

WASH competency framework -for low-resource contexts

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This framework is accompanied by set of supporting documents. These provide advice and additional information on using this framework.

Acknowledgements

This draft framework is inspired by and uses the approach taken by the Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE) with their Humanitarian and International Development Competency Framework¹, which complements their Initial Professional Development Guidance². Some of the text is based on this document. The framework uses the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management's (CIWEM) Mandatory Competence Attainment Report Guidance³ as its foundation, rather than the IStructE competencies.

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¹ ISTRUCTE, 2021. *Humanitarian and International Development Competency Framework*. London, UK: Institution of Structural Engineers. Available from: <https://www.istructe.org/resources/guidance/humanitarian-international-dev-framework/>.

² ISTRUCTE, 2025. *IPD Guidance*. London, UK: Institution of Structural Engineers. Available from: <https://www.istructe.org/training-and-development/ipd/>.

³ CIWEM, 2023. *C.WEM Mandatory Competence Attainment Report Guidance*. London, UK: CIWEM. Available from: <https://www.ciwem.org/assets/pdf/Membership/Application%20Guidance/C.WEM%20MC%20Guidance.pdf>.

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A. Existing and emerging factors influencing water, sanitation and hygiene issues

A1. Knowledge of wider social, economic, technical, health and environmental issues and trends

Demonstrate your knowledge of the issues and trends in the WASH sector that go beyond your area of expertise. You will be familiar with examples of current relevant local, national or global social, economic, technical, health and environmental issues, and how they affect your sector. You should know how these issues and trends have developed over time, and how they may develop in the future. You should be able to describe the opportunities and threats that these issues have on the WASH sector and your area of work. Having this knowledge is important, as these changes and developments will likely influence your work in some way in the future.

Application in low-resource settings.

Consider **social** challenges affecting the WASH sector. These may include unequal access to WASH services for marginalised groups, as well as the impact of rapid urbanisation and the expansion of informal settlements on service provision. Your knowledge of relevant **economic** issues and trends could include the sources and flows of funding for the sector and the challenges of assuring cost recovery whilst maintaining affordable services. WASH facilities are dependent on a good knowledge of **technical** issues, with innovative approaches being developed to address emerging challenges. Key public **health** considerations can include the prevalence and nature of disease outbreaks, and the interdependence of WASH, health and nutrition efforts on protecting public health. You should understand the **environmental** challenges, such as nutrient recycling, the effects of climate change, the risk of flooding events and an increased focus on nature-based solutions. You should be familiar with the legislative, financial and policy drivers at national, regional and international levels, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, International Humanitarian Law and the localisation agenda.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Identify current local, national and/ or global social, economic, technical, health and environmental external factors that impact the WASH sector such as climate change, disease outbreaks, funding cuts, changing legislation, and emerging technologies.
- Classify the major actors who influence decision-making and best practice in the sector, such as the Global WASH Cluster, WHO, UN Agencies, national and regional level institutions.
- Describe positive and negative, direct and indirect impacts that adequate WASH services have on society, the economy, development, health and the environment.
- Describe the other social, economic, technical, health and environmental issues that your organisation is contributing towards outside of their sector.
- Distinguish the different institutional models of governments, and the role of UN agencies, INGOs, CBOs, private sector companies and voluntary groups.
- Give examples of how your work is driven by common goals, principles and standards for the sector, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sphere project, national guidelines, and the WHO drinking water quality guidelines.
- Differentiate between phases of a humanitarian response, types of service levels, diversity of WASH service users and various contexts or conditions.
- Summarise relevant legislation (e.g. International Humanitarian Law, anti-corruption and fraud legislation, legislation to limit child and sexual abuse as well as planning, construction, employment and contract laws).
- Describe international funding flows, including institutional donors, public donations, remittances, accountable grants and commercial contracts and the implications of each source (e.g. public opinion in donor countries).

A2. Ability to develop strategies or plans to address changes in your sector

Building on your knowledge of the wider emerging issues and trends affecting the WASH sector (demonstrated under A1), respond to the challenges, consequences and impacts these changes are having on your sector and area of work. This may include the effects these changes have on workloads and revenues for you personally, as part of a team or as an organisation, or on the methods you have used in your work. Show how you have monitored and reviewed how these issues and trends have changed over time. You should demonstrate your ability to develop, adapt and use strategies that help you, your team and your organisation effectively respond to and manage these changes and their impacts. These strategies could include creating and putting plans in place in preparation for anticipated change. Strategies are the approaches and ways of working that you use to “get things done”. You should be able to identify gaps in your knowledge and conduct appropriate research to develop strategies built on evidence.

