

Asia Pacific Emergency WASH Training Review

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Executive Summary

This document reviews the contribution of regional training events to emergency water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) surge capacity in Asia Pacific (AP). It aims to inform future training plans, resource allocation and to help shape global efforts in the development of sectoral competency frameworks for surge capacity.

Quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect information regarding training and deployments.

Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) WASH trainings (in AP training referred to as 'e-WASH') have been held in AP since 2008. 278 participants (262 individuals)¹ representing 40 different National Societies have taken part in trainings.

Just over half of the 278 trainees since 2008 have been assessed as suitable for international deployment, however, only 57 are currently registered on the active RDRT WASH roster and deemed suitable for deployment.

Overall, the trainings have made a major positive contribution to emergency WASH surge capacity within AP and have been the catalyst for exponential development of National Society emergency WASH programmes across the region.

¹ 16 participants have taken part in more than one training, meaning 262 individuals trained and 278 total number of participants.

WASH surge capacity has been successfully utilized across AP in a number of ways, linked to both formal and informal deployment mechanisms.

Training and deployment outcomes can be improved by taking action in a number of areas, including:

- the number of trainees recommended for deployment
- low rates of female participation
- the low percentage of trainees currently registered on the AP WASH surge roster
- data collection and management
- Insufficient post-training follow-up.

The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training has adequately prepared personnel for deployment and provides relevant technical information to support personnel to make decisions in the field. The pre-course webinar series, introduced in 2014, has proved effective at providing the foundation level knowledge required to take part in the training event.

A full review of training content and redesign of the training support processes aligned with relevant core and sectoral competency frameworks is recommended.

1. Background, Purpose, and Methodology

Background

Overall water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) surge capacity within the Asia Pacific (AP) region has been developed from three main training strands:

- national level WASH training
- regional level WASH RDRT (eWASH) training
- global level training (Field Assessment Coordination Teams (FACT), Emergency Response Units (ERU), Mass Sanitation Module (MSM)).

This report focuses exclusively on the contribution made by the AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training to emergency WASH capacity within the region.

The first RDRTs in the AP region were created in 2003 out of a recognized need for increased disaster response capacity in South Asia and South East Asia. WASH-specific RDRT trainings began in 2008 and nine have since been conducted in Asia and three in the Pacific. A total of 262 people from 36 National Societies across the region have been trained, along with staff from Partner National Societies, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC).

Although some efforts have been made to follow the deployments of WASH RDRT trainees both nationally and internationally, information is incomplete, and no systematic follow-up is in place to gauge the effectiveness of the training in preparing people for deployment.

Purpose of review

The overall purpose of this review is to inform future training plans, resource allocation and to help shape global efforts in the development of sectoral competency frameworks for surge capacity.

Specifically, the review aims to explore how well regional training events have contributed to an increase in emergency WASH surge capacity in Asia Pacific, both in terms of past and current availability and readiness for deployment (Annex 1).

Methodology

Analysis was undertaken to consolidate experiences from the previous nine years of regional WASH-specific RDRT training in Asia Pacific. The review utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data collection techniques included key informant interviews, survey and desk review and analysis of reports and secondary data. Detailed methodology is provided in Annex 2.

For the purposes of this report international deployments are considered to be those undertaken by WASH personnel outside of their country of primary residence. National deployments are those undertaken by WASH personnel as part of their National Society's domestic response mechanisms.

Key findings from the review are detailed in three sections and aim to answer the following main questions.

- Section One: How well have AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainings contributed to an increase in WASH surge capacity?
- Section Two: How has the WASH capacity been utilised in the Asia Pacific Region?
- Section Three: How suitable is the current training as preparation for deployment and what are the identified gaps?

The final section explores the way forward for AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training.

Section One: Development of WASH Surge Capacity in Asia Pacific

Key messages:

- Asia Pacific regional WASH trainings (AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training) have made a major positive contribution to emergency WASH capacity within Asia Pacific with respect to surge capacity and has been the catalyst for exponential development of National Society emergency WASH programmes across the region.
- Just over half of the 278 trainees since 2008 have been assessed as suitable for international deployment, however, only 57 are currently registered on the active RDRT WASH roster and deemed suitable for deployment.
- The practically focused delivery of AP WASH training is a key strength of the programme.
- Limited investment in data management, personnel and knowledge management and lack of investment in post-learning support are the main weaknesses.

