

‘Resilience, water and sanitation’: WEDC Open Day Group Exercise

Task: Imagine that you are representatives of the ‘WASH Cluster’ and that you have been asked to draw up examples of how the seven resiliency principles could be applied to water and sanitation provision in the aftermath of your group’s disaster scenario. Key points raised during the group session are provided in the table below.

| Resiliency principle | What could you do? |
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| 1. Adopt a holistic perspective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with a wide range of governmental and non-governmental organisations, disciplines and sectors Ensure cross cluster cooperation Understand the needs of community groups and sections of society that may be typically under-represented Build capacity at community and local governmental levels Take a multi-hazards approach to dealing with hazard mitigation Appreciate the role of ‘non-structural approaches’ (such as health and hygiene promotion) |
| 2. Develop and appropriately apply resilient technologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of technological advances and innovations (e.g. raised latrines, robust/flexible materials/pipes) Provide extension services to help reduce vulnerability Encourage a range of disciplines to work together in problem solving Provide local people with skills in maintenance and construction Consider the use of warning systems (and the awareness raising campaign that will required to make such a system useful) |
| 3. Engage a wide range of stakeholders in resilience efforts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make concerted efforts to identify all the stakeholders and involve them proportionately in decision making Use a range of methods to engage people in different ways (formal/informal, gender/child sensitive, written/verbal/images) Appreciate the importance of targeting the most vulnerable sections of society (good examples of this in West Bengal, India) Work with the UN cluster system but also appreciate the limitations of such a system Encourage the different ‘clusters’ to work with each other – attain some ‘joined up thinking’ Raise children’s awareness of hazards and threats and encourage them to educate their parents about key issues (i.e. Japan) |
| 4. Utilise existing guidance and frameworks when appropriate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don’t always try to invent the wheel; realise that in many cases appropriate solutions may already exist Embrace traditional knowledge and don’t be overly technocratic in your responses Try to understand what local, regional, national and international frameworks/guidance can be used/adapted Publicise good practice and don’t be afraid to tell people about how things have gone wrong or not worked Consider using a disaster management design protocol |
| 5. Exploit opportunities to build-in resiliency measures post-disaster | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that post-disaster reconstruction should not be rushed but is an opportunity to build back better Provide the communities with opportunities to raise their awareness and make informed decisions about hazard mitigation features Learn lessons from other post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction approaches (i.e. in Mozambique and Pakistan) Provide flood, earthquake, cyclone resistant designs to water supply and latrines |
| 6. Integrate built environment (and WATSAN) professionals into the DRM process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage town/urban planners, engineers, utilities companies, NGOs etc. to work with emergency planners and risk managers Provide guidelines to the construction industry on what they can do to make the built environment more resilient Set out suitably robust building regulations AND establish mechanisms to ensure they are enforced Establish multi-sectoral local resilience forums for a range of stakeholders to participate in |
| 7. Mainstream resilience into the built environment curricula | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate disaster risk management into the professional training of engineers and development practitioners (though degree courses and also continued professional development) Informally incorporate basic and advanced risk management/hazard mitigation techniques into the informal training of skilled and semi-skilled artisans and construction workers |

If you are interesting in hearing more about this topic (or related topics) then please attend the following sessions at the WEDC conference

- Thursday 7th July (session 3E, 4E)