Application in low-resource settings.

Changes you encounter may include developments at the institutional level, such as modifications to the strategy to humanitarian response issued by the WASH Cluster or through a UN-led initiative. There may be regulatory changes, such as to drinking water quality guidance from the WHO. Social changes could include an increased recognition of socially excluded groups. Economic changes may relate to changing flows of aid or different ways of spending money, such as market-based approaches. Technical changes may result from innovations or new research. Changes in health issues may include the emergence of neglected tropical diseases. Environmental changes may be broader, such as changes in the climate. You will not be expected to be an expert in these topics, but you will be expected to demonstrate how you have identified and developed strategies to anticipate and address these issues from a WASH perspective.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Debate the plans and strategies that have been devised and used to address changes in the sector.
- Evaluate how the sector, organisational or project strategies that have been devised have helped your organisation, and the sector as whole, meet these external pressures.
- Investigate gaps in your knowledge required to be able to support strategy development.
- Research new and/ or emerging technologies or approaches that could be used to help meet future sector needs.
- Recommend a new standard, system, service or way of working as part of a future strategy.

B. Planning, implementation and evaluation of work

B1. Ability to analyse and evaluate water, sanitation and hygiene problems

Consider a project or piece of work that you have had responsibility for. You may have worked as part of a team, so identify the role you played and your personal contribution to analysing and evaluating the problem. Demonstrate your ability to analyse and evaluate a WASH problem in a holistic manner. Consider not just technical issues, but economic, health, environmental and social factors, considering the needs and perspectives of all stakeholders. This will include the end users, service providers, the client, regulators and the public. Demonstrate that you have understood the problem across each of these factors and stakeholder perspectives. You should describe the research, surveys, information gathering methods and analysis that you have done to understand the problem and be able to identify the causes of the problem. This will include both the secondary information already available and first-hand data that you have used.

Application in low-resource settings.

In low-resource settings you are likely to be closely involved in the development of an entire project from the early stages of needs identification and problem analysis. This could include defining the rationale behind a project, establishing the objectives and identifying what changes are needed. In low-resource settings existing information may be less readily available, and you may face resource constraints for data collection. This may lead decisions to be more heavily influenced by judgement and experience. Information gathering, however rapid, should still be carried out. Your assessments should show an understanding of the social (such as inclusion and institutions), economic, technical, and environmental aspects of WASH interventions. Any assessment should include both data collection methods and analysis.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Explain common WASH concepts such as the F diagram, multiple barrier methods, Shit Flow Diagrams, water catchment areas, groundwater recharge, barrier analysis, the Sanitation Chain, incremental approaches, the sanitation ladder, service delivery options, self-supply, system thinking, behaviour change models and theories, social exclusion and management approaches.
- Plan appropriate surveys/ assessments to collect data. Show ability in a range of physical, economic, social and environmental methods such as focus groups, sanitary surveys, Knowledge – Attitude - Practice surveys, demographic surveys, observations, flow measurement, willingness to pay surveys, needs assessments, interviews, infiltration tests, water quality tests, training needs assessments, ecological assessments, infrastructure inspections, resource reviews (e.g. water, materials, institutional, labour force) and mapping.
- Organise stakeholder consultations to ensure that people's perspectives, needs, capacities and interests influence the understanding of the problem.
- Check the quality of the data, noting where information is missing, approximate or uncertain.
- Manage data and information so it can be use, stored and protected.
- Present your findings in appropriate formats to a range of appropriate stakeholders, such as water service users, government officials and partner organisations, ensuring that the nature and extent of the problem have been fully understood by all concerned.
- Review relevant literature, reports and standards. Being able to identify trustworthy sources of information is part of this process. Local plans, regulations and laws can provide guidance.
- Analyse data and information collected using methods such as barrier analysis, GIS analysis, jar tests, Environmental Impact Assessments, stakeholder mapping, WASH FIT, epidemiology, cash flow forecasts, modelling, scenario planning, Wash 'Em or market assessments.
- Integrate findings from various (social, economic, environmental, physical) sources to provide an interdisciplinary assessment of the situation. Systems thinking, livelihood analysis, results chains, problem and solution trees, theories of change or log frames may be useful.
- Review your work in the light of feedback, to check the quality of the data and the analysis appropriate to the current context (e.g. limited time or resources) and any apparent bias.