Background

A total of 12 AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainings have been completed since 2008, nine in Asia and three in the Pacific (Annex 3). The approach and curriculum of the training is aligned with global WASH tools and modified for the AP context. It is comprised of two components:

1. Pre-course foundation webinar series (Section Three).
2. Face-to-face training event (Section Three).

The overall objective of the training is to “Develop and strengthen the IFRC emergency response capacity in the AP region in the WASH sector as well as to enhance technical knowledge and skills of National Society staff and volunteers”.

The Disaster Management Unit in the AP Regional Office maintains a roster of active WASH RDRT members which is an important tool for gauging overall WASH surge capacity in AP. Registration on the roster is based on performance and recommendations made during a training event.

A snapshot of training statistics (Annex 3):

- Females have been consistently underrepresented in trainings, accounting for only 28% of overall participants.

- 278 participants (262 individuals)² representing 40 different National Societies have taken part in trainings.
- 203 participants have attended the Asia-based trainings.³
- 75 participants have attended the Pacific based trainings.⁴
- The majority of participants have been National Society staff (or delegates), with approximately 11% of participants registered as volunteers at their National Societies.⁵

“Having gender balance within our WASH deployment teams is important as it makes for a stronger team which is better at equalizing needs and is more culturally acceptable. It is important for our National Society to ensure gender balance with regards to selection of participants for regional trainings. We are very intentional about this”

- National Society WASH representative, Philippines Red Cross (from a total of 22 participants from the Philippines, 10 have been female)

International WASH Surge Capacity

57 % or 157 participants were assessed as suitable for international deployment.

Table 1. Summary data of AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) Training Outcomes (Annex 4 & 5)

Recommendation	# of participants	Percentage
Suitable for international deployment	157*	57 %
Suitable for national deployment only	83	30 %
Not recommended for deployment	29	10 %
Not assessed	9	3 %

* 43 of these 157 individuals were recommended for deployment under certain conditions, such as sub-sector deployment only, deployment with additional support or second round deployment.

² 16 participants have taken part in more than one training, meaning 262 individuals trained and 278 total number of participants.

³ The Philippines, Indonesia and Nepal National Societies have contributed the highest numbers of participants (22, 22 and 19 respectively).

⁴ Samoa Red Cross has contributed the highest number of participants (18 in total). This is attributed to the objectives of the first Pacific WASH training in 2010, which was linked to utilization of equipment donated as a result of the 2009 tsunami.

⁵ This may be underreported as current status, or position at time of training was not available for all trainees.

Visual representation of Gender Breakdown Across – Training Events, Recommended for International Deployment and WASH RDRT Roster

Training Event – 262 individuals (279 participants)	
28% Female	72% Male

Recommended for International Deployment – 157 individuals	
31% Female	69% Male

Current WASH RDRT Roster – 57 individuals	
19% Female	81% Male

The current roster significantly over-estimates available international WASH surge capacity in AP. 38 out of 95 roster entries were not included in this review as they either had no AP training record, were not recommended for deployment, or were duplicate entries. Only 57 individuals representing 19 National Societies are currently deemed to be valid members.

“I’m not really clear on what deployment lists exist. Does IFRC have a WASH emergency deployment list that I am now on? My National Society seems to have their own list. I feel like there is currently a block between me and deployment opportunities”

- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee recommended for deployment, Pacific 9, 2017

Only 11 out of 57 (19%) of active roster members are female, with no females registered from East Asia and only one in the Pacific. This is despite 31% of participants recommended for deployment being female (Table 5.2, Annex 5).

“I feel I am well trained in WASH theory, I have completed a Masters paper in WASH and additional webinars since RDRT training. I retain a strong interest; however, I have hesitated to put my hand up for an RDRT deployment because I think I need more hands on practice”

- Female AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee, Asia 7, recommended for deployment

National WASH Surge Capacity

30 % or 83 participants were assessed as most suited to national deployment (Table 1).

National Society WASH capability is an important aspect of overall surge capacity in the region. AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training has had significant positive benefits to National Societies, stimulating interest in

WASH and resulting in the exponential expansion of national level WASH trainings and national level deployments. Prior to 2008 there was very limited national level trainings, no broader emergency WASH objectives and no holistic approach to WASH training. Since 2008 26 National Societies have conducted some form of WASH specific emergency response training (Annex 5).

