



Supportive Environments for Healthy Communities

Issue 26 September 30, 2011 | Focus on WASH and Humanitarian Assistance

This *WASHplus Weekly* contains 2010 and 2011 resources about water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues in disaster or emergency situations. Please contact WASHplus if you have new or upcoming resources to add to this for future issues. Some of the resources in this *Weekly* include updates of WHO technical notes for WASH in emergencies, the 2011 SPHERE manual on WASH standards, links to USAID and other relevant websites.

REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

- **Cholera Fact Sheet, 2011.** World Health Organization. ([Full-text](#))
The consequences of a disaster – such as disruption of water and sanitation systems, or the displacement of populations to inadequate and overcrowded camps – can increase the risk of cholera transmission should the bacteria be present or introduced. Cholera remains a global threat to public health and a key indicator of lack of social development. Recently, the re-emergence of cholera has been noted in parallel with the ever-increasing size of vulnerable populations living in unsanitary conditions.
- **Disaster Risk Management for Health: Water Sanitation and Hygiene, 2011.** World Health Organization. ([Full-text](#))
Multi-sectoral action reduces vulnerability, maintains water sources and waste systems, and ensures WASH is a priority action in the response to emergencies. The main objective of water, sanitation and hygiene programs in disasters is to reduce faeco-oral transmission of disease and exposure to disease-bearing vectors.
- **Guidance on Water and Sanitation in Extreme Events.** 2010. World Health Organization. ([Full-text](#))
Water supply and sanitation services have to prepare for the widely anticipated consequences of floods and droughts, or risk compromising access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. This report addresses the vulnerability of coastal areas and bathing waters, discusses the impact on human health, places extreme weather events in the context of water safety plans and formulates advice for adaptation measures for water supply and sanitation services during such events.

- **Minimum Standards in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion**, 2011. SPHERE Project. ([Full-text](#)) (See pages 80-138 of Sphere manual)

The chapter on Minimum Standards in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion is divided into six main sections: Hygiene Promotion, Water Supply, Excreta Disposal, Vector Control, Solid Waste Management and Drainage. Each section contains the minimum levels to be attained in the provision of water and sanitation responses in disaster situations.
- **Refugee Health: An Approach to Emergency Situations**, n.d. Médecins Sans Frontières. ([Full-text](#))

This book is a collective accomplishment of the different sections of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and has been written to consolidate the broad experience of MSF in refugee programs. It deals with refugees and internally displaced persons, and what a health agency can do to relieve their plight. It focuses on policies rather than on practical aspects, and is meant to act as a guide to decision-makers.
- **Sustainable Sanitation for Emergencies and Reconstruction Situations**, 2010. Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA). ([Full-text](#))

This fact sheet presents some sustainable approaches to sanitation during emergencies. A sustainable sanitation is a system that is economically viable, socially acceptable, and technically and institutionally appropriate as well as protects the environment and the natural resources.
- **Technical Notes on Drinking-water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Emergencies**, 2011. World Health Organization. ([Full-text](#))

These four-page illustrated notes have been prepared to assist those working immediately or shortly after an emergency to plan appropriate responses to the urgent and medium-term water and sanitation needs of affected populations. The notes are relevant to a wide range of emergency situations, including both natural and conflict-induced disasters.
- **The Use of Poo Bags for Safe Excreta Disposal in Emergency Settings**, 2010. Oxfam. ([Full-text](#))

Safe excreta disposal is a top priority in an emergency, but one that takes time and extensive resources to implement. This Technical Briefing Note examines the use of poo bags for safe excreta containment and disposal in urban emergency settings. The brief also explores ways of building more complete excreta management systems to ensure not only safe disposal, but also to ensure the dignity and safety of users.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- **The 2008 Cholera Epidemic in Zimbabwe: Experience of the ICDDR,B Team in the Field**, *J Health Popul Nutr*, Oct 2011. S. Ahmed, ICDDR, B. ([Full-text](#))

During August 2008–June 2009, an estimated 95,531 suspected cases of cholera and 4,282 deaths due to cholera were reported during the 2008 cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe. The breakdown of both potable water and sanitation systems and the widespread contamination of available drinking-water sources were considered responsible for the rapid and widespread distribution of the epidemic throughout the country.

