

COVID-19

GN6

WASH for COVID-19 Response in Slums and Informal Urban Settlements

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

UNDERSTAND GOVERNANCE, COMMUNITY DYNAMICS AND COORDINATION ISSUES TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF INTERVENTIONS

- Build inclusive partnerships and support government-led coordination of all relevant service providers (municipal authorities, utilities, humanitarian and development partners, private sector, community organisations, women's groups and landlords)
- Empower critical community-level WASH actors (i.e. authorities, utilities and other community-level service providers) to take leadership in the response

GATHER SPATIAL INFORMATION IN REAL TIME TO INFORM WASH INTERVENTIONS

- Map inequities in provision of WASH services using assessment tools
- Monitor service disruptions
- Map risk factors and health conditions with spatially referenced information, displayed on platforms to allow decision makers real-time access

ADDRESS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF SUPPLYING WATER, SANITATION, HYGIENE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES

- Ensure WASH service continuity and meet the needs of the most vulnerable e.g. through cooperation with urban safety net programmes
- Promote/ enforce physical and social distance between users
- Promote innovative solutions to take care of additional grey water from increased handwashing and other types of waste
- Consider safety and accessibility to reduce the risks of gender-based violence and encourage usage by women and girls, and persons with disabilities

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1 PLANNING AND COORDINATION

NATIONAL LEVEL

- Ensure inclusion of informal urban settlements and slums in the national COVID-19 response plan

CITY LEVEL

- Assist city government, municipalities and utilities to develop a response plan that includes informal settlements
- Develop standard planning and response protocols for informal settlements, ensuring city level coordination committees include community representatives
- Identify high-risk areas (i.e. based on overcrowding, water and sanitation deficits, transit places, health facilities, schools)
- In collaboration with local representatives and community organisations, develop a geo-referenced community map of high-risk areas
- Use GIS tools to communicate information to decision makers and local community-management structures
- Develop community-based monitoring and reporting systems to provide feedback on functionality and adequacy of WASH services

4 SECTOR LEVEL SUPPORT

- Support city government, municipalities, utilities and small WASH service providers to ensure continuity of WASH services
- Support peer to peer learning, virtual technical exchange and capacity support among utilities
- Advocate for additional financial support to utilities to meet increased demand and sustain their operations
- Strengthen data and evidence generation for advocacy, planning and provision of WASH services as part of the city masterplan
- Protect front-line service providers (WASH and solid waste management providers) with adequate personal protective equipment

2 HYGIENE PROGRAMMING

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

- Build on existing initiatives to promote hand hygiene
- Identify and train established community groups on basic IPC in coordination with Ministry of Health, municipalities and others
- Install handwashing stations and develop mechanisms for operating them (e.g. community organisations assign youths/residents to operate them)

INTERMEDIATE ACTIONS

- Encourage local private sector actors to promote local design and production of handwashing stations and sustained access to soap
- Promote public-private partnership with multinational companies for provision of soap and other hygiene materials

3 WASH SERVICES AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

Secure access and continuity to water and sanitation services

- Ensure continuity of water supply through: meeting peak demand (e.g. water trucking or additional emergency storage), not disconnecting defaulting consumers, subsidizing utilities or cash transfers for access to WASH services for the most vulnerable.
- Install temporary sanitation facilities (including regular desludging and cleaning services) to reduce sharing of facilities
- Increase the frequency of solid waste disposal and management
- Engage and empower small private vendors providing WASH services
- Set up a rapid response specialist team to make any critical emergency repairs to WASH infrastructure
- Support provision of personal protective equipment where needed for safe delivery of services

Clusters of cases or places in quarantine

- Ensure continuous access to essential WASH services in quarantined informal settlements and slums
- Provide IPC kits to all vulnerable households through in-kind distribution, or cash-transfer/social safety net based on local knowledge

Households and isolation centres

- Identify and train community volunteers to provide IPC assistance to suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases
- Identify at-risk households for prioritized interventions such as elderly, persons with underlying health conditions, large families with poor living conditions, and persons with disabilities
- Prevent conflict and stigma that may be associated with households with suspected cases of COVID-19
- Support provision of adequate WASH as well as training of isolation centres personnel in community isolation spaces

Functioning schools in informal settlements

- Support safe schools protocols, including the provision of hand washing facilities, soap, cleaning materials and increase onsite water storage capacity

INTERMEDIATE ACTIONS

Improve access and continuity of WASH services

- Implement a cash-based approach for the most vulnerable groups
- Strengthen supply chains for essential WASH products
- Support the extension of low-cost networked water supply and sanitation services to under-served areas
- Increase per capita daily water supply to meet additional needs during this emergency period
- Increase solid waste and faecal waste management services