UNICEF management with Coordination (1, 20%). – To advocate to get more people in the Cluster (1, 20%).	– To get more Cluster staff (IM and co-Coordinator) (4, 24%). – To reduce the turnover and have Coordinators for at least 2 years (2, 12%). – To reinforce the TWiGs (2, 12%). – To create more 'Working Group' at the provincial level (1, 6%). – To include nationals in the Cluster staff to increase capacity and transition (1, 6%). – To increase Cluster staff technical capacity (1, 6%). – To change the leadership of the partner co-Coordinator to improve innovation (1, 6%).	– To strengthen sub-level coordination and UNICEF representation (regional and provincial level) (7, 7%). – To get more nationals in the Cluster staff (1, 1%). – To get more people in the Cluster staff (1, 1%).

Partners' Engagement (BA.2)

- Partners regularly contribute to key cluster core functions and participate to coordination meetings.

According to the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, there were 30 to 45 partners active in the WASH response¹¹, but the number varied between 40 according to the activity reports.

Depending on their activities and size, some partners have WASH Cluster representation at both the national and sub-Cluster levels, while others only have representation at the sub-Cluster level. Information about Cluster partners' engagement was mainly collected via key-informant interviews with Cluster staff, but also emerged from the interview with the Cluster partners and from the survey.

Each time, it is the Cluster that motivates the partners to participate. But sometimes partners are not as accountable to the Cluster when the Cluster asks them to share evaluation reports.

Partner informant

Table 3
Facilitators, Barriers, Priorities and Recommendations for the 'Partners' Engagement' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 1 report)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 4 informants, 80%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 11 informants, 65%)	Survey (from 10 informants, 10%)
Facilitators		– High partner engagement (2, 40%).	– High partner engagement (1, 6%).	– There is a document called the '20 commitments' that partners must sign to show their engagement (2, 2%).
Barriers	– Between 25 to 50% of partners shared their data in March.	– Development partners with development funding that are more difficult to coordinate (1, 20%). – Partners share at the national level but not at the sub-level of coordination (1, 20%). – Some partners still think the Cluster staff represents UNICEF (1, 20%).	– Some partners are not active and do not share information relevant to the WASH coordination (7, 41%). – Partners with low technical capacity participate to the meetings (1, 6%). – Some organisations do not have a clear WASH focal point (1, 6%). – It is difficult for some organizations to attend the coordination meeting, and decreasing motivation and participation (1, 6%).	– Lack of partners engagement and participation (6, 6%).
Priorities and Recommendations		– To increase partners awareness to participate and to show the importance of the Cluster (1, 20%).		– To reduce the number of partners in provinces to reduce duplication of activities (1, 1%). – To coach new partners better (1, 1%).

¹¹ OCHA. *Plan de Réponse Humanitaire : République Centrafricaine*; 2023.
<https://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/republique-centrafricaine-plan-de-reponse-humanitaire-2023-janvier-2023>. + addendum

Inter-Cluster Coordination Support (BA.3)

- The Humanitarian Coordination Team and Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (OCHA and ICCG) are functional and support the WASH Cluster as needed.

The inter-Cluster coordination takes place through the formal Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism (ICCM) meetings at the national and sub-national level, chaired by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and through informal bilateral or joint relationships.

Information about Inter-Cluster Coordination Support was mainly collected via the activity reports and the key-informant interviews with Cluster staff informants. However, two partner informants also discussed a facilitator of the Inter-Cluster Coordination.

OCHA often sets timelines according to its own agenda, without allowing sufficient time to prepare or set things up properly. We are frequently asked to work in a rush, even though much of this could be initiated earlier.

Staff informant

Table 4
Facilitators, Barriers, Priorities and Recommendations for the 'Inter-Cluster Coordination Support' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 2 informants, 12%)	Survey (no information)
Facilitators	– The WASH Cluster receives support from OCHA (HRP dissemination in February, Field visit to understand humanitarian dynamics in some areas and Pooled Funds in March). – Inter-Cluster Meetings (1 or 2 meetings per month at sub-national and national).	– IMO Working Group with frequent meetings and good coordination (1, 20%). – OCHA supports the Cluster in allocation request (1, 20%). – Good communication with OCHA at the subnational level (1, 20%). – OCHA led the AAP and Localization TWiGs (1, 20%).		
Barriers		– OCHA works at its own agenda/pace and this forces the WASH Cluster (staff and partners) to work in a hurry/in bad conditions. Not always effective and supportive (3, 60%). – OCHA is not always effective in facilitating the meetings (1, 20%). – The co-Coordinator (government) is not associated to the meetings with OCHA (1, 20%). – Turnover among OCHA staff (1, 20%).	– OCHA does not advocate to improve humanitarian access (1, 6%). – OCHA is biased in the distribution of the funding between the Clusters and there is conflict of interest (1, 6%).	
Priorities and Recommendations		– To review timeframe/agenda with OCHA (1, 20%).		

Host Government (BA.4)

- The host government facilitates or leads the WASH Cluster mission as needed.

Information about Host Government was mainly collected via the key-informant interviews with Cluster staff informants. However, some partner informants (through key-informant interview and survey) identified this basic assumption as a facilitator or barrier impacting the effectiveness of the WASH Coordination and Response.

Table 5
Facilitators, Barriers, Priorities and Recommendations for the 'Host Government' by data collection type

	Activity Report (no information)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 4 informants, 80%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 5 informants, 29%)	Survey (from 2 respondents, 2%)
Facilitators		– Good relationship with the government (with co-Coordinator and co-IM) and dialogue possible (2, 40%). – Government participates in coordination meetings (1, 20%).	– Engagement of the authorities (documents to help the work of the Cluster, meeting room loan) (1, 6%).	
Barriers		– Low level of participation of the government (3, 60%).	– Governmental restrictions (e.g., borehole cost) (2, 12%). – Low level of engagement of the authorities for the WASH sector (2, 12%).	– The government does share health data (1, 1%). – Low level of engagement of the authorities for the WASH sector (1, 1%).
Priorities and Recommendations				

Coordination Financial Needs (BA.5)

- Financial needs (other than staffing) for coordination at national and sub-national level are met and provided by the CLA.

