



WASH Cluster
Water Sanitation Hygiene

Country Report: Northeast Nigeria

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).

Northeast Nigeria 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 five monthly activity reports from Sector staff;
- 2 four key-informant interviews with the Sector staff;
- 3 19 key-informant interviews with Sector partners; and,
- 4 83 online surveys.

According to staff and partners, the activities the most completed by the WASH coordination platform in Northeast Nigeria were:

- 1 the basic coordination to support delivery, including coordination meetings and information sharing that helped partners to share updates, identify gaps, make strategic decisions, provide technical support, and strengthen stakeholders' relationships;
- 2 the capacity-building activities or shared information on opportunities of training and workshops that allowed partners to increase their capacities and provide effective response; and,
- 3 the development of standards and technical documents to plan and harmonize the response.

With those actions, informants agreed to say the WASH coordination platform helped partners to make strategic decisions, identify the gaps in the response, and strengthen stakeholders' relationships. These outcomes impacted the most the partners and the affected populations by providing an effective and strategic response to avoid duplication of activities and meeting the needs of the affected populations. Overall, respondents reported that the WASH Sector was meeting their expectations and had evolved positively.

While partners discussed the Sector shared tools to conduct the monitoring and evaluation and that monitoring visits ensured partners were not going out of scope, the outcomes the least reached by the WASH coordination platform were to 'Complete Monitoring & Evaluation', 'Evaluate the quality of the programs', and 'Obtain funding'. Additionally, staff and partners provided recommendations to improve the WASH coordination platform in Northeast Nigeria, including:

- 1 to advocate for more funds and resources;
- 2 to work on capacity building and support new organizations with more training;
- 3 to further continue localization (especially regarding the funding and the inclusion of national staff into the Sector staff;
- 4 to work on the exit/sustainability strategy and look at the Nexus between Humanitarian and Development response; and,
- 5 to improve the WASH Sector Common Pipeline and Supplies in terms of visibility and items availability.

Overall, this study collected rich context-specific details on the WASH coordination platform in Northeast Nigeria 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.

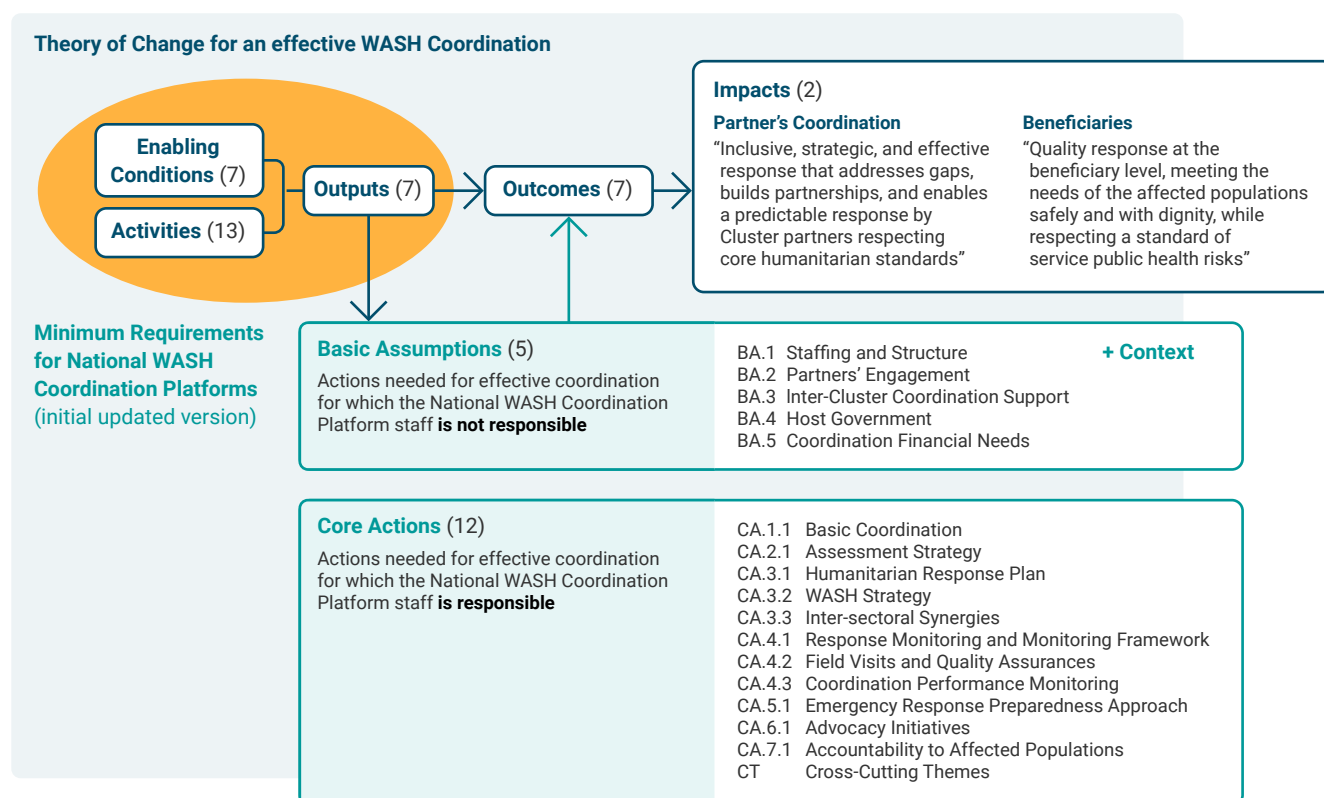
Over the past four years, Tufts University and UNICEF have collaborated to complete research to understand the value-add of WASH Coordination in Emergencies.

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.; Porteaed, 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-nationalhumanitarian-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.

Quality assurance is something that we have some work to do on. I recall that the global WASH cluster is piloting it in maybe six countries.