“Six people from our National Society took part in what was an eye-opening training for us. It focused our efforts for national training opportunities and resulted in significant increases in capacity. Now we have three types of specialised WASH training at National, District and Community levels. In NRCS national level of training involves four key trainers all of whom have come through the AP WASH RDRT training. During national level deployments RDRT trained people can work as team leaders”

- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee and National Society WASH Manager, Nepal Red Cross

The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training programme has contributed to an increase in national level WASH capacity through:

- increased technical knowledge and skills of 240 participants recommended for either international or national deployment
- provision of standardized training materials, in line with global directives and best practice
- support for the adoption of on-line learning (e.g. Vietnam Red Cross and Indonesia Red Cross)
- increased pool of national level WASH trainers or facilitators
- promoting opportunities for WASH advocacy
- strengthening the AP WASH network (as regional facilitators).

“After the eWASH training in Fiji I have been interested more on the menstrual hygiene management and I have also raised concerns on MHM to be part of the new IDA (assessment) form that the society is currently looking at”

- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee, Pacific 3, March 2017

Information on individual National Societies’ WASH surge capacity is collected and collated based on their systems and needs. There is no consolidated or comprehensive dataset at regional level.

Key findings and recommendations:

- 1.1. AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training remains an important contributor to surge capacity for larger scale, complex disasters. However, balance is needed in the resources allocated towards this type of training vs. national level trainings which focus on training local WASH people for their local contexts.
- 1.2. The target for training participants recommended for international deployment should increase to 80% to maximize return on investment at the regional level (in line with other global surge

capacity trainings in the sector). Training selection, approach and delivery needs to be adjusted accordingly (refer to Section 3).

- 1.3. Less talk and more action is required to address gender imbalance. A strategy is needed to address low rates of female participation, including support for National Societies to develop recruitment strategies to address WASH team gender imbalance, action to increase the number of females actively engaged in rosters, and a system to mentor high performing female participants through training to deployment.
- 1.4. The low percentage of trainees currently registered on the roster needs to be addressed. Pathways for AP WASH surge capacity needs to be mapped in alignment with the WASH sectoral competency framework to better manage participant expectations and streamline the process from training through to post-deployment.
- 1.5. The current dataset held by the AP WASH team and the database of active WASH RDRT roster members are not fit for purpose. AP WASH needs to “own” this data and allocate adequate resources for data management. The tracking and consolidation of all trainee experiences post-training should be systematized, aligned with the sectoral WASH competency framework and incorporate professional development along with national/bilateral deployment experiences. Opportunities to link the AP WASH personnel database to the global IFRC surge optimization database should be considered, taking into consideration the requirement for AP to track all WASH capacity (not just global surge capacity).

Section Two: Utilization of WASH Surge Capacity in Asia Pacific

Key messages:

- WASH surge capacity has been successfully utilized across Asia Pacific in a number of ways, linked to both formal and informal deployment mechanisms.
- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trained personnel have played an important technical role in responding to over 20 international operations and numerous local operations of national importance.
- Surge capacity has been utilized across all phases and subsectors of WASH, including assessment, water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion.
- The nature and delivery of WASH surge support has changed over time and will need to continue to adapt to respond effectively to changing and evolving needs.
- Opportunities to support deployment of trained personnel outside of the emergency context need to be explored in order to continue engagement, foster innovation and transfer technical skills across National Societies.
- A fidelity of practice and systematized approach to the follow-up of deployed WASH personnel is needed.
- There is substandard information management and a lack of consolidated data capturing the details and experiences of WASH deployments, resulting in lost learning opportunities.
- Deployment decision making needs to be based on assessment against a WASH competency framework in order to promote fairness and transparency.

Background

AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees have contributed to the WASH sector within AP in the following ways:

- emergency deployments – international deployment linked to the IFRC surge mechanism for emergency response, international deployment linked to bilateral or non-formal surge mechanism, or national deployment for emergency response
- non-emergency deployments to provide tailored technical support
- supported delivery of trainings at national and regional level, both face-to-face and online.

Emergency deployments

The nature of WASH emergency deployments has changed over time. Early international deployments typically focused on assessment with WASH personnel embedded within a larger RDRT team. This approach was modified in 2010 with sector specific surge provided on an as-required basis. AP WASH

RDRT (eWASH) trainees have been utilised to support FACT missions (e.g. Bangladesh 2017) and support the deployment of ERU/MSM teams (e.g. Nepal 2015). WASH sub-sector specific deployments (such as hygiene promotion deployment in India 2017) have been undertaken based on needs and National Society capacity. Bilateral deployments (commonly undertaken between the likes of New Zealand Red Cross and the Pacific National Societies) have also been utilised in South-East Asia, such as the Indonesia Red Cross four-person response team sent to support to Philippines Red Cross in 2014.