Information about funding for the WASH Coordination was mainly collected via the activity reports and the key-informant interviews with Cluster staff informants, but this theme also emerged in two interviews with Cluster partners.

Our role is to mobilize resources for the humanitarian response, not to fund ourselves. We should be supported by UNICEF in this, but that support is currently lacking.

Staff informant

Table 6
Facilitators, Barriers, Priorities and Recommendations for the ‘Coordination Financial Needs’ basic assumption by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 3 informants, 60%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 2 informants, 12%)	Survey (no information)
Facilitators				
Barriers		– No funding for the WASH coordination (3, 60%).		
Priorities and Recommendations		– The Cluster staff should have a budget for field visit and response monitoring, capacity-building activities, etc. (2, 40%).	– The Cluster staff should have a budget to organize field visit (2, 12%).	

4 Core Actions

Core Actions include the actions needed for effective coordination for which the National WASH Cluster staff is responsible. Twelve core actions were identified in the Minimum Requirements and one action emerged over the course of the study.

Basic Coordination (CA.1.1)

- Capacity development and learning needs for partners are identified, training resources are made available and learning activities are conducted.
- Frequency and structure of the coordination meetings are in-line with the coordination functions, organized and minutes recorded.
- Information sharing tools are established and updated, with information regularly shared.

Information about actions that have been completed by the WASH Cluster and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, and emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

Table 7
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Basic Coordination' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 17 informants, 100%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– The contact list was updated every month. – The Information Sharing Platform¹² was transferred to ReliefWeb in December 2022 and fully re-organized in January 2023. – The WASH Cluster produces newsletters. – Coordination Meetings (2 per month at national and 1 at sub-national) are held to present partner projects, security of the situation at the sub-level and challenges.	– There are regular coordination meetings (3, 60%). – Different communication and information sharing tools with partners (Skype group, contact list, bilateral communication, information sharing platform, Google Drive, newsletters, fact-sheet, etc.) (2, 40%). – Trainings and capacitybuilding activities are organized (on monitoring and data management, pooled fund advocacy, PSEA) (2, 40%). – The Cluster tries to organize the national-level capacitybuilding activities at the subnational level too (1, 20%).	– The coordination meetings are regular (including reminder and meeting minutes) (15, 88%). – The Cluster organizes (in-person) technical trainings to improve partners capacity (15, 88%). – The Cluster identifies gaps, monitors the response, and helps partners to make strategic decisions during the cluster meetings and information sharing (8, 47%). – The tools and information are regularly shared by the Cluster (via contact list, bulletin, etc.) (6, 35%). – Good communication channels (including bilateral communication) (4, 24%). – The challenges are discussed and addressed during the coordination meetings and that helps to build partners capacity (3, 18%). – The information sharing platform is well organized (including Google Drive) (5, 29%).	– Coordination meetings are conducted twice per month at the national level (80, 78%) to monitor the work of the organization and share information with partners. – Contact list exists (63, 61%), include local authorities, and is available to strengthen partners' relationships. – Meeting minutes exist (60, 58%) and are regularly shared to be transparent and make sure all the partners have the same level of information. – Capacity building activities are organized (i.e., Kobo, WASH in Emergencies) (53, 51%).

¹² Link to the Information Sharing Platform in Central African Republic:
<https://response.reliefweb.int/central-african-republic/eau-assainissement-et-hygiene>

Table 7 (continued)

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 17 informants, 100%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well (continued)	Minutes are shared after each national coordination meeting.	The coordination meetings help members to identify the gaps, share experiences, and monitor the activities (1, 20%).	- Feedback shared during the meeting help to assess and improve response quality and to harmonize the response (2, 12%). - The Cluster recommends consortium to respond and this increase partners' capacity and relationships (1, 6%).	- Information sharing platform exists (50, 49%) via website and Google Drive. - Monthly, quarterly bulletin to present partners interventions exist (2, 2%).
Not doing well		The sub-national organizations only report to the national level and skip the sub-national one so it makes difficult for the sub-national level to address challenges (1, 20%).	- There are no capacity-building activities on WASH programming and techniques (only on data collection) (2, 12%). - Coordination meetings are organized in the afternoon when it is more complicated for partners to attend (1, 6%). - Sub-national meeting-minutes and information are not (well) shared with the national level (1, 6%). - Lack of time during the meetings to share/discuss (technical) activities (1, 6%).	- Insufficient capacity-building activities (because short duration and low frequency) (2, 2%). - Online meetings are not efficient (1, 1%).
All priorities and Recommendations		- To repeat the same activity building activities every year (on coordination mechanism, protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, etc.) (1, 20%). - To conduct trainings and workshop at the national and sub-national level (1, 20%). - To increase capacity-building activities for the Cluster staff (1, 20%).	- To increase the frequency of capacity building activities (6, 35%). - To decrease meeting frequency (from twice to once a month) while increasing the duration (3, 18%). - To change the format of the trainings (longer, attendees, etc.) (2, 12%). - To share sub-national meeting minutes during the national coordination meeting (2, 12%). - To conduct more technical discussions during the meetings (including sanitation and innovations) (2, 12%). - To continue to coordinate partners to help them to make strategic decisions (2, 12%). - To organize more trainings at the province-level (1, 6%). - To advocate and to organize trainings outside of the country (1, 6%). - To organize field visits to understand the challenges of the organizations (1, 6%).	- To reinforce partners capacity (more training, based on the needs, and especially national organizations, on resources mobilization, programming (14, 14%). - To increase information sharing (incl. frequency of the updates) (2, 2%). - To increase coordination (incl. at field level) and response monitoring (1, 1%). - To organize international field trip to bring more innovations into the WASH response (1, 1%). - To improve the coordination meeting room (1, 1%). - To increase the coverage of the coordination meeting (inside the country) (1, 1%).

The WASH Cluster's activities help us identify gaps. As I mentioned earlier, there is regular information sharing and constant connectivity between us and the Cluster.