B2. Ability to solve problems by identifying, developing and evaluating options

Demonstrate your ability to identify and develop potential solutions to resolve a WASH problem. When developing and evaluating these options, you should draw upon your knowledge of the key principles appropriate to your discipline. Use engineering, environmental, health, management, scientific and social approaches and methods. You need to demonstrate how you considered the implications, advantages and disadvantages of each option. Demonstrate how you have reached a decision on which option best fits the issue you are seeking to address. This should consider the multiple requirements for the proposed solution concerning economic, environmental, regulatory, technical and social factors. Use evidence to support your recommended option.

Through your example(s) consider the goal of your proposed solution. Demonstrate the extent to which your selected option addresses the problem(s) (identified in B1). Highlight the costs, benefits and resources required of each solution you considered.

Application in low-resource settings:

Analysis and design are likely to be much more based on judgement and experience than it would be in better resourced contexts. You may have to rely on first principles rather than codified analysis and calculations. It is likely that robust guidance is not available for many of the problems that you will encounter. Where standard solutions are being used, selecting the most appropriate approach becomes more important. For example, simple toilets may not require detailed structural design but correctly choosing between container-based sanitation, simple pits and composting methods may determine the success of a project.

You may have responsibility for identifying and defining the inputs and resources required for the work. This may include deciding on the staffing requirements, setting activities, preparing detailed workplans, creating a budget and defining the results that the project should deliver.

The range of options will probably differ from better resourced contexts. Onsite sanitation may be preferred to sewerage, safe household storage of water may be a priority over implementing high levels of water treatment, face to face hygiene promotion may be more effective than using modern media. The availability and quality of materials and equipment may be limited. These constraints need to be considered in the design stage. Durability and maintenance must take a much more central role in design decisions than they do in highly engineered projects.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Define the goal / aim / objective of the intervention in a project specification, proposal or business case.
- Design a range of activities (e.g. behavioural change promotion and messaging, water network damage and leak assessments, training of local toilet slab producers, distribution of household water filters) and facilities (e.g. water source development, installation of clinical waste management facilities). If working in a team or with a group of users, emphasise your role.
- Estimate the current and future inputs and resources required for a range of sustainable solutions, collaborating with procurement and logistics experts if necessary.
- Quantify the social, economic, health and environmental costs / risks and benefits of each solution to various stakeholders. Identify compromises or areas where the solution does not fully meet the objectives. Show how you assign costs and benefits to the various stakeholders.
- Review relevant standards, specifications, codes and guidance.
- Integrate engineering and social science principles, ensuring that solutions are technically sound, socially acceptable and appropriate to the context.
- Forecast opportunities and threats, drivers and barriers that may affect each option.
- Justify your selected option in a transparent way to a range of stakeholders.

B3. Ability to plan and implement solutions and monitor their continuing performance

Demonstrate your ability to effectively plan and implement solutions that you, or others have developed. This could be the development of WASH infrastructure, the delivery of services or conducting research. Show how you comply with appropriate standards such as health, safety and well-being procedures, quality assurance, cost control and the effective management of resources. Identify the risks that may compromise the outcome of the solution, using a structured method such as a risk register. Demonstrate that you can monitor and evaluate the performance of the solution against the design criteria and specification agreed with clients / stakeholders, referring to initial baselines, identified needs and chosen objectives. Show how you learn from and amend operations using the data you collect to evaluate performance.

Application in low-resource settings:

This competence examines how you can deliver solutions. In low-resource settings it is important to adapt design and construction methods to local practices and capacities, as the resources and ability to change and improve practices will be very limited. However, health and safety and value for money should not be neglected.

You may make use of social or economic interventions for delivering WASH solutions. This can include community engagement, developing behaviour change strategies, supporting capacity building of local actors or institutional development, alongside provision of WASH infrastructure. When working with the private sector, such as through market-based approaches, you will need to prepare clear contracts to ensure understanding and agreement of all parties. This will help avoid and manage potential conflict, empowering the parties to maintain agreements. You should be confident in using contracts to help deliver WASH solutions.

