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**WATER,
SANITATION
AND HYGIENE**
**SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S
2020-2025 STRATEGY**

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ENSURING ACCES TO WASH SERVICES FOR ALL, AN AMBITION ALL THE MORE CRUCIAL IN DEGRADED CONTEXTS

Lack of access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services continues to wreak havoc and poses a real threat to public health. In 2019, it is estimated that:

- **2.2 billion people**, or 29% of the world's population, do not have access to safely managed domestic water supply services¹, 144 million of which only use untreated surface water sources²;
- **4.2 billion people**, or 55% of the world's population, do not have access to safely managed sanitation services, 673 million of which still practise open defecation³;
- **3 billion people** do not wash their hands at home, including 1.4 billion who have no access to soap and water for handwashing⁴; it is yet common ground that this is the practice most likely to reduce diarrhoeal morbidity⁵;
- **58 % of diarrhoea cases** in low- and middle-income countries, or 842,000 deaths annually, are caused by inadequate access to WASH services⁶; this accounts for the deaths of approximately 1,000 children under the age of five every day⁷;
- **1 in 3 women worldwide** are exposed to disease, shame, harassment or attacks because of lack of access to safe toilet facilities⁸. In addition, 82% of rape cases occur during the performance of daily tasks, including water collection⁹.

Cover photo:
Water point in Gado camp
in Garoua Boulai, Cameroon, 2019
© Adrienne Surprenant



Bougoumeira water tower
using solar energy
in Goundam, Mali, 2019
© Vinabe Mounkoro

2018 IPCC report, 200 million people will be forced into exile by 2050 due to climate change. It is therefore essential to place the protection and sound management of water resources at the heart of humanitarian responses in the WASH sector.

3. Increasing humanitarian needs confronted to stagnating public funding. The annual increase in funding from public donors rose from 20% between 2013 and 2014 to 3% between 2015 and 2017⁴⁴. In the search for more efficiency and effectiveness, the humanitarian sector is therefore compelled to innovate more and more in order to reach a greater number of beneficiaries despite increasingly rigid financial constraints.

4. WASH interventions of relative quality that call for the review of intervention methods. According to the SOHS 2018, barely half of all humanitarian programmes achieve their objectives on time and with an acceptable level of quality⁴⁵. The WASH sector is no exception and struggles to carry out satisfactory initial assessments, to sufficiently contextualise responses, to articulate interventions between emergency and recovery phases, and to propose qualitative responses. Finally, the sector suffers from a lack of evaluation and learning, which generates a knowledge gap on the real effectiveness and efficiency of WASH interventions, particularly when it comes to sanitation⁴⁶.

Finally, the United Nations agenda has set the goal for itself, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to guarantee access to drinking water and sanitation for all by 2030. However, as the 2018 UN-WATER report points out⁴⁷, *"the world is not on track to achieve the MDGs by 2030: financing for water and sanitation is insufficient, governance structures are fragmented and institutional and human capacities in the water sector as a whole are also insufficient, particularly in the least developed countries"*. This observation is all the more true in crisis situations: one of SI's objectives for the period to come will be to actively contribute to the achievement of SDGs, particularly in degraded contexts.

In addition to these alarming observations, there are aggravating contextual factors which are new challenges for SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL (SI) to take into consideration and overcome:

- 1. An increasing number of crises that are more intense, more complex and longer, requiring the coexistence of emergency responses and more structural responses.** Humanitarian action must therefore respond to the immediate and vital needs of populations while considering more sustainable solutions to pave the way for future recovery. In 2018, the HIIK Conflict Barometer counted 374 conflicts⁴⁰ around the world, almost three times as many as in the 1990s⁴¹, with one in seventy people in the world in need of humanitarian assistance and "forcibly displaced people" spending an average of 20 years in refugee camps (UNHCR, 2019).
- 2. Climate change and its impact on availability and access to water resources.** Pressure on water resources should increase considerably over the next decade due to changing consumption patterns and population growth. In Africa alone, the population is expected to double by 2050 to reach 2.5 billion inhabitants⁴², and it is estimated that 38% of the world population will be exposed to water stress in 2025, compared to only 9% in 2008⁴³. Moreover, according to the