Staff informant



Methods

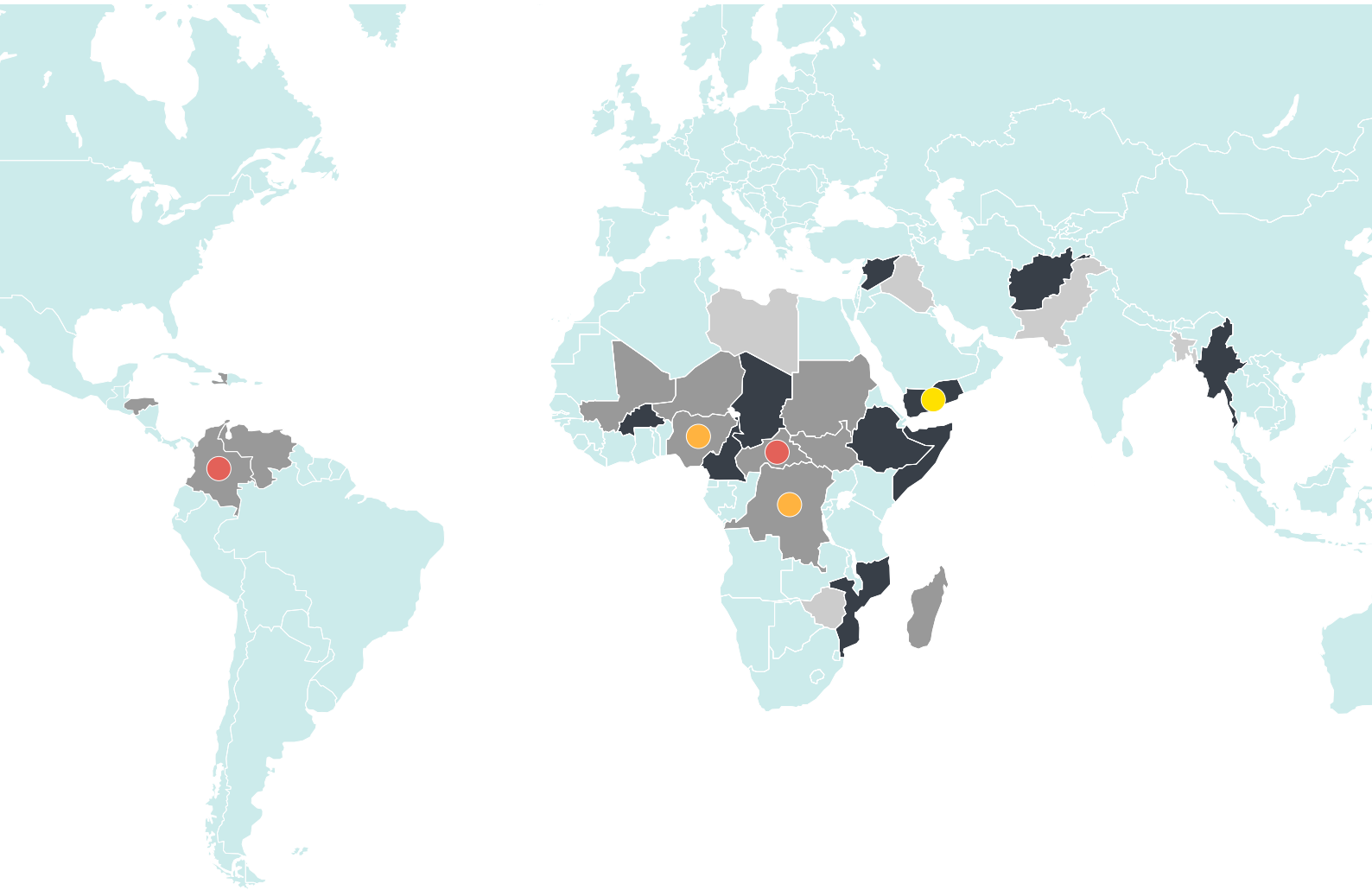
This work was approved by the Social, Behavioral, and Educational Research Institutional Review Board (SBER IRB) at Tufts University (STUDY00002894). No local ethics approval was needed, as all human-subject interactions were conducted remotely.

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

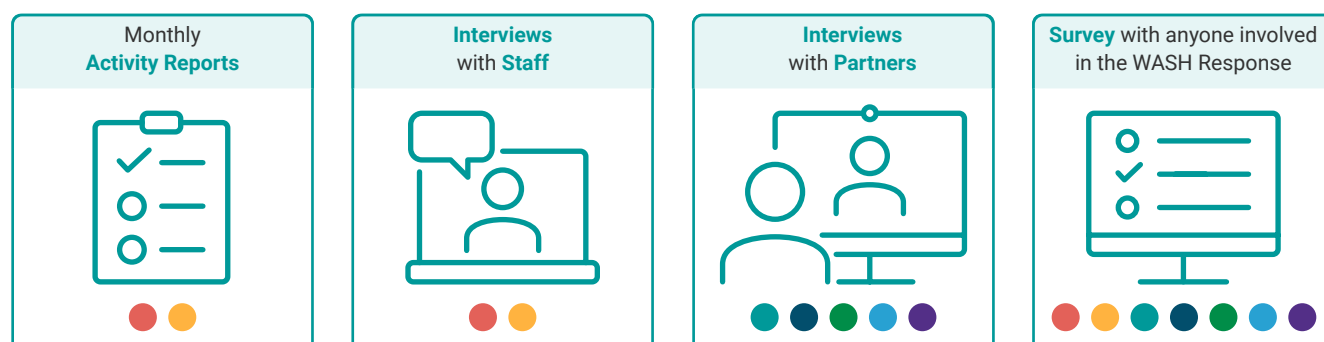
at the time of the study (figure updated from the GWC website⁸)



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 **Northeast Nigeria** (NE Nigeria) 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 5 activity reports between November and April 2023, including 4 from the Coordinator (for the months of November, December, January, and March) and 1 from the Information Manager (in November).
- 2 **Key informant interviews with Sector staff:** We recruited the Sector Coordinator, the co-Coordinator, and the Information Manager over the two rounds of data collections and four key-informant interviews were conducted with the Sector Coordinator (Rounds I and II), the co-Coordinator (Round II), and the Information Manager (Round II).
- 3 **Key-informant interviews with Sector partners:** We recruited 33 people from the Sector contact list (36 contacts) and 19 key-informant interviews were conducted with 14 different people. Among the interviews, 10 were conducted with partners from international NGOs, 7 with partners from national NGOs, and 1 with a donor and a member of the host government.
- 4 **Online survey with anyone self-defining involved in the response:** The online survey was sent to the broad Sector contact list (589 contacts) and filled out 82 times. 36 surveys were filled out by partners from international NGOs and 26 by partners from national NGOs.

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)	5	4		1
Coordination Staff (sub-national level)				
National Organizations			7	36
International Organizations			10	26
Government			1	9
Donor				
Other (UN, Observer, etc.)			1	10
	N = 5	N = 4	N = 19	N = 82

2 Context

Since the start of the non-international armed conflict in 2009, there have been millions of vulnerable people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states in NE Nigeria. The L3 emergency was assigned from 2016 to 2019⁹ and in 2023, an estimated 8.3M of people were in need of humanitarian assistance in Northeast Nigeria¹⁰. There are few signs that the conflict will come to an end in the short term. Displacement from violence, high levels of malnutrition, food insecurity, camp closure and resettlement, climate change, and outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, in addition to lack of basic services and protection, were identified as the most pressing problems contributing to the need for humanitarian aid.

In 2023, an estimated 5.1M people were in need of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance and services and the humanitarian response cycle targeted 3.1M in WASH need with a 113M financial requirement.

The Sector approach was activated in NE Nigeria in 2016, and the objectives of the WASH Sector in 2023 were to:

- i Support life-saving assistance through the provision of safe water at the household level by ensuring emergency and sustainable water sources are available for the affected populations;
- ii Improve access to sanitation, ensuring the availability of gender segregated sanitation facilities;
- iii Promote, in local languages, culturally appropriate hygiene messages for social behaviour change for all target populations (delivered alongside key WASH non-food item distributions) – namely, households with children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and/or cholera cases;
- iv Continue to mainstream protection and mitigate gender-based violence (GBV); and,
- v To ensure that access to WASH services takes into account findings from systematic consultations with women and girls.

Barriers related to the context impacting the effectiveness of the WASH coordination emerged during the key-informant interviews with Sector staff and partner respondents, and from the online surveys.