Most WASH solutions require sustained service delivery rather than just providing infrastructure. Report how you considered the practicalities of regular data collection and analysis so that it can be used to inform project delivery. You need to select and develop the indicators used to monitor the performance of the project. At the end of the project you may be more closely involved in looking back and evaluating performance as well as preparing for an effective handover or external review. You should keep reliable records of the work done through the project life cycle to support this.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Prepare programmes of work, budgets and log frames to implement a solution
- Select resources appropriate for the context
- Identify risks that may compromise the success of the solution
- Determine indicators to measure progress and performance.
- Develop contractual agreements with third parties
- Monitor the progression of work, identifying changes in schedule, scope and costing.
- Supervise the activities of others.
- Track the movement, consumption and quality of materials and equipment.
- (Re)schedule activities and resources in response to progress and performance updates.
- Resolve problems during the implementation stage.
- Recommend future work where justified.
- Prepare operational manuals, standard operating procedures, handover notes and training programmes to ensure sustainable WASH services.
- Report on progress, challenges and achievements to a range of stakeholders.
- Evaluate projects against planned outputs and outcomes.

B4. Ability to anticipate, adapt and manage changing contexts

Demonstrate that you can adapt to changing contexts and a range of circumstances when implementing a solution. This includes the impact of changes in the climate, discovering more information, increases in material costs, unforeseen physical obstacles, new requests from decision-makers, changes to institutional arrangements and discovering the needs of specific users amongst other factors. Show your ability to monitor work, revise plans and manage these changes as well as your ability to anticipate change or new developments in your work. You should evaluate the implications of these changes, identify mitigation measures, and understand and communicate residual risks; while ensuring appropriate systems, documentation and controls are in place for managing change.

Consider how you have adapted systems of work such as procurement processes and the contracts and documents you have prepared. Highlight how you ensure legal compliance, budgetary control and communication with clients and stakeholders when managing these changes.

Application in low-resource settings:

Demonstrate your flexibility due to change and different contexts. You may have rapidly changing conditions, such as the escalation of conflict or the spread of disease. You will likely encounter changes over time, such as the progression through the stages of humanitarian response from the provision of immediate life-saving services in the immediate phase through to reconstruction at the recovery stage. You may need to make adaptations due to the location, where needs and methods vary between urban, peri-urban and remote rural areas. You need to consider variations due to climatic conditions such as the risk of flooding and the differences between arid and cold regions.

Different institutional contexts, such as schools, health centres and prisons, will require varied approaches. You should develop solutions to meet the needs of diverse groups of people. This could include children, people with physical disabilities or people living with incontinence, as well as nomadic, displaced or transit populations.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Explain the project cycle, with examples of how inputs and activities change over time.
- Distinguish between different approaches and solutions suitable for different project stages/ locations/ institutional situations/ groups of users (e.g. bathing needs for people with different disabilities).
- Report progress to relevant stakeholders (e.g. updates to WASH service users and donors.)
- Adapt common WASH solutions to a variety of contexts and users (e.g. emergency water supply, sanitation for girls in a school, incontinence services for displaced people in transit).
- Monitor the context, activities and outputs to identify changing circumstances or new information.
- Anticipate risks (e.g. ensuring a flexible plan, using suitable contracts, mitigating hazards, recognising key indicators).
- Plan for changing circumstances and possible risks, ensuring projects are flexible with various options (e.g. phases of humanitarian response, increased probability of floods or droughts).
- Reorganise inputs, activities and outputs to suit a changing context, negotiating a revised plan of action if needed.

C. Safe and effective working practices

C1. Ability to manage resources effectively and efficiently

Demonstrate your management skills and how your working practices contribute to your organisation or workplace (financially, technically and professionally). Show how you use resources effectively and efficiently for the delivery of WASH solutions. You could show how you have contributed to the selection of resources, from the recruitment of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to the specification and procurement of suitable materials and equipment. You could demonstrate the methods you use to ensure you deliver your project responsibilities on time, meeting required standards within budget. You could identify the training needs and skills gaps of stakeholders, opportunities to use new and emerging technologies or processes and how you promote sharing of best practice and knowledge. You should have the ability to assess the changing requirements of your organisation's sector.

Application in low-resource settings:

In settings where resources are limited, you will need to demonstrate how you can make the most of what resources have - the manpower, machines, materials, money and methods available to you. Engagement with partners or community groups needs to be mutual and supportive and build capacities, rather than contractual or competitive. The drivers of projects and the motives of organisations involved in humanitarian and development contexts is different from those in purely commercial settings. This could include supporting community groups through capacity building to deliver activities or sharing knowledge and best practice with other agencies.