“The WASH RDRT team which deployed in 2014 played an important technical role in our operation. They understood the context and were able to get a picture of the WASH technical challenges very quickly. In addition to providing general WASH support they also provided technical expertise in GIS mapping which in the end was perhaps the most useful thing they contributed as it was not a technical area of skill that we had at the time”

- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee and National Society WASH Manager , Philippines Red Cross

Individual end of mission reports are completed for the majority of international deployments. The management of technical reporting or debriefing for national deployments is managed by the respective National Societies. There is currently no systematized approach to collating learnings from any deployments, or consolidation of learnings from national level trainings.

A snapshot and analysis of WASH emergency deployment statistics:

- 51 international WASH deployments, or peer to peer exchanges have taken place – 37 in Asia and 14 in the Pacific (Table 2).
- 31 trainees (25 male and six females), drawn from each of the AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainings⁶, have been involved in international WASH deployments. The majority of people (20) have been deployed once (Annex 4).
- One in five of the deployments was undertaken by a female.
- Two thirds (33) of the international deployments have been linked to the official IFRC RDRT deployment mechanism (Annex 4).
- The highest number of deployments were undertaken during 2015, with nine WASH RDRT missions linked to the Nepal earthquake response.
- Indonesia Red Cross has supported the most international deployments (17) and provided the highest number of personnel (8) (Annex 7).

⁶ With the exception of Asia 2 and 7.

- Only 30% of the people registered on the active WASH RDRT roster have deployed internationally.
- 30% of trainees (at least 77) are known to have deployed at least once nationally, however, this is likely to be an under representation as no comprehensive or consolidated dataset of national level deployments exists (Annex 4).
- At least ten trainees have deployed five or more times for their own National Societies and regularly deploy on an annual basis for their National Societies.

Table 2. Number of International WASH Emergency Deployments – RDRT, Peer-to-Peer or Surge

Year	Number of deployments	Operations contributed to
2009	1	Philippines Flooding Typhoon Ketsana
2010	6	Haiti Earthquake Pakistan Floods
2011	2	Tuvalu Drought
2012	3	Myanmar Floods Samoa Cyclone Evan
2013	6	Marshall Island Drought Solomon Islands Flash Floods DPRK Floods Cook Islands Drought
2014	7	Philippines Typhoon Yolanda Solomon Islands Flash Floods Tonga Drought
2015	14	Papua New Guinea Drought/El Nino Vanuatu Cyclone Pam Malaysia Floods Nepal Earthquake
2016	4	Vietnam Drought Malaysia Floods Sri Lanka Floods Fiji Cyclone Winston
2017	7	India Floods Bangladesh Population Movement
2018	1*	Bangladesh Population Movement

* Information as of January 2018

There is no definitive figure of how many WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees are still actively involved with their National Society. Early tracking of retention rates (2012) indicated approximately 5% trainee attrition. Additional figures from selected National Societies show retention rates varying between 20-

80% of those originally trained⁷. Retention rates post training are likely to vary considerably amongst National Societies.

Non-emergency deployments

There has been limited use of AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees in non-emergency deployments. There are four documented deployments – one equipment review (China 2011) and two water supply spring protection projects (Malaysia 2015 and Fiji 2016) (Table 8.1, Annex 8). AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees have also been used for country specific developmental WASH programme reviews such as the Nepal RC AP WASH trainee whom supported the 2017 mid-term review of the Myanmar RC WASH programme. These deployments harnessed high level technical proficiency of personnel for National Society specific programmes.

“After over 10 years of WASH support from IFRC, ICRC and partners working with the national society on the spring protection project gave me and my national society the opportunity to contribute back to the movement. It was enjoyable as I had a great working relationship with the IFRC delegate, whom had a good understanding, good coordination was well organized which meant we could effectively plan together. I would do it all again”

- Peer-to-peer exchange, CVTL to Fiji Red Cross, Winston Recovery Programme (to support with implementation of first spring protection programme undertaken in Fiji in the WASH sector)

Support for trainings

AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees are used very successfully to support national and regional level training initiatives.

- The majority of national level NDRT or emergency WASH trainings utilise, or have utilised, AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees as training facilitators.
- There are 11 examples of utilizing trainees to support other National Societies emergency WASH trainings within the AP region (Table 8.2, Annex 8).
- 16 trainees have been subsequently used as facilitators for IFRC regional AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainings. 10 in Asia and 6 in the Pacific (Annex 9).
- 13 out of 29, or just under half, of the technical speakers for AP WASH webinars have been AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees (Table 9.3, Annex 9).