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

Activity Report (no information)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 informants, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 15 informants, 79%)	Survey (from 10 informants, 12%)
Barriers	– Lack of funding for the WASH response (3, 75%). – Lack of access to hard to reach areas because of flooding and insecurity (2, 50%). – Political interference with activities (2, 50%). – Liquidity crisis because the government forbade old banknotes in January 2023 (1, 25%).	– Insecurity (7, 37%). – Lack of funding for the WASH response (5, 26%). – Poor internet network services that impact communication and information sharing (3, 16%). – Low capacity of partners (3, 16%). – COVID-19 consequences¹¹ (1, 5%). – High turnover of partners involved in the WASH Coordination (1, 5%).	– Lack of funding for the WASH response (6, 7%). – Insecurity and access (3, 4%). – Low partner capacity (2, 2%). – Vandalism (1, 1%).

⁹ UNICEF. *Level-3 and Level-2 Emergencies*. <https://www.corecommitments.UNICEF.org/level-3-and-level-2-emergencies?lang=fr> (accessed 2023-07-07).

¹⁰ OCHA. *Humanitarian Response Plan: Nigeria; 2023*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/nigeria-humanitarian-response-plan-2023-february-2023>.

¹¹ Partners reported interactions have a big impact on the level of engagement and networking among implementers. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Sector to conduct virtual coordination meetings that reduced the efficiency of the WASH Sector.

3 Basic Assumptions

Basic Assumptions include the actions needed for effective coordination that the National WASH Sector 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 Sector in NE Nigeria. 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.

At the time of the study, there were two dedicated WASH Sector Staff – including a Coordinator (UNICEF) and a co-Coordinator (NRC) – and a double-hatted National Information Management Officer (UNICEF) at the main level of activation (sub-national coordination mechanism, hosted in a regional UNICEF Office). The team was based in Maiduguri (Borno state). According to the guidance on good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams at country level¹², if the sub-national coordination mechanism does not report to the national one such as in NE Nigeria, the decision of the structure should be made using the national decision tree. Therefore, the recruitment of a dedicated P4 Sector Coordinator and P3/NOC Information Management Officer on fixed term contracts is recommended. To our knowledge, there were no position changes among the staff over the course of the study, but the Coordinator joined the team one month before the beginning of the study and the co-Coordinator left after the second round of data collection. The Sector staff has Terms of Reference available for their positions.

The Information Management Officer position should be dedicated. I think there is quite a lot of work within the role, and the double hating reduces the effectiveness. That is something that can easily improve the coordination because a lot of things are delayed because of the over stretched nature of the current setup.

Partner informant

Additionally, there were two double-hatted state focal points (UNICEF) for Yobe and Adamawa states and additional district focal points for the main Local Government Area (LGA) (from national or international organizations). The WASH Sector has a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and four Technical Working Groups (TWiGs) on drinking water (including ground water monitoring), sanitation (with Fecal Sludge Management as a sub-group), hygiene promotion, and infectious disease (with Menstrual Health Management sub-group).

Several facilitators, barriers, and recommendations on 'Staffing and Structure' emerged from the Sector staff and partners interviews, but also from the surveys.

¹² 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>.

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 11 respondents, 58%)	Survey (from 83 surveys, 100%)
Facilitators	– Sector staff has Term of Reference. – The WASH sector receives support from UNICEF (daily collaboration, WASH supplies for WASH sector common pipeline, cholera proposal, administrative and financial support, etc.). – The GWC provides support (development of the NE Nigeria GWC Annual Report 2022 Country Profile in January 2023). – The SAG exists, shared the meeting minutes, and reviewed the Terms of Reference. – TWIGs exist.	– Qualified staff (2, 50%). – Good understanding of the Coordination/Sector Coordinators roles from the UNICEF Senior Manager (2, 50%). – The WASH Sector receives support from the GWC (on information management and advocacy framework) (2, 50%). – Good relationship and understanding among the staff at the main level of activation (1, 25%). – Focal points are present in the main districts to share information (1, 25%). – Clear IM framework for the double-hatted Information Management officer outlines the work and eases the position (1, 25%). – The SAG has been strengthened (1 in Round II, 25%).	– Qualified Sector staff and good leadership (9, 47%). – That is good to have UNICEF as the Sector Lead Agency because they work together with the government and they are very active (2, 11%). – Sector structure and subdivision enable to understand what is happening and collect information (1, 5%).	– Terms of Reference for WASH Sector exist (30, 37%) with detailed description of mandate/responsibilities/accountabilities/rules of engagement for members and the Sector as a group. – The Technical Working Groups exist (60, 73%) to provide technical expertise in handling WASH related issues. – The Strategic Advisory Group exists (26, 32%) and routine and emergency meetings to provide strategic direction and recommendations for the WASH Sector are held.
Barriers		– The structure of coordination (WASH Sector hosted by a UNICEF regional office) creates problems and slows actions (3, 75%). – Response time and help from the GWC is slow because they are often overwhelmed (2, 50%). – Coordination not always efficient at the state-level of coordination (double-hatting, turnover, contract types, and qualification) and district level (turnover and no dedicated funding) (2, 50%). – Double-hatted Information Management Officer (1, 25%). – Co-Coordinator (NRC) will be on leave in a few months and UNICEF may contest that someone from NRC takes the position (1, 25%). – Change in leadership may affect the coordination performance (1, 25%).	– Lack of Sector staff to improve the level of coordination (1, 5%). – The strength of the coordination is not equal across all locations (1, 5%). – Sector staff tends to be slightly autocratic and there is a tendency to lose some of the Sector integrity (1, 5%).	– The sub-coordination at the district/LGA level is not operating according to humanitarian principles and being a lead is seen as a competitive advantage and used as such instead of relaying and leading the overall interest of the Sector (1, 1%). – Confusing wording of "Sector" instead of 'Cluster' (1,1%).

Table 2 (continued)

Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 11 respondents, 58%)	Survey (from 83 surveys, 100%)
Barriers (continued)	– Decentralized coordination and the lack of a coordination platform for development activities force the WASH Sector to organize 'development activities' (i.e., training on CLTS, list of water points, etc.) (1, 25%). – ReportHub focal point for NE Nigeria (iMAP) is not based in Nigeria anymore so the response time for support has reduced drastically (1, 25%). – The Sector Information Management Officer has only one reporting line (UNICEF WASH Section) because there can be only one supervisor at UNICEF (1, 25%). – The UNICEF WASH Section does not always understand the Sector coordination (e.g., why UNICEF receives less funding compared to other Sector partners) (1, 25%). – The TWiGs are too 'high-level thinking' on innovations and do not address specific topics and responses to immediate needs (1, 25%). – The SAG exists but is not as active as the Sector staff would like (1 in Round I, 25%).		
Priorities and Recommendations	– To strengthen coordination at the state level (2, 50%). – To involve the GWC in the recruitment of the WASH Sector/Cluster Coordinators and co-Coordinators (1, 25%). – To have a dedicated Information Management Officer (1, 25%). – The GWC should review the work of the Technical Working Groups and their outputs (1, 25%). – To get more people at the GWC to help the coordination platforms and reduce the waiting time for specific requests (1, 25%).	– To increase the number of Nigerian/national staff in the Sector staff/coordinating body because local knowledge helps in decision making (4, 21%). – To strengthen the coordination in all locations (1, 5%). – To increase the coverage of the Sector/coordination to other states (e.g., crisis in the northwest) (2, 11%).	– To have a strong coordination platform at the national level to support the other states in the country (1, 1%); – To include local partners in the Sector staff (1, 1%). – To rotate district/LGA leadership to eliminate its use as a competitive advantage (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 29 partners active in the WASH response¹³. The number of partners varied between 20 and 35 according to the activity reports.

