

WASH RISK ASSESSMENT

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES



Final Synthesis Report

Centre for Humanitarian Change

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Introduction

UNICEF engaged a consultant to pilot the recently completed risk assessment tool and test its applicability at sub-national level in a devolved water sector. Specifically, the consultancy aimed to;

- Support the implementation and follow up of the participatory methodology developed by UNICEF-GWP to conduct three County level WASH risk assessment exercises (Turkana, Garissa and Kitui). The results of these assessments will be presented, discussed and validated during a national workshop to be hosted by the Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS), with support from UNICEF, and;
- Conduct a review of existing systems and approaches for sustainable and resilient water systems in drought affected counties, leading to programmatic / technical recommendations.

The work took place between November 2019 and May 2019 and included the following activities:

- A review of theory and existing examples of climate resilient water interventions in Kenya and beyond.
- Climate Risk Assessment using the GWC/UNICEF tool developed as part of the Strategic Framework for WASH Climate Resilient Development for three counties, Garissa, Kitui and Turkana
- Workshops in the three counties to validate the risk assessment results and identify options for climate resilient water interventions.
- Support to County Government Water teams to develop results framework and to present their climate risk assessment work to County and National stakeholders
- National workshop on Climate Resilient WASH
- Development of a strategy brief on Water Climate Resilience in Kenya.

The outcomes from this work are summarised below and described in three separate reports:

Climate Risk Assessment

[See Annex 1 – Climate Risk Assessment for WASH – Reflections on Pilots in Kenya]

Over the past four years UNICEF HQ and GWP have been collaborating to develop a Strategic Framework for WASH Climate Resilient Development. The Risk Assessment tool designed as part of the ‘Understanding the Problem’ component of the strategy is considered useful in understanding Kenya’s exposure to risk in the WASH sector. UNICEF therefore engaged a consultant to pilot the risk assessment tool and test its applicability at sub-national level in a devolved water sector in Kenya.

This report presents the consultants reflections on using the tool and to identify strengths and weaknesses in the tool itself and the process of using it as an exercise to identify risks and raise awareness on the importance of more risk informed planning in the water sector. It is hoped that these reflections could assist others who may want to apply the strategy and use the tool both in UNICEF and elsewhere.

A decision was made early on to take an alternative route to using the tool by doing a pre-assessment as a desk exercise and then using a stakeholder workshop to validate the results and start work on options/action plans for climate resilient water with participants in the workshop. There are some advantages in this in that it focuses on interventions and action plans rather than assessment which is easier in a workshop. The exercise therefore consisted of the following steps:

1. Desk study & information gathering
2. Preliminary risk assessment using the GWP/UNICEF Risk Assessment Tool
3. Stakeholder workshops in three counties (Kitui, Garissa and Turkana) to validate results & develop outline plans for climate resilient water development
4. Write up of water risk assessments for each county

In general, the risk assessment tool was well understood and easy to use due to the simple language and systematic approach that links hazard, exposure and vulnerability before assessing the risk. The guidance note fully describes the required fine details of the tool and provides good examples in each of the steps carried out making it easier to refer to while conducting risk assessment. However, there were a few challenges experienced when conducting the risk assessment, mostly related to the relative inflexibility of the Excel worksheet structure of the tool.

Validating the results at county stakeholders' workshops highlighted some capacity and knowledge gaps in the sector with regard to climate change, risk and the impact on the water sector. This is surprising considering the frequency of climate related events, especially drought and floods, in Kenya and the obvious challenges these present to water actors. The exercise was therefore more successful in raising awareness on the importance of these issues, the high risk in the sector and the gaps in current strategies and plans in addressing this rather than in validating the detailed risk assessment.

The team concludes that the Risk Assessment Tool is a useful part of advocacy for more climate resilient water development but more is required to build capacity and influence key actors to dedicate resources to this in Kenya.

National Workshop on Climate Resilient WASH

[See Annex 2 – National WASH Climate Resilience Workshop Report]

UNICEF Kenya in partnership with Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS) organized a one-day national workshop with an objective of generating ideas and approaches to a more coherent risk informed water sector development strategy and plan for investments to strengthen water climate resilience in Kenya.