Partner informant

Assessment Strategy (CA.2.1)

- An assessment strategy to collect assessment data from partners has been jointly agreed, shared, and implemented.
- Standard WASH Core Assessment Indicators have been developed, shared with partners and have been integrated into multi-sector data collection initiatives.

Information about actions that have been completed by the WASH Cluster and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants and in the recommendation section of the survey.

Our priority is the needs assessment strategy we are working on, and we're also launching parallel evaluations to generate data that is much more robust than what we had last year for the HNO/HRP.
Staff informant

Table 8
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Assessment Strategy' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 4 informants, 80%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 7 informants, 41%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Needs Assessment Strategy and Methodology exists and was revised in April. – The Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) is done by REACH and finalization of the MSNA questionnaire in April. – WASH Core Assessment Indicators exists. – Assessment Analysis exists.	– REACH does the yearly MSNA in households (4, 80%). – Revision of the Need Assessment Strategy (1, 20%). – The Cluster works on other ways to collect data (survey on menstrual hygiene) (1, 20%). – The Rapid Response Monitoring (RRM) exists (1, 20%).	– Need assessment tools exist (MSNA and WASH, Rapid Response Monitoring (RRM), on Kobo) to help partner to identify the needs (6, 35%). – Partners reviewed the need assessment tools (1, 6%). – The Cluster encourages partners to conduct need assessments (1, 6%).	– Need assessment strategy/tool/form exists (52, 50%) via intersectoral assessment (household survey, FGD) and tools are provided. – WASH Core Assessment Indicators exists (28, 27%) and are reviewed by partners. – The Need Assessment Strategy is based on REACH work and RRM (1, 1%).
Not doing well		– The Need Assessment Strategy is outdated and there is no good tool to conduct the need assessment (1, 20%). – There is no need assessment outside of the household (e.g., schools, health centre, etc.) (1, 20%). – The WASH Cluster does not conduct need assessment by itself (1, 20%).	– It is difficult for partners to conduct need assessments and they sometimes don't get compensation/funding for the response (1, 6%).	
Priorities and Recommendations		– To revise the WASH-related MSNA data before OCHA (1, 20%). – To develop tools related to the reviewed Strategy (1, 20%).	– To conduct more need assessments (1, 6%).	– To strengthen needs assessments in the least 'assisted' areas (1, 1%). – To support partner to be more effective in reporting the need assessments (1, 1). – To involve national organizations in the RRM (1.1%).

Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) (CA.3.1)

- The Humanitarian Response Plan (or other) has been jointly revised, agreed, and shared with partners, with key consideration for inter-sectoral projects, accountability to affected populations, and for local actor inclusion.

Information about actions that have been completed by the WASH Cluster and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

For the HNO and HRP, the WASH Cluster informed us of the indicators and sampling strategy, but we were not consulted in advance to validate those criteria. We were also not asked to contribute, even though we could have supported primary data collection and provided relevant secondary data.

Partner informant

Table 9
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for the 'Humanitarian Response Plan' by data collection

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 4 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 10 informants, 59%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Discussions with the ICC and discussions with the SAG in November to work on the HRP according to the HNO. Revision of the HRP to include a response for the Sudanese refugees in April. – Launch of the MHH survey in April.	– Yearly completion of the Humanitarian Need Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) (4, 80%). – The Cluster invited the Humanitarian Coordinator during a meeting to explain the Humanitarian Program Cycle (1, 20%).	– The Cluster set up the HNO/HRP and severity map that help partners to identify the gaps (4, 24%). – Cholera response plan exists (1, 6%).	– The Humanitarian/WASH Response Plan exists (71, 69%) and is revised annually.
Not doing well		– Not enough time to analyse the MSNA data before HNO presentation (1, 20%).	– The HNO/HRP did not involve all the partners and partners were not consulted (3, 18%). – The HRP helps to get the national priorities but it is not enough detailed to make strategic decisions (1, 6%). – It is difficult to get quality data to make partners/donors confident (1, 6%).	– Poor need assessments (1,1%).
All priorities and Recommendations		– To involve more the sub-clusters in the HNO and HRP and use their expertise (1, 20%),	– To involve partners for more than 3 days before the revision of the first draft (including on indicators) (1, 6%). – To prioritize the WASH response in Schools and sanitation (1, 6%).	

WASH Strategy (CA.3.2)

- A WASH Strategy or Strategic Operational Framework has been revised, jointly agreed, shared, and implemented (with consideration for transition, inter-sectoral, accountability to affected populations, and localisation).

Information about actions that have been completed by the WASH Cluster and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

The Cluster helps define the indicators. During the HNO process, this was done in collaboration with the SAG and then with partners. The indicators include those for project monitoring, protection, and other key areas.

Partner informant

Table 10
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'WASH Strategy' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 11 informants, 65%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Strategic Operational Framework (SOF) exists. – WASH Standard exists and were reviewed with partners in February.	– Standards were revised to help partners to assess the WASH response (2, 40%).	– There are guidelines and strategic documents to help partners to harmonize and implement a better response (e.g., standard cost for infrastructures, water points managements, etc.) (7, 41%). – The Cluster shares standards (5, 29%). – There is a workplan that has been shared with the partners (1, 6%). – The Cluster has started to review the standards (1, 6%). – The Cluster frequently reviews the tools (1, 6%). – The Cluster has reviewed the 2019 SOF and there were consultations with partners (1, 6%).	– WASH Standards exists (59, 57%) with minimum standard and recommendations. – Strategic Operational Framework exists (34, 33%) and was created in 2017 according to one respondent. – Transition plan/exit strategy exists (21, 20%). – The Cluster organizes meetings to discuss the standard and how to respect them (1, 1%).
Not doing well			– The Cluster doesn't have specific standards for the WASH response (2, 12%). – It takes time for some documents to get finalized (e.g., standard cost) (1, 6%). – The Cluster doesn't consult partners to develop the strategies (1, 6%).	
All priorities and Recommendations			– To share indicators with partners to improve the quality of the response (1, 6%). – To include national organizations in reviewing the strategies (1, 6%).	– To review the standards by involving the government (1, 1%).

Inter-sectorial Synergies (CA.3.3)

- Inter-sectorial synergies have been identified with integration into response plans.