Partners' coverage was not the same between the states (with more partners present in Borno state). The Sector rationalized camp and communities to partners. Information about partners' engagement was mainly collected via key-informant interviews with Sector staff, but also emerged from the interview with the Sector partners and from the survey.

I feel that coordination depends on information from partners, and sometimes the data from the field isn't accurate. For example, if I am the lead in an LGA, I might try to make things look good so partners assume I am doing the right work at that level.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 5 respondents, 26%)	Survey (from 5 surveys, 6%)
Facilitators	– More than 75% of partners share their data according to the activity report from March.	– Partner engagement is very good (2, 50%).		
Barriers		– Some partners don't understand the Sector/ coordination role and mission (1, 25%). – Lack of reporting from some partners or reporting without using the Sector tools (2, 50%).	– Lack of reporting from some partners or reporting the correct information (4, 21%). – Some partners do not follow the Sector's recommendations (1, 5%).	– Lack of reporting from some partners (3, 4%).
Priorities and Recommendations		– To organize a training on coordination for partners to make the Sector more effective because it is easier when everyone understands (1, 25%).	– To enhance partners' engagement (1, 5%). – To conduct a survey to understand why partners do not share their data (1, 5%).	

¹³ OCHA. Humanitarian Response Plan: Nigeria; 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/nigeria-humanitarian-response-plan-2023-february-2023>.

Inter-Sector Coordination Support (BA.3)

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

The inter-Sector coordination takes place through the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), chaired by OCHA. The Humanitarian Coordinator is based in Abuja (national level). Information about Inter-Cluster Coordination Support was collected via the activity reports and the key-informant interviews with Sector staff respondents, only.

There are many criticisms of inter-sectoral coordination. Some people have been in their roles for a long time, so meetings often feel repetitive and are not always announced in advance. However, this is also linked to dependency on the humanitarian structure and decisions made in Abuja.

Staff informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (no information)	Survey (no information)
Facilitators	– The WASH Sector receives support from OCHA (Pooled Fund WASH projects signatures and 2023 HRP project modules submission in December and the Humanitarian Coordinator advocate to end the suspension of INGO and NNGO activities in Adamawa State in March). – ISCG meetings are held.			
Barriers	– Lack of efficiency (i.e., late announcement of meetings, short timeframe to submit proposals) of OCHA and inter-sector coordination (3, 75%). – OCHA's leadership, strengths and weaknesses influence the work of the Sector (1, 25%). – OCHA did not follow WASH Sector recommendations on adding strategic indicators in the HRP (1, 25%).			
Priorities and Recommendations	– To improve the Intersectoral Coordination because there are still some things that are pending (1, 25%).			

Host Government (BA.4)

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

The WASH Sector is working with the Ministry of Water Resources (formal agreement at the national level) and their respective focal points at the state level. The Ministry of Water Resources presides over the Sector and gives an official framework to the coordination.

Other ministries (such as Environment or Health) may also be involved in the coordination but that is state dependent.

Information about the Host Government was mainly collected via key-informant interviews with Sector staff respondents. However, Sector partner respondents also identified this basic assumption as a facilitator or barrier impacting the effectiveness of the WASH Coordination and Response.

We have a strong and constructive relationship with the government. At every meeting, representatives from all three states are present and can see what partners are doing. When something isn't working well, they feel free to point it out. Government involvement in coordination is very significant.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (no information)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 1 respondent, 25%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 7 respondents, 37%)	Survey (from 5 surveys, 6%)
Facilitators		– Each state has its own 'WASH related organization' with whom the Sector has an overall good relationship (1, 25%).	– Good relationships between the government and partners (2, 11%).	– The coordination meetings are chaired by the Government, and supported by the WASH Sector Coordinators (2, 2%).
Barriers			– Politics impact the organizations because of conflicts of interest and decisions (i.e., election period, camp closure) (4, 21%). – Some ignorance from the government in understanding how the humanitarian system works (1, 5%). – The government wants to lead but lacks the capacity (1, 5%).	– Government policy is a barrier for the coordination (3, 4%).
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 Sector staff informants, but this theme also emerged in three interviews with Sector partners.

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 1 respondent, 25%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 3 respondents, 16%)	Survey (from 1 survey, 1%)
Facilitators	– The WASH sector receives administrative and financial from UNICEF.			
Barriers		– Lack of funding for the coordination (1, 25%).		– Coordination funding is a barrier for the coordination (1, 1%).
Priorities and Recommendations			– The Sector should have a budget to conduct assessments or organize some events (3, 16%).	

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 Sector and are known about by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, and emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Sector staff and partner respondents.

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 19 respondents, 100%)	Survey (from 83 surveys, 100%)
Doing well	– Sector governance guidance exists. – Coordination meetings are held almost every month and the first in-person meeting was held in December 2022 (after 2 years remote). – Coordination meetings discuss the updates from states, TWiGs, review strategic documents (capacity plan, HRP, etc.), and give time for partners to present. – The meeting minutes are shared after each coordination meeting. – Other ad hoc meeting are held (e.g., WASH Sector Meeting on Contingency Measures for Survival Water and Sanitation Access for Banki Returnees in January). – Contact list exists and is updated/cleaned every month. – Information Sharing Platform exists¹⁴ and is updated on a regular and ad hoc basis.	– Organization of workshops and training to improve the quality of the response (i.e., better hygiene promotion, better cholera response through case-area targeted intervention [CATI] approach) (2, 50%). – The coordination meetings increase relationships and networking among partners (2, 50%). – The Information Sharing Platform is packed and helps to reduce the number of questions from partners and to focus on other important tasks (2, 50%). – A lot of information is shared to qualitatively improve the response (1, 25%).	– Coordination meetings are regular to share updates, gaps, and to provide technical support (19, 100%). – The Sector organizes trainings led by the WASH sector or through partnership with other WASH actors, and shares information related to trainings and workshops opportunities (17, 89%). – The Sector identifies gaps, organizes the response, and helps partners to make strategic decisions during the Sector meetings and information sharing (11, 58%). – Capacity building activities helps partners to improve their technical capacities and develop new trends in the WASH sector (6, 32%) and to improve the quality of their interventions (3, 16%). – The WASH Sector created a WhatsApp group to improve information sharing (1, 5%).	– Coordination meetings are chaired by the Government and partners share their updates (65, 79%). – Information Sharing Platform (sector response.reliefweb + WASH Sector WhatsApp) (48, 59%) stores and disseminates information to Sector partners. – Meeting minutes (45, 55%) with action points and main issues are shared via the mailing list. – Capacity building activities (41, 50%) with technical training (water quality testing, borehole rehabilitation and construction, cholera prevention and mitigation) are organized. – Contact list exists (38, 46%) with focal points/representative and means of communication.