- 1** Report of the Joint Monitoring Program 2019, WHO/UNICEF. Definition of a safely managed drinking water service: "Drinking water from an improved source located on premises, available when needed, and free from microbiological and priority chemical contamination".
- 2** Ibid.
- 3** Ibid.
- 4** Ibid.
- 5** Fewtrell L. et al, *Water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions to reduce diarrhoea in less developed countries: a systematic review and meta-analysis*, Lancet Infect. Dis., 2005.
- 6** Report "Preventing diarrhoea through better water, sanitation and hygiene: exposures and impacts in low- and middle-income countries", WHO, December 2014, page 9.
- 7** Atlas on children's health and the environment, WHO, 2017, page 146.
- 8** WaterAid: Briefing note – 1 in 3 women lack access to safe toilets, 19 November 2012.
- 9** MSF Darfur study, 2005.
- 10** Over 200 of these conflicts are categorised as "violent". In 1993, there were just over 100 violent and non-violent conflicts around the world. <https://hiik.de/conflict-barometer/current-version/?lang=en>
- 11** Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, Conflict Barometer 2018.
- 12** INED, *World population in graphs, Population curves* https://www.ined.fr/en/everything_about_population/graphs-maps/population_graphs/
- 13** <https://www.cieau.com/eau-transition-ecologique/enjeux/rechauffement-climatique-les-consequences-sur-leau/>
- 14** Global assistance report 2018.
- 15** State of the Humanitarian System 2018.
- 16** Groupe URD and Académie de l'Eau, 2010 *Réflexions méthodologiques sur l'accès à l'eau et à l'assainissement pour les populations en situation de crise*.
- 17** <https://www.unwater.org/publications/highlights-sdg-6-synthesis-report-2018-on-water-and-sanitation/>



Household disinfection of a cholera case in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 2019
© Camille Neil

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE'S 2020-2025 WASH STRATEGY

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE reaffirms its commitment to an appropriate, qualitative and high-impact humanitarian response, focusing primarily on the health, dignity and well-being of vulnerable populations affected by a crisis.

As part of its 2020-2025 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy, SI aims to actively contribute to achieving objectives 3 & 6 of the SDGs. It plans to do so by systematising "WASH" & "Health" integrated approaches in degraded contexts in order to provide high-impact qualitative responses essentially focused on the health, dignity and well-being of affected populations.

To achieve this ambition, SI prioritises the following specific objectives for the period 2020-2025:

1. Implement and/or support responses to epidemics and efficient and adapted WASH services, preventing all types of health, environmental and social risks.

Result SI's WASH interventions are systematically of high quality and comply with internal requirements and standards in force;

2. Develop SI expertise by significantly improving knowledge building, demonstration and innovation capacities.

Result SI's knowledge production and demonstration capabilities in the WASH sector are strengthened, and high-impact innovations are developed;

3. Promote knowledge sharing within the sector, convey the voice of crisis-affected populations to the local, national, regional and international levels, and actively engage international and national actors to accelerate the achievement of SDGs in degraded contexts.

Result SI is an active member of the dynamic WASH networks and is globally recognised for its campaigns and contributions to the humanitarian WASH sector.

THE ROADMAP ASSOCIATED WITH THESE OBJECTIVES IS PRESENTED IN ANNEX 1.



Unplanted drying bed in the Sludge Treatment centre in Sittwe, Myanmar, 2018
© Marine Ricau

PRIORITY WASH PROGRAMMATIC LINES OF WORK

To these objectives are associated **3 programmatic lines of work on which SI will concentrate its efforts between 2020 and 2025.**

AXIS 1 **INTENSIFY THE FIGHT AGAINST EPIDEMICS**

- Strengthen **multisectoral WASH & Health coordination** at all levels (global, regional, national & local) and increase **joint actions**;
- Contribute to strengthening the **effectiveness of local epidemiological surveillance systems** by developing **community and environmental surveillance** programmes;
- Improve the **predictability of epidemics** and the quality of **rapid responses**;
- Equip **treatment centres and health facilities located in endemic areas** with appropriate and efficient drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services;
- Prioritise support for the **coverage and performance of drinking water and sanitation services in cholera and Ebola hotspots**.