The forum convened at Norfolk Hotel on 25th April, 2019 brought together 36 participants (government and non-government) from water and disaster risk management sectors based in County, National and Regional level. The workshop design aimed at capitalizing on participants' knowledge on climate change and the water sector context during plenary debate, group work sessions and panel discussions. The workshop produced the following recommendations:

1. The absence of climate risk assessment and planning for climate resilience in the water sector needs to be urgently addressed by all water stakeholders.
2. The outcomes from the workshop should be shared with other ASAL counties. County water departments should be encouraged to carry out WASH climate risk assessment and incorporate activities to strengthen climate resilient water development in their plans.
3. The leadership and collaboration between key actors across climate change and water sectors¹ started in this workshop should be maintained through regular contact and seizing opportunities for joint advocacy and action.
4. MoWS should take the lead in developing mechanisms for improved coordination and collaboration between national and county water actors (as well as other stakeholders) around issues such as water climate resilience which requires a combination of water resource management and service delivery efficiency.
5. UNICEF should facilitate stakeholders to form a Water Climate Resilience Working Group, starting with the workshop participants as the basis for the group. This group should aim to advocate for more focus on climate resilience in policy and planning documents and develop guidelines on this for use at National and County levels.
6. The workshop facilitators (Centre for Humanitarian Change) should host a resource hub on climate resilient WASH, preferably on an easy to access platform such as google drive, and start by sharing all workshop materials

Review of Climate Resilient Water Systems in Kenya

[See Annex 3 – Climate Resilient Water Supply in Kenya – Strategy Brief]

Devolved government in Kenya has resulted in a huge increase in investment in water infrastructure in ASAL counties in Kenya since 2014. However, the country faced another drought emergency in 2016/17 which resulted in over 800,000 people facing acute water shortage. This burden falls largely on women and impacts on child malnutrition as well as maternal and child health. Lessons learnt from the 2011 food security crisis and the 2016/17 drought indicate a weakness in the water sector in Kenya to address the underlying causes of drought and seasonal water stress. Successive local water departments have initiated water trucking as a first response measure instead of a last resort. The resilience of households in ASAL areas depends on the reliability of their water supplies and there is a need to strengthen water service systems to i) develop resilient water supply technologies and ii) contribute to strengthening household resilience to drought.

UNICEF Kenya commissioned this review and strategy development as part of its support to the water sector, specifically county governments and the Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS), to strengthen risk assessment and planning and to provide a clear direction for building water resilience in the ASALS. The review identifies a number of lessons learnt from the 2016/2017 drought in the region with respect to water resilience and highlights some promising developments and innovations. Outcomes from the risk assessment exercises carried out in three counties (Kitui, Garissa and Turkana) and the National

¹ MoWS, WSTF, UNICEF, MWA, NDMA, ADA, GoK Climate Change Directorate

Workshop on Climate Resilience WASH are combined with findings from the review to develop a strategy for UNICEF. The recommended strategy for UNICEF WASH follows a three-part approach of i) foundational – risk informed development (i.e. DRR), ii) Reliability – Sustainable water supply systems and iii) Response capacity – Shock responsive systems ('Surge models' - services that expand and contract to meet demand).

Conclusions

The consultancy provided an opportunity to explore the extent to which risk is understood and incorporated in water sector planning and development activities. This is the core of a disaster risk reduction approach and provides the foundation for climate resilience in a country with high vulnerability to climate related events. Fundamental gaps were identified in the policies, strategies and planning systems across both government and NGO water sector. Specifically, the consultancy concluded;

1. The latest climate change predictions are not adequately addressed in current water sector plans
2. The Climate Risk Assessment Tool is useful and the assessment should be carried out in all high-risk counties in Kenya
3. County Climate Resilient WASH Results Frameworks should be incorporated into other County planning exercises, such as CIDP, Annual Work plan for Water Sector disaster contingency plans
4. The proposal by Kitui Water Department to create a standard operating procedure (SOP) to apply the climate resilience appraisal ('stress test') for all new/proposed water developments in the county could be replicated across other counties as a 'gold standard' approach to mainstreaming climate resilience in planning.
5. It is important to balance climate proof infrastructure with investments in monitoring and sustainable, 'perennial' water service delivery systems. Climate resilience is too often reduced to adaptations in design and construction of infrastructure without considering the need for a systems resilience approach.
6. Many of the existing water policies/strategies and climate change strategies and action plans are not fit for purpose to guide climate resilient water development. They do not adequately address the risks to the water services and the water sector as a whole from climate related events.
7. Many stakeholders feel there needs to be improvements in coordinating the distinct but overlapping mandates of county government (for water service delivery) and national government (water resource exploitation/management) to ensure a coherent strategy for climate resilient water supply
8. Stakeholders encouraged UNICEF partner with MoWS and others to form a National Working Group on Water Climate Resilience with the aim of developing a guiding document for water climate resilience to be used by all water stakeholders. This could be a complete strategic framework or a set of guiding principles.

9. The Strategy Brief on Climate Resilient Water Supply in Kenya should be widely disseminated and used beyond UNICEF. There is a gap in knowledge and learning on climate resilience in the water sector and this brief goes a long way towards filling that gap.