Information about actions that have been completed by the WASH Cluster and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

It's quite interesting because it's a joint working group between the WASH and Nutrition clusters. We are still in the early stages, but we've developed the terms of reference, the work plan, and agreed on what we want to do and how we will do it.

Staff informant

Table 11
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for the 'Inter-sectorial Synergies' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 3 informants, 18%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Field visit with Inter-Cluster to understand humanitarian dynamics in the South-East of the country.	– The Cluster organizes multi-sectoral assessment with OCHA and the other Clusters (1, 20%). – The WASH in Nut TWiG exists (1, 20%). – The Cluster organizes trainings on Nutrition, protection, etc. (1, 20%). – Revision of the composition of the NFI kit with the CCCM, Education, and Protection Clusters (1, 20%).	– There is a TWiG WASH in Nut with meetings (2, 12%). – Partners participate in the 'WASH in School' TWiG (1, 6%).	– Inter-sectoral synergies exist (35, 34%), notably between the WASH and Education sectors or between the WASH and CCCM sectors in IDP sites. – Four respondents discussed the synergy via the RRM (4, 4%).
Not doing well				
All priorities and Recommendations		– To create more relationships at the intersectoral level to get a shared strategy (1, 20%).		– To improve synergies with other sectors (1, 1%).

Response Monitoring and Monitoring Framework (CA.4.1)

- Data on response monitoring, quality of the response, funding status, and partners capacity is regularly collected, analyzed, and shared informing advocacy activities.

- Response monitoring data is disaggregated whenever possible, and regularly disseminated.
- The monitoring plan and framework have been jointly established/agreed, shared, and implemented.
- A joint IM framework and workplan for the NCP has been developed based on a diagnostic review with partners.

Information about actions completed by the WASH Cluster that are known by partner was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants and in the recommendations provided by the survey respondents.

Table 12
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Response Monitoring and Monitoring Framework' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 16 informants, 94%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Monitoring Plan and Framework exist. – Review of activities, indicators in 5W, and info products from partners feedback in January. – Implementation of corrective actions to improve WASH response exists (lighting in camps in November and recommendation sharing in February and April after field visits). – Response Monitoring 4/5Ws exists and update in December, March and April. – Response Analysis exists. – Response Monitoring Dashboard exists and operational presence mapping and dashboard in March. – Production of partners capacity mapping to respond to floods. – Information Management Framework and Workplan exist. – Information Management Diagnosis exists.	– The Cluster regularly updates partner's response progress in a formal 5W to help to make prioritization process easier for partners (4, 80%). – The IM produces info products and maps (3, 60%). – The Cluster organizes trainings with partners on monitoring and evaluations (1, 20%).	– The Cluster shares and discusses the gap (via the 5Ws, activity report, and info products) and compare with the indicators to help to identify the gaps and important activity to implement and to make decisions (10, 59%). – There is a map of partners' presence and activity to help to identify the gaps (5, 29%). – The funds tracking system exists (2, 12%). – There is a tool to map partners with capacity to make boreholes (2, 12%). – There is a monitoring and evaluation tool that helps partner to assess the quality of the response (2, 12%). – The Cluster reminds partner each time they have to send their data (1, 6%). – The Cluster organized a training on data collection and the use of Kobo to manage data (1, 6%). – The monitoring and evaluation tools are easy and can be used whenever there is no connection (1, 6%). – The Cluster proposes solutions to address challenges if partners' response is not enough performant/efficient (1, 6%).	– Monitoring Plan and Framework exists (40, 39%) and is shared and partners are included in the process. – Response monitoring via online tools and analysis exists (40, 39%) and are shared during the meetings to identify the performance of the interventions. – Gap analysis exists (40, 39%) to highlight the needs and the response to identify the gaps and uncovered needs and to strategize.

Table 12 (continued)

Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 16 informants, 94%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Not doing well	– There is no tool to assess and monitor the quality of the response (1, 20%).	– The WASH Cluster has not been able to produce monitoring and evaluation report to share best lessons learned, and improvements (1, 6%).	– 5W exists but there is no particular framework (1, 1%). – Tables are too dense to be able to use them on a regularly basis (1, 1%).
All priorities and Recommendations	– To get support from the GWO to improve the 5W (in analysis but also partners completion) (1, 20%). – To help partners to collect their data (1, 20%).	– To continue to update the 5W and identify the gaps (2, 12%). – To develop a map on working water points (1, 6%). – To create tools to collect data on quality and assess program quality (1, 6%). – To make sure that partners use the same set of tools and speak the same language to collect and encode data to improve the harmonization of the data (1, 6%).	– To train partners on the use of the 5W (1, 1%). – To simplify the tools (1, 1%). – To create more detailed maps on implemented activities (1, 1%).

Field Visits and Quality Assurance (CA.4.2)

- Field visits are regularly conducted, documented by the Cluster staff and inform the monitoring of the quality of the response.

Information about actions completed by the WASH Cluster that are known by partner was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

It's difficult for me to go to the field often enough. I am managing everything alone, and with WASH Cluster meetings every 15 days, it becomes very difficult to make field visits, that is simple.

Staff informant

Table 13

Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for the 'Field Visits and Quality Assurance' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 10 informants, 59%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	Field visits conducted in November, January, and April to monitor Pooled Fund partners project.	The Cluster staff conduct monitoring field visits (including co-Coordinator) to improve the quality of the response of the Pooled Funds projects (2, 40%).	- There are field missions to monitor the WASH response (for Pooled Funds project) (5, 29%). - The Cluster shares report with feedback and recommendation after field visit (1, 6%).	Field visits are conducted (42, 41%) to monitor pooled fund interventions and strengthen partners' capacities.
Not doing well		The Coordinator does not have time to regularly go to the field (mainly because of the regular coordination meetings and lack of staff) (1, 20%).	The Cluster does not organize regularly field visit to monitor the activities (3, 18%).	
All priorities and Recommendations			- To organize more field visits (including with non-Pooled Funds projects) (7, 41%). - To define a framework to monitor partners and projects in order to improve the quality of the response (3, 18%). - To include the government counterpart in field visit monitoring (1, 6%).	To conduct field visit in areas where there is no coordination representation (1, 1%).