¹⁴ Link to the Information Sharing Platform of the WASH Sector in Northeast Nigeria: <https://response.reliefweb.int/nigeria/water-sanitation-hygiene>

Table 7 (continued)

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 19 respondents, 100%)	Survey (from 83 surveys, 100%)
Doing well (continued)	– The Information Sharing Platform was transferred to ReliefWeb in December 2022 and fully re-organized in January 2023. – The WASH Sector produces newsletters. – Capacity Building Resources/Activities exists and CLTS++ training and various WASH-related trainings are organized.			
Not doing well			– Information sometimes comes late (2, 11%). – There are too many meetings organized by the WASH Sector (1, 5%). – Reporting, sharing ideas and discussing needs and gaps tends to not be as active as it should be (1, 5%).	
All Priorities and Recommendations		– To assess the impact of the capacity-building activities (1, 25%). – To re-prioritize the role and tasks of the WASH Sector (e.g., CLTS training more related to development activities, involvement in events and celebration days) (1, 25%). – To improve the Information Sharing Platform because there are some updates that are not always seen (1 in Round I, 25%). – To set up an 'early warning system' in areas where partners are not present (1, 25%).	– To work more on capacity building and support new organizations with more trainings (6, 32%). – To continuously share information and reports to guide the response (2, 11%). – To improve the frequency of the meeting (from once to twice a month) (1, 5%). – To conduct more in-person meetings (1 in Round I, 5%). – To inform on decisions of the humanitarian coordinator and the humanitarian partners (1, 5%). – To gather the sub-levels of coordination and working groups on a quarterly basis to enhance discussions (1, 5%). – To encourage partners to publish their research (1, 5%).	– To improve communication among partners and to involve the different stakeholders more (6, 7%). – To increase capacity building activities, especially for local partners (5, 6%). – To increase information sharing (1, 1%). – The WASH sector should be transparent all the time (1, 1%). – Empowerment of local CSOs as first responders (1, 1%).

And suddenly an email will come from the sector telling you that a report is out and says this or that. So they share a lot of information. I think the most impactful aspect of their work is information sharing that tells you what is going on, who are the relevant stakeholders, where funding is coming from, and so on.

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 Sector 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 Sector staff and partner informants.

We agreed on formats for assessing needs, PIN, total budgets for the needs/gaps.

Staff respondent

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 1 respondent, 25%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 3 respondents, 16%)	Survey (from 83 surveys, 100%)
Doing well	– Needs Assessment strategy and methodology exist. – WASH Core Assessment Indicators exist. – Assessment Analysis exists.	– A Rapid Response Monitoring (RRM) to assess the need has been established by UNICEF (1, 25%).	– There is multisector assessment (MSNA) to identify the gaps (3, 16%).	– Strategy and Tools (questionnaires for KII and FGD and ODK and Kobo Collect) exist (49, 60%) to carry out the needs assessment at the community level. – WASH Core Assessment Indicators exist (32, 39%) and were reviewed by partners. – The rapid-response mechanisms were reported by one respondent (1, 1%).
Not doing well		– There is no RRM network to collect the information (1, 25%). – Strategic indicators are not related to WASH-related vulnerabilities (1, 25%).		
Priorities and Recommendations				– To encourage joint assessment between national/International partners (1, 1%).

Humanitarian Response Plan (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 Sector 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 Sector staff and partner informants.

We are able to provide a holistic picture of the needs. We are able to provide clear analysis, you know, an unbiased picture of the needs. And this helps the partners to make strategic decisions in terms of where to target and the kind of activities they need to prioritize.

Staff informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 3 respondents, 75%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 9 respondents, 47%)	Survey (from 83 surveys, 100%)
Doing well	– The HRP/WASH Response Plan exists and was proposed to OCHA after having been discussed at the WASH Sector coordination team level and presented to the partners in November. – New WASH Sector strategic indicators are endorsed by OCHA in the 2023 HPC Project Modules logical framework.	– The HRP provides a holistic picture of the needs to make strategic decisions (1, 25%). – The HRP monitoring framework that the Sector develops is quite robust and helps to define indicators for M&E (1, 25%). – The Sector prioritizes or identifies locations with the Strategic Advisory Group and the other members of the sector coordination team (1, 25%).	– Organizations collaborate to provide their inputs for the HNO to prioritize locations where partners should intervene (5, 26%).	– Humanitarian Response Plan exists (52, 63%) and the Plan for WASH Sector NE Nigeria is a 3-year strategy.
Not doing well		– The HRP is simplified compared to other contexts and there is not always enough information (1, 25%). – The timeline is challenging for partners and the HNO and HRP were not finalized on time (1, 25%).	– The WASH Sector provides assessment and data for some hotspot locations only (2, 11%). – The HNO and HRP processes are not as participatory as they should be (1, 5%). – Not on time with response plan (i.e., cholera response plan not ready in April and rain is coming) (1, 5%).	
All priorities and Recommendations			– Information should cover more locations and provide specific needs (1, 5%).	– To engage the partners more at every step (1, 1%).

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 Sector 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 Sector staff and partner informants.

The Sector comes up with strategies and then it helps partners to come up with their programs. So without the cluster, I think there will be multiple approaches in terms of programming and it will not be fine.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 1 respondent, 25%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 15 respondents, 52%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– The SAG made some decisions regarding the pipeline contingency and TWiGs structure in March. – TWiGs developed presentations and conducted field visits in November. – Strategic Operational Framework exists. – WASH Standards exist.		– The WASH Sector supports specifications and standards via the Technical Working Groups (15, 52%). – The Sector develops tools and guidelines to make the organizations use the same methodology (5, 26%). – The WASH Sector leads in the design by developing a sectorial plan, objectives and indicators, adhering to common standards and guidelines to improve and harmonize the response (7, 37%).	– WASH Standards exists (46, 56%). – Partners are aware of a transition plan/exit strategy (25, 30%). – The Strategic Operational Framework exists (18, 22%).
Not doing well	– Not many direct outputs in terms of strategy in January because both HNO and HRP were under review.	– The TWiGs are too 'high-level thinking' on innovations and do not address specific topics and responses to immediate needs (1, 25%). – The WASH Sector Strategic Operational Framework is not as specific as it should be (1, 25%). – There is no tool to systematically convert the Humanitarian Program Cycle into WASH Strategic documents (1, 25%). – The WASH Indicators are indicators of WASH coverage in camps that cannot be met (because of closure and not 'ideal' conditions in settlements) (1, 25%).		
All priorities and Recommendations		– To revise the Strategic Operational Framework (1, 25%).	– To ensure that innovations are shared with partners (1, 5%). – To provide more support in terms of technical experience (2, 11%).	– To improve strategic plan including exit strategy with focus on local managerial concept (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 Sector 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 Sector staff and partner informants.

We feel there is closer working relationship and information sharing between the Health and the WASH Sectors. I think that's one beautiful thing that happened recently where we decided as a group to do a meeting every month and compare notes on the cholera response plan for 2023.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 3 respondents, 75%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 1 respondent, 5%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Inter-sector strategies exist and Inter-sectoral Health Sector & WASH Sector workshops/meetings were held for 2022 Cholera outbreak lessons learned and 2023 Cholera preparedness, response and prevention plan update in March.	– The Sector staff participates in joint meetings with other clusters (1, 25%). – Cholera Response Plan and CATI approach developed with the Health Sector (2, 50%).	– The Health and WASH sectors decided to have monthly meetings to look at the cholera and malaria responses (1, 5%).	– Inter-sectoral strategies exist (27, 33%) on how to work with other sectors (health, nutrition, education, protection, shelter, ...).
Not doing well				
All priorities and Recommendations		– To not only count on OCHA to develop inter-sectorial synergies (1, 25%). – To be proactive and to develop a multisectoral approach (1, 25%). – To develop a cholera helpdesk to map the cases and gather the data (1, 25%).		– To integrate with other sectors at programme development stages (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 that have been completed by the WASH Sector 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 Sector staff and partner informants and in the recommendations provided by the survey respondents.