⁷ Based on information provided by Philippines RC in Dec 2017 Estimates from the Pacific from French RC (PIROPS) was that of the 45 people trained in WASH over the course of the capacity building programme, 10 currently remain actively engaged.

Pathways for further development

There are positive examples of RDRT deployments leading to further professional development opportunities. For example, one internationally deployed trainee was subsequently appointed as a WASH delegate for a IFRC recovery project based on their successful mission. The experiences and learnings from a particularly challenging operation supported another trainee's promotion within their national government disaster management department.

Key findings and recommendations

- 2.1 WASH deployments have occurred every year since 2009 with an average of five international surge WASH deployments occurring. There is currently no systematized collection of deployment details, experiences and learnings. It is recommended that the WASH team invest in the capture and consolidation of data, which will ultimately allow a more accurate understanding of surge capacity availability and limitations.

- 2.2 Non-emergency deployments that continue engagement and foster innovation and transfer of technical skills across National Societies needs to be supported, adequately resourced and supervised. It is recommended that a target of three non-emergency deployments per year is set with other peer-to-peer exchanges to support trainings be undertaken on an as required basis.

- 2.3 AP WASH trainees have contributed significantly to regional and national WASH training events. This has been largely successful, however, there is a need to provide more consistent support and to build facilitation skills. It is recommended that trainer capacity be integrated into individual learning pathways (via IFRC learning platform and other on-line providers for facilitator support) and webinar(s) specifically focused on the sharing of WASH training modalities should be undertaken.

Section Three: Suitability of WASH RDRT (eWASH) Training

Key Messages:

- The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training has adequately prepared WASH personnel for deployment (international and national) and provides relevant, useful, technical information to support personnel to make decisions in the field.
- The face-to-face training event remains relevant and is essential for assessing participants' suitability for deployment.
- The pre-course webinar series, introduced in 2014, has proved effective at providing the foundation level knowledge required to take part in the training event. The webinars, however, are not a useful screening tool for assessing the suitability of candidates for face-to-face training (and ultimately deployment).
- The training approach, content and curriculum has been modified over time and whilst grounded in participatory adult learning principles, it currently lacks a formalised pedagogical framework.
- Female participants are underrepresented in trainings. The participant selection process, as well as post-training support, needs a clear strategy for ensuring a gender balance in order to maximize female representation on the WASH roster.
- There is currently a lack of investment in post-training follow-up and support or a clear pathway to deployment for trainees.
- A full review of training content and redesign of the training support processes aligned with relevant core and sectoral competency frameworks is recommended.

Scope

The application of findings in this section with regards to behavioral outcomes within the deployment context is limited. Several factors contribute to this including challenges with attribution of knowledge, the lengthy timeframe for some respondents between training, deployment and follow up survey and the lack of any practice fidelity.

Key findings apply across trainings, unless otherwise specified.

Current training package

The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training has developed over time to respond to the changing and evolving needs of WASH surge capacity and participant feedback. Three key changes in approach have been adopted: strengthening the practical simulation component (2009); addition of a pre-training on-line learning component (2014); and implementation of an advanced full simulation training (2016) (Annex 11).

The current training package is comprised of three core components:

i. Pre-course work

Participants must pass all modules of the foundation WASH webinar series (five parts for Asia, two parts for the Pacific) prior to being nominated for training.⁸ Assessment is via online quiz. A pre-reading list is provided to all participants.

ii. WASH training event

The face-to-face training runs for four days (Pacific) or five days (Asia). It consists of approximately 20% theory, 50% practical exercises and 30% practical simulation exercise.⁹

iii. Follow up

Follow up is only provided to trainees who are registered on the AP WASH contact list, registered on the AP WASH RDRT roster and for selected National Society WASH initiatives (depending on available resources). There is no personalized follow-up or tracking of professional development post training.

Relevance and effectiveness

The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training was designed to be relevant, engaging and challenging (Annex 12).

Feedback from the AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) Training Review Survey (Annex 10) indicates that the training is highly relevant during deployment with all personnel indicating that they put some of the AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) learnings to use during their deployment(s).

- The majority of respondents (68%) felt that the training prepared them for deployment technically, but not logistically or administratively (30%).
- 70% of respondents felt the training prepared them well to solve WASH problems they encountered in the field.
- The majority of respondents (80%) felt that the training had adequately prepared them personally for deployment.
- 80% of respondent felt that the training prepared them to engage with people from affected communities, other RCRC movement partners and to effectively engage with National Societies. Almost half of respondents did not feel prepared to engage with other WASH stakeholders and government counterparts.