Coordination Performance Monitoring (CA.4.3)

- A workshop has been held to define a collective coordination workplan.

In 2022, 45 partners participated in the Cluster Performance Monitoring.

Information about actions completed by the WASH Cluster that are known by partner was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

Table 14
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Coordination Performance Monitoring' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 2 informants, 12%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– The Cluster staff reviewed and prepared the results of the CCPM in November for validation during a workshop in Bangui. – Survey and session organized by the Cluster to capitalize IM products.	– Survey and session organized by the Cluster to capitalize IM products (2, 40%). – Evaluation of the Cluster is regularly done through the Cluster Coordination Performance. Monitoring (CCPM) to identify how much the Cluster is performing based on the core functions (1, 40%).	– The Coordination Performance was done at the end of the year (2, 12%).	– Coordination Performance Monitoring is conducted annually (46, 45%).
Not doing well				
All priorities and Recommendations				– To establish a mechanism to assess the coordination by Cluster partners (including NGOs) (1,1%).

Emergency Response Preparedness Approach (CA.5)

- Hazard identification, risk assessment and monitoring has been undertaken by the NCP.
- Minimum Preparedness Actions, Contingency Planning, and Advanced Preparedness Actions exist for high risk or recurring disasters.

Information about actions completed by the WASH Cluster that are known by partner was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

Table 15
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for the 'Emergency Response Preparedness Approach' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 6 informants, 35%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Operational Presence Mapping exists and Mapping of the partners to respond to floodings in April and capacity mapping for cholera response in March.	– Information on stock contingency was gathered for the inundation response (1, 20%). – Capacity development plan was established based on a survey shared with partners (1, 20%).	– Contingency stock and partners position for the inundation response (4, 24%). – The Cluster positions equipment in areas before they become logistically 'hard-to-reach' (1, 6%). – Good capacity development plan (1, 6%).	– A capacity development plan is ongoing and main topics are defined with the SAG and partners (2, 2%). – Emergency Response Preparedness Approach exists (i.e., floods) (34, 33%) and updated by the TWiGs. – Review of contingency stock (2, 2%). – Capacity mapping exists (41, 40%).
Not doing well				
All priorities and Recommendations			– To go to the sub-national Clusters and partners to understand the capacity-building needs (1, 6%). – To focus on inundation preparedness with the government (1, 6%).	– To make a list of equipment available for each organization to help for intervention (1,1%)

Advocacy Initiatives (CA.6.1)

- A joint strategic approach to advocacy is monitored which includes identification of issues, development of messages, and tactics targeting key stakeholders

Advocacy Initiatives (including resource mobilization initiatives, joint strategic approach, advocacy campaigns and messages, and funding mapping) are taken to support robust advocacy. Information about actions completed by the WASH Cluster that are known by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants and during the survey with respondents (not doing well and recommendations).

When there are calls for allocation, the Cluster share them. Efforts are made to inform all actors to apply. And the cluster also encourages national NGOs to apply, to come and be recommended to the humanitarian pooled fund.

Partner informant

Table 16
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Advocacy Initiatives' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 14 informants, 82%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Sector funding mapping exists. – Resource Mobilisation Initiatives exist. – Discussion was conducted with the GWC to mobilize funding for the WASH coordination in March.	– The Cluster is part of the committee to assess partners proposals (3, 60%). – The Cluster enhances discussion about consortium between international and national partners (1, 20%). – The Cluster advocated among development partners to mutualize the resources for the response (1, 20%). – Advocacy with the OCHA made the Cluster got more funding than expected (1, 20%).	– The Cluster helps partners to prepare proposals by sharing information to identify the gaps (5, 29%). – The Cluster advocates to get funding (4, 24%). – he Cluster informs when there is an allocation and on eligibility conditions (3, 18%). – The Cluster advocates for logistic to response (e.g., intercluster provided a helicopter for a specific response) (1, 6%).	– Joint Strategic Approach to Advocacy exist (27, 26%) and is efficient according to one partner. – Advocacy Campaigns and Messages are conducted and shared by the Cluster (24, 23%).

Table 16 (continued)

Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 5 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 14 informants, 82%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Not doing well	– The Cluster does not have many interactions with the donors outside the Pooled Fund, mainly because they are not in-country (2, 40%).	– The Cluster does not help to create consortium between partners to get funding (2, 12%). – The funding is not well oriented between partners (1, 6%). – There is no advocacy with other donors that the Pooled Funds (e.g., such as BHA, French Development Agency, etc.) (1, 6%). Some donors do not consult the WASH Cluster to give funding (1, 6%). – Partners are not involved in the selection of partners in the Pooled Fund Process (1, 6%).	– Advocacy Campaigns and Messages are not regular enough (1, 1%). – There are not enough leverages for efficient advocacy (1, 1%).
All priorities and Recommendations	– To develop the advocacy for the WASH Cluster (2, 40%). – To include the government (via co- Coordinator) in the revision of the Pooled Funds proposals (1, 20%). – To increase advocacy with development donors (1, 20%). – To ensure the Pooled Fund Allocation does not go out at the same time as HNO/HRP deadlines.	– To improve advocacy and fund mobilization (7, 41%). – To create a consortium between partners (2, 12%). – To define a strategy to get a rapid response from the Pooled Funds when there is a request (as done by the Food Security Cluster) (1, 6%).	– To advocate for more funding (7, 7%). – To increase the opportunity for local organizations to create a consortium with international NGOs to get access to the Pooled Fund allocation (1, 1%). – To receive fundings only if partners participate in the Cluster. – To be 'impartial' in the selection of partners for the Pooled Funds (1, 1%).

I work in WASH. I am not someone who normally does advocacy, so I find it challenging. That is why the GWC developed a toolkit. We are not typically the ones building partnerships, so it's hard for us to fully engage in these areas.

Staff informant

Advocacy with government specifically emerged during data collection with the WASH Cluster and partners informants and respondents and therefore, was described separately in the results. Advocacy with the Government includes any action taken to include the Host Government in the coordination and help WASH partners to navigate with the local authorities and current politics.