You may be managing staff with very variable levels of qualification, skill, expertise and background, often across large geographical areas, where support and supervision is provided remotely. You will likely encounter complex projects in difficult circumstances. Good results in such contexts are dependent on effective and adaptive management and getting the most out of the available resources.

The rule of law may be weak, or subject to significant corruption in some places. WASH professionals working in this context need to be able to manage the successful delivery of projects that do no harm and improve people's lives, while still controlling significant financial and legal risks, including challenges in enforcing contracts or resolving disputes.

Efficient use of resources may include use of local materials, or nature-based methods, reducing reliance on weak supply chains. Market-based approaches can be effective ways to use supply chains that are already exist. Using labour-based methods rather than depending on imported machinery may increase the benefit to the local economy. In humanitarian contexts, where time is a limiting resource, being able to prioritise immediate activities that effectively save lives early on is essential. Planning for more sustainable solutions at the same time will still be required.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Organise teams, prioritising workload whilst recognising stressful and high-risk working environments.
- Schedule surveys, deliveries, activities to meet project deadlines, according to the flow of funds and around the commitments of partners and other stakeholders.
- Manage a diverse workforce, which may include both technical and non-technical staff, volunteers, disaster-affected people, vulnerable people and people with low skill levels.
- Create partnerships with a range of organisations.
- Select appropriate forms of contracts for the supply of materials, labour and services.
- Identify training needs and opportunities for staff and partners.
- Account for funds, materials and staff time, reviewing opportunities for improving efficiency and effectiveness. Cost savings should be balanced with value for money.

C2. Experience of the promotion and application of Health, Safety and Wellbeing

You should recognise how work practices and WASH services can impact the Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&W) of both users and operatives. Demonstrate your implementation of relevant HS&W policy, best practice and legislation relevant to your sector. This could include organisational HS&W policy, legislation relating to the HS&W of all employees, service providers and users, as well as policies and legislation that is specific to your sector. Demonstrate your understanding of how such policies, practices and legislation are promoted and applied in your sector and specific area of work, for all stakeholders. Consider the resulting changes in attitude, behaviour and practice. You need to show your understanding of processes in place to investigate and record accidents and those which promote a preventative approach to HS&W. Show an understanding of a culture of wellbeing and good behaviours to support this. Illustrate how your promotion or application of HS&W policy and practice has resulted in changes in attitudes, behaviour or practice.

Application in low-resource settings:

The importance placed on and the understanding of health and safety varies enormously from country to country. In addition to complying with local laws and regulations, WASH professionals working in humanitarian and development contexts must apply best practices appropriate to the context. You must understand your personal and ethical responsibility for your own health and safety, and the health and safety of those working with and for you. You must show that appropriate risk assessment and management is in place in your projects and organisations. You may face HS&W risks that are uncommon in higher-resourced settings. You will need to demonstrate that you have considered hazards beyond common construction site risks. You may find that you have greater responsibility for HS&W in the absence of staff dedicated to this purpose. Where there are limited health services, avoiding dangerous situations becomes a priority.

Low resource settings can cause stress for you and your colleagues, especially in humanitarian situations. Instability, violence, and unpredictable disease outbreaks can increase pressure on staff. Considering mental health may be as important as physical health.

The HS&W risks of individuals accessing WASH services should be considered at the design stage. These risks can be greater in remote or insecure settings. Where children and women need to access water points or shared sanitation, they should not be at risk of accidents or violence due to the design or location of the facilities. The lack of robust WASH facilities is one of many risks faced by those experiencing poverty and vulnerability. Addressing the resilience of services is a priority. If a service fails, the users should not be placed in a worse position than if the service had not been provided.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Describe the health, safety and wellbeing (HS&W) legislation, policy and best practice that is relevant to your area of work (e.g. ensuring safe access and security protocols in hostile environments, safe handling and storage of water treatment chemicals)
- Describe the consequences and effects of HS&W incidents for various stakeholders
- Assess working conditions for possible hazards to staff, partners, and communities (e.g. carry out risk assessments, consider specific training such as first aid or security).
- Manage safety and security for project stakeholders, including staff, partners, and communities, including due consideration of both physical and mental health and safety
- Support staff, partners and the public to behave in a safe manner, using monitoring, training, warning notices and reasonable sanctions.
- Determine the need for and maintenance of personal protective equipment and safety devices.
- Illustrate how WASH facilities can be designed and operated to reduce the risks of injury or violence (e.g. sharps management in health care facilities, siting of communal toilets, timing of water truck deliveries, reducing rats and snakes).

