



WASH RESILIENCE, CONFLICT SENSITIVITY AND PEACEBUILDING:

JOINT OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK



Commissioned by: German WASH Network, as a contribution to the [WASH Road Map](#)

Supported by: Federal Foreign Office of Germany

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCA	Common Country Analysis	NCP	National Coordination Platform
GWC	Global WASH Cluster	NWOW	New Way of Working
JIAF	Joint Intersectoral Assessment Framework	PPP	Public Private Partnership
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team	RPBA	Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment
HDPN	Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus	RRP	Refugee Response Plan
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview	RC/HC	UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
IDP	Internally Displaced Person	SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
IFI	International Financial Institution	TOC	Theory of Change
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	TWG	Technical Working Group
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management	WASH-BAT	WASH Bottleneck Analysis
JIAF	Joint Intersectoral Assessment Framework	UN	United Nations
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme	UNCT	United Nations Country Team
JOF	Joint Operational Framework	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MFI	Microfinance Institution	UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

FOREWORD



Visiting Qoloji IDP camp in Jijiga in Ethiopia last year, I once again saw proof of the vital importance of access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation facilities and good hygiene practices for the overall wellbeing of the people living there.

It is successful interventions around water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) that help us prevent the spread of diseases like cholera, ensure that food can be prepared in a healthy way, and provide dignity in situations where people are already vulnerable.

Access to water and sanitation is also crucial for preventing conflicts around resources and remains an important component for development in ensuring health services in communities. Sustainable WASH solutions often go hand in hand with better opportunities for education and more equality, for example by considering the specific needs of persons with disability.

With numerous and protracted humanitarian crises, growing needs must be addressed within the limits of existing funding. And it is imperative to find ways to shrink the needs. To that end, we must apply the humanitarian-development-peace

nexus more systematically: ensuring that humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding join up for sustainable, durable solutions. Successful nexus approaches are essential to achieving sustainable progress in WASH, too.

This is why Germany supports the development of this framework for the global WASH sector. It provides practitioners, coordinators and policymakers with comprehensive and practical guidance on how to plan and implement WASH solutions. These solutions contribute to resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding – while not letting the most vulnerable out of sight.

In DRC for example, we are applying the nexus approach in a project which establishes WASH services (such as water points and latrines) for both internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their host communities, thereby helping to avoid conflicts between them.

Engagement with host communities and IDPs alike, for example by establishing water committees in which women and men participate equally, enables local ownership for building and maintaining sanitation infrastructure. The establishment of better hygiene and disposal practices results in healthier communities.

I am convinced that this new operational framework will contribute to increasing resilience through successful cooperation of the actors along the nexus, enabling better WASH conditions – in the interest of the many people in dire need of assistance.

MS. DEIKE POTZEL

Director-General for Crisis Prevention, Stabilisation, Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Assistance of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Special thanks

We would like to thank Monica Ramos from the Global WASH Cluster (GWC), Angie Saleh from Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), and Omar El Hattab and Jamal Shah from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for their continuous advice and extensive review.

We are grateful to the hosts of the regional consultations in Asia and Africa, Malteser International and Sign of Hope. We also acknowledge the great support of the UNICEF Regional Offices of South Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa.

Technical contributions

Through their participation in formal interviews and/or technical draft reviews, we would like to thank the following individuals for their invaluable contributions to this publication:

Abbie Jones, Alejandro Jiménez, Alexandra Campbell Ferrari, Andrea Bindel, Andy Bastable, Anna Azaryeva Valente, Annakristina (Tina) Kanathigoda, Antonio Torres, Ariana Lauren Lopes Morey, Arjan Ottens, Arno Coerver, Baptiste Lecuyot, Barbara Schreiner, Brenda Brouwer, Brooke Yamakoshi, Bruce Gordon, Caroline Pellaton, Catarina de Albuquerque, Claudio Deola, David Githiri Njoroge, David Kaelin, Callist Tindimugaya, Silver Mugisha, Elke Peetz, Emmett Kearney, Fabrizio de Georgio Ferrari Trecate, Franck Bouvet, François Baillon, Frank Greaves, Franziska Stahl, Gidon Bromberg, Graham Alabaster, Guillaume Pierrehumbert, Jeff Goldberg, Joachim Peters, Joanna Trevor, John Butterworth, Joost Kooijmans, Juste Nansi, Laurence West, Lisa Schechtman, Mara Tignino, Marc Andre Bunzli, Marco Visser, Marielle Snel, Martin Menger, Martina Rama, Monica Llazamares, Nat Mason, Nikos Papamanolis, Oliver Hoffmann, Patrick Moriarty, Paul Deverill, Pierre Cerdan, Pierre Fourcassie,

Rachel Stevens, Raphaela Betz, Rebecca Gilsford, Roland Hansen, Rolando Wallusche Saul, Sabine Eismann, Sam Godfrey, Sareen Malik, Siemen Veenstra, Stephan Simon, Steven Mudhuviwa, Svenja Meier, Tim Hayward, Tom Heath, Tracy Wise, Uli Jaspers, Will Carter, Will Tillet.

Representing the following organisations and institutions:

Action Against Hunger (ACF), ArcheNova, Burkina Faso WASH Cluster, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Center for Water Security and Cooperation (CWSC), European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), EcoPeace Middle East, UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Geneva Water Hub (GWH), German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), German Toilet Organization, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), GWC, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), International Humanitarian Infrastructure Platform (IHIP), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), IRC WASH, Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), Ministry of Water and Environment (Uganda), National Water and Sanitation Corporation (Uganda), Overseas Development Institute (ODI), SWA, Save the Children, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Sign of Hope, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Solidarités International (SI), Tearfund, The Johanniter, UN-Habitat, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, United Purpose, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), VEI (Dutch Water Operators), WASH for Life, World Bank, Welthungerhilfe (WHH), World Health Organisation (WHO), Water Integrity Network (WIN), Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP).

This publication is a contribution to the Triple Nexus in WASH Initiative, co-led by GWC, GWN, Help, Oxfam, Sustainable Sanitation Alliance, SWA and UNICEF.

We would like to acknowledge kind support from: The Federal Foreign Office of Germany



Federal Foreign Office

INTRODUCTION



We are clear that working ‘at the nexus’ ... is not an end in itself, but a means to addressing and reducing people’s unmet needs, risks and vulnerabilities, increasing their resilience, addressing the root causes of conflict and building peace”

[Development Initiatives, 2019](#)

CONTEXT

In contexts where people are highly exposed and vulnerable to recurrent and protracted crises driven by climate change, conflict and other risks – and where states are unable to progressively realise the human rights to water and sanitation – collaboration between humanitarian, development and peace pillars is the key to building resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities.

When built within water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) systems and communities, these capacities are a prerequisite for:

- addressing and reducing WASH humanitarian needs over the long term;
- achieving the sustainable development of WASH services, and more broadly water resource management, water security, and water-related ecosystems; and
- contributing to both minimising harm and building peaceful societies.

The desired impact is:

Improved public health	Improved wellbeing	Improved peace	Improved prosperity	Natural environment
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TERMINOLOGY

The **triple nexus** is the term used to capture the interlinkages between the humanitarian, development and peace sectors. For the purposes of this document, it will be referred to as the nexus throughout.

To this end, from a global and intersectoral perspective, in 2016 the United Nations (UN) Secretary General released a call to action promoting closer collaboration and coordination between humanitarian, development, and peace pillars (i.e., the nexus approach), supported by the following global agendas:

- The **New Way of Working (NWOW)** as outlined in the [Secretary-General’s Report of the World Humanitarian Summit \(UNSG 2016\)](#), and the [Grand Bargain \(IASC 2016\)](#): Commonly referred to as the nexus approach, the NWOW is based on collaboration between diverse stakeholders with complementary mandates and strengths across humanitarian, development and peace pillars.

- The **Agenda 2030 (UN 2015a)**: The nexus approach supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 (to ensure access to water and sanitation for all) through advancing complementary SDGs relating to resilience and peace. This includes SDG 1 (resilience of the poor and vulnerable), SDG 9 and SDG 11 (resilient and inclusive infrastructure and cities), SDG 13 (climate change), and SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies).
- The **Paris Agreement (UN 2015b)** and **Sendai Framework (UN 2015c)**, which were adopted in 2015 to support the 2030 Agenda through measures to address climate change and reduce disaster risks.
- The **Sustaining Peace Agenda**: The Security Council Twin Resolutions on Sustaining Peace adopted in 2016 recognise the importance of collaboration across the nexus (UNGA 2016b & 2016c).

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Joint Operational Framework (JOF) is to provide practical support to new and existing WASH programmes:

- 1 To do what?** Build capacities relating to resilience, conflict sensitivity and peace (where feasible and relevant) within WASH systems.
- 2 How?** By applying the nexus approach in combination with other programmatic approaches.
- 3 Why?** To reduce people's unmet needs, risk and vulnerabilities within the context of the WASH sector, increase their resilience, minimise harm and build peace.
- 4 For whom?** Policy makers, directors, coordinators and practitioners within government, civil society, private sector, UN agencies, banks, donors and academia.
- 5 Where?** Regional, transboundary, national and subnational levels.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Leveraging the nexus approach means encouraging collaboration, programming coherence and coordination across humanitarian, development and peace pillars within the WASH sector while respecting organisational mandates and acknowledging that solutions are context specific and locally driven.

WHAT IS THE JOF?

The JOF sets out the thinking (**Section 2**), theory of change (**Section 3**) and key steps (**Section 4**) for putting the nexus approach into practice within the WASH sector along with establishing strong linkages with the integrated water resource management (IWRM) sector.

The word “joint” emphasises the collaboration required between humanitarian, development and peace actors. The word “operational” hints at the suggested practical steps and entry points for policy makers and practitioners. **As such, the JOF is not a new WASH programme or initiative.**

The JOF is designed primarily for humanitarian-development collaboration. However, where feasible and relevant, the nexus should be extended to include the additional participation of the peace pillar.

The JOF is not a detailed guidance note to be strictly followed but has been designed to be easily adapted by users for their own WASH programming guidance notes and tools.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Annex 1 – glossary of terminology.](#)
- [Annex 2 – links to key guidance and tools published by actors in the WASH sector.](#)
- [Annex 3 – brief case studies relating to strengthening resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities.](#)

IN WHICH CONTEXTS IS THE JOF RELEVANT?

Experience of implementing the nexus approach suggests that it is particularly relevant in contexts prone to protracted (e.g., long term conflict, water insecurity etc.) and recurrent (e.g., floods, drought etc.) crises (IASC 2020a).

In such contexts, humanitarian, development and peace pillars collaborate to provide the required stability to implement long-term programmes.

Given the role of climate change as a driver of conflict and protracted/recurrent crises, the JOF is also highly relevant in climate vulnerable contexts.

HOW WAS THE JOF DEVELOPED?

The development of the WASH JOF was recommended by a global event ('Building Resilient WASH Systems in Fragile Contexts') that took place in 2019 and was subsequently included as a key deliverable in the [WASH Road Map - Initiative "The Triple Nexus in WASH"](#), co-led by GWN, GWC, SWA and UNICEF.

The document is the result of an iterative process, based on inputs from more than 40 interviews with key WASH stakeholders across the three pillars, an ongoing literature review of policy, guidance and case studies, a technical review by more than 50 experts, and more than 10 learning workshops and webinars at the global and regional level (Africa and Asia) with inputs from policy makers and practitioners.



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THE NEXUS



This section provides insight into the thinking behind the nexus and the JOF. It covers the drivers for action, the linkages between pillars, and the relevant principles.

DRIVERS FOR ACTION

Climate change, conflict and water insecurity are rapidly accelerating the number and magnitude of protracted and recurrent crises globally.

Based on current estimates, by 2030, up to two-thirds of the global extreme poor will be living in fragile and conflict affected contexts (Coral P et al. 2020) and more than 100 million will slip into extreme poverty driven by climate change (Jafino et al. 2020).

In 2021, 250 million people required humanitarian assistance. This marks a steadily increasing trend in needs of 250% over the last seven years with the great majority affected living in fragile and conflict affected contexts (UNOCHA 2022).