The Cluster works a lot on advocacy. There are more and more requirements from the government and this can handicap partners' interventions. The Cluster has worked on certain moratoriums (authorization and payment necessary to carry out drilling). The Cluster negotiated a 6-month moratorium to continue the implementation of activities.

Partner informant

Table 17
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Advocacy with Government' by data collection type

Activity Report (no information)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 3 informants, 60%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 12 informants, 71%)	Survey (from 2 respondents, 2%)
Doing well	- The co-Coordinator from the government helps to ease relationships with the government, to get authorization, and to share information (1, 20%). - The Cluster advocated with the government on the 'drilling taxation' (1, 20%).	- The Cluster advocated with the government on the 'drilling taxation' (6, 35%). - The Cluster shares information related to procedures and 'ministerial orders' (3, 18%). - The Cluster involves the government in the strategy revision (1, 6%). - The Cluster reinforces capacity of the local authorities via capacity building activities (1, 6%).	
Not doing well	- Few relationships and capacity building activities with the government (1, 20%).		
All priorities and Recommendations	- To create more relationships with the government (1, 20%). - To get more funding to organize trainings on the coordination with the government (1, 20%).	- To share more information with the government and cooperate more (2, 12%). - To build the capacity of the local authorities to improve cooperation and leadership (1, 6%). - To make the technical validation of the technical tools by the government faster (it takes time) (1, 6%). - To have one person from the government ('ressources hydrauliques', 'ANEA', or 'SODECA') present in each meeting (1, 6%). - To follow-up on the 'drilling taxation' (1, 6%).	- To increase relationships with government bodies in charge of the water-sanitation-hygiene promotion (1,1%). - To reinforce government bodies capacities (1,1%).

Accountability to Affected Populations (CA.7)

- AAP is mainstreamed throughout the HPC and a key component of the WASH Cluster strategy. This includes AAP workshop and complaints and feedback mechanism.

Tools and mechanisms such as the workshop on AAP, the Safe and Accessible Community Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms, Communications and Participation Strategy with Affected Populations, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) strategy, and Quality Assurance Initiative that are completed by the WASH Cluster and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants.

One priority of the Cluster is to have an eye on accountability for beneficiaries because there are partner interventions that do not fit with the defined strategy or the country strategy.

Partner informant

Table 18
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for 'Accountability to Affected Populations' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 3 informants, 60%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 3 informants, 18%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Workshop/Training on Accountability to Affected Population were organized in November at sub-cluster level. – Safe and Accessible Community Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms exist in collaboration with C4D at the sub-level. – Data is disaggregated.	– Trainings are organized on AAP by the Cluster (3, 60%). – Two indicators on quality were integrated into strategies (1, 20%). – The AAP TWiG is managed by UNICEF/ OCHA and the Cluster WASH has been selected to conduct a pilot (1, 20%).	– The Cluster organizes trainings on accountability (2, 12%). – Data shared to the Cluster is disaggregated by gender and age (1, 6%).	– Accountability to Affected Population Strategy exists (48, 47%), including trainings. – There is a Technical Working Group on AAP (1, 1%).
Not doing well				
All priorities and Recommendations			– To focus more about quality and accountability (1, 6%).	– To promote community engagement and participation (1, 1%).

Cross-cutting Themes (CT.1.1)

- Cross-cutting themes (including gender, inclusion, environmental protection, cashbased interventions, localization, and Nexus) have been incorporated to strategies.
- Specific WASH Cluster focal points for cross-cutting issues have been identified.

Information about actions completed by the WASH Cluster that are known by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Cluster staff and partner informants and during the survey with respondents (not doing well and recommendations).

When it comes to climate change and the Nexus, we don't really have a choice, we know we need to move in that direction. We are not there yet, but have to start.

Staff informant

Table 19
Actions done by the WASH Cluster and Recommendations for the cross-cutting themes by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 9 informants, 53%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Inclusion of the 'Fulani' minority and people with disabilities in the design of the latrines. – Cross-cutting and transversal themes Identification exists.	– Trainings on PSEA and GBV are yearly organized (1, 20%). – The WASH Cluster is working on GBV/WASH guidelines and minimum requirements (1, 20%). – OCHA led the Localization TWiG (1, 20%). – Working group in Menstrual Hygiene (2, 40%). – Planned workshop on environmental issues (1, 20%).	– The Cluster tries to share good practices on the 'environmental engagement' (1, 6%). – The Cluster tries to create a consortium between national and international NGOs to get funding and to build partners capacity (1, 6%). – There is a draft on the strategy on 'Localization' (1, 6%). – Working group in Menstrual Hygiene (2, 12%).	– Inter-sectoral synergies with Nexus approach in 2023 (1, 1%).
Not doing well		– The Cluster does not collect data on gender (1, 20%). – There is not strategy on Localization at the WASH Cluster level (1, 20%).	– National organizations are 'marginalized' (1, 6%). – The coordination/Cluster uses a lot of acronyms that are difficult for local organisations to understand (1, 6%).	– Eligibility criteria for the Pooled Funds are too strict for the national organization (4, 4%). – There is not enough collaboration with the national partners (3, 3%).

Table 16 (continued)

Activity Report (from 10 reports)	Interviews with Cluster Staff (from 2 informants, 40%)	Interviews with Cluster Partners (from 9 informants, 53%)	Survey (from 103 respondents, 100%)
All priorities and Recommendations	- To create a checklist with minimum requirements to consider the environmental aspect (1, 20%).	- To support local organizations (3, 18%). - To advocate to reduce eligibility conditions for a local NGOs to get funding (2, 12%). - To recommend or create consortiums between national and international NGOs to increase partners capacity (1, 6%).	- To involve more the local actors in all actions carried out by the WASH cluster in the country (10, 10%). - To ease funding access especially for local NGO (incl. eligibility criteria for local NGO with low capacity at the Pooled Funds) (6,6%). - To advocate for the leadership strengthening of women-led organizations (1, 1%). - To increase Cluster's visibility to development actors for better coordination and complementarity of actions (1,1%).