⁸ Pacific participants can complete this onsite prior to training if they have problems with internet access.

⁹ An advanced training of seven days duration was run in 2016 as full simulation exercise.

The training has been partially successful in meeting the overall objective of contributing to AP emergency WASH capacity (refer Section One and Two of this report) and partially to fully successful in meeting specific objectives regarding increased knowledge. This is evidenced by an average increase in post test scores of 10-17% in all but one of the trainings (Annex 13).¹⁰

The pre-course webinar component has achieved key objectives around knowledge transfer and wider outreach. However, it has not improved the candidate selection process for face-to-face training – evidenced by a decrease in the average percentage of trainees recommended for international deployment, from 65% (pre-2014) to 49% (post-2014) (Table 5.2, Annex 5).

Participant reaction to the pre-course and training event has been largely positive and has met participant expectations. Testimonials such as “this is the best training I have attended in the Red Cross” are common for the face-to-face training (Annex 14). Both components of training have reportedly increased the sense of belonging to an AP WASH network, with 56% of respondents of the survey identified increased commitment to the RCRC movement as a result of participation in AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainings.

Clear selection criteria are developed from the original training and subsequently modified over time, however, it does not appear to have been consistently or strictly applied. This has had a significant impact on the caliber of participants, quality of interaction at trainings and training outcomes. National society level NDRT and emergency WASH trainings have proved a useful “stepping stone” screening tool for access to the regional level training event (Annex 15).

An ongoing challenge is the low rate of female participants in trainings, a strategy for addressing this is lacking.

“The national society used the performance at the NDRT to select the best candidates to put forward for WASH RDRT training. Interestingly the two candidates selected for regional WASH training were actually from a Health and Disaster Management background despite the training being mainly attended by WASH people, all of whom have years of great experience. The two-selected showed they had the right technical knowledge and just as importantly a really good attitude and focus on achieving positive outcomes”

- Reflections from National Society selection process by PNS WASH Delegate

There are no selection criteria for the pre-course webinar series, which helps to attract a wide and diverse audience of participants.

¹⁰ Pre-post test scores results not available for Asia 1, 2 or Pacific 1, 2 or 3 trainings.

Approach and curriculum

The approach for the training event focuses strongly on the practical application of skills and simulation exercises and has served trainees well during deployment. Annual curriculum changes have increased focus on key aspects such as assessment and hygiene promotion. This has been well received and ensured participants are well positioned to contribute to response operations (Annex 15).

“Training needs to respond to technical skills, but also how people react to the unknown, how people view their potential contribution and to prepare people for the fact that there are not nice neat answers in the field”

- IFRC WASH representative

The training modules perceived as most relevant or useful for participants varied depending on the deployment context. The hygiene promotion module and practical simulation were reported most useful for many participants. The modules reported as least useful were those on bulk water and WASH and technology. This is subjective and based on context. The utilisation of AP WASH trainees in facilitation and as trainers of staff and volunteers during deployments is very high, with the most commonly reported non-WASH role linked to volunteer management. It will not be possible to incorporate all relevant content into a WASH specific training, however, pathways for learning should be mapped out and provided to all participants.

“During RDRT training you are using standardized equipment, however, in the deployment situation you use whatever equipment you have and improvise with your training and use problem solving skills in what can be pretty complex situation. It is important that trainings find a balance between technical skills and valuing other skills”

- AP WASH RDRT trainee, deployed both internationally and nationally as WASH RDRT

The webinar curriculum is based on the theoretical sessions delivered at face-to-face training prior to 2014. The content and delivery has been well pitched for basic level or foundation knowledge and optimized for the humanitarian (and specifically the RCRC) context. The online approach has successfully extended reach and provided entry to a WASH learning pathway for a diverse audience.

The current participant appraisal system is used solely as a tool for IFRC to assess participants for their own purposes. Information is not shared with participants or National Societies, resulting in people not understanding where “they stand”, or what they need to do to make themselves available for deployment.

“It would be good if IFRC provided feedback on what parts of the training you did well in and what you need to work on, perhaps after the training has been finished. Also, a clear indication on your deployment status and what this means now and in the future.”

- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee, Asia 6

A self-assessment feature introduced in 2017 shows that participants are overestimating their knowledge, skills and suitability for deployment. This leads to disappointment among trainees at a perceived lack of deployment opportunities.

The approach to post-learning support has been hampered by a lack of dedicated resources. Despite this, two thirds of respondents who had deployed felt fully technically supported during deployment. Less than a third of those deployed reported using a WASH network such as WhatsApp or a Facebook group during their deployment.