In 2021, 89.3 million people were forcibly displaced from their homes and in 2020, 286 million people were international migrants, the highest numbers ever recorded in an increasing upward trend, often exacerbating transboundary tension ([UNHCR 2022](#))



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Water insecurity and water-related ecosystem degradation, resulting from mismanagement, overuse, pollution, conflict, and climate change, **ranked in the top 5 risks to global economic, social and political instability** (WEF 2020). Additionally, they are key drivers of displacement and migration due to their impact on health and livelihoods along with the conflicts they risk triggering. The situation is predicted to worsen as 40% of the world is expected to live in constant water stressed environments by 2050 (UNESCO & UN Water 2020).

Progress towards access to WASH services and safe community WASH behaviour is severely off track. According to WHO and UNICEF, when comparing fragile and non-fragile contexts, the former demand 23 times more effort to achieve the SDG target for safely managed drinking water and 9 times more effort to achieve the target for safely managed sanitation (WHO & UNICEF 2021).

Infrastructure is often ageing, mismanagement is common, WASH outcomes are challenging to sustain over the long term and markets and supply chains are weak. WASH systems that lack inclusive, trust-building and accountability measures, lead to inequities in access and can expose women and girls to gender-based violence when accessing WASH services in schools and communities. In conflict affected countries such as Yemen, which experienced 122 airstrikes on water infrastructure between March 2015 and January 2021, attacks on drinking water have become a weapon of war (UNICEF 2021).



40%

of the world is expected to live in constant water stressed environments by 2050.

Exposure and vulnerability to shocks and stresses exacerbate water insecurity, the severe lack of WASH services, the mismanagement of water resources and the loss of water-related ecosystems. Long-term stressors such as weak institutions, political instability and climate change, increase vulnerability to shocks such as floods, conflicts, droughts, earthquakes and diseases.

These crises in turn further weaken and degrade water-related ecosystems, and WASH/water resource institutions, systems, and infrastructure, causing disease, loss of life and livelihoods, and dramatic socioeconomic and environmental damage. As the global rate of urbanisation continues to rapidly increase, shocks and stresses are devastating urban centres, requiring coordination and engagement with a much larger set of stakeholders and services than in rural areas.

There is a huge gap to finance resilient WASH systems. US\$60 billion per year is

needed in fragile contexts (UNICEF 2019), over half of the estimated annual capital investment required to meet the SDGs globally. Without resilient WASH systems, humanitarian resourcing needs continue to grow.

Global WASH humanitarian appeals remain largely unmet and their funding rate even dropped from 48% to 19% between 2014 and 2021 (GWC 2021). Challenges continue to prevent the full realisation of the Grand Bargain commitment to provide flexible, unearmarked and multiyear funding (IASC 2016 & 2020c).



\$60 BILLION per year is needed in fragile contexts (over half of the estimated annual capital investment required to meet the SDGs globally)



The global funding rate for humanitarian WASH needs DROPPED FROM 48% TO 19% between 2014 and 2021

Collaboration between silos is feasible. Significant structural barriers must be overcome to break down the silos between the humanitarian, development and peace pillars. Different mandates, priorities, planning horizons, funding cycles and modes of operation have led to norms, culture and language specific to each pillar, consequently creating disincentives to collaborate (Mason & Mosello 2016). For example, with respect to funding, humanitarians are often bound by short term funding cycles while many development actors lack the capacity to operate in insecure environments over the long term (Tuchel 2020).



TERMINOLOGY

Additionally, with respect to language, building a common terminology through agreement of concepts and definitions is a critical step towards empowering constructive dialogue and working relationships across pillars.

SHARED PRINCIPLES



In the long term, closer collaboration between humanitarian aid, development and peacebuilding efforts is the only way we will achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and leave no one behind.”

ANTÓNIO GUTTERES

UN Secretary-General (UNOCHA 2022)

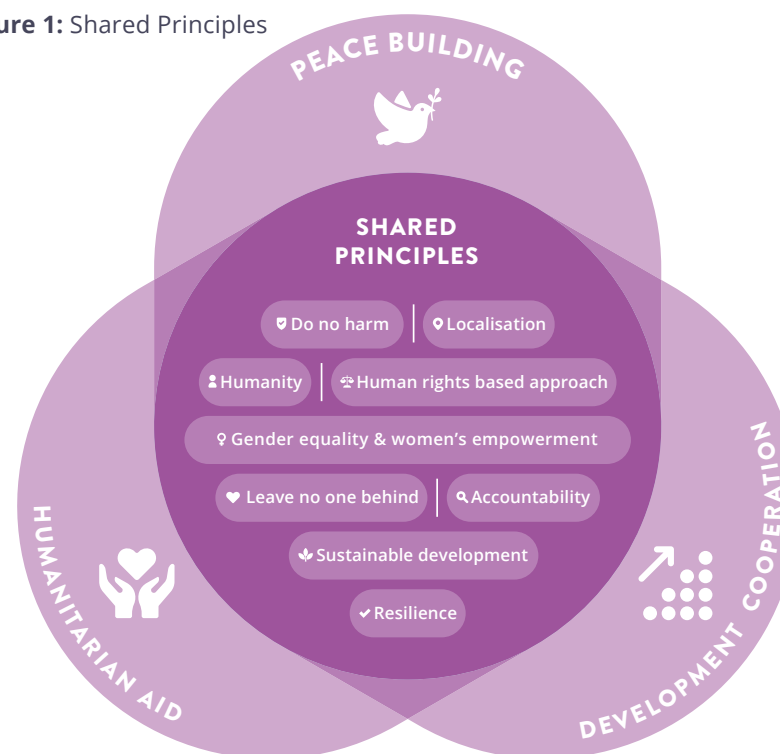
There are several principles that humanitarian and development actors share, along with elements of conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding, thus providing common ground and a strong foundation for collaboration, effective coordination and coherence across all programming phases (see figure 1).

Humanity, one of the core humanitarian principles based on addressing human suffering wherever it is found, is closely related to the development pillar’s principle of employing a human rights-based approach (UNOCHA 2012).

The six principles central to realising the 2030 Agenda have universal appeal across the pillars. These are leave no one behind, gender equality and women’s empowerment, a human rights-based approach, sustainability, resilience, and accountability (UNSDG 2019). The principle of localisation, which is to recognise, respect and invest in national and local capacity, is also supported across all pillars.

Additionally, as conflict over management of water resources intensifies and water security declines across the globe, the principle of “do no harm” is a minimum requirement for every water resource management and WASH programme so that existing conflict is not exacerbated, or new conflict created (UNICEF 2016).

Figure 1: Shared Principles



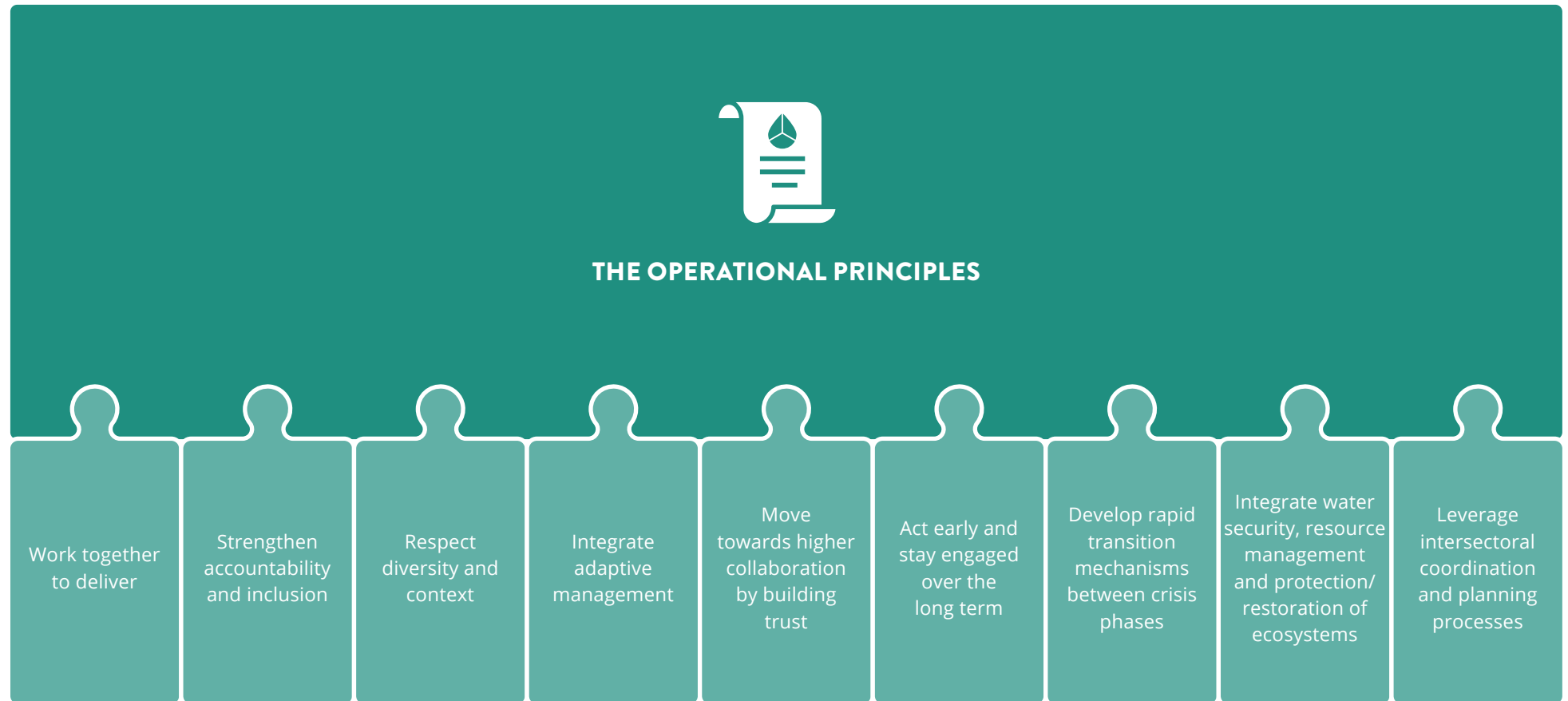
However, in some situations certain principles do clash. For example, targeting the delivery of aid based on political/security objectives can directly clash with the core humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence across several contexts. The resulting erosion of trust in service providers and authorities, the potential to fuel tensions between communities and the threat to the safety of front-line workers are well documented (Perret 2019). Another example is the over extraction of groundwater to support vulnerable communities in protracted crises which negatively impacts long-term water security. Furthermore, the direct provision of services by humanitarian actors may relieve governments of their responsibility to progressively realise the human rights to water and sanitation. These examples are real problems, and they are not easily solved. However, acknowledging and respecting opposing principles, while proactively seeking common ground, is key to constructively managing an effective collaboration across the nexus. This is reflected in the nexus operational principle of “respecting diversity” (see [page 7](#)).

THE NEXUS OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The nexus utilises the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions to achieve collective outcomes. These are ‘commonly agreed measurable result(s) or impact(s) enhanced by the combined effort of different actors, within their respective mandates, to address and reduce people’s unmet needs, risks and vulnerabilities, increasing their resilience and addressing the root causes of conflict’ (OECD 2022).

The nexus operational principles are key to managing the nexus in challenging environments. They are:

Figure 2: Nexus Operational Principles



WORK TOGETHER TO DELIVER

Working together to deliver is core to the nexus. Where feasible and relevant, WASH actors should work jointly across all coordination and programming activities, including assessment, analysis, planning, delivery, monitoring, review, and financing. Joint action can be broken down into three elements (OECD 2022):

1. **Collaboration:** working jointly with multiple stakeholders with a strong emphasis on local partnerships;
2. **Complementarity:** partnering based on the comparative strength of each pillar and actors' mandate related to the context; and
3. **Coherence:** ensuring that coordination, programming and financing is unified across the pillars, including agreement on key concepts and definitions to form a common terminology.

STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCLUSION

Strengthening systems of accountability, ensuring community engagement and feedback mechanisms are developed, and addressing inclusion and marginalisation in access to and management of WASH services (Tearfund and UK AID 2014).

RESPECT DIVERSITY AND CONTEXT

Respecting diversity of principles, mandates, roles and organisational independence, and ensuring context specific solutions that are locally led.

INTEGRATE ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Applying adaptive management within and across organisations collaborating on nexus initiatives, to adapt to unpredictable operating environments such as protracted and recurrent crisis settings. The aim is to create an environment of intentional learning and flexible project and activity design. It also requires minimising the obstacles to modifying programming and creating incentives for adaptive management (USAID 2018).