C3. Appreciate the issues of sustainability, inclusion and health

Explain your understanding of the terms “sustainability”, “inclusion” and “health” in relation to your sector, your workplace and everyday life. Give practical examples of how you apply these concepts through your work or at a personal level where you live. You could demonstrate the need to minimise waste, manage the use of non-renewable resources, or monitor and review energy consumption at the workplace, in the home or your community. You may consider how inclusive your workplace, home and working practices are. You could consider the health risks and implications, both physical and mental, for you and your colleagues at work and/ or for members of your wider community. Sustainability, health and inclusion audits can be used to assess current practice. You could consider the extent to which the WASH solutions you are delivering are sustainable, inclusive and protective of health.

Have you been motivated to act on issues of sustainability, inclusion and health, that are outside of your formal obligations? This could include volunteering on community initiatives.

Application in low-resource settings:

As a WASH professional there may be heightened expectations of your behaviour in relation to issues such as “sustainability”, “inclusion” and “health”, both in and outside of work. For example, if your project is promoting good hygiene practice, you may be expected to reflect these messages in your day-to-day life. Ensure that appropriate and desirable handwashing facilities are in place and are well-maintained. In low-resource settings, although legislation on sustainable use of resources and environmental protection may not be strong, limited resources may make avoiding wastage, and re-using and recycling materials more important.

Similarly, where labour laws may be less regulated and enforced, you may be required to demonstrate how you actively promote care for the natural environment, support the equitable treatment of people and create an inclusive and healthy workplace. This could include reviewing accessibility needs for staff and making modifications to facilities and working practices where necessary (e.g. flexible working hours for parents).

Possible indicators of achievement

- Define concepts such as sustainability, equity and well-being.
- Recognise your personal approach to environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss or pollution (e.g. minimising air travel, reducing energy use).
- Reflect on actions that can make your organisation or the WASH sector more inclusive (e.g. improve access, adjust working hours).
- Practise and promote healthy behaviours (e.g. washing hands, using bed nets, using water filters).
- Review the impact your work has on the natural and social environment.
- Give examples of how you incorporate social, economic and environmental sustainability in the solutions you deliver.

C4. Experience of the promotion & application of quality assurance & quality enhancement

Quality assurance practices are actions you can take to ensure the quality of work before it takes place, such as checking and approving designs. Quality enhancement is improving on a solution when possible. This is different from quality monitoring, which may be limited to observations made once work is completed. Demonstrate your practical knowledge of the methods, systems and techniques that can be used in your discipline to assure the quality of work. You should show how you ensure your responsibilities are delivered to established standards. This could include methods that define, monitor and evaluate the quality of project inputs such as manpower, machines, materials and methods, such as establishing specifications, design reviews and inspections. If you collect and/ or interpret data, you should demonstrate you can assess the accuracy, quality and reliability of results, and how you use these to make appropriate recommendations. You should demonstrate your knowledge of using these techniques to identify, implement and evaluate quality enhancement for the continual improvement of your area of work. This should include better efficiency, reducing errors and improving value for money.

Application in low-resource settings:

In low-resource settings there is very little margin for wastage or preventable mistakes. Time and money are in short supply. You should show how you monitor work to ensure that the outputs are still relevant, that work meets appropriate standards and that opportunities for improvements are taken. In low-resource settings you may find that there are little in the way of formal quality management systems in place. You may need to use or develop methods that are appropriate for different stages of the project cycle. Logical Frameworks can be used to define, monitor and evaluate the quality of interventions. The SaniTweaks approach can be used to identify quality enhancements.