Monitoring has become easy because it becomes easy to collect data based on the outcome and outputs that are achieved at the end of implementation for these activities. And there is a sort of uniform system for charting what has been done by which partner and what are the gaps that exist.

Partner informant

Table 12

Actions done by the WASH Sector and Recommendations for 'Response Monitoring and Monitoring Framework' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 15 respondents, 79%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Monitoring Plan and Framework exist and improvement action plan led in December. – Response monitoring 4/5W is produced almost every month. – Response monitoring dashboard was produced in December and the Gap Analysis was produced in Mar. (quarterly WASH Services Gap Analysis). – Information Management Framework and Workplan exist.	– The WASH Sector monitoring dashboard is a reporting dashboard that helps partners understand who is where, and to make strategic decisions and identify gaps (4, 100%). – A cholera dashboard exists and highlights the reported number of cases of cholera that received a WASH kit (1, 25%). – An IM workplan was developed at the beginning of the year with the OCHA IM TWiG (1, 25%).	– Partners monthly share their activities to the Sector via ReportHub to create monthly or quarterly infographics and monitor the response (10, 53%). – Response monitoring dashboard and mapping help partners to identify the gaps (5, 26%). – The funds tracking system exists (1, 5%).	– Gap analysis (35, 43%) on WASH services are updated using the gap analysis matrix. – Response Monitoring and Analysis exists (30, 37%). – Monitoring Plan and Framework exists (24, 29%). – One partner discussed the cholera disinfection map and the partner borehole mapping (1, 1%).

Table 12 (continued)

Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 15 respondents, 79%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Not doing well	– The Sector does not monitor the quality of the response (partners does not report the time to respond, etc.) (3, 75%). – There is no systematic mechanism for early warning because the gap analysis is not frequent enough (1, 25%).		
All priorities and Recommendations	– To work on qualitative monitoring with the support of the GWC (1, 25%). – To produce the gap analysis every week or month to establish an early warning system to quickly identify the issues and gaps (1, 25%). – To work more with the communities to collect information by having focal points in those communities (because partners do not all have the capacity to report) (1, 25%).	– To strengthen monitoring activities (2, 11%).	– To proactively share the gaps (1, 1%). – To establish contact with the field base staff for field experiences during gaps analysis (1, 1%).

What we call monitoring is mostly based on what partners report. For me, this is the main limitation of the HRP progress dashboard: we set annual targets, but we don't track the timeliness or quality of the response.

Staff informant

Field Visits and Quality Assurance (CA.4.2)

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

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

Table 13
Actions done by the WASH Sector and Recommendations for the 'Field Visits' by data collection type

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 2 respondents, 50%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 4 respondents, 21%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Field visits exists but no visits were conducted in Nov, Dec, Jan, and Mar according to the activity reports.	– The Sector staff conducts some field visits (2, 50%).	– The Sector staff has monitoring visits to ensure people are not going out of scope and also maintaining quality (2, 11%).	– Field visits (46, 56%) are conducted from time to time to promote quality assurance.
Not doing well		– The monitoring visits are feasible for UN staff only in areas controlled by the government (compared to national NGOs) (1, 25%).	– The Sector staff does not travel to the deep field much to see what is happening (1, 5%).	
All priorities and Recommendations			– To have an independent monitoring body (1, 5%).	– To conduct regular field visit (1, 1%).

Coordination Performance Monitoring (CA.4.3)

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

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

I can also clearly see the Sector carrying out more engagements like assessing its own performance through feedback mechanisms and so on, which is also something that I notice as a change.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 2 respondents, 25%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 1 respondent)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– The CCPM survey was completed by organizations in November. – Fruitful CCPM workshop with improvement action plan was led in December.	– Evaluation of the Sector is done through the Sector Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) to identify how much the Sector is performing based on the core functions (2, 50%).	– The Sector assesses its own performance (1, 5%).	– Annual coordination Performance Monitoring exists to help to improve the coordination mechanism (24, 29%). – One respondent reported the coordination monitoring through policy documents and meeting minutes (1, 1%).

Not doing well

All priorities and
Recommendations

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 Sector that are known by partner was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Sector staff and partner informants and respondents.

The Sector also provides access to basic WASH NFIs through a common pipeline, which any member of the sector would have access to facilitate the distributions to the people in need.

Partner informant

Table 15

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 7 informants, 37%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Emergency Response Preparedness and Anticipatory Action Planning exists and the 2023 WASH Sector Anticipatory Actions templates focusing on floods and cholera was shared with OCHA in March. – Operational Presence Mapping exists and was updated in December. – Capacity Development Plan exists.	– The WASH Common Pipeline exists (3, 75%) and partners are supposed to do the distribution, manage distribution and then give us reports on how the distribution went.	– Partners have access to the WASH Common Pipeline to get some materials in some localities (6, 32%). – The Sector has been building national capacity in preparedness and contingency plan for cholera and flood response (3, 16%).	– Emergency Response Preparedness Approach exists (39, 48%) including mapping of WASH response capacities and Cholera preparedness strategy. – Capacity Mapping (28, 34%) is regularly conducted using Sector developed surveys to assess existing capacities and identify areas of strengthening.
Not doing well		– There is no quick information management for the WASH Common Pipeline (1, 25%).	– Items are not always available even though it was requested and approved (1, 5%). – There is no continuous sustainable Common Pipeline funding so items can be out of stock (1, 5%).	– Using the common pipeline/supply for hygiene kits has potential to delay emergency response for hygiene kits (1,1%).
All priorities and Recommendations		– To improve the WASH Sector Common Pipeline and Supplies in terms of visibility and items availability (3, 75%). – To work on 'anticipatory risk' strategy (1, 25%). – To work on the Emergency Preparedness strategy for the rainy season (2, 50%).	– To expand the scope of the Common Pipeline (1, 5%). – To restock the Common Pipeline and avoid having items be out of stock (1, 5%). – To mobilize more partners to ensure that stocks are always made available (1, 5%). – The Sector should focus on the Cholera preparedness plan (3, 16%).	– To shift to a more humanitarian risk reduction integrated cluster approach (1, 1%). – To map new local partners coming on board (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 Sector that are known by partners was systematically collected via the activity reports and surveys, but also emerged during the key-informant interviews with the Sector staff and partner informants and during the survey with respondents (not doing well and recommendations).