The Cluster isn't doing enough advocacy for local organizations. It should actively champion local NGOs and lower the entry barriers for new partners, then gradually increase requirements over time. This is essential to make localization real, not rhetorical.

Staff informant

5 Outcomes

From the activity reports, the Cluster staff perceived that the WASH Cluster helped Cluster partners to reach some outcomes (developed in the Theory of Change). The main outcomes reached by partners almost every month over the course of the study and reported by the Coordinator were:

- Make strategic decisions;
- Identify gaps in the response; and,
- Complete Monitoring & Evaluation.

Cluster staff informants confirmed they helped members to make strategic decisions via the annually reviewed Humanitarian Response Plan. The outcome of 'Completing Monitoring and Evaluation' was also well rated by the Staff thanks to the indicators developed in the HRP and the 5W. The Information Management Officer also frequently produced many information products to help partners to monitor and evaluate their interventions and to identify the gaps in the response.

The outcomes the least reached by partners according to the Coordinator were:

- Evaluate the quality of the programs;
- Define indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation;
- Reduce gaps in response; and,
- Obtain funding.

Cluster staff informants confirmed it was difficult to go to the field to evaluate the quality of the programs, mainly because of a lack of time. The projects the staff was able to evaluate, were the one funded by the Pooled Funds via field visit but also with monthly meetings with partners involved. However, the Cluster staff agreed with the SAG to develop indicators of quality in relation with the AAQ and two indicators were integrated (on beneficiaries satisfaction and inclusion). While the Cluster staff informants discussed the WASH coordination helped partners to obtain funding, they confirmed that the priority of the Cluster in the six next months was to work on the advocacy and the mobilization of the resources. The Cluster received support from the Global WASH Cluster to work on this aspect.



Partners respondents mainly reported through the online survey that the WASH Cluster helped them/their organization to (Figure 6):

- Identify the gaps (75%);
- Strengthen stakeholders' relationship (71%);
- Make strategic decisions (68%); and,
- Obtain funding (68%).

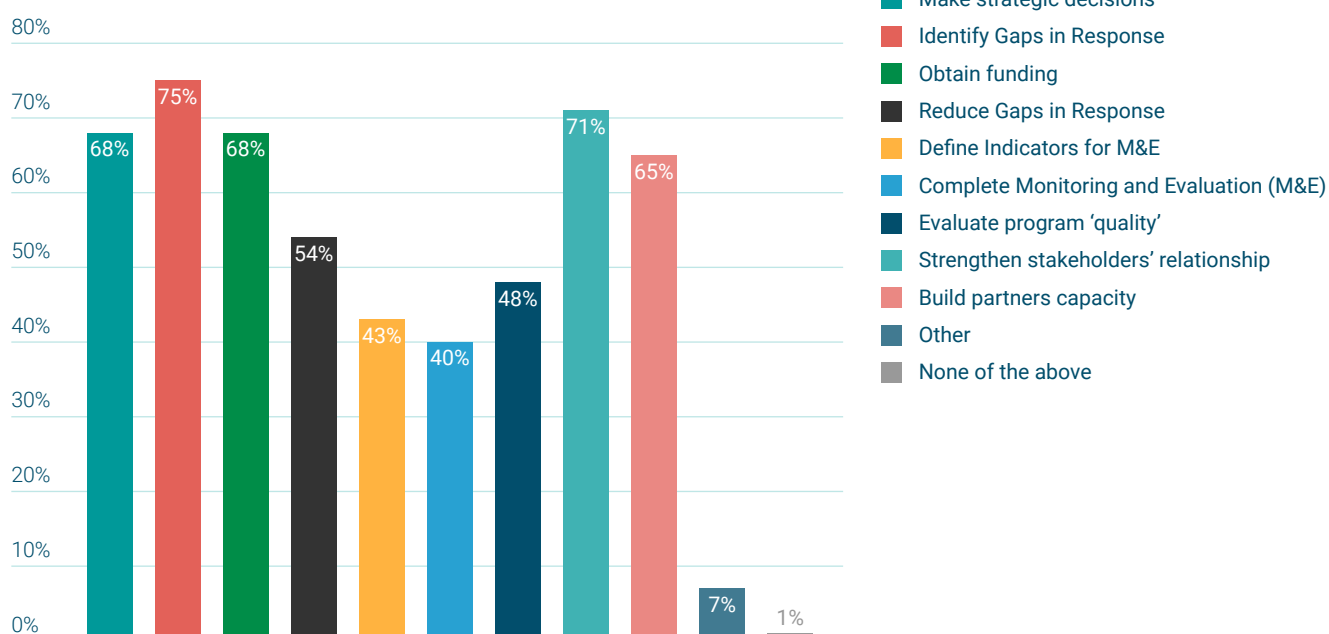
This corresponded to qualitative information provided by the partners informants. Overall, informants especially discussed that the WASH Cluster helped them to identify the gaps in the response and make strategic decisions during the coordination meetings and with information sharing thanks to the 5W and information products on operational presence and activity reporting. Many informants also discussed the Cluster helped them to obtain funding by helping them to prepare their proposals by sharing information on the gaps or on the allocations, but also to build partners' capacity and strengthen stakeholders' relationships during those same coordination meetings and trainings and workshops organized by the WASH Cluster.

The outcomes the least reached by partners according to the survey respondents were:

- Complete Monitoring & Evaluation (40%);
- Define indicators for M&E (43%); and,
- Evaluate the quality of the programs (48%).

Some informants discussed the Cluster shared tools to conduct the monitoring and evaluation, and discussed the gap (via the 5Ws, activity report, and info products), which gave them an idea on what was done and still needed to be done. According to them, the tools and indicators also allowed them to evaluate and improve the quality of the programs. However, other informants did not agree the Cluster helped them to complete the Monitoring and Evaluation or to evaluate the quality of the programs, mainly because it is something exclusively done with regular field visit that the Cluster is not able to conduct.

Figure 6
Outcomes as defined in the Theory of Change reached by Cluster Partners thanks to the tools and activities of the WASH Cluster according to survey respondents.