You may be basing quality standards on donor, organisational or sector guidance, such as the Sphere standards for WASH. You may need to rely on your knowledge of methods that can be used to avoid mistakes and ensure the quality of work such as spot-check inspections, material testing or staff / contractor assessments. In the absence of agreed standards, you may choose to conduct studies, tests and pilot trials to gain confidence that innovative approaches are effective before widespread use. Recording failures experienced will provide beneficial learning for the sector. Evidence that work is independently checked and monitored is important for quality assurance. You may need to rely on or develop standard operating procedures, material specifications and job descriptions to help define and assure quality.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Reference quality standards (e.g. Sphere standards, WHO drinking water quality guidance, Core Humanitarian Standard, sector standards for healthcare settings).
- Discuss material and equipment specifications, quality testing, safe transport and storage (e.g. safe storage of water treatment chemicals to minimise degradation)
- Give examples of quality assurance methods and systems you use in your sector (e.g. water quality testing, measurement of behaviour through knowledge, attitudes and practice surveys)
- Check designs and work plans.
- Prepare job descriptions, protocols or standard operating procedures.
- Prepare monitoring frameworks, selecting indicators, testing methods, sampling frequency and criteria for action.
- Inspect work being carried out by others.
- Report failures so lessons can be learned (e.g. the Nakuru Accord).

D Communication and professional ethics

D1. Ability to communicate effectively

Demonstrate that you can communicate effectively. Define your understanding of effective communication, giving examples of how you have done this. This competence can be judged through your individual assessment against this framework. This could take the form of a written submission, a verbal presentation and/ or a formal interview. Other examples could include your contributions to meetings and events, where you have facilitated discussions or recorded actions. Give examples of documents that you have prepared. This could include guidance, specifications, assessment and/ or evaluation reports, case studies and examples of your written work. Give examples of presentations and discussions that you have led and/ or facilitated with a variety of stakeholders. This should include two-way communication with clients, colleagues and end-users, demonstrating your ability to listen to and respond to feedback. Consider how you have obtained and shared information with stakeholders to ensure their participation in decision making.

Application in low-resource settings:

In low-resource settings you may take on greater responsibilities for communicating with a much wider range of stakeholders on project matters, than in higher-resource settings. You may be expected to engage directly in two-way communication with project donors, government officials and marginalised and/ or vulnerable groups that the intervention is seeking to serve. You should acknowledge how your position, power and identity influence these interactions and communications.

You may be working in stressful situations, with unfamiliar languages and cultures that may mean you need to rely on translation or interpretation from others. To ensure effective communication you will need to use listening and observation skills. Communication may require several rounds to ensure that each party has been accurately understood, and that issues have been effectively recognised and resolved. Formal and informal feedback and accountability mechanisms can be used to help ensure contributions are received from all stakeholders, so that no one is excluded. You should be able to communicate technical concepts to non-technical audiences who may have lower levels of literacy, limited access to electronic/ mobile communication, a lack of familiarity with drawings, imagery or other conventional ways of demonstrating technical information.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Write clear reports, instructions and messages, organising translation where required.
- Prepare drawings, illustrations, photographs, videos or plans to communicate designs or activities clearly to a range of stakeholders
- Present WASH topics formally or informally using appropriate methods. (e.g. sharing work updates with donors, the government, presenting solutions to end users)
- Organise meetings so all attendees can participate (e.g. setting agendas, briefing participants, choosing suitable locations, organising translation where required).
- Negotiate issues where there is disagreement.
- Request and respond to feedback from WASH users, colleagues and project partners.
- Record discussions, decisions and meetings so the key points are identified.
- Listen to stakeholders and team members to understand their perspective and priorities.
- Manage data and information safely so it stored or disseminated for wider use.
- Respond to feedback from WASH users, colleagues and project partners.

D2. Knowledge of working professionally, ethically & complying with relevant codes of conduct

Define your understanding of what it means to work professionally. Demonstrate an awareness of potential ethical dilemmas in your area of work. You will need to demonstrate knowledge of legislation, policies, regulatory frameworks and standards that are used to define professional and ethical approaches and codes of conduct in your organisation and sector. You will need to demonstrate that you think and behave professionally and impartially. You will be expected to show how you promote compliance to these approaches with your colleagues and clients, holding them to account when necessary. You will be aware of the limits of your own knowledge, expertise and competence and when to seek advice or guidance.

Application in low-resource settings:

You will need to be aware of relevant organisational and sector-wide policies, such as the Do No Harm approach, the Humanitarian Charter and the Code of Conduct for humanitarian relief workers. You will be expected to give examples of how you and your organisation adhere to these guidelines, raising concerns where you consider non-compliance has occurred. You should be holding yourself, colleagues and other stakeholders to account if acceptable standards are not met.