There is no comprehensive database that tracks additional WASH training or professional development of AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainees. 50% of survey respondents for this review have completed further emergency response WASH training, with 75% facilitating WASH NDRT trainings or WASH modules in National Society emergency response trainings. This is valuable information to capture as it contributes to a more in-depth understanding of the capacity and strengths and weaknesses of personnel in the region.

End of mission reporting and technical debriefing was commonly reported for international deployments. The documentation of deployment experiences and sharing of learnings with national society counterparts was very commonly reported for national deployments.

“There is an opportunity for trainees to play a lead role back in their National Societies particularly in disaster prone countries. Follow up engagement should include support to apply learnings to their own context, look at the state of their own WASH inventory and what does local market analysis show with respect to availability of WASH materials? And importantly to support the question of where to from here?”

- AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainee, Asia 6 + facilitator

Quality and efficiency

Since 2008, the development of the AP WASH programme has been overseen by three IFRC WASH coordinators. Additional WASH delegate support has been available within the region for selected periods of time. Diversity of personnel has meant improvements through time, openness to change, new ideas and embracing new approaches. Challenges are, however, evident through lack of consistency with reporting and accountability of key recommendations or follow up action items.

The support of Partner National Societies has improved the quality of the AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training – contributing funding, participants, observers and facilitators. Funding has been provided for AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) trainings by Partner National Societies (Annex 16). There is no evidence of any adverse or negative influence from donors over the training objectives, curriculum or approach.

The first AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training was held in Manila, Philippines in 2008. Subsequent Asian training has been conducted at Bandung, Indonesia. The Pacific trainings have been held in Samoa (2010 and 2015) and Fiji (2017). All locations have been considered suitable and appropriate.

The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training has used a diverse range of facilitators from IFRC, Partner National Societies and National Societies. The technical knowledge of facilitators has been prioritised over educational or learning expertise. There has been a disproportionately high percentage of male facilitators used across training components. Only 34% of the technical speakers for webinars and 24% of the facilitators for the face-to-face training event have been female.

The average cost of a AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training event is approximately 30-35,000 CHF which is in accordance with similar RDRT regional trainings. This figure does not include costs incurred during planning of the training event (e.g. time of IFRC coordinator or organizing team), nor does it include costs for facilitators, IFRC participants or Partner National Society participants or facilitators. It is estimated that the over 80% of the investment contributes to the goal of increasing WASH capacity within Asia Pacific.

There are no costings available for the pre-course work or costs associated with follow up.

Estimates from key informants indicate approximately 30% of time, resources and money is invested in the pre-course webinar series, 60% in the training event and 10% in follow-up.

Considerably more time and resources were required to develop and implement the 2016 Advanced Full Simulation training. The added value of the advanced training is not clear. The concept is valid; however, it is likely the success of this training was hampered due to participant suitability. The training received positive initial feedback from participants, but only 38% were recommended for deployment, and two have gone on to complete international deployments (Table 5.2, Annex 5).

Key findings and recommendations

Details in this section primarily relate to the face-to-face training event, unless otherwise specified.

Recommendations to improve training	
3.1 Technical areas that need to be added to the current training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water supply technology – springs, boreholes, distribution networks • faecal sludge management • decommissioning and rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure • new technology – e.g. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles • menstrual hygiene management • risk management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cash transfers in WASH programming • environmental sustainability.
3.2 Areas requiring additional focus or emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protection, gender and inclusion (integrated into WASH sessions) • community engagement and accountability (integrated into WASH sessions) • hygiene promotion and Behavioral Change Communication • household Water Treatment and Storage and end use monitoring • bulk water treatment – without the use of water treatment units • navigating IFRC processes and procedures • volunteer management in WASH context.
3.3 Organizations or stakeholders that could be more prominent in trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • global WASH cluster • selected private sector/academic partnerships • health sector • government representatives (as appropriate).
3.4 Improvements to participant selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise participant selection criteria to require prior involvement as participant and facilitator at NDRT level • introduce a competency-based test as part of the application process • build pathways for self-directed learning so that people have the prerequisite knowledge • develop an AP WASH gender strategy that addresses imbalances in participation at training level.
3.5 Improvements to online learning approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide both basic level and more advanced webinar topics, along with topics of interest (e.g. feedback from deployments) • remove quizzes from the webinars, introduce optional desktop assignments to support extended learning (AP WASH personnel to review and provide) • limit participant numbers in the pre-course webinar to maximize opportunities for interaction • consider running multiple sessions to accommodate different time-zones.
3.6 Improvements to face-to-face training approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extend the training timeframe to support effective learning through “practice, practice, practice” • allocate time to support participant reflection and individual feedback sessions • adopt problem-based learning approaches.
3.7 Advanced training options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • look at alternative learning pathways to support ongoing professional development, rather than advanced training • high performing trainees as facilitators for regional or national level trainings • experienced trainees as mentors in the AP WASH network.
3.8 Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of facilitators for WASH trainings should be female • appoint lead facilitator to monitor learning outcomes • provide additional support for facilitators (learning pathways).
3.9 Frequency and timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider moving from annual to biennial training • 7-day training schedule.