What outcomes do you think the tools/activities of the WASH Sector help you/your organization to reach? (N=96)

6 Impact and Evolution

Overall, partners informants agreed to say the WASH Cluster in Central African Republic was meeting their expectations although there was still room for improvement (including the need for a stronger involvement of local actors). According to most partners, the WASH coordination has positively evolved because partners' engagement was better, there were more tools, and a better communication among stakeholders. Some partners attributed this change to the leadership, quality, and stability of the current Coordinator. Partners who did not discuss a positive evolution attributed it to a lack of evolution in strategies to involve local actors.

The Cluster provides a strong coordination mechanism that improves both efficiency and effectiveness. It helps identify gaps, prevents duplication, and reduces wasted resources. Through the Cluster, partners access trainings on proven practices that can be replicated easily. The information requested by the Cluster also creates a level of accountability that encourages better program quality. Overall, it enables partners to make strategic decisions, assess their performance, and strengthen the impact of their interventions.

Partner informant

The way we collaborate has become simpler and more efficient. Communication is faster, which motivates people to participate regularly. There is a clear improvement compared to how things worked before.

Partner informant

The biggest *impact of the WASH Coordination on partners* according to partner informants was that the WASH coordination helped partners to provide a more strategic response according to the WASH identified needs and to improve the quality of the response. Informants also highlighted the importance of the WASH Cluster to: conduct an effective response and to improve the visibility of the WASH response to deliver advocacy messages. According to partners respondents, the main impact of the WASH Cluster on partners were:

- 1 the partners capacity strengthening;
- 2 information sharing; and,
- 3 strategic orientations given by the Cluster.

The biggest *impact of the WASH coordination on affected populations* according to partners was that it helps to meet the needs of the affected populations. Informants also reported the WASH Cluster provides a better inclusion for the WASH response and a better quality. According to partners respondents, the main impact of the WASH Cluster on the affected populations were:

- 1 to identify the real needs of the affected populations;
- 2 to improve affected populations accountability; and,
- 3 to improve improve the quality of the response.

The areas of collaboration are not fragmented, and I believe this is thanks to the WASH Cluster, which ensures that partners integrate these areas into their projects.

Partner informant

Summary of the Results and Discussion

To assess and establish the value-add of staffed WASH coordination in humanitarian emergencies, we collected data from November 2022 to June 2023, including:

- 1 ten monthly activity reports from Cluster staff;
- 2 five key-informant interviews with the WASH Cluster staff;
- 3 17 key-informant interviews with partners; and,
- 4 103 online surveys.

Results were described by theme (context, 5 basic assumptions, 12+1 core actions, outcomes, and impact) for each data collection type (activity report, key-informant interviews with coordination platform staff, key-informant interviews with coordination platform partners, and online survey) with the number of mentions.

Overall, the main **challenges and barriers**, besides insecurity of the context, identified by informants and respondents were:

- 1 The lack of funding for the WASH response and the donor space shrinking;
- 2 The lack of staff (dedicated co-facilitator and information management officer positions with fixed term contract) at the national-level; and,
- 3 Partners' engagement into the WASH coordination.

Those barriers were related to the context and to two of the five basic assumptions needed for an effective WASH coordination for which the WASH Cluster staff is not responsible.

Over the course of the study, partners discussed **activities and core actions** well completed by the WASH Cluster and the most identified by the informants were:

- 1 Basic coordination to support delivery, including regular meeting and good communication with information sharing platform and several communication channels to share the gaps and the updates of the response and address challenges;

- 2 The Cluster collected and analyzed data on response activity to produce several information products and to track the progress and performance of the response; and,
- 3 Several guidelines and strategic documents were produced by the Cluster, with the support of different Technical Working Groups and the Strategic Advisory Group to help partners to harmonize and implement a better response.

According to Cluster staff and partners informants and respondents, the main **outcomes** the WASH Cluster helped partners to reach were to:

- 1 Make strategic decisions, and,
- 2 Identify the gaps in the response.

Additionally, many Cluster partners informants and respondents also highlighted the importance of the Cluster to help them to obtain funding and to strengthen stakeholders relationships, but this vision was not fully shared by the Coordinator. The main impact of the Cluster was the provision of a more effective and strategic response according to the WASH identified needs. Overall, informants reported that the WASH Cluster was meeting their expectations and evolved positively.

Informants and respondents however discussed actions the WASH Cluster was not doing or not doing well and provided **recommendations** to improve the WASH coordination, including:

- 1 To improve advocacy and fund mobilization;
- 2 To organize more field visits (including with non-Pooled Funds projects) to monitor the response;
- 3 To increase the frequency of capacity-building activities;
- 4 To involve local actors more in all actions carried out by the WASH cluster in the country; and,
- 5 To get more Cluster staff at the national level to be able to work and develop all the humanitarian core functions.



Overall, these results were consistent with the 2022 CCPM results for the Central African Republic. The Cluster staff and partners also rated the 'supporting service delivery' and 'monitoring and evaluating performance' well. The results differed, however, in regards of the 'advocacy' and 'accountability to affected people' core functions that were well rated in the CCPM analysis, but we observed less consensus in this study for the advocacy, and informants did not frequently discuss the accountability to affected populations strategies of the WASH Cluster. While the WASH Cluster had integrated two indicators on quality into the strategy, the AAP initiative was mainly enhanced by a Technical Working Group led by OCHA.

Compared to the assessment of the Minimum Requirements in 2021, the results of this study suggest the WASH Coordination has positively evolved as only the 'Humanitarian Response Plan', the 'Intersectoral Synergies', and the 'Coordination Performance Monitoring' core actions were considered 'fully operational' in 2021. The main changes (and improvement) between 2021 and this year, was the recruitment of a dedicated Cluster Coordinator in December 2021, the presence of an Information Management Officer during a year, and the formation of a Strategic Advisory Group.

These results have been compared with those from Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Northeast Nigeria, and Yemen to assess the outcomes and impacts of the WASH Cluster coordination with different staffing levels to establish the value-add of well-staffed WASH coordination in humanitarian emergencies.



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