MOVE TOWARDS HIGHER COLLABORATION

Moving towards higher levels of collaboration (e.g., shared planning, resources etc.) from lower levels of collaboration (e.g. information sharing) based on developing trust, which can take time.

ACT EARLY AND STAY ENGAGED

Ensuring humanitarian and development partners act early to prevent and prepare

for shocks and stresses, and stay engaged and flexible over the long term.

DEVELOP RAPID TRANSITION MECHANISMS

Developing rapid and effective transition mechanisms between crisis phases, ensuring that water resources and WASH systems enable:

1. Humanitarian actors, in consultation with development actors, to focus on sustainability from the start of an emergency response, building on existing water resource/WASH systems and markets.
2. Both humanitarian and development actors to develop policies supporting each crisis phase with associated guidance on triggering, standards, data sharing, and associated accountabilities for all stakeholders.
3. Development actors to support the integration of humanitarian actors' input into long term assessment, policy, planning, and resourcing processes.
4. Humanitarian and development actors to collaboratively transform monitoring systems to include relevant "real time" indicators that incorporate resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities (UN 2020, OECD 2022, IASC 2020b, SWA 2020).

INTEGRATE WATER SECURITY, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION/ RESTORATION OF ECOSYSTEMS

Collaborating beyond the WASH sector, by linking with the broader water sector to address water security, resource management and the protection/restoration of water-related ecosystems.

For example, SDG 6.6 calls for action to "protect and restore water-related ecosystems" and SDG 6.5 ensures that competing interests for domestic use, economic development and environmental protection are adequately managed IWRM, providing opportunities for coordination and planning across the nexus, including transboundary cooperation and establishing water rights.

LEVERAGE INTERSECTORAL COORDINATION AND PLANNING PROCESSES

Collaborating beyond SDG 6, by linking with existing intersectoral coordination and planning processes at the country level, which provide multiple benefits to targeted communities across health, education, food security, nutrition etc. The success of achieving long term collective outcomes within these structures is high as they are often well-established, robust and well-funded (IASC 2020a).

3

THE FRAMEWORK | Defining a new programme logic ..



This section outlines the theory of change (TOC) for strengthening WASH systems to enable their resilience and sustainability in protracted and recurrent crisis settings.

The TOC is underpinned by the WASH nexus operational principles described above and develops the causal links (impact, outcomes, outputs and approaches) to enable both new and existing WASH programmes to build capacities relating to resilience, conflict sensitivity and peace (where relevant and feasible) within new and existing WASH systems.

While the TOC is predominantly WASH focused, the intersection with IWRM and protecting and restoring water related ecosystems is a priority. Furthermore, an intersectoral approach is strongly recommended, where possible, in order to achieve the overall SDG targets.



TERMINOLOGY

Many of the concepts, terms and definitions used in this section are debated among actors and pillars. This section and the glossary aim to provide a base terminology from which a common language can be built between actors. To this end, terminology can be modified to suit the requirements of different contexts and processes.

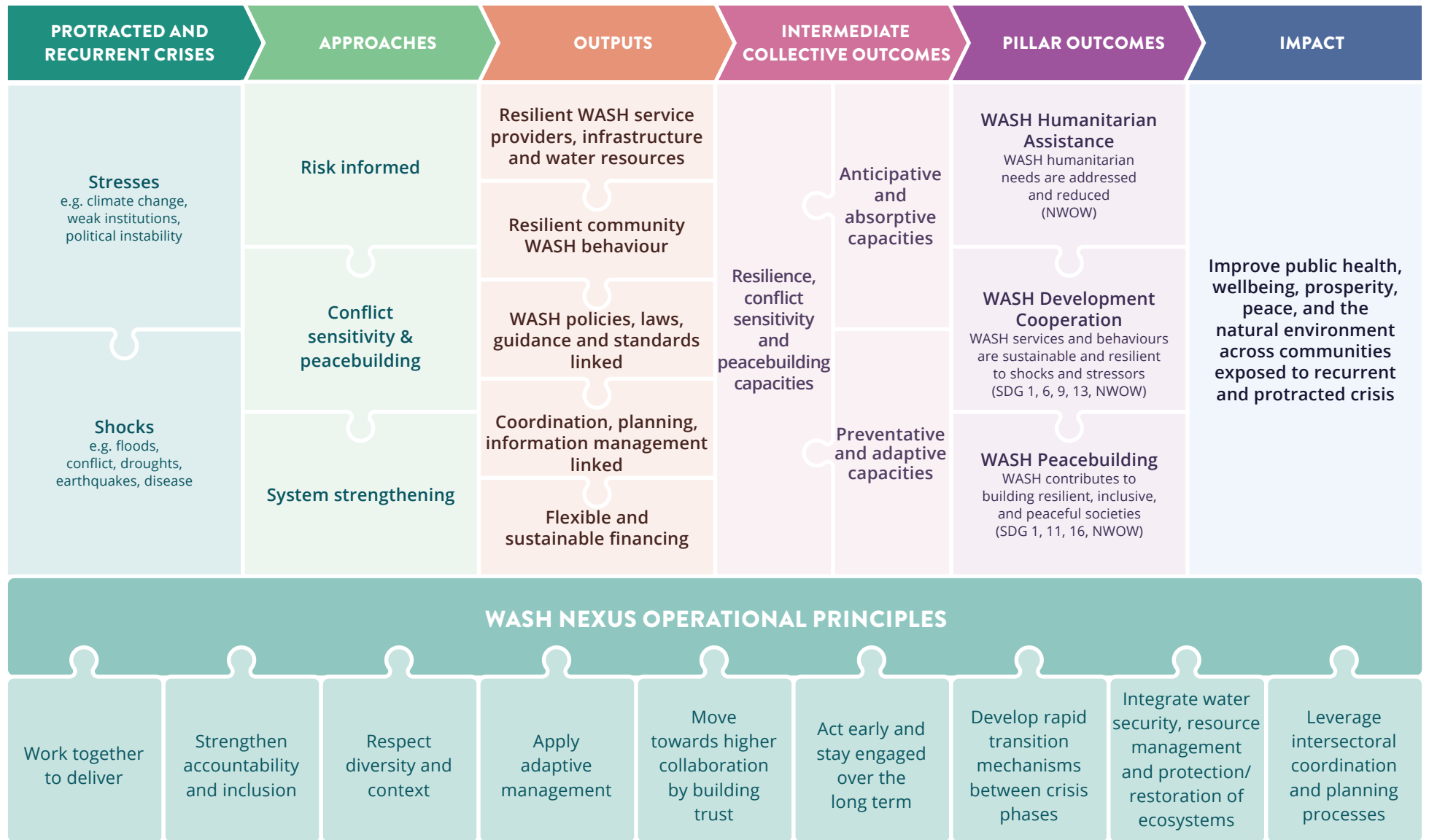
THE VISION



By 2030, enhance resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities to enable sustainable WASH for all, always and everywhere.

“All” stresses that the vision is inclusive of all groups, especially the most vulnerable. “Always” refers to accessibility during and outside of crisis. “Everywhere” emphasises the relevance for all people, especially those living in protracted and recurrent crisis settings.

Figure 3: Theory of Change



IMPACT

The overall impact of building capacities relating to resilience, conflict sensitivity and peace into WASH systems is to:

Improve public health, wellbeing, prosperity, peace, and the natural environment across communities exposed to recurrent and protracted crises.

WASH PILLAR OUTCOMES

The humanitarian, development and peace pillars each have a WASH outcome, for which they are primarily accountable. The three pillar outcomes can be summarised as (but not limited to):

 <p>WASH Humanitarian Assistance</p>	 <p>WASH Development Cooperation</p>	 <p>WASH Peacebuilding</p>
<p>WASH humanitarian needs are addressed and reduced (NWOW)</p>	<p>WASH services and behaviours are sustainable and resilient to shocks and stressors (SDG 1, 6, 9, 13, NWOW)</p>	<p>WASH contributes to building resilient, inclusive, and peaceful societies (SDG 1, 11, 16, NWOW)</p>

WASH INTERMEDIATE COLLECTIVE OUTCOMES | Building Resilience, Conflict Sensitivity and Peace Capacities

To address shocks and stresses, a precondition for achieving the WASH Pillar Outcomes is to strengthen WASH systems by integrating and building resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities within them.

DEFINITIONS



The term **WASH systems** can be broadly defined here as an effective network of people (community) and the systems of which they are a part, operating together to deliver WASH services (IRC 2022).



Resilience capacity is the ability of all key WASH stakeholders to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover positively, efficiently and effectively when faced with a wide range of risks, while maintaining an acceptable level of WASH system performance without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and wellbeing for all (UN 2020).



Conflict sensitivity capacity is the ability of a WASH organisation to understand its operating context, the interaction between its interventions and the context, and act upon this understanding to avoid negative impacts (“do no harm”) and maximise positive impacts on conflict factors (UNICEF 2020, IASC 2020b).



Peacebuilding capacity, where feasible and relevant, is the ability of key WASH stakeholders to address the root causes of violence that impact on the performance of a WASH system (noting that the WASH system itself may be one of the root causes) and to contribute to the peace and development of the community (UNICEF 2020, IASC 2020b). By building conflict sensitivity and peace capacities into the management of water resources, water-related ecosystems and the delivery of WASH services, the broader water sector can play a significant role in contributing to peaceful societies.

Within the TOC, the resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities are labeled WASH Intermediate Collective Outcomes. They are:

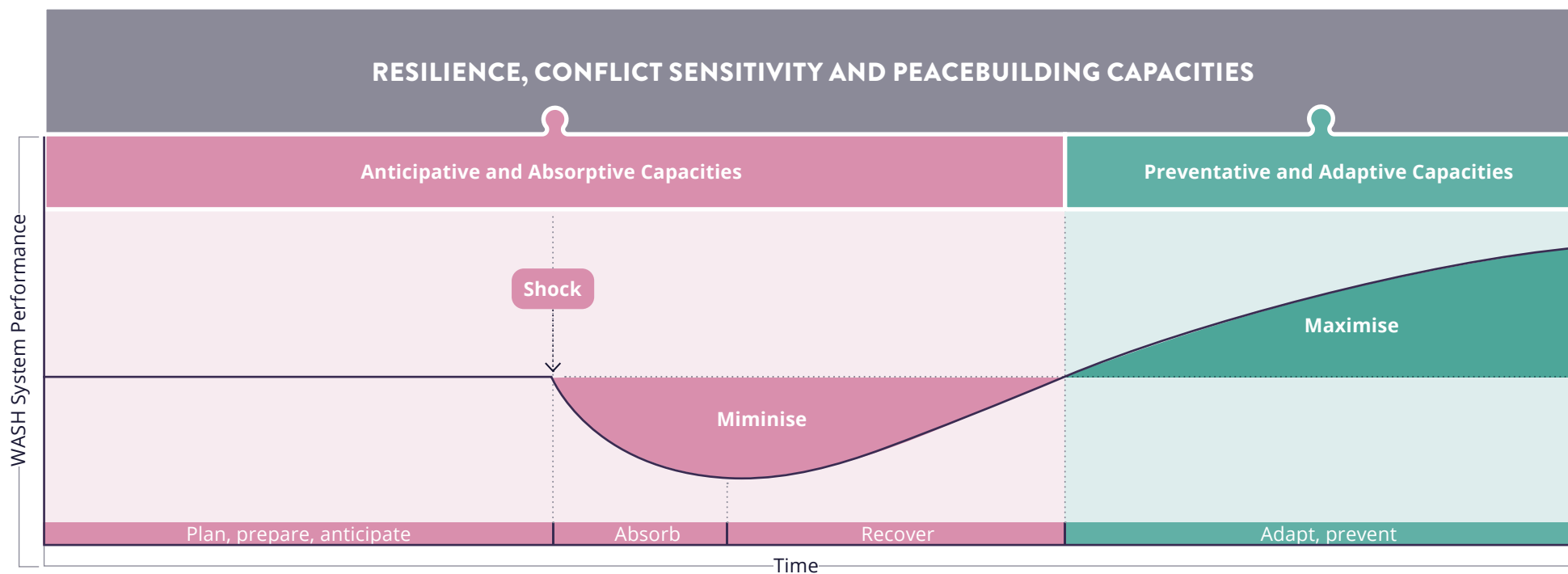
- Considered **intermediate outcomes**, as they are a step towards achieving the WASH Pillar Outcomes.
- Considered **collective outcomes** as they require a nexus approach to enable them (outlined in the Operational Principles below).
- Bundled together as they are **mutually reinforcing**. Conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities strengthen social cohesion within and across communities, and between communities and service providers/authorities. Social cohesion is foundational for building WASH systems resilience.