You should respect people's privacy and dignity, being sensitive to cultural practices and taboos when communicating with stakeholders. You should demonstrate your knowledge of informed consent when working with communities, why it is important, and when and how it should be obtained. For example, photographs, videos and any data obtained about individuals should be kept secure and anonymous.

When working on innovative or new technologies and approaches that requires active research you should consider the ethical implications of "trailing" methods. Consider the purpose behind your work in low-resource settings of saving lives and improving the quality of lives, and the risks and benefits associated with testing new ways of working.

In some contexts, you may be required to work on issues outside of your area of expertise. In such circumstances you should demonstrate that you seek support, advice, additional training and relevant information sources to make informed decisions.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Recognise your own limitations, biases, position and expertise.
- Discuss your work in remote, stressful, hazardous or other difficult environments.
- Decline work in areas you are not competent in (e.g. where specialist training or knowledge is required).
- Illustrate times when you have sought expert advice (e.g. when assessing a problem or developing a WASH solution liaising with an experienced practitioner).
- Describe how you work in a team, with project partners and WASH service users.
- Support team members, project partners and WASH service users.
- Give examples of ethical and unethical actions related to your work, using relevant policies and codes of practice.
- Distinguish conflicts (e.g. between user needs and donor requirements, between design standards and available materials).

E. Professional development

E1. Appreciate the importance of continuing professional development

Explain the importance and value of continued learning and professional development in your discipline and sector. Give examples of how you have identified learning opportunities to meet the evolving needs of your area of expertise and projects that you work on. Illustrate how your learning contributes to your ability to perform effectively as a WASH professional, reflecting on what you have learned and how it has changed your practice. You are expected to demonstrate how you maintain a broad awareness and understanding of the emerging issues and trends influencing your sector that goes beyond your area of expertise. You will be aware of the need to maintain at least 30 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) every year and keep a record of this. Show how you use a variety of learning methods including self-directed research through studying journal articles, legislation, policy and guidance documents. Examples of CPD can include attending workshops, conferences, technical panel meetings, seminars or training courses. You may have experience giving presentations of your work or publishing journal papers. Training courses can cover both technical areas of your work and cross-cutting skills such as health and safety, project management and report writing.

Application in low-resource settings:

You may find that learning resources relevant to your work are spread across formats, languages, levels of expertise and locations. You should demonstrate your ability to identify and select resources that are relevant to your work and current level of knowledge and experience. You may want to demonstrate your approach to identifying learning needs and gaps, in the absence of formal support structures. You should be making the most of resources available online in real-time or through recordings, such as webinars and conferences, to maintain your awareness of current issues and trends. In low-resource settings where time and money are limited, you may need to take the lead in identifying learning opportunities relevant to you and your work, as well as advocating with your organisation the value in your participation.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Reflect on your own needs for training and professional development
- Identify relevant opportunities and methods of gaining knowledge and experience
- Record your training activities

E2. Appreciate your commitment to the sector

Articulate your personal commitment to the WASH sector. Identify your reasons and motivations for getting involved in and continuing to support the sector. You should be able to demonstrate how you have, or will continue to, contribute to the development of the sector. This will require you to show your personal contributions outside of your core job responsibilities. This could include writing or reviewing journal papers and articles, participating and contributing to special interest groups and technical panels. You may support networking and learning events or provide mentoring support. For those early on in your careers, you may find it difficult to demonstrate your involvement in such activities. You will still be expected to demonstrate an awareness of the contributions other members of the WASH profession make to the sector. You should be able to describe how you intend to contribute to the sector as your career develops.

Application in low-resource settings:

In low-resource settings many sector-wide initiatives such as Technical Working Groups (TWiGs), conferences, webinars, the development of guidelines and learning events, rely upon the personal contributions WASH professionals make outside of work commitments. You may find that there are more opportunities to be involved in research and pilot studies compared to higher-resource settings. Initiatives that help support the sector are a key way for the professional community to combine knowledge and expertise to address challenges facing the sector. Active participation in such forums can provide important networking opportunities that will help connect you with professionals with expertise that complements your own. You may find that you rely on the input and advice of fellow professionals that you have met through such events. In recognition of the limited resources available to support learning and development in the sector, you will be expected to appreciate the role current professionals have in supporting those new to the sector. This could include coaching or mentoring others.

Possible indicators of achievement

- Coach, counsel or mentor others
- Engage in consultations, research projects or sector-wide trials
- Promote the importance of WASH to colleagues and partners working outside of the sector.