

WASH in Emergencies

Water and sanitation seem to be the one of the top priorities in cases of emergencies. Health and nutrition are also part of the core services that people require most urgently.

The earthquake in Haiti can give us a firsthand exposure to the technical challenges and the systems deploy in such devastating events. Endemic conditions such corruption, malnutrition, lack of education and decayed infrastructure can only be exacerbated by an earthquake. The last earthquake in San Francisco caused 63 casualties and last weekend's earthquake in Chile has caused 711 deaths so far. In Haiti, the first day after the disaster 17,000 people were buried in a common grave.

Water

A fundamental resource to keep people in good health is transported and distributed in different ways; **water** trucks for focused point distribution, water kiosk where people can collect and buy water, commercial distribution in plastic bags and bottles. In organized or spontaneous camps you also find the following systems.



20 lt water tank with water purification pills. This water is mainly use for hygiene purposes



Pre assembled toilet units. Back to back with toilet, sink and shower head. Commonly use for prefab offices



Commercial water in plastic bags. NGOs will also distribute as last resource. Approximate amount is 2 glasses of water



Water kiosk with 10,000 lt plastic bladder. Most of the time the kiosk is set up NGO and run by community water committee



Water bladder within camp site. See below for connection to taps



Water tap connections for water distribution connected to rubber Bladder

Sanitation

The **sanitation** component of any emergency is the most complicated one. When you have massive migration of people and no access to proper toilets the alternatives are limited. Open defecation tends to be the first option and the one that all actors involved in the response want to avoid or curtail in order to prevent the spread of disease. At the moment there are more than 350 spontaneous camps in the three major affected areas; Port-au-Prince, Jacmel and Leogane. The biggest camp has 45,000 people and the most of them have 6,000 people.

The amount of human solid waste generated on a daily basis is very large and hard to manage if you don't have the capacity and technical knowhow to implement the right system. Pit latrines are the most basic solution but with limited capacity and potential for underground water contamination. These are some of the latrines implemented so far:



Pit latrines with ventilation pipe. 8'-0" deep hole with no lining. Wood super structure and heavy canvas as wall covering



Public showers over gravel bed. Wood super structure and heavy canvas as wall covering



Chemical toilets.
Requires emptying 3
times a day by trucks.
Disposal dish must be
properly size and design



Corrugated plastic
latrines. Maximum life is
two weeks. So far they
are serving for 6 weeks.
They are focal point for
disease



Individual latrine.
No comments



Portable toilet seat.
Complemented by paper
bags that can be
biodegradable or use for
compost