AXIS 2 **STRENGTHEN THE QUALITY OF WASH INTERVENTIONS DURING PHASES OF SHOCK ABSORPTION**

- Contain health risks and minimise **negative environmental impacts** by systematising:
 - » The preservation and sound management of water resources;
 - » The development of complete sanitation services, including the use of by-products¹;
 - » Vector control actions in housing areas and within households;
 - » Regulating the efficiency of the treatment processes used;
 - » Taking into account the determinants of behavioural change when designing communication and social mobilisation strategies;
- Systematise the application of **protection measures against all forms of violence and violation of populations' well-being and dignity** in WASH interventions;
- Develop and promote **tools to assist in the rapid and participatory design** of more qualitative responses;
- Actively contribute to improving the **quality and effectiveness of humanitarian coordination mechanisms**.

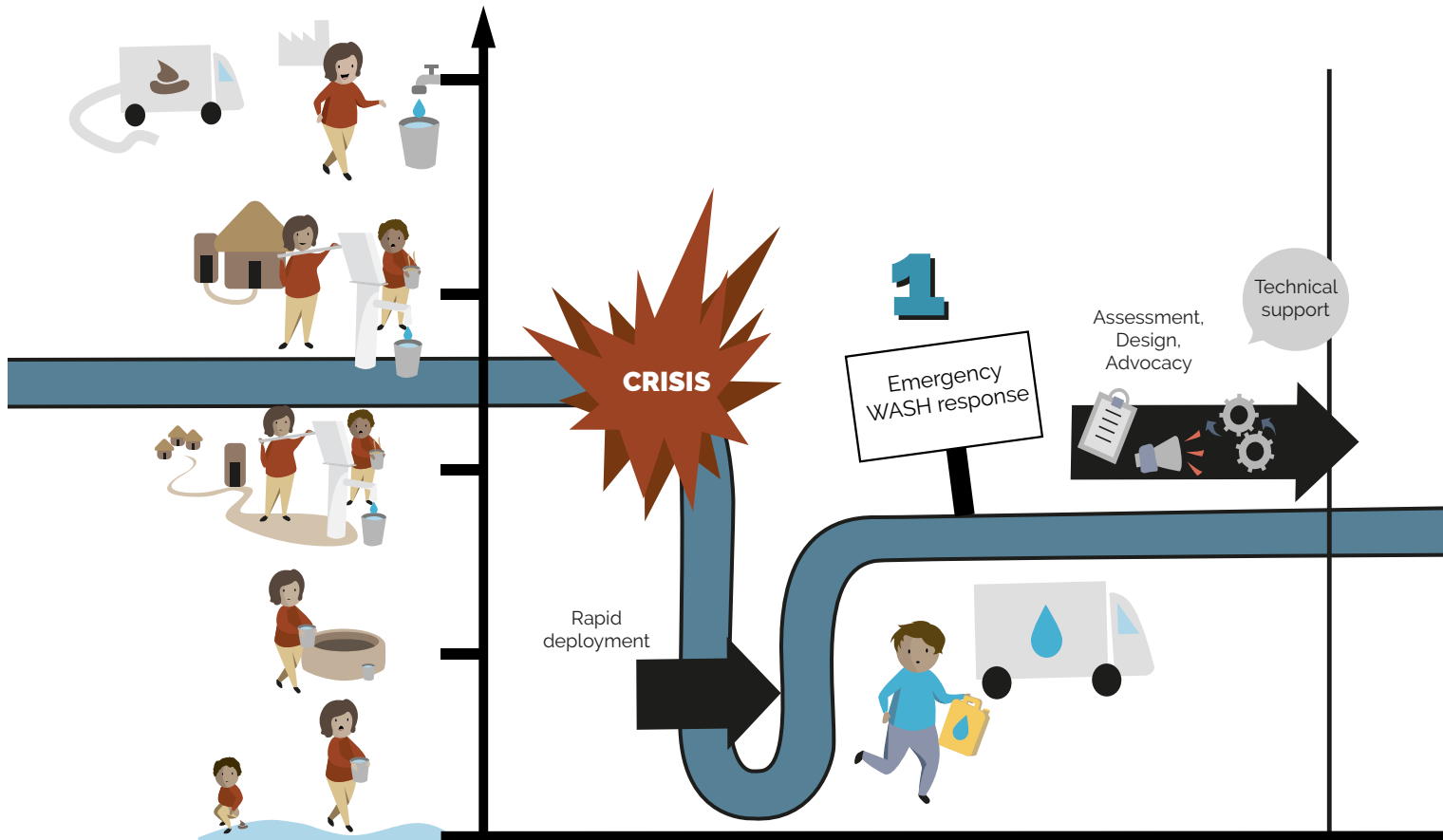
AXIS 3 **STRENGTHEN PUBLIC WASH SERVICES IN DEGRADED CONTEXTS**

- Promote **knowledge and practice sharing** between humanitarian and development actors by initiating a more active dialogue and supporting **joint initiatives**;
- Actively support the **continuity of public drinking water and sanitation services** in degraded contexts by boosting capacity building and **local technical assistance**;
- Encourage **sustainable and concerted management of water resources** by promoting the concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) - in WASH and FSL² programmes;
- Strengthen the adaptation of populations to climate change by integrating actions in the field of **Disaster Risk Reduction** within programmes for supporting governance and public WASH services.

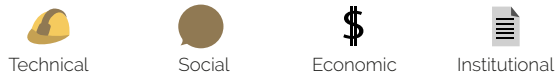
¹ In link with SI's Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) programmes.

² Food Security and Livelihoods.

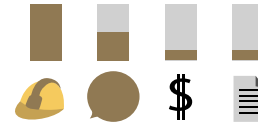
Ladder of WASH services



Importance of the dimensions according to the response



Shock absorption phase



LOGIC OF INTERVENTION & WASH INTERVENTION PRINCIPLES

As an experienced humanitarian actor, SI intends to (i) assist populations affected by conflicts, epidemics and natural disasters as rapidly and effectively as possible, covering their vital needs, and (ii) support them in recovering their livelihoods and capacities to face future challenges with dignity.

At the heart of SI's concerns are the deployment of WASH responses adapted to the temporality of crises and their progressive improvement over time; these responses focus on both public health and supporting populations towards recovery, by integrating preparation and adaptation to risks (including epidemics). SI thus