In turn, resilience capacity provides the stability for building conflict sensitivity and peace capacities within WASH systems.

- **Divided into key components of building WASH system capacity**, i.e. “anticipative and absorptive capacities” and “preventative and adaptive capacities” based on the resilience capacities outlined in the UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies (UN 2020).

The diagram below (figure 4) demonstrates the relationship between these capacities and WASH systems and how this evolves over time when faced with shocks (adapted from OECD 2014). As these key components of resilience, conflict sensitivity and peace capacities are built and further shocks and stresses are experienced, WASH system performance will incrementally improve.

Figure 4: WASH Intermediate Collective Outcomes



ANTICIPATIVE AND ABSORPTIVE CAPACITIES

Minimise WASH system underperformance (red)

Resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities can first be grouped into those that ensure a WASH system can anticipate, prepare for, respond to (absorb) and recover from shocks (such as floods, conflict, or disease outbreaks) based on achieving a minimum humanitarian standard.

Strengthening anticipative and absorptive capacities will minimise WASH system under-performance, as represented by the critical red area in figure 4.



Resilience example – building anticipative capacity: linking the WASH system to a new or existing early warning system along with a forecast-based financing mechanism, which automatically allocates funding for pre-defined early actions once a forecast trigger has been reached.



Resilience example – building absorptive capacity: strengthening the long-term preparedness and emergency response capacity of a WASH service provider to ensure business continuity (i.e., uninterrupted delivery of WASH services) in times of crisis.



Conflict sensitivity example – building anticipative capacity: by using a combination of conflict analysis (ranging from a checklist as a minimum requirement to more comprehensive approaches, where feasible and relevant) and information networks (e.g., informal community, formal security sources, etc.), WASH organisations can increase their capacity to anticipate conflict, while continuously assessing their contribution both to minimising conflicts and looking for opportunities to build social cohesion.

PREVENTATIVE AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITIES

Maximise WASH system performance (green)

Secondly, resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities can be further grouped into capacities that ensure a WASH system can both prevent (or in most cases reduce) exposure to shocks and long-term stresses such as climate change, and most importantly can incrementally and fundamentally adapt to them. Strengthening preventative and adaptive capacities will maximise WASH system performance, as represented by the critical green area in figure 4. Organisations are encouraged to integrate “adaptive management” processes (as described in section 2) which require an investment in capacity of systems and personnel, as well as a shift in culture. For example, the integration of real-time data into programme and management systems will enable a shift to a more rapid and informed decision making, which is necessary for addressing ongoing and future risks.



Resilience example – building preventative capacity: flood/climate proofing critical WASH infrastructure and services and minimising damage to water-related ecosystems.



Resilience example – building adaptive capacity: diversifying water resources and delivery mechanisms (i.e., developing alternative power and water sources) to ensure business continuity should the primary sources fail during a crisis. Diversifying power and water is an example of deliberately building redundancy (or “back-ups”) into WASH systems, which is a key component of resilience (World Bank et al. 2021).

Building preventative and adaptive capacity from a conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding perspective is about ensuring processes and mechanisms are integrated within the WASH system to promote collaboration, inclusion, and accountability (Tearfund & UK AID 2014).



Peacebuilding example – building preventative and adaptive capacity: where feasible and relevant, there are opportunities for WASH interventions to address the root cause of conflict and build trust between

opposing communities, and communities and service provider/authorities by firstly, ensuring inclusion of a representative group of stakeholders in WASH decision making bodies, and secondly, promoting new or existing transparent mechanisms to resolve community water related disputes.



Conflict sensitivity example – building preventative and adaptive capacity: Undertaking a conflict analysis, even a basic one such as a checklist, can help WASH organisations understand conflict dynamics within the community, especially regarding allocation of water and energy resources. WASH programme managers/coordinators can use this information to both prevent WASH programmes from exacerbating existing community tensions and develop capacity for ongoing programme adaptations by seeking opportunities to create a positive effect on the conflict, depending on expertise and experience.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [For tools and resources, see Annex 2.](#)
- [For relevant case studies, see Annex 3.](#)

OUTPUTS

To achieve the intermediate collective outcomes described above, it is recommended to integrate resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities across the five key WASH outputs outlined in Table A below. These outputs capture key elements of the WASH sector building blocks set out by both SWA and the Agenda for Change (SWA 2020, Huston & Moriarty 2018).

Table A: The Five Key WASH Outputs

1	2	3	4	5
Resilient WASH service providers, infrastructure and water resources	Resilient community WASH behaviour	WASH policies, laws, guidance, and standards linked	Coordination, planning, information management linked	Flexible and sustainable financing
Enhanced resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities of WASH service providers, water resource managers, and within WASH system infrastructure and markets.	Enhanced resilience, conflict sensitivity, and peacebuilding capacities within communities practising WASH behaviours.	Resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding elements integrated into WASH policies, laws, guidance, and standards at the national, sub-national and local level. Enhanced resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities of policy makers and service authorities.	Coordination, planning, review and information systems linked across the WASH sector. Resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities integrated into relevant platforms and processes. Existing government led systems are prioritised.	Flexible and sustainable financing strategies are enabled to ensure that both financing and funding is adaptive to unpredictable environments, especially those that experience protracted and recurrent crises.

1	2	3	4	5
<p>1.1 Allocation, upgrade and management of WASH and water resource infrastructure enhanced by integration of resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities.</p> <p>1.2 WASH service delivery models enhanced to absorb (i.e., business continuity) and adapt to shocks and stresses.</p> <p>1.3 Water resources diversified, and redundancy built into WASH systems to prevent failure and collapse.</p> <p>1.4 Smart technologies for integrating resilience into WASH systems investigated and implemented.</p> <p>1.5 Nature-based solutions are prioritised to protect and restore water-related ecosystems.</p> <p>1.6 Local markets and supply chains strengthened to increase availability of resilient WASH products and services, and demand strengthening programmes in place for cash and vouchers.</p>	<p>2.1 Community WASH knowledge and behaviour enhanced to address shocks and stresses.</p> <p>2.2 Community monitoring systems and anticipatory action enhanced and linked to early warning systems and forecast-based financing systems.</p> <p>2.3 Opportunities leveraged to build social cohesion through WASH programmes.</p> <p>2.4 Community engagement dialogue mechanism set up for responsive communication and to resolve conflicts.</p>	<p>3.1 Knowledge of disaster and climate risks generated and shared.</p> <p>3.2 Resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding, where feasible, features prominently in national WASH policies, plans and programmes.</p> <p>3.3 Integrate WASH resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding into standards and programming guidance.</p> <p>3.4 Enhance systems of accountability between policy makers, service providers, civil society organisations and communities, ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined between both WASH humanitarian and development actors.</p> <p>3.5 Enhance WASH sector regulation of services to adequately cover all stages of a crisis.</p> <p>3.6 Local and national civil society organisations are included in national and local decision making around planning, policy enactment and delivery.</p>	<p>4.1 WASH stakeholders mapped to facilitate collaboration.</p> <p>4.2 Joint assessment, planning, monitoring processes and coordination platforms identified to facilitate participation of humanitarian and development actors.</p> <p>4.2 Resilience and peacebuilding is integrated into WASH Joint Sector Reviews and WASH Bottleneck Analysis (WASH-BAT).</p> <p>4.3 A joint context and risk (including conflict) analysis is completed as a foundational element of WASH programming.</p> <p>4.4 Humanitarian and development information management systems are linked, covering WASH gaps, risks, and vulnerabilities.</p> <p>4.5 Contingency plans are periodically updated to address shocks and stresses.</p> <p>4.6 Plans for the transition to government-led national coordination platforms (NCPs) are prepared and implemented, and the WASH Cluster deactivated (if applicable).</p>	<p>5.1 A landscape analysis of opportunities for financing resilience and peacebuilding initiatives within the WASH sector is conducted.</p> <p>5.2 WASH resilience and peacebuilding (where feasible) is integrated into country level financing strategies.</p> <p>5.3 Pre-crisis risk assessment of WASH institutions undertaken; flexible and forecast-based financing mechanisms are built.</p> <p>5.4 Research/evaluations of innovative WASH financing models conducted by banks/IFIs in crisis settings to identify lessons learned and opportunities for long term investment.</p> <p>5.5 The long term performance of WASH service providers is enhanced as a prerequisite to attract financing.</p> <p>5.6 Financial management capacity of local private sector, government and NGOs in the WASH Sector is built.</p> <p>5.7 Advocacy for predictable, un-earmarked and flexible multi-year funding is conducted.</p>

THE NEXUS APPROACH | Operational and Programmatic

In order to achieve the outputs and outcomes described above, it is recommended to apply both operational principles and programmatic approaches.

- Firstly, apply the WASH Nexus Operational Principles outlined in section 2. In the context of recurring and protracted crises, these principles are foundational to the TOC and are key to enabling the programmatic approaches.
- Secondly, apply the programmatic approaches outlined below to enable both

the delivery of the outputs and the building of resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities.



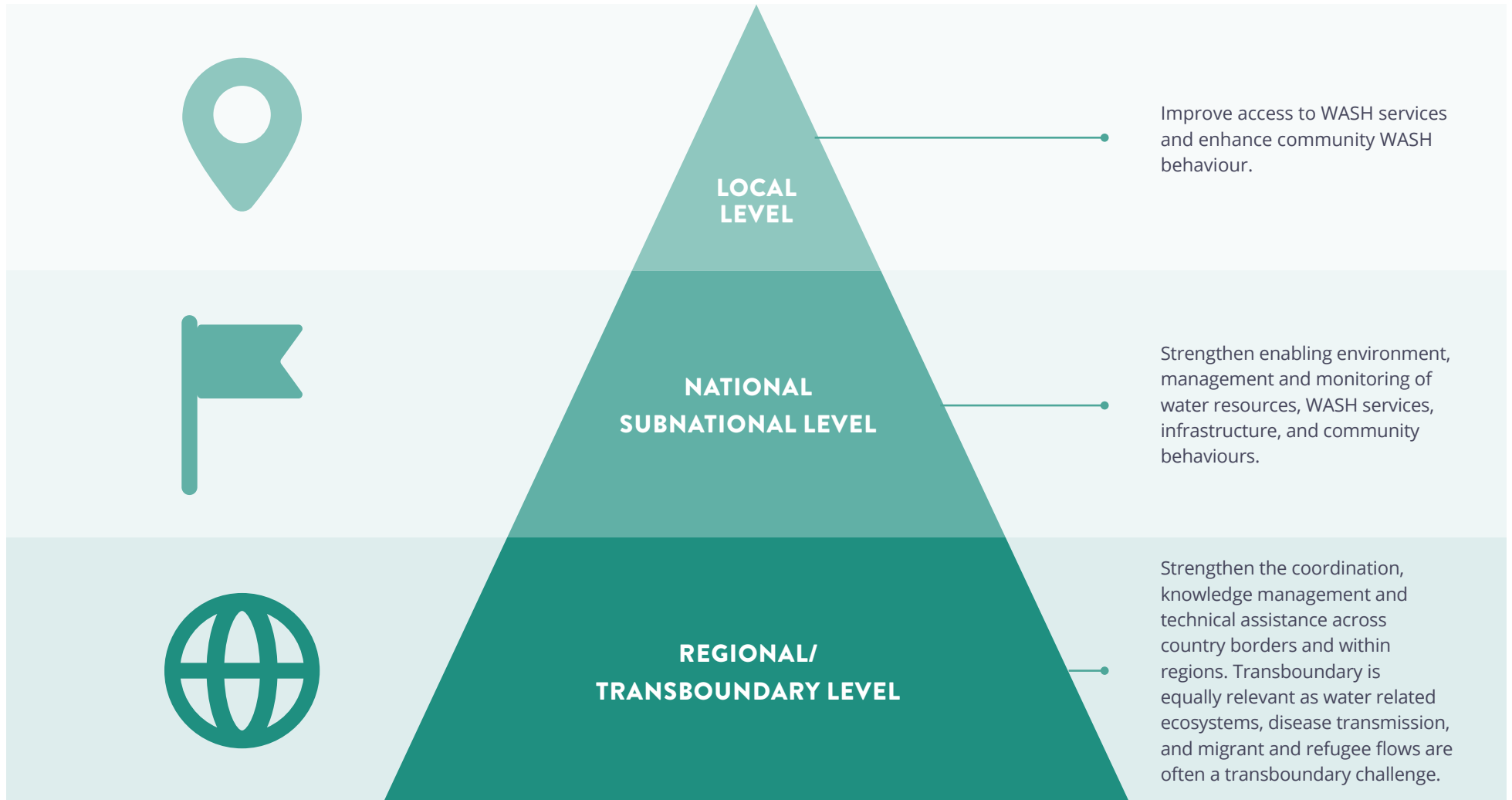
TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Links to useful guidance tools can be found in Annex 2.](#)

PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES (Operational principles are equally applied here)		
Risk informed	Conflict sensitivity & peacebuilding	System strengthening
<p>A risk informed and context specific way of working is a minimum requirement.</p> <p>It begins with an analysis of the local context to understand the multiple and interconnected dimensions of risk, including conflict (UNICEF 2018). This analysis then provides the evidence and direction for building risk-informed capacities such as resilience.</p>	<p>Conflict sensitivity is a minimum requirement while peacebuilding is applicable where feasible and relevant. Conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities can be applied across three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Connecting WASH institutions and communities (e.g., via a service provider-community feedback mechanism); ➤ Enhancing relationships at the community level, (e.g., through the allocation and management of water resources); and ➤ Enhancing individual capacities (e.g., by empowering women and indigenous WASH representatives (UNICEF 2016)). 	<p>The aim of the system strengthening approach, along with a risk informed approach, is to first identify the linkages between shocks and stresses and the vulnerability and exposure of WASH services in a given geographic area, and to then address them in a targeted manner across the five outputs / buildings blocks (UN 2020, Tillet et al. 2020).</p> <p>In addressing them, the approach aims to understand where resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities are best placed within and between WASH systems, and to build them in a way that leverages the interconnectedness of these WASH systems.</p>

INTERVENTION LEVELS

The framework covers three levels of interventions for strengthening resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding in the WASH sector:



4

KEY STEPS | Putting the JOF into practice



This section outlines how to put the WASH nexus approach into practice through a series of key steps (see figure 5).



Policy makers and practitioners



Key entry points and actions



Processes and coordination structures

Within each step, policy makers and practitioners are provided with key entry points and actions that are linked with country processes and coordination structures commonly operating in protracted and recurrent crisis contexts. Additionally, connections are made to the previously mentioned outcomes, outputs and approaches.



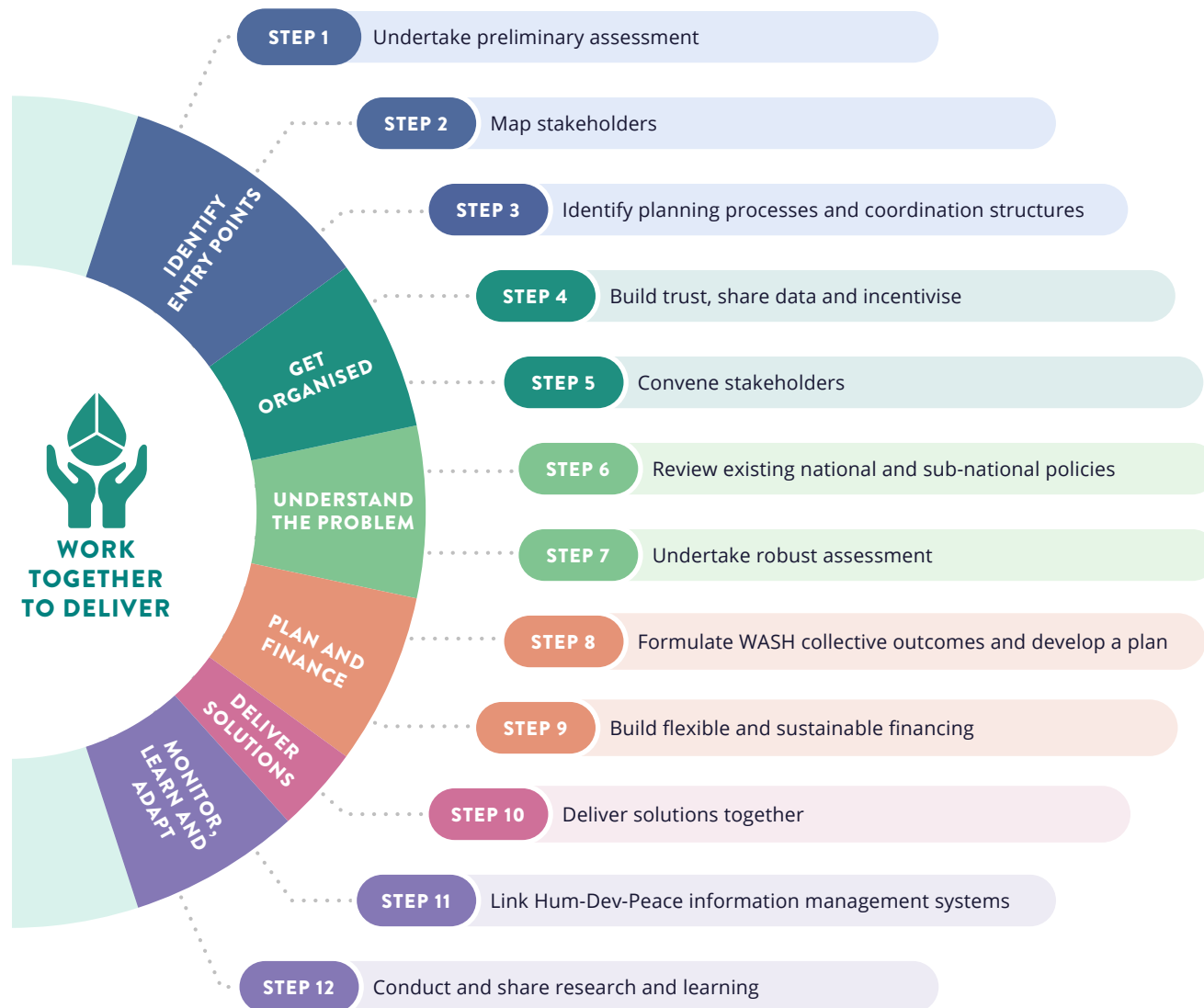
TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [For further guidance and tools, please refer to Annex 2.](#)



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Figure 5: Putting the JOF into Practice



In adopting these steps, please note the following:

- They were developed from and are consistent with the steps outlined in the UN Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes (IASC 2020a). Any differences are based on advice from multiple WASH experts.
- These steps do not necessarily need to be undertaken in a linear fashion. For example, where existing platforms and processes enable cooperation between humanitarian and development actors in the WASH sector, it is recommended to begin with step 7 (undertake robust assessment) and then go back to either steps 4 or 5 to select partners capable of addressing the assessment recommendations.
- It is assumed that these steps be completed outside of the acute phases of an emergency response. However, should the preparation not be in place, these steps can be rapidly followed while adhering to local coordination and planning processes.
- Most importantly, policy makers and practitioners are encouraged to seek out local planning processes and coordination structures that are unique and local to the setting and may not be part of UN or national government bodies.

IDENTIFY ENTRY POINTS




STEP 1 Conduct a preliminary assessment to identify WASH needs, risks, and vulnerabilities

Prior to initiating a nexus collaboration, a preliminary assessment should be undertaken to determine the key needs, vulnerabilities, and risks faced by the targeted population. This assessment should be designed to provide sufficient information for an overall assessment and encourage other actors to want to collaborate.

STEP 2 Conduct stakeholder mapping to determine suitable partners for collaboration (output 4.1)

To build a collaboration, the actor or group of actors who undertook the preliminary assessment need a practical understanding of potential partners in the sector. A formal or informal stakeholder mapping exercise will identify which actors operate within a given geographic area and with which mandate(s) (USAID 2021). If the stakeholders are already well known through existing networks, then this step can be skipped. The table below proposes required actions and responsible parties. As the water sector is fragmented, the stakeholder analysis can draw on IWRM coordination bodies and stakeholders to complement mapping of the WASH stakeholders.

Table B: Stakeholder mapping actions and responsible coordination platforms





LEVEL	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE COORDINATION PLATFORM
 Regional/ transboundary	Develop a regional/transboundary WASH stakeholder map	River/basin-level authorities, neighbouring countries health and WASH, water resource authorities.
 National/ subnational	Develop a national/subnational WASH stakeholder map	National/subnational humanitarian-development platform identified in step 1 with assistance from WASH Cluster Coordinator (and other relevant WASH leads if the Cluster is not operational), and national development WASH platform leads.
 Local	Using national mapping as a starting point, develop a local WASH stakeholder map	Local humanitarian and development.






STEP 3 Identify most suitable planning process and coordination structures to launch collaboration (output 4.2)

A joint humanitarian and development coordination platform should be identified to support a planning process based on achieving collective outcomes. Ideally this will be an existing structure with a trusted leadership either within the WASH sector or within or across multiple sectors inclusive of the WASH sector. Local planning processes and coordination systems should be prioritised and supported in alignment with the principles of localisation and sustainability.

An additional benefit of selecting an existing platform is that in many cases, the government, the UN and other bodies have established, long term, and well-resourced coordination and planning processes in protracted and recurrent crisis settings (IASC 2020a). The table below provides entry points for such in-country intersectoral planning processes that draw on existing coordination platforms and coordinating actors.

Table C: Identifying the most suitable coordination platform and planning process

LEVEL	ENTRY POINTS FOR PLANNING	RESPONSIBLE COORDINATION PLATFORM OR ACTOR
 Regional/ transboundary	Investigate existing platforms, especially those used by IWRM sector, IOM regional response plans etc.	Regional platforms, river/basin-level authorities, neighbouring countries health and WASH, water resource authorities, UN agencies, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).
 National/ subnational	Government planning and budgeting processes within the WASH Sector. Humanitarian and development actors can engage in the periodic (typically annual) WASH Joint Sector Reviews and WASH-BAT- see output 4.2.	WASH Sector coordination platforms (led by the line ministry and sometimes co-led by a donor, bank or UN agency), UNICEF (WASH-BAT).
 National/ subnational	Utility planning processes (including public private partnerships). Humanitarian and development actors are encouraged to engage in these processes, where possible.	Utility CEOs, line ministry.
 National/ subnational	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The UN promotes ‘collective outcomes’ in protracted crisis settings. Humanitarian WASH actors can engage in the annual review of both the Joint Work Plans and the Common Country Analysis (CCA) (UNSDG 2019).	Co-leads of the relevant Results Groups and Sub-Groups. For establishing contact, lead actors can be found in the UNSDCF country document. Dual mandate UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNDP are well placed to provide support, along with United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), United Nations Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)/ United Nations Country Team (UNCT).