- **Innovation and Sustainable Development in Refugee Camps: Concrete Action: Twin-pit VIP Latrine and Large Ferro-cement Water Tank**, *Consilience - The Journal of Sustainable Development*, 2010. F. Kreuzer. ([Full-text](#))

This paper researches the possibility to increase sustainable development in long-term protracted refugee situations and the work of UNHCR in applying technological innovations. As a case study, examples from the lessons learned in the Nepalese camps are given. The areas of research are sanitation and water supply/storage and two innovations are examined, the twin-pit VIP latrine and the large ferro-cement water tank.

- **The Public Health Implications of Water in Disasters**, *World Medical & Health Policy*, 3(2) 2011. D. McCann. ([Full-text](#)) (Article is free of charge but registration required to download article)

Disasters are becoming more frequent worldwide and water figures prominently in many of them. Disasters can result from a severe shortage of water (drought, famine) or too much of it (floods, tsunamis). After disasters, water contamination can compound an already miserable situation. This article discusses the most current literature on the public health implications of water in disasters and offer recommendations for public policy changes to improve water security.

- **Safe Water Supply in Emergencies and the Need for an Exit Strategy to Sustain Health Gains: Lessons Learned from the 2005 Earthquake in Pakistan**, *East Med Health*, (16) 2010. M. Magan, World Health Organization. ([Full-text](#))

The bacteriological quality of the drinking-water supply of five major urban centers affected by the October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan was assessed in three phases: onset of emergency, during emergency response and post-emergency. The organization of a timely emergency response intervention depends on the level of preparedness of local water-supply service providers as well as on their institutional capacities. Bacteriological water-quality improvements made during emergencies may not be sustained unless complemented by a proper exit strategy.

- **SPHERE Based Assessment of Water Access, Quantity, Perceived Quality and Sanitation in Internally Displaced People of Pakistan**, *Gomal Journal of Medical Sciences* 8(2) 2010. M. Qayum. ([Full-text](#))

SPHERE standards and indicators are used worldwide to determine the quality of

support services for displaced persons. This study was undertaken to assess relevant relief efforts on global standards regarding internally displaced person's access to water. The water supply was regular to 110 (94%) and within acceptable distance. Twenty-four (21%) households had sufficient quantity of water while 106 (90%) lacked water storage facilities. While water availability, its quantity and distance from the household are crucial in determining access to water, secondary determinant factors such as lack of water storage facilities at household level are also important.

WEBSITES

- **USAID Water, Natural Disasters and Climate Change**, ([Website](#))
To adapt to and mitigate the impact of natural disasters, climate variability, and global climate change, USAID works with developing countries on disaster forecasting and responding to disasters. This website contains USAID reports and projects information.
- **Oxfam – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Emergencies**, ([Website](#))
Provides links to Oxfam manuals and information on Oxfam's current projects.
- **ReliefWeb**, ([Website](#))
This website is a good resource for maps on WASH emergencies and information on cholera outbreaks, floods, etc.
- **UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene**, ([Website](#))
This useful website has links to UNHCR manuals, policy papers and other information.

Each *WASHplus Weekly* highlights topics such as Urban WASH, Indoor Air Pollution, Innovation, Household Water Treatment and Storage, Handwashing, Integration and more. If you would like to feature your organization's materials in upcoming issues, please send them to Dan Campbell, WASHplus knowledge resources specialist, at dacampbell@fhi360.org.



About WASHplus - WASHplus, a five-year project funded through USAID's Bureau for Global Health, creates supportive environments for healthy households and communities by delivering high-impact interventions in water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and indoor air quality (IAQ). WASHplus uses proven, at-scale interventions to reduce diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, the two top killers of children under five years of age globally. For information, visit www.washplus.org or email: contact@washplus.org.

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