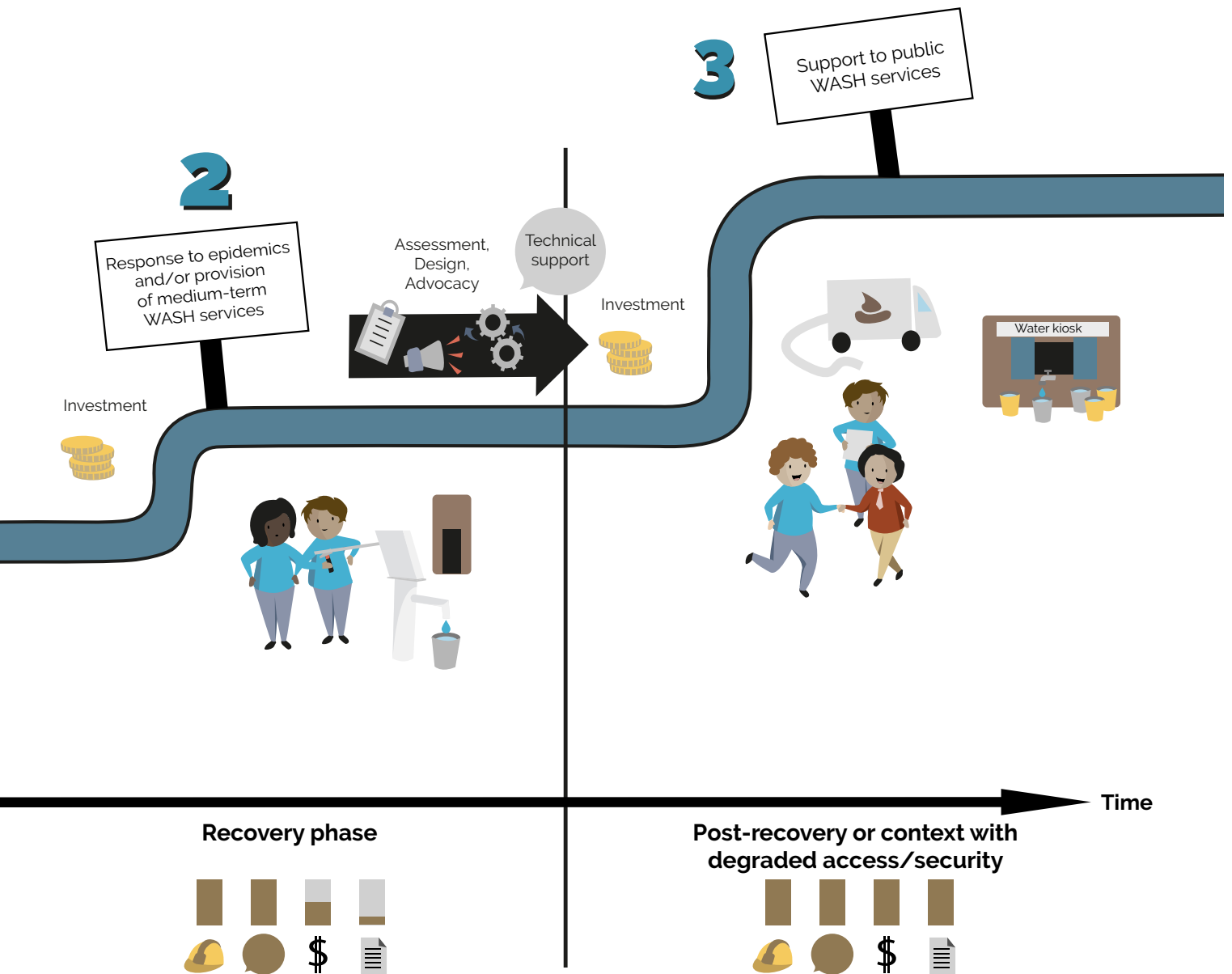
distinguishes three main types of WASH responses:

1. Emergency WASH interventions

In the event of shocks or epidemics, these interventions focus on timeliness for immediate effects in order to (i) meet the vital needs of populations and (ii) contain health risks as much as possible. **This type of intervention is characterised by relatively short preparation time, including assessments, and a predominantly technical dimension.**

The responses deployed are primarily aimed at meeting Sphere standards^{®1} in order to provide quality drinking water in sufficient quantity, ensure safe management of excreta and solid waste, support good hygiene practices,

participate in vector control and control epidemics. The solutions implemented are generally temporary and, by definition, unsustainable due to their operating costs, their poor adaptation to local demands and specificities, and with a risk of undermining pre-existing systems. Typical activities include the delivery of water trucking, the commissioning of temporary surface water treatment plants, the repair/rehabilitation of broken-down water points, the construction of emergency latrines and faecal sludge disposal sites, hygiene kit and/or vouchers / "cash for WASH" distribution campaigns, etc.



2. Medium-term WASH and/or epidemic control services

When crisis situations are protracted and these 'emergency solutions' can no longer be maintained, or when the intervention context allows for a longer preparation/design phase, SI emphasises contextual knowledge (situational analysis, one-off and continuous assessments), partnership strategies, technical support and dialogue with stakeholders in order to provide more adapted and efficient medium-term WASH and/or epidemic control services.

The technical and social dimensions are at the heart of these responses

which aim primarily at (i) achieving - at the very least - the 'basic' level on the WASH service ladder of the JMP², (ii) maximising beneficiaries' satisfaction and ownership of the services provided, and (iii) promoting the adoption of adequate WASH practices by all. These responses mainly target forced IDP camps - whether formal or informal - and more generally areas and/

or facilities that host and care for crisis-affected populations.

3. Support and/or strengthen WASH public services

In contexts of long-term crises (> 5 years) and/or degraded contexts to which access is restricted to humanitarian actors only, SI works in close collaboration with development actors and local authorities in order to support and/or strengthen public WASH services (3), in order to lay the foundations for the future recovery of these areas. **Thus, in addition to the technical and social dimensions, the search for economic and organisational viability, as well as the boosting of governance and local capacities, guide this type of response.** The latter mainly covers structural and preventive interventions that specifically target public services, in degraded contexts that endure epidemics (Cholera / Ebola virus disease) and/or massive influxes of forcibly displaced persons. It may also consist in the

transformation of temporary host areas into sustainable living areas.

It must be noted that these three responses can coexist in the same area at the same time, and that operational modalities need to be adapted in a dynamic way according to the level of degradation of the context, to access conditions, to population movements and to the needs of the different social groups and communities present.

Finally, as illustrated above, testimony and advocacy are central to this logic of intervention, in order to call for the mobilisation of all partners (operational and financial) so that the impact of interventions are maximised through a progressive and continuous improvement of the relevance and quality of the responses provided.

¹ And/or the "limited" level of the JMP WASH ladder - <https://washdata.org/>

² <https://washdata.org/>

In addition to this logic of intervention, SI's WASH responses are systematically characterised by the following six (06) intervention principles.

They constitute the six WASH pillars of SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL.

1 Public health, the common thread of SI's WASH interventions

SI acknowledges that the lack of access to quality drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services has consequences on the health and well-being of populations; WASH responses offered by SI therefore systematically endeavour to have a strong impact on the prevalence of waterborne diseases and epidemics. In this respect, SI is engaged in (i) collaborating closely with health actors, (ii) contributing strongly to the improvement of epidemiological surveillance systems, (iii) targeting and prioritising its interventions based on epidemiological data, (iv) and monitoring the performance of its WASH programmes on the basis of public health indicators.

2 Beneficiaries at the core of WASH responses

With this public health objective in mind, SI's WASH interventions seek primarily to (i) maximise community ownership of the services provided, (ii) promote the sustainable adoption of adequate hygiene practices, and (iii) ensure the protection of its beneficiaries. As such, user-centered designs, participatory processes, consultation mechanisms, iterative approaches and the use of human sciences are central to SI's WASH programmatic practices.

3 The progressive improvement of WASH responses through continuous situational analysis

SI is committed to delivering effective and relevant humanitarian programmes that are responsive to the needs and crisis temporalities. Before being launched, each intervention therefore originates from a preliminary situational analysis of the context and needs, including in emergency situations¹; this exercise is regularly updated and completed in order to allow for the adaptation of operational modalities. Moreover, SI strongly encourages innovation and research in its intervention contexts so that it can suggest new approaches that boost the quality, effectiveness and relevance of the responses implemented..

4 Responses that systematically anticipate exit strategies

SI acknowledges that humanitarian responses must address the symptoms of a crisis while paving the way to recovery². The organisation thus strives to systematically develop three (03) tools to assist in the management, operation and monitoring of WASH services, namely : provisional operating accounts for WASH services, (ii) maintenance and upkeep plans for the infrastructures in question, and (iii) clarification of the roles, responsibilities, rights and duties of the stakeholders, in a perspective of technical, economic and organisational viability of the WASH services supported and/or strengthened.

5 Capacity building, a central element

SI places knowledge transfer and capacity building of local actors at the heart of its interventions. To do so, The latter are underpinned on a strong partnership logic and systematically include (i) an assessment of individuals' and organisations' needs and demands for capacity building, (ii) the development and implementation of training plans that favour proximity (coaching programmes particularly), and (iii) the evaluation of the achievements and effects of these programmes, allowing for adjustment and continuous improvement.

6 Strong support for coordination and knowledge sharing efforts

Finally, SI adheres to the principle that the coordination of humanitarian responses is essential to the quality of the assistance provided³; it is thus committed to contributing to the continuous improvement of coordination mechanisms through active participation in the Global WaSH Cluster and other sector initiatives. In the field, SI becomes a key interlocutor within national and local coordination mechanisms, and proactively exchanges information on its operations.

1 SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL Operational Framework – September 2016

2 Report Pathway for Peace, World Bank and United Nations – March 2018.

3 SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL Operational Framework – September 2016.



CONTACT

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

Aude LAZZARINI

Head of WASH department
alazzarini@solidarites.org

info@solidarites.org

Report

Deputy Direction of Operations for Programmes

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Aude Lazzarini et Suricats Consulting

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