

Position and recommendations of the French Water Partnership

STOCKHOLM WORLD WATER WEEK
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Water, sanitation and hygiene in crisis and fragile contexts

The members of the French Water Partnership (FWP) Working Group on "WASH in crisis and fragile contexts" wish to draw attention to the fact that current policies and practices are insufficient in light of what's needed to reach Agenda 2030's targets related to water, sanitation, and hygiene, especially in crisis and fragility situations.

The number of people in need of humanitarian aid continues to grow globally and was estimated at 201 million in 2017, the highest number to date¹. The main indirect drivers behind this figure are conflicts and instability, which undermine economic development and personal security². As crises deepen, infrastructure, services and living conditions deteriorate. For instance, children living in contexts of protracted conflicts are three times more likely to die of water-related illnesses than of violence³. Consequences of climate change further contribute to the degradation of crisis scenarios and the increase of humanitarian needs.

The FWP WASH development and humanitarian actors acknowledge that their ability to respond is insufficient and not proportional to the growing need to ensure universal access to basic services by 2030. In order to improve the sector's performance and achieve its key objectives, the Working Group has identified the following priorities, on which it is collectively working:

Advocacy towards public authorities:

- Ensure the respect and enforcement of the principles of International Humanitarian Law and the maintenance of ceasefires, and fight against the use of WASH infrastructure as weapons/targets of war.
- Strengthen the collective capacity of French actors to coordinate internally, as well as with international actors, on WASH issues in crisis and fragility contexts.

¹ SOHS, State of the Humanitarian System 2018 report Summary [[En ligne](#)]

² World Bank: Conflict and Fragility [[en ligne](#)]

³ UNICEF, 22 march 2019, Press release [[en ligne](#)]

- Ensure that humanitarian funding is dedicated to addressing populations' priority needs (i.e. access to basic services) and not redirected to serve other purposes (i.e. security-related).
- Increase and improve the quality of funding for humanitarian WASH responses (rapid disbursement, multi-year funding, greater flexibility, untied aid, funding for preparedness ...).

Advocacy towards the WASH sector:

- Evaluate security risks more effectively/precisely and find solutions to 'go where no one is going'.
- Increase investment dedicated to capacity-building and education (national staff, expatriates, and local organizations) in order to ensure sustainable and quality works and infrastructure.
- Advocate for the better mainstreaming of WASH into related sectors (nutrition, health, education) and vice-versa, to ensure that WASH further integrates these related sectors in a more cost-effective manner.
- Specifically prioritize the following often overlooked dimensions in emergency programming: i.e. sanitation, hygiene, human and social sciences (i.e. behaviors and attitudes, vulnerabilities, etc.).
- Agree on WASH research priorities in crisis and fragile contexts.
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of WASH services provided in emergency situations in order to ensure the quality and adequacy of services delivered, and to better prioritize and respond to the real needs of populations.