3.10 Performance appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement a new system aligned to the WASH competency framework to assess technical and core competencies and take into account pre-existing qualifications or experience. The new system needs clear guidelines so that it is able to cross geographical, cultural and technical boundaries.
3.11 Non-WASH specific support modules	Map pathways for learning and provide to participants, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitation skills and effective learning principles • psychological support and psychological first aid • leadership in disaster response.
3.12 Tracking professional development	Implement AP WASH database and update on an annual basis focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trainee details and contact information • trainings completed • competencies achieved • qualifications achieved • deployments undertaken.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The AP WASH RDRT (eWASH) training will make an important contribution to AP WASH capacity development over the next five to ten years and should be continued.
2. The IFRC AP WASH team should lead the training development process and, together with movement partners, commit adequate resources to maintain effective coordination, quality assurance, technical standardization and accountability in the WASH training and surge capacity space.
3. The training package should be reviewed to align with the development of the IFRC WASH competency framework. It should retain both on-line learning (webinars) and face-to-face training components. The face-to-face component remains critical for assessing core and technical competencies and suitability for deployment. The revised training package should take into account:
 - a. bringing webinars up to a consistent standard and running an annual webinar series focused on basic and advanced technical information and knowledge transfer
 - b. reducing the frequency of face to face training events to once every two years, capping the number of participants to 25 and increasing the target of trainees suitable for deployment to 80%
 - c. lengthening face-to-face training duration to increase the practical component and allow for reflection and team/individual performance feedback
 - d. strengthening connections with WASH stakeholders, relevant private sector players, academic organizations and government representatives
 - e. supporting the facilitation team to upskill through on-line learning opportunities
 - f. utilising a lead facilitator to focus on learning outcomes
 - g. redressing gender imbalance in technical speakers and facilitators for all training components.
4. There needs to be a major shift in the IFRC approach and resourcing of training follow-up. The AP WASH post-training follow up should include:
 - a. drafting and implementing a post-learning engagement strategy including systematized performance appraisal feedback, better management of trainee expectations and promoting individual learning pathways

- b. supporting the journey from training to deployment, including working with trainees to increase the percentage available on surge capacity rosters
 - c. implementation of the AP WASH mentoring programme to support high-performers and nurture the development of potential WASH leaders
 - d. support to, and technical supervision of, non-emergency deployments.
5. Improvements are needed in AP WASH capacity data, information and knowledge management. This should include:
- a. WASH personnel database (linked to the IFRC global surge database or developed specifically for purpose), maintained and operated by WASH/health personnel
 - b. systematic collection and consolidation of information from international and particularly national deployments
 - c. systematic collection of deployment experiences to facilitate knowledge transfer within the AP WASH network (via podcast, webinar, updates to IFRC WASH online resource library mission assistant).
6. Improvements are needed with respect to real time data collection and evidence of effective deployment practices. This should include:
- a. fidelity of practice during deployment – to move beyond deployment statistics and assess evidence of behavior change of AP WASH trainees
 - b. implementation of a WASH surge capacity self-assessment tool – to capture competency-based information during, or immediately after, a deployment.
7. The AP WASH network needs to attract and work to retain a diverse group of technical specialists. More emphasis is needed on recruitment, recognition, celebrating success, and supporting WASH personnel involved in international or national deployments. This includes:
- a. reviewing and re-scoping the utilisation of WASH personnel, considering the wider contribution personnel can make outside of emergency deployments
 - b. drafting a clear strategy for addressing low rates of female selection for trainings and inclusion on surge capacity rosters
 - c. ensuring all WASH surge personnel are well connected to psychosocial support
 - d. recognizing the efforts and providing the resources to support WASH staff and volunteers whom are continuously deploying in their own countries, and potentially their own communities.

8. Look to the future. WASH surge capacity needs to remain flexible and adaptable to changing technical needs and the evolving humanitarian landscape. