**Terms of Reference and proposed agenda**

**WASH and Nutrition Forum**

**Background:**

At an RC/RC WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion) Advisors meeting held in Vienna in January 2016 it was agreed that an increased emphasis and focus should be placed on nutrition and WASH especially in light of new and increasing research evidence that clearly links WASH as a crucial and causal link to poor nutrition. It was recognised also that improved RC/RC operational and programming design and synergy between the two sectors may lead to greater impact upon and management of poor nutrition.

In recent years both within the movement but more so externally there has been some advances in cross sectoral integration but it is still mostly ad hoc and scattered. This lack of integration has been recognised as a major challenge and not just within the RC/RC but in the humanitarian sector as a whole.

This TOR provides the basis for a proposed WASH and Nutrition Forum that will bring together a cross section of RC/RC nutrition and WASH expertise together with external experts to formulate, in the first instance, a strategic direction, a plan of action and define some key deliverables to move the nutrition and WASH agenda further. It should not attempt to reinvent the wheel but learn, absorb and adapt what other players have achieved and added to our own experience, see a clearer way forward.

**Problem Statement**

The human body consists of 75 per cent water and water is one of the main nutrient components for human growth. But this is not the only link between WASH and Nutrition. [[1]](#footnote-1)Every year diarrhoea causes the death of 760,000 children under the age of 5. [[2]](#footnote-2)And one of the main causes of Stunting and Wasting in children is from severe and subclinical infections including diarrhoea resulting from the exposure to contaminated environments and poor hygiene. [[3]](#footnote-3)UNICEF estimates that 90 per cent of the diarrheal deaths are attributed from use of unsafe or inadequate water and poor sanitation and hygiene practices.

One evident cause of anaemia in women of reproductive age is infection and chronic inflammation, including malaria and severe bacterial infections, which can be minimized or prevented from better vector control measures while implementing WASH programs. The anaemia in women attributes to low birth weight in children, which increases the risk of perinatal mortality and morbidity.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (RCRC) has dedicated a substantial amount of time and resources to improve its ability to deliver WASH programmes and nutrition programmes in both acute emergencies and long term development. Many NSs have established a WASH or a nutrition program targeting communities in need and there are some that have implemented WASH and Nutrition together and also may have called it an integrated WASH and Nutrition program.

But looking closely, the approach taken by many are ‘alongside’ programmes rather than integrated programmes. No uniform integration manner was followed to establish complete complimentarity or integration and demonstrate a more holistic approach and in a more cost-effective/impactful manner.

It is also recognised that in some case nutrition is overlooked in emergencies until it become a significant problem and cause increases in morbidity and mortality. The well-established WASH emergencies programmes can better address the emergency needs and components of nutrition, if it is interlinked and incorporated from the outset.

The integrated approach of WASH and nutrition may contribute more to reaching long term goals and specifically the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3) and Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6). By helping communities to have healthy women and children, this will contribute greatly to achieving SDG4 (Quality Education), SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and it will also help communities in their efforts to achieving SDG1 (No Poverty).

[[4]](#footnote-4)Many organization have started to look into the issues and finding solutions by taking a more holistic approach. There are some evidence base researches underway to find connection between WASH and undernutrition and there is collaborative work done by UNICEF, WHO, USAID and other organizations to develop better integration of WASH and Nutrition programmes that we can learn from and build upon.

**Forum Objectives**

What we propose is to hold a forum to discuss and broaden our knowledge on how to improve the delivery of WASH and nutrition operations and programmes.

The outputs proposed under this forum are simple steps to pave the way forward to develop a framework and clear guidelines to integrate WASH and nutrition programs for the long term and emergencies. We recognize one of the main challenge is to establish a wide uptake and acknowledgement WASH and nutrition best practices. Furthermore, we need to consider what guidelines and approaches and M&E Frameworks may be required or adapted from what is already developed.

The general objectives of this forum are therefore as follows:

* Sharing the knowledge and experiences of WASH and nutrition practitioners both RCRC and from other external partners.
* Creating a broader understanding on the Integration of WASH and nutrition programming.
* Agreeing on where we are and where we want to go in terms of integrating the WASH and nutrition activities.
* Sharing information and knowledge.
* Agree on a strategic direction, Plan of Action and way forward.

**Forum agenda**

The first draft proposed agenda for a 3 day forum on Integration of WASH and nutrition is as follows:

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| Day | Time | Topic | Facilitator/Moderator |
| 1 | AM | Components and targets of nutrition |  |
| Components and targets of WASH |  |
| PM | Links between WASH and nutrition – the ACF work in this sector. | Dr Jean Lepeque, ACF Paris. |
| 2 | AM | WASH and nutrition programs in emergencies  WASH and nutrition in development programmes |  |
| PM | Tools of WASH and nutrition |  |
| Lesson Learnt from previous programs with WASH and nutrition components |  |
| 3 | AM | How to link? What goes with what? Other related issues on designing (Volunteer Management, Partnership and who takes the lead?) |  |
| PM | Strategic direction, POA, next steps |  |

Outputs from this forum should have action points and lead towards the development of an integrated WASH and nutrition programming framework and guidelines.

1. WHO Diarrhoea Fact sheet. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. WHO global nutrition targets 2025. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UNICEF 2012. Children and Water: Global Statistics. New York, United Nations Children’s Fund. <http://www.unicef.org/wash/index_31600.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. USAID Integrating Water, Sanitation and Hygiene into Nutrition Programming [↑](#footnote-ref-4)