The coordination team should intensify efforts to bring more donor agencies into the WASH sector. There is still a long way to go and many needs to address. National coordination plays a very important role in making this happen.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 4 respondents, 100%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 13 respondents, 68%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– Resource Mobilization Initiatives exists and WASH Sector inputs – for coordination team, common pipeline of supplies, and cholera preparedness and response consultancy – were provided to UNICEF in a 2-year ECHO proposal 2023–2024 in December.	– The Sector staff supports advocacy for partners based on the data they gather as a sector (3, 75%). – The Sector currently works on an advocacy framework (2, 50%). – The Sector developed an advocacy note to highlight the Common Pipeline needs (1, 25%).	– The Sector helps partners with resource mobilization and carries out engagement with relevant donors to ensure the Sector gets adequate funding (7, 37%). – Partners rely on Sector information and gap identification to write their proposals (7, 37%). – The Sector organizes meetings before the launch of any allocation cycle and informs when there is a call for proposal (3, 16%). – Partners are involved in the technical assessment of proposals that have been submitted by other organizations (1, 5%). – The Sector helps partners to write a saleable proposal (1, 5%).	– Joint Strategic Approach to Advocacy exists (19, 23%). – Advocacy Campaigns and Messages exist (38, 46%).
Not doing well			– The Sector does not connect partners with donors (1, 5%).	– There is a bias towards allocating funds to the employed agencies and transparency in the process of distribution (3, 4%).
All priorities and Recommendations		– To think differently to get more funding (1, 25%). – To improve advocacy and lobbying (1, 25%).	– To advocate for more funds and resources (9, 47%). – To help local organizations have access to direct funding (4, 21%). – To have an emergency standby funding for immediate support whenever the need arises (1, 5%).	– To advocate to get more funding for organizations (3, 4%). – To make sure partners participate in Sector activities to receive funding (1, 1%).

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.

They [coordination platform staff] already have that link with the government, so it makes it easier for me to go in if I face difficulties.

Partner informant

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

Activity Report (no information)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 1 respondent, 25%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 10 respondents, 53%)	Survey (no information)
Doing well	– The Sector has joint meetings with the government (1, 25%). – The Sector invites partners from the government to trainings (1, 25%).	– The Sector manages any challenges partners may have with the authorities and reinforce the relations (4, 21%). – The Sector helps to harmonize government and partners workplans (4, 21%). – Government agencies are also invited to participate in capacity-building activities (3, 16%).	
Not doing well			
All priorities and Recommendations		– To continue engagement with government and see the government take the lead (3, 16%). – Having more nationals will also influence and plead the relationship with the host government (1, 5%). – To improve government's capacity for more resilience (1, 5%).	

Accountability to Affected Populations (CA.7)

- AAP is mainstreamed throughout the HPC and a key component of the WASH Sector 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 Sector 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 Sector staff and partner informants.

Table 18

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 2 respondents, 50%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 5 respondents, 26%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	– AAP focus highlighted for more consultations, joint monitoring, and women-led organizations in 2023 – HRP at WASH Sector Defence meeting in December. – Workshop/Training on Accountability to Affected Population exists. – Data is disaggregated	– There is an OCHA TWiGs on risk communication/AAP/localization (1,25%). – There are Post-Distribution Monitoring, toll free lines, and engagement with community leaders (1, 25%). – The Sector works with other sectors (e.g., CCCM) to conduct monitoring surveys to obtain feedback and adjust the programs (1, 25%).	– Partners' learned lessons are shared with the Sector to improve the approach to be more accepted by the beneficiaries (2, 11%). – Technical requirements are created to ensure there is accountability (2, 11%). – The Sector advocates to partners to ensure there is accountability in what they are doing (1, 5%). – The HRP was improved to include elements in regard to AAP (e.g., protection, human rights, etc) (1, 5%). – There are tools for the Post-Distribution Monitoring that partners use to look at the program quality and accountability (1, 5%).	– AAP strategy exists (34, 41%) and include the accountability framework and AAP Handbook for UNICEF and Partner.
Not doing well		– The OCHA TWiGs on AAP is not active and is not on the overall list of OCHA TWiGs (1, 25%); – There is not really an AAP strategy (1, 25%); – Difficulty getting feedback and analysing data from the affected population during the Post-Distribution Monitoring because of lack of time and indicators (2, 50%).		
All priorities and Recommendations		– To do more in terms of standards and tools to assess beneficiaries' satisfaction (1, 25%).	– To focus more on quality and accountability and community monitoring (2, 11%).	

Cross-cutting themes needed for good programming (CT)

Cross-cutting themes include gender, inclusion, environmental protection, cash-based interventions, localization, and the Nexus and should be incorporated into WASH strategies. This component was systematically asked in the activity report and surveys, and emerged from the interviews with the Sector staff and partners respondents, especially regarding Localization.

I'm aware of the ongoing localization process, and one of the priorities is to advance it through better resource allocation. Localization needs to go further by ensuring more direct funding to national organizations, not only international ones.

Partner informant

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

	Activity Report (from 5 reports)	Interviews with Sector Staff (from 2 respondents, 50%)	Interviews with Sector Partners (from 11 respondents, 58%)	Survey (from 83 respondents, 100%)
Doing well	Bilateral meeting with national NGOs Localization Focal Point was conducted in March.	- Good progress on Localization as a toolkit was developed by consultancy (1, 25%). - Annual revision of the minimum extend basket (1, 25%). - Gender is integrated into the WASH strategy (2, 50%).	- The Sector is working on the localization of the response by supporting local partners in terms of capacity development and ensure specific funding goes to local partners (3, 16%). - The Sector has been pushing partners to be 'disability inclusive' (1, 5%). - The Sector invites partners to present some key findings related to environmental issues and impact (1, 5%). - There is a CASH working group (1, 5%).	One respondent reported that the WASH sector prioritizes capacity strengthening of the national organizations to ease transition and exit (1, 1%).
Not doing well		- There is no WASH program with cash-based interventions (1, 25%). - Nexus is not moving forward (1, 25%).	- The Sector does not have confidence to provide funding to local organizations because of some risks related to corruption (1, 5%). - The information regarding the engagement of local actors is not yet clear (1, 5%).	The low level of localization is a barrier that impacts the effectiveness of the Sector because some communities are not accessible (physically and acceptance) for international organizations (1, 1%).
All priorities and Recommendations		To produce the 'Localization WASH' strategy based on the Toolkit developed on Localization (1, 25%).	- To continue further localization in terms of resource allocation (6, 32%). - To work on the exit/sustainability strategy and look at the Nexus (4, 21%). - To develop a strategy for inclusion (disabilities and gender) and work on behavior changes to include those people (1, 5%). - To have a minimum expenditure basket for WASH/NFI items and to involve partners on this task (1, 5%).	- To promote and fund localization (2, 2%). - To let local organizations be part of WASH Sector (1, 1%). - International organizations need to work with the national organization to have good working ground (1, 1%).

5 Outcomes

From the activity reports, the Sector staff perceived that the WASH Sector helped 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
- Strengthen stakeholders' relationship.

Overall, Sector partner respondents especially discussed that the WASH Sector helped them identify the gaps in the response and make strategic decisions during the coordination meetings and with information sharing.

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

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

Sector staff informants confirmed they had indicators to report and monitor on quantity, but not to assess the quality of the intervention or WASH response (including the time-efficiency).

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

- Identify the gaps (89%);
- Make strategic decisions (76%); and,
- Strengthen stakeholders' relationship (73%).

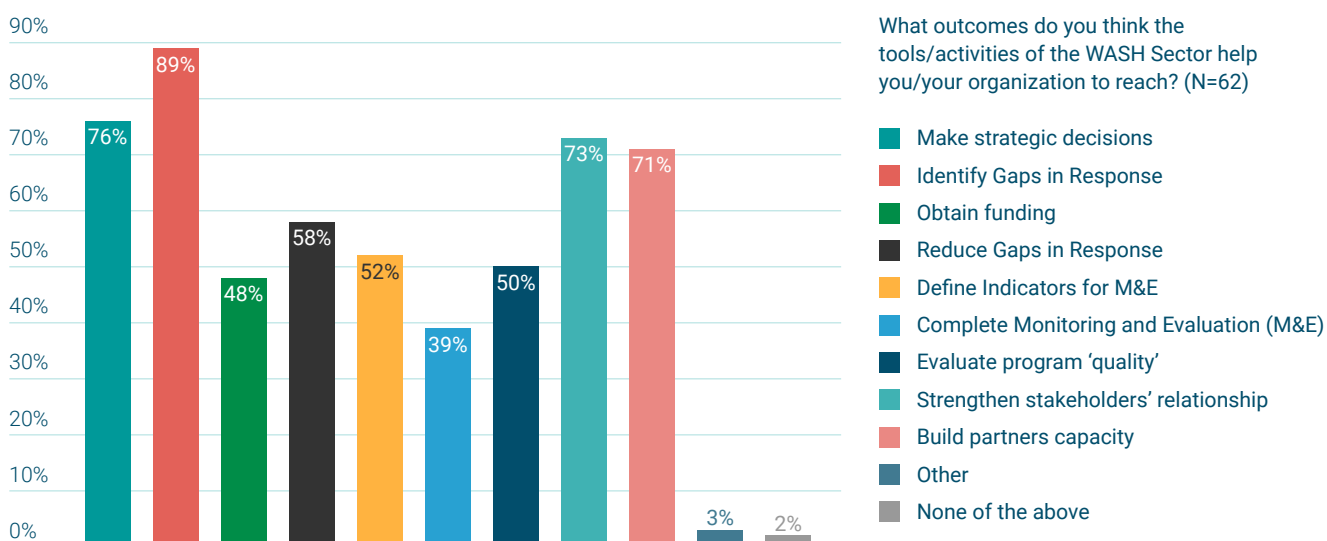
This corresponded to qualitative information provided by the partners informants. Overall, informants especially discussed that the WASH Sector helped them to identify the gaps in the response and make strategic decisions during the coordination meetings and with information sharing thanks to the 5W and information products on operational presence and activity reporting. Many informants also discussed the Sector helped them to obtain funding by helping them to prepare their proposals by sharing information on the gaps or on the allocations.

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

- Complete Monitoring & Evaluation (39%);
- Obtain funding (48%); and,
- Evaluate the quality of the programs (50%).

Results from informants were slightly different as some partners discussed the Sector shared tools to conduct the monitoring and evaluation and that monitoring visit ensured partners were not going out of scope. However, field visits were not frequent.

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



6 Impact and Evolution

Overall, partner informants agreed to say that the WASH Sector in Northeast Nigeria was meeting their expectations. Most partners reported that the WASH coordination had positively evolved because there was more communication, activities, and there was transparency and accountability in what the Sector was doing. Three respondents reported that the WASH Sector did not change and was plateaued; one respondent stated that the coordination does not work through virtual meetings because they cannot address things immediately.

I think it's a beautiful concept. I'm sure it came about as a result of rigorous thinking and experiences in different regions of the world over the years, but it's a very good thing that has come up and it should continue to stay there for a long time.

Partner informant

Through the support it provides to its members, the Sector contributes to more effective delivery. When coordination is strong, delivery improves, even with limited resources, and more people in need are able to access assistance.

Partner informant

The biggest *impact of the WASH Coordination on partners* according to partner informants was that the coordination helped partners provide an effective and strategic response and to improve the quality of the response. Respondents also highlighted the importance of the WASH Sector to: develop new approaches and innovation, to keep peace between partners, and to answer some critical challenges. The main impact on partners according to survey respondents were:

- 1 the coordination and planning of the response;
- 2 the increase of coverage of the WASH intervention; and,
- 3 the capacity-building reinforcement.

The biggest *impact of the WASH coordination on affected populations* according to partners was that it helped to meet the needs and target areas with the highest level of needs. Informants also reported that the WASH Sector improves the quality of the response and provides an inclusive response. Similarly, according to partners respondents, the main impact of the WASH Sector on the affected populations were:

- 1 the increase of response coverage area to meet the needs;
- 2 to support Accountability to Affected Population by providing awareness and follow-up on standards; and
- 3 to provide more funding for the response.

We as local partners are essentially the foot soldiers. When our capacities are strengthened and we receive the right information, it directly translates into a positive impact for the people we serve.

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 five monthly activity reports from Sector staff;
- 2 four key-informant interviews with the Sector staff;
- 3 19 key-informant interviews with Sector partners; and,
- 4 83 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;
- 2 The lack of reporting or engagement from some partners; and,
- 3 Government politics and restrictions including camp closure.

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 Sector staff is not responsible.

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

- 1 Basic coordination to support delivery, including coordination meeting and information sharing that helped partners to share updates, identify gaps, make strategic decisions, provide technical support, and strengthen stakeholders' relationships;

- 2 The capacity-building activities or shared information on opportunities of trainings and workshops that allow partners to increase their capacities and provide a more effective response; and,
- 3 The development of standards and technical documents to plan and harmonize the response.

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

- 1 Make strategic decision;
- 2 Identify the gaps in the response; and,
- 3 Strengthen stakeholders' relationship.

Overall, respondents reported that the WASH Sector in NE Nigeria was meeting their expectations and had evolved positively. According to Sector partners, the WASH Coordination in NE Nigeria impacted the most the partners and the affected populations by providing an effective and strategic response to avoid duplication of activities and meeting the needs of the affected populations.

Overall, partners did not discuss many actions that the Sector was not doing well (maximum two Sector partners respondents in the key-informant interviews and three survey respondents discussed the same action). However, **recommendations** were provided to improve the coordination, including:

- 1 To advocate for more funds and resources;
- 2 To work on capacity building and support new organizations with more trainings;
- 3 To further continue localization (especially regarding the funding and the inclusion of national staff into the Sector staff);
- 4 To work on the exit/sustainability strategy and look at the Nexus between Humanitarian and Development response; and,
- 5 To improve the WASH Sector Common Pipeline and Supplies in terms of visibility and items availability.



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Overall, those results were consistent with the CCPM conducted in 2022 that gave a 'Good' mention to all the Core Functions. Partners overall agreed that all Core Functions were met (100%) and did not provide many recommendations to improve the WASH Coordination in Northeast Nigeria. However, sub-Core Functions such as 'Advocacy', 'Recommending corrective action where necessary', 'Reports shared by partners on their activities are taken into account in Cluster reports', and 'Cross-cutting themes' were actions that received less consistency between partners (75% to <100% partners agreed that those themes were met). In this study, we also observed more recommendations to improve the advocacy and the localization (which is one of the cross-cutting themes).

Compared to the assessment of the Minimum Requirements in 2021, the results of this study suggest the WASH Coordination has positively evolved.

These results collected in NE Nigeria have been compared with those from Colombia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Yemen to assess the outcomes and impacts of the WASH Sector coordination with different staffing levels to establish the value-add of well-staffed WASH coordination in humanitarian emergencies. The consistent use of the same mixed-method evaluation design enabled rich context specific details while generating global data comparable between contexts.



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