 <p>National/ subnational</p>	<p>Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Development WASH actors can engage in the technical working groups (TWGs) and participate in the HNO and HRP annual processes within the WASH Cluster (UNOCHA 2021).</p>	<p>National or subnational WASH Cluster Coordination platform led by the WASH Cluster Coordinator (typically government and UNICEF). Coordination platforms identified under the UNSDCF can also facilitate.</p>
 <p>National/ subnational</p>	<p>Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPBA). Humanitarian actors can engage throughout the process (UN, WBG & EU 2017).</p>	<p>Government, UN, World Bank and European Union. Leadership at the national level is context specific. WASH Sector contacts are UNICEF, UNDP, ECHO and World Bank.</p>
 <p>National/ subnational</p>	<p>Refugee Response Plans (RRPs). Development WASH actors can engage in the TWGs and participate in the RRP annual planning processes (UNHCR 2022).</p>	<p>National or subnational WASH Sector coordination platform led by the WASH Sector Coordinator (typically UNHCR and/or government).</p>
 <p>National/ subnational</p>	<p>Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Framework on durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Entry points for humanitarian and development actors transition towards long term solutions (IASC 2010).</p>	<p>Government and UN led.</p>
 <p>Local</p>	<p>Locally led planning and budgeting processes. Humanitarian and development actors can engage in the annual review of plans, which is often led by government.</p>	<p>Local government supported platforms, especially supported by disaster management authorities.</p>

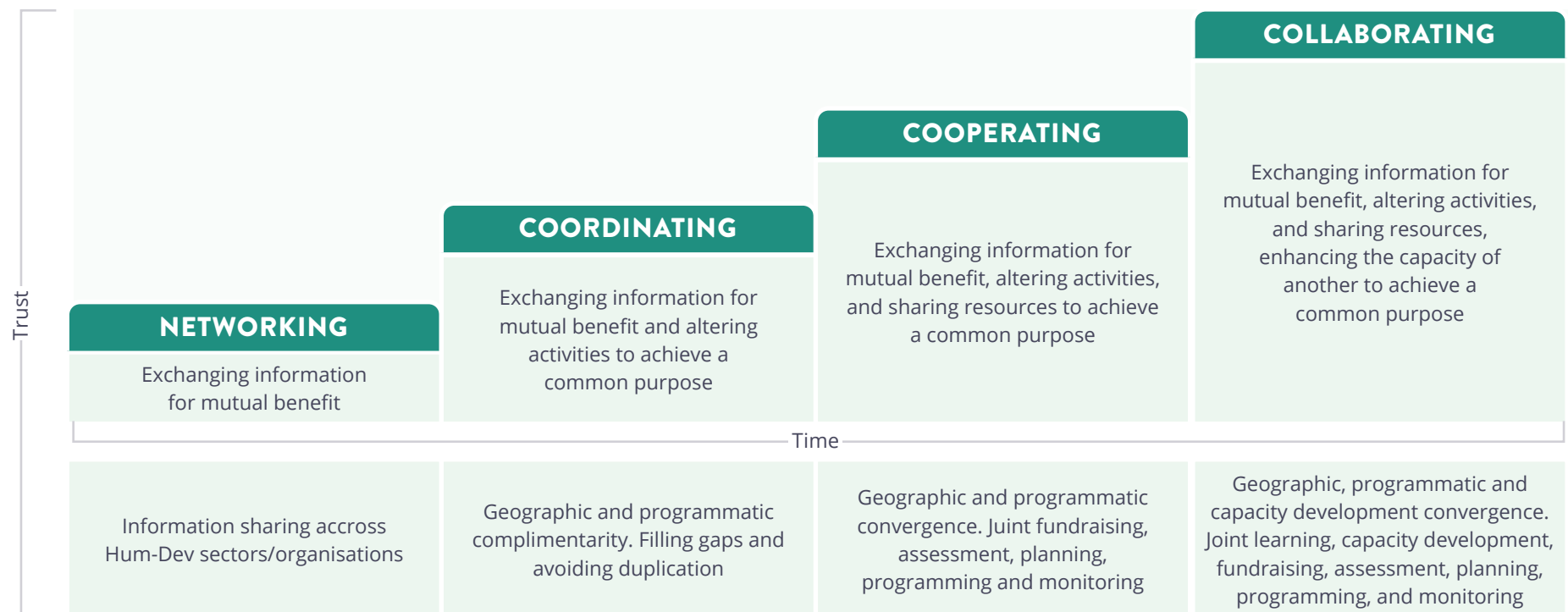
IDENTIFY ENTRY POINTS

STEP 4 Build trust, share data, and incentivise

Collaboration is based on trust.

The next step is therefore to ensure that sufficient incentives for collaboration are provided and are based on building trust. A WASH Cluster analysis of collaboration between WASH humanitarian and development partners in Burkina Faso demonstrated that levels of collaboration vary significantly (WASH Cluster Burkina Faso 2021). Where there are low levels of trust between partners, networking and information sharing is a good place to start. According to the continuum of collaboration (see figure 7) trust is built over time, with higher levels of collaboration achieved when resources, planning processes and capacity building are well coordinated or shared.

Figure 7: Continuum of Collaboration



STEP 5 Convene stakeholders and determine their comparative advantages for specific roles in the HDPN process in a transparent and inclusive way

In order to determine the best fit for collaboration, a transparent process for evaluating the comparative advantage of each potential partner is recommended for development. This is a sensitive process that will require the trust of partners (as described in step 4). Additionally, the coordination platform needs to adopt a common terminology that is context specific and based on knowledge and understanding of local preferences and sensitivities (IASC 2020).

Table D: Coordination platforms to convene stakeholders and determine comparative advantage of actors

LEVEL	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE COORDINATION PLATFORM
 Regional/ transboundary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene stakeholders 2. Evaluate mandates, experiences and capacities of each potential actor 3. Select actors and formalise collaboration with defined roles and responsibilities 	Regional platforms, river/basin-level authorities, neighbouring countries health and WASH, water resource authorities, UN agencies, INGOs.
 National/ subnational		WASH Sector coordination structures (led by the line ministry and sometimes co-led by a donor, bank or UN agency) including relevant platforms identified in step 2.
 Local		Local government supported platforms, especially those supported by disaster management authorities.

UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

STEP 6 Review existing national and subnational priorities (outputs 3.2 and 3.3)

An assessment of the links between WASH priorities, resilience and peacebuilding, is useful in identifying synergies, finding opportunities for strengthening them and proposing entry points for collective outcomes to be enhanced by collaboration with other sectors (such as health, food security and energy).

These sectors have strong synergies with WASH and water resource management and share priorities on resilience and peacebuilding. The following table outlines proposed action points, their purpose and entry points into existing in-country processes.

Table E: Entry points for reviewing existing and subnational priorities

ACTION	PURPOSE	ENTRY POINTS FOR ALIGNMENT WITH RELEVANT PROCESSES IDENTIFIED IN STEP 2
Review development and humanitarian policies and plans	To determine the extent to which WASH resilience and peacebuilding is embedded.	Key entry points in government (and utilities) planning and budgeting processes, including joint WASH sector reviews.
Review WASH policies and plans	To determine the extent to which resilience and peacebuilding is embedded based on SDGs 1 (goal 1.5: resilience), 13 (climate) and 16 (peacebuilding).	Annual CCA reviews as part of the 'Cooperation Framework'.
Review resilience and peacebuilding policies and plans	To determine the extent to which WASH outcomes are embedded based on SDG 6 (WASH & water resource management).	HNO step 2: secondary data review. RPBA step 1: pre-assessment.

STEP 7 Conduct a robust joint assessment of WASH context, risks and needs (output 4.3)

Conducting a joined-up assessment and analysis of WASH context, risks (including conflict) and needs is a fundamental step that provides the evidence and direction for building resilience, conflict sensitivity and peace, as outlined in output 4.3 and nexus approach 2. Table F outlines relevant entry points.

The application of environmental and social impact assessment and management tools are increasingly regarded as good practice by large institutions such as development banks, donors and the UN.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES:





- [Relevant tools, such as UNDP’s environmental and social screening procedure, can be found in Annex 2.](#)



NOTE

A practical consideration: while a joint assessment of primary data is ideal, if this presents a major obstacle to implementation, then a secondary data assessment or joint analysis of existing data sets (UNICEF and WHO’s Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) etc.) and assessments is worth considering as the basis for planning.

Table F: Entry points for conducting a joint assessment of WASH context, risk and needs

LEVEL	ENTRY POINTS FOR ALIGNMENT WITH RELEVANT PROCESSES IDENTIFIED IN STEP 2
 National/ subnational	Engage in government and utility risk assessment and planning processes.
 National/ subnational	UNSDCF: annual reviews of the CCA .
 National/ subnational	<p>HNO: step 3. Collect primary data.</p> <p>HNO: step 4. Conduct joint inter-sectoral needs analysis.</p> <p>Since 2020, countries preparing humanitarian responses within the Humanitarian Programme Cycle have been using the Joint Intersectoral Assessment Framework (JIAF) to inform their country HNO, which outlines opportunities for development actors to engage related to collective outcomes.</p>
 National/ subnational	RPBA: step 4. Assessment of recovery and peacebuilding needs, with opportunities for humanitarian actors to engage.

PLAN AND FINANCE

STEP 8 Formulate WASH collective outcomes and develop a joint plan (outputs 1-5)

- A. A joint definition of the WASH problem statement, including clear definitions for WASH resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities will provide clarity to all stakeholders on the problem itself and the type of capacities that need building (World Bank Group 2017). It is recommended that these definitions include:
- to what the project/programme is building resilience, conflict sensitive and peacebuilding (where relevant) capacities (e.g., floods, conflict, climate change, drought, etc.).
 - to whom the project/programme is providing resilience, conflict sensitive and peacebuilding capacities (e.g., households, communities, WASH service providers, local government, a sector, a country, etc.).
- B. The formulation of WASH collective outcomes is based on the definitions above, and is recommended to include:
- an aim at the intermediate collective outcome level (see section 3);
 - a span of a minimum 3-5 years, with longer timeframes encouraged (IASC 2020);
 - a target level of engagement (i.e., national level and transboundary, subnational level or local level); and
 - the use of the SMART framework (i.e., Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound).
- C. Lastly, the development of a joint plan or results framework should be based on the:
- development of a context specific TOC, outlining the links between approaches, outputs and intermediate collective outcomes, based on the TOC proposed in section 3. Assumptions and risks should be made explicit, tested and managed where possible;
 - assignment of agencies' responsibilities for each output and outcome. Specific contributions may include those delivered in existing, funded programmes, those in the pipeline, or unfunded programmes that target gaps identified in the joint analysis.






NOTE

This outline may be aspirational only for certain collaborations that have yet to reach this level. This should not discourage collective outcomes. As per step 4, collective outcomes can be based on separate planning and funding exercises where collaboration is at the coordination level (e.g., targeted geographic convergence).

The following table outlines the relevant entry points at the national, subnational and local levels:

Table G: Entry points for developing collective outcomes

LEVEL	ENTRY POINTS FOR ALIGNMENT WITH RELEVANT PROCESSES IDENTIFIED IN STEP 2
 National/ subnational	<p>Government budget and planning processes: the annual WASH Joint Sector Reviews.</p>
 National/ subnational	<p>Water utility planning processes: entry points will vary based on context.</p>
 National/ subnational	<p>UNSDCF: annual work plan reviews.</p> <p>HRP: step 5. Define the scope of the HRP and formulate initial objectives.</p> <p>HRP: step 6. Conduct response analysis.</p> <p>HRP: step 7. Finalise strategic and specific objectives and associated indicators.</p> <p>If collective outcomes have been agreed upon in a country, the HRP Strategic Objectives should connect or align. If they have not yet been agreed, the HRP Strategic Objectives should inform the formulation of collective outcomes (UNOCHA 2022), along with those of development plans such as the UNSDCF.</p> <p>HRP: step 8. Formulate projects/activities and estimate costs of the response plan.</p> <p>RPBA: prioritisation and presentation of priorities in a strategic, implementable recovery and peacebuilding plan and results matrix.</p> <p>RRP: steps 2- 5.</p>

STEP 9 Build flexible and sustainable WASH financing (output 5)

As outlined in output 5, financing covers the need for:

- a financing landscape analysis, integration of WASH resilience into country level financing strategies (Poole and Scott 2018);
- building multi-year, unearmarked and flexible financing mechanisms (IASC 2016, BMZ 2021);
- leveraging International Finance Institutions (IFIs), commercial banks and Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) (German WASH Network et al. 2021);
- de-risking WASH service providers (from the perspective of finance institutions) by improving their credit worthiness and building financial management capacity of local institutions (German WASH Network et al. 2021);
- creating a humanitarian and resilience investment ecosystem that attracts private sector finance through blended finance by leveraging de-risking grants from traditional and philanthropic donors, as well as investments from IFIs that protect investors against dramatic loss (WEF et al. 2019);
- ensuring emergency preparedness plans (business continuity) for acute crises are regarded as “no-regrets” investments and developing forecast-based funding mechanisms that anticipate the funding requirements for a crisis (World Bank 2020).

Table H: Financing entry points for developing collective outcomes

ENTRY POINTS FOR ALIGNMENT WITH RELEVANT PROCESSES IDENTIFIED IN STEP 2	RESPONSIBLE COORDINATION PLATFORM
Government planning and budgeting processes: identify opportunities to influence grants and loans.	WASH joint sector reviews led by line ministries, inter-sectoral government platforms, platforms hosted by finance ministries, donors and commercial banks, IFIs or MFIs.
Water utilities: identify opportunities for improving investment, de-risking and business continuity.	Government line and finance ministries, water utilities, IFIs etc.
UNSDCF: review the funding framework and all work plans on an annual basis.	Co-leads of the relevant results groups and sub-groups.
HRPs: launch annually for funding at the national level.	National or subnational WASH cluster coordination platform led by the WASH cluster coordinator.
RPBA: validation and finalising phase.	Government, UN, World Bank, and the EU.

DELIVER SOLUTIONS

STEP 10 Deliver solutions together (outputs 1-5)

Establish mechanisms to execute the plans in step 8, ensure frequent coordination and set up monitoring, learning and adaptation processes as per step 9. It will be critical to ensure that each partner delivers and shares information and lessons learned in terms of building trust and incentivising continued and further collaboration as per step 4.



NOTE

Each WASH programme will have its own unique delivery mechanism based on the structure of the collaboration and the context.

MONITOR, LEARN AND ADAPT

STEP 11 Develop a data sharing platform between humanitarian, development and peace pillars (output 3.4)

By developing a data sharing platform that links humanitarian, development, and peace pillars, the aim is to improve coordination and programming coherence, and gradually move towards fully linking WASH humanitarian, development and peace information management systems. This includes accountability mechanisms that are relevant, context specific and linked with existing national data systems, thus enabling:

- **monitoring dynamic outcomes** such as resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities;
- humanitarian actors to focus on **sustainable WASH services from the start of an emergency response** based on leveraging development infrastructure and service delivery models; and
- **development actors to transition more effectively from recovery into development** by leveraging the systems developed by humanitarian actors.

Ideally, the monitoring systems will operate in real-time so that WASH actors and systems can learn, adapt and make better decisions both during a crisis and beyond (see Nexus Operational Principles, Section 2). The table below provides possible entry points with relevant in-country processes.

Table I: Entry points for developing a shared data, monitoring and learning platform.

OUTPUTS	ENTRY POINTS FOR ALIGNMENT WITH RELEVANT PROCESSES IDENTIFIED IN STEP 2	RESPONSIBILITY
Outputs outlined under output 4.4 in section 3	Review of government and utility data management processes .	Government statistical office, line ministries and utilities data focal points.
	HRP: step 9. Conduct After Action Review.	National or subnational WASH cluster coordination platform led by the WASH cluster coordinator (typically government and UNICEF).
	RPBA: validation and finalising phase.	Government, UN, World Bank, and the EU.

STEP 12 Conduct and share research and learning from the programme (outputs 1.5 and 3.1)

Research and learning provide the evidence to improve nexus coordination, programming, and financing in the WASH sector as well as underpinning advocacy to drive the agenda forward. Building resilience and peacebuilding capacities in the WASH sector is a relatively new field, presenting significant opportunities and challenges for evaluation.

When developing evaluation methods, the following points should be considered.

- Given resilience is unobservable, the development of multiple proxy and process indicators will be better suited than one universal indicator (DFID 2014, World Bank 2017). Examples of proxy indicators include:
 - Peacebuilding: percentage of target beneficiaries who express that they experienced increased trust in members of another community/or public institutions (UNICEF 2016).
 - Resilience: percentage of days water service provider delivers minimum quantity of water to community (households and institutions) during shocks and stresses.
- The effect of resilience building can only be proven in the face of shocks and stresses, making it challenging to ensure evaluations are flexible enough with their timeframes to capture these events.
- Building resilience capacity may take time, creating the additional challenge of ensuring sufficient timeframe to capture results.

- ▶ Given these challenges, qualitative analysis (combined with quantitative analysis, where possible) is the preferred method of evaluation, including any one of the following (World Bank 2017):
 - A theory-based analysis – using the WASH programmes TOC, identify and confirm causal processes, and articulate supporting factors and mechanisms at work in the context.
 - A descriptive study – make comparisons across and within cases (e.g., across and within households) to determine causal links and overall implications of the WASH programme design.
 - A participatory annual study – for instance, following key stakeholders within a utility throughout each step of the WASH programme can provide validation of the causal links underpinning the capacity building intervention, from the perspective of the stakeholders.



5

WHAT'S NEXT?



To put the WASH nexus into practice at country level, the following actions are recommended:



Mainstream the nexus approach in WASH programmes at the national and subnational level, especially in protracted and recurrent crisis contexts.



Create an enabling environment in key countries for implementing the WASH nexus approach, leveraging existing planning architecture and coordination structures where possible.



Adopt flexible and sustainable financing strategies into protracted and recurrent crisis contexts, and leverage financing to achieve the SDGs.



Advocate for predictable, un-earmarked and flexible multi-year funding, and the development of innovative financing and forecasting models.



Continue to build key evidence, learning and capacity.

ANNEX 1 | Glossary

Anticipative capacity	The ability to take early action in anticipation of a potential threat to reduce its potential negative impacts; including through early warning, early action and forecast-based financing (UN 2020, United Nations Climate Resilience Initiative, 2017).
Adaptive management	An intentional approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new information and changes in context. The ability to adapt requires an environment that promotes intentional learning and flexible project and activity design, minimises the obstacles to modifying programming and creates incentives for managing adaptively (USAID 2018).
Absorptive capacity	The ability to take protective action and ‘bounce back’ after a shock using predetermined responses to preserve and restore essential basic structures and functions. It involves anticipating, planning, coping and recovering from shocks and stresses (UN 2020; OECD 2014; Oxfam 2016).
Adaptive capacity	The ability to make incremental adjustments, modifications or changes to the characteristics of systems and actions to moderate potential changes, in order to continue functioning without major qualitative changes in function or structural identity (UN 2020, OECD 2014; IPCC, 2012; Oxfam 2016).
Collective outcomes	“Commonly agreed measurable result(s) or impact(s) enhanced by the combined effort of different actors, within their respective mandates, to address and reduce people’s unmet needs, risks and vulnerabilities, increasing their resilience and addressing the root causes of conflict” (OECD 2022).
Conflict sensitivity	“The capacity of an organisation to understand its operating context, the interaction between its interventions and the context, and act upon this understanding to avoid negative impacts (“do no harm”) and maximise positive impacts on conflict factors”(UNICEF 2020).
Do no harm	Building on the recommendation of the conflict analysis, the next step is to ensure a “do no harm” approach “to avoid unintended negative consequences” from the implementation of the WASH programme. This is a minimum requirement (IASC 2020, Sphere Association 2018, UNICEF 2016).
Fragility	The combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacity of the state, systems and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks. Fragility is measured on a spectrum of intensity and expressed in different ways across the economic, environmental, political, security and societal dimensions, with a sixth dimension (human capital) forthcoming in States of Fragility 2022 (OECD 2020). Regardless of the definition, fragile states characterised by weak institutions, extreme poverty, political instability, poor infrastructure, and limited service provision perpetuate a persistently risky environment (Sagara 2018).

Humanitarian-development-peace nexus	Refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions (OECD 2022).
Joined-up	Refers to the coherent and complementary coordination, programming and financing of humanitarian, development and peace actions that are based on shared risk-informed and gender-sensitive analysis; while ensuring that humanitarian action always remains needs-based and principled (OECD 2022).
Peacebuilding	Capacity to “reduce the risk of a lapse or relapse into violent conflict by directly addressing root causes and consequences of conflict,” and to address conflict and “lay and support foundations for sustainable peace and development” (UNICEF 2016).
Preventative capacity	The ability to implement activities and take measures to reduce existing risks and avoid creating new ones. While certain risks cannot be eliminated, preventative capacity aims at reducing vulnerability and exposure in such contexts where, as a result, the risk is reduced (UN 2020, adapted from the OIEWG, 2016).
Resilience	Resilience is the ability of individuals, households, communities, cities, institutions, systems and societies to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover positively, efficiently and effectively when faced with a wide range of risks, while maintaining an acceptable level of functioning without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and wellbeing for all (UN 2020).
Shocks	Short term deviations with substantial negative effects on people’s current state of wellbeing, level of assets, livelihoods, safety or ability and capacity to withstand future shocks (UN 2020).
Social cohesion	The quality of bonds and dynamics that exist between different groups within a society. Groups can be distinguished in terms of regional, ethnic or socio-cultural identities, religious and political beliefs, social class or economic sector, or on the basis of characteristics such as gender and age (UNICEF 2020).
Stressors (or risk drivers/ risk factors)	Long term processes or conditions, often related to development and inequality, that influence the level of risk by contributing to exposure and vulnerability or reducing capacities (UN 2020).

ANNEX 2 | WASH Resilience, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding tools

USEFUL TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NEXUS APPROACH (SECTION 3):

A risk informed and context specific way of working:

- UNICEF's guidance on risk informed programming: <https://www.unicef.org/documents/guidance-risk-informed-programming>
- UNDP's environmental and social screening procedure: [UNDP's Social and Environmental Screening Procedure \(SESP\) | United Nations Development Programme](#)

Conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding:

- UNICEF's guide to conflict analysis: <https://www.unicef.org/documents/unicef-guide-conflict-analysis>
- USAID's water and conflict toolkit: <https://www.globalwaters.org/resources/assets/water-and-conflict-toolkit-programming-0>

Anticipatory Action and Disaster Risk Reduction:

- IFRC's anticipation hub: <https://www.anticipation-hub.org/learn/learning-resources>
- IFRC's forecast-based financing manual: <https://manual.forecast-based-financing.org/en/>
- Global WASH Cluster's Disaster Risk Reduction and WASH comprehensive guidance: <https://www.humanitarianlibrary.org/resource/distaster-risk-reduction-and-wash-comprehensive-guidance-0>
- CADRI tool for Disaster Risk Reduction, capacity diagnosis and planning: <https://www.cadri.net/cadritool/home>

WASH system strengthening tools:

- IRC WASH's WASH system strengthening course covering the basics: <https://www.ircwash.org/news/wash-system-strengthening-basics>
- IRC WASH's WASH system strengthening approach - tools for practitioners: https://www.washagendaforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ssi_toolbox_08apr20.pdf
- Agenda for Change's WASH discussion paper with useful case studies: <https://washagendaforchange.org/blog/applying-wash-systems-approaches-in-fragile-contexts/>

Adaptive management tools include:

- USAID's adaptive management toolkit: <https://usaidlearninglab.org/qrg/adaptive-management>
- Mercy Corps' adaptive management tools: <https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/adaptive-management-tools-system>

USEFUL TOOLS FOR THE KEY STEPS (SECTION 4)

Step 3: Identify best planning process and coordination structures to launch collaboration.

- UNICEF's WASH-BAT: <https://www.washbat.org/>
- UN's Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF): https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/UN-Cooperation-Framework-Internal-Guidance-Final-June-2019_1.pdf
- UN, WBG and EU's Joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments (RPBAs), A Practical Note to Assessment and Planning: <https://www.recoveryandpeacebuilding.org/content/rpba/en/home/partnership-documents.html>
- UNHCR's Refugee Response Plans (RRPs): <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/55127/interagency-unhcr-led-refugee-response-plans>
- UNOCHA's Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP): <https://assessments.hpc.tools/km/hno-hrp-step-step-guidance-2021>

Step 7: Conduct a robust joint assessment of WASH context, risks and needs (output 4.3, in conjunction with tools outlined above under “a risk informed and context specific way of working”, and “conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding”).

Useful tools to assess WASH context, risks and needs at the local level are:

- UNOCHA's Joint Intersectoral Assessment Framework (JIAF): <https://www.jiaf.info/>
- UNDP's environmental and social screening procedure: <https://www.undp.org/publications/undps-social-and-environmental-screening-procedure-sesp>
- Mercy Corps' risk and resilience assessment tool: https://resiliencelinks.org/system/files/documents/2019-08/gn01_riskandresilienceassessments_final508_1.pdf
- CALP Network Basic Needs Assessment Toolbox: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/basic-needs-assessment-guidance-and-toolbox>

ANNEX 3 | Case studies



Syria – Building WASH system absorptive capacity through skilled volunteers.

Since the onset of the conflict in Syria in 2011, WASH utilities have faced frequent service disruption during the protracted crisis (due to multiple factors such as damaged and deteriorated infrastructure) and both reduced revenue and state finances. In response, ICRC collaborated with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), building the capacity of 1,500 skilled volunteers on emergency WASH response. These SARC volunteers were assigned to each of the governorate WASH service providers. To date, they have played a key role in the long-term capacity that WASH service providers require to absorb shocks (World Bank et. al 2021).

[See section 3 \(adaptive capacity\) and outputs 1 and 2](#)



Zambia – Building WASH system adaptive capacity by diversifying power supply.

In Zambia, the Southern Water & Sanitation Company (SWSC) faced power shortages due to persistent drought which reduced the dams' water level to below the threshold required to produce hydroelectricity. SWSC was able to adapt to these interruptions by diversifying the supply of power through the introduction of solar farms that provided complementary renewable energy (WSUP 2020).

[See section 3 \(adaptive capacity\) and output 1](#)



Myanmar – Building WASH system adaptive capacity with cash.

In 2019, in response to recurrent natural disasters and high rates of open defecation (90%) in Rakhine communities, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), with support from IFRC, provided cash to households to build latrines. The intervention has strengthened the overall community adaptive capacity to protect community health and dignity. Cash was made available along with a 50% co-financing arrangement with households. This arrangement resulted in a rapid uptake of latrine construction, high levels of ownership by the community, and a stimulation of the local economy. It also supported artisans and local suppliers and transferred technical skills to the community (IFRC 2019).

[See section 3 \(adaptive capacity\) and output 2](#)



Somalia – Building absorptive and adaptive capacity through public-private partnerships.

In Somalia, the city of Boroma has for decades remained in a protracted crisis due to conflict, drought, and outbreaks of disease. In 2004, with the support of UNICEF, the SHABA water corporation was established based on a public private partnership (PPP) model to provide drinking water to the long term residents and to the frequent and large number of displaced persons. Based on a community participatory process, tariffs were developed to support the operations and maintenance cost of the utility, while UNICEF supported large infrastructure costs. Over a 15-year period the utility was able to successfully recover its operation and maintenance costs while increasing its household connections to almost 9,000 homes. The PPP model is an example of a successful locally led long term solution to building the absorptive and adaptive capacity of the WASH system in very challenging circumstances (UNICEF 2019).

[See section 3 \(absorptive and adaptive capacities\) and output 1](#)



Burkina Faso – An incremental approach to strengthening WASH sector collaboration.

Burkina Faso's incremental approach to the WASH nexus encourages stakeholders to engage in collaboration based on their most strategic fit, ranging from a basic level to a totally integrated approach that is determined according to the following four steps:

- The basic level encourages information exchange between the humanitarian WASH Cluster and the WASH development donors' forum.
- The second level, coordination, fosters cross-learning. Development actors assist humanitarian actors in ensuring interventions are more sustainable, inclusive and better quality, while humanitarian actors assist development actors to improve their efficiency and flexibility to address the needs of displaced persons.
- The third level, cooperation, seeks an integrated approach. For example, in Kaya, the UN's humanitarian interventions are linked with public WASH infrastructure and service delivery models of Kaya's national Water Authority to address existing needs as well as promoting extensions to include long term displaced persons.
- The final level seeks a totally integrated approach across planning, financing, and delivery. For example, the recent joint initiatives of humanitarian and development NGOs, public local authorities and service providers to rehabilitate and expand Djibo and Barsalogo water networks, in order to meet the emergency needs of displaced persons (interview with Burkina Faso WASH Cluster Coordinator, 2022).

[See section 4, step 4 \(build trust, share data, and incentivise\)](#)



Uganda – Robust joint planning and coordination.

A recent example from Uganda demonstrates the benefits of investing in transparent and well-resourced planning processes and coordination structures to ensure collaboration across the nexus. Through implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), the Ministry of Water and Environment operationalised a WASH nexus programme in the north of Uganda, with the support of UNHCR and a diverse group of actors. It received a high level of government support and was launched by the Deputy Prime Minister.

The planning process was slow yet thorough and built trust through the consultation and participation of a diverse range of stakeholders. While it required 18 months to eventually launch, the WASH programmes have led to longer term peaceful and resilient WASH solutions for refugees and local communities and introduced a significant increase in funding (interview with UNHCR, 2021).

[See section 4, step 3](#)

[See section 3, output 4](#)



Honduras – Joint information management; improving absorptive capacity.

UNICEF and the National Statistics Office in Honduras successfully linked humanitarian and development databases to create a vulnerability prioritisation index for people affected by Hurricane Iota in 2020, resulting in a tenfold improvement in targeting vulnerable populations for disaster relief. Local governments provided maps showing the impact of the hurricane on affected populations within 72 hours, and this was overlaid on existing maps of long-term vulnerabilities of the same population.

The data was analysed in real-time, empowering national and municipal authorities to effectively lead the response and ensure their limited resources reached the most vulnerable. Such a prioritisation index is a multisectoral tool that can be more widely applied for national planning and financing once its governance structure is contextualised to the country and validated by all parties (interview with UNICEF, 2022).

[See section 3, output 4](#)



Nigeria – Joint analysis of groundwater extraction.

For the past decade, protracted conflict has forced large migrations towards small towns, resulting in rampant borehole drilling with little understanding of the impact on groundwater levels and water quality. In response, USAID/BHA funded Action Against Hunger to assist local authorities in developing long term groundwater monitoring capabilities alongside the humanitarian WASH Cluster. The groundwater monitoring initiative has provided opportunities for development actors to implement complementary actions, including the development of policy and legal frameworks for groundwater monitoring and the establishment of a State Water Regulatory Board (USAID 2021).

See [section 4, step 7](#) (conduct a robust joint assessment of WASH context, risks and needs) and [output 4.3](#)



Africa, Asia and South America – Microfinancing at scale.

Across 11 countries in Africa, Asia and South America, households, schools, and health clinics are taking out loans for long-term water and sanitation solutions. Water.org have successfully leveraged financial institutions and local government to provide microfinancing to households, schools and health clinics. According to their website, by October 2022, Water.org’s partners had disbursed 10.6 million loans, with a total of \$3.8 billion reaching 50 million people. 89% of borrowers are women and they claim a loan repayment success rate of 99% (Water.org 2022).

See [section 4](#)
See [section 3, output 5](#)



Lebanon – Conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding capacities.

In Lebanon, years of conflict extend back to the 1980s and combined with prolonged neglect, have destroyed Tripoli’s WASH infrastructure. In 2014, due to the ongoing conflict between the Alawite and Sunni Muslims communities, local water authorities in Tripoli were unable to provide these communities with access to a newly constructed piped water supply. For example, in the neighbourhood of Quobbe, the pipeline trenches dug by the water utility contractor were filled in before the pipe could be laid and the contractor driven out. To resolve the situation, the Lebanese Relief Council used participatory community interventions (such as community drama and hygiene education) to help the communities realise that working collaboratively would be beneficial. While the intervention did not address the root cause of the conflict between the communities, it addressed the symptoms relating to inequitable access of WASH and as a result was able to build social cohesion between the communities. In addition, UNICEF assisted the water utility to regain trust with the community by establishing a customer relations unit as a mechanism to receive complaints and feedback. The result of this enhanced social cohesion between the communities themselves and with the service provider led to the successful extension and management of the piped water network, serving both Alawite and Sunni Muslim neighbourhoods (UNICEF 2019).

See [section 3](#)



Nigeria – Building preventative capacity (peacebuilding) through improving legal frameworks.

In Nigeria’s Komadugu Yobe Basin, conflicts concerning water are rife and have even reached the court system. However, in a stunning turnaround, conflicts decreased by 90% between 1999 and 2006. This result was directly related to improvements in the water basin’s governance institutions and legal frameworks and an increase in stakeholder dialogue within established water committees (USAID 2022).

See [section 2](#)
See [section 3, output 3.2](#)



Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) – Building resilience by strengthening peacebuilding capacities: collaboration, accountability and inclusion.

From 2014 to 2019, a EU SAGE project was implemented by Join for Water in the Ituri province of DRC. The intervention assisted Community Management Committees (CMCs) to improve WASH service delivery performance by strengthening management capacities and establishing them as legal entities. The improved governance structure was an entry point to legalise the inclusion of a diverse group of community members and build accountability mechanisms to enhance integrity and build trust. As the process evolved, the collaboration created new dynamics and brought authorities and the community closer together. One of the major conclusions was that “this change of mentality of the actors is perhaps the most promising result, on which other actions in the future can be built” (Tillet et al. 2020). The development of peacebuilding capacities within the WASH system (such as incentivising collaboration, building systems of accountability and ensuring inclusion of a cross section of the community) led to strengthened social cohesion between the communities and authorities and reduced negative misconceptions. The strengthened social cohesion has created a foundation for building resilience capacities of the CMCs, which will ultimately enable sustainable WASH outcomes.

[See page 12](#)
(resilience and peacebuilding are mutually reinforcing)



Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina – Building community anticipative capacity based on a foundation of community social cohesion.

Across Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, some 7 million people in the Gran Chaco region are affected by annual flooding from the Pilcomayo River. In response, a series of grassroots organisations built an early warning system across the three nations to notify residents to prepare and evacuate if necessary. The early warning system was developed by a socially cohesive and interconnected network of community organisations with a high level of women’s participation. In January 2018, during the largest flood in 35 years, the system successfully warned the people of Gran Chaco resulting in no loss of life. This example illustrates how social cohesion (the result of strengthened peacebuilding capacity) created a foundation to build community anticipative capacity across nation states (UNDRR 2022).

[See section 3](#)
(anticipative capacities)



Kenya - Strengthening water resource management adaptive capacities, using indigenous knowledge and approaches such as sand dams

In climate affected areas in Kenya, Arche Nova is working towards the realisation of integrated water resource management, using innovative approaches such as sand dams. Through existing community and district-level contacts, indigenous knowledge of this practice could be identified and extrapolated. By providing tools, training, logistical support and materials for communities to rebuild sand dams and plan for construction, such programmes provide water resources during dry seasons and enhance biodiversity and soil for agricultural activities around river basins. Cartographic surveys were carried out with the communities to map the climate risks and potential natural hazards on a site-specific basis and to increase awareness of the extent to which flooding, erosion, loss of livestock, prolonged drought and crop failure threaten individual villages ([Arche noVa 2022](#)).

[See section 3](#)
(anticipative capacities)



South Sudan – Building WASH adaptive capacities for communities exposed to conflict

In volatile and protracted contexts like South Sudan with re-occurring conflict and displacement, flexibility is crucial for WASH projects to meet the changing needs of affected populations. In Western Bahr El Ghazal, Malteser International, donors, and local authorities effectively collaborated and applied adaptive management to sustainably support communities over the long term. In 2016, during a food, nutrition and WASH development project, the 860 target households were displaced due to conflict. In close coordination with the donor and the authorities, the activities were shifted to providing emergency water supply, home gardening, and hygiene promotion in their new urban refuge. Funding was complemented by a humanitarian donor to support IDP camps and to provide cash transfers to vulnerable households. After a year, stabilised households were integrated into a small business grant scheme funded by a development donor. As the conflict calmed, a transitional assistance project restored damaged water supplies for families that returned to their villages and partnered with a local NGO to establish peace-building solutions to the conflict between farmers and cattle herders. The project was renewed in 2022 and focuses on building resilient WASH systems and creating livelihoods through improved food production and markets. Other organisations have joined to support the area ([Malteser International 2022](#)).

[See section 3 \(anticipative capacities\)](#)



Mali - Leveraging local knowledge and traditional owners to build trust and resilience in WASH systems

The city of Mopti, located on the Niger River in conflict affected central Mali, manages water and sanitation infrastructure for the entire district, but insecurity and armed group attacks have caused significant upheaval to the delivery of WASH services. To address this issue, Help - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe (funded by BMZ) is working closely with local water services, city and district representatives and mayors to enable them – through capacity building and mentoring – to monitor and maintain existing WASH infrastructure, establish a city-wide garbage collection and disposal system and create water and sanitation management plans that access financing available through the Malian decentralisation process. Help is also drilling and constructing water supply systems in underserved neighbourhoods to increase access and inclusivity of public services. Help has learned that working with experienced local partners who know the traditional supply systems, and especially community leaders, is critical to building trust with the population and ensuring the sustainability of water infrastructure. Access to water is an invaluable asset in this part of the country, playing an important role in negotiations with armed groups operating in the area, as they also rely on community support. At the same time, community support has also protected implementing partners, enabling uninterrupted assistance ([Help - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe 2022](#)).

[See section 3, page 12 \(mutually reinforcing\)](#)

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Networks supporting the Joint Operational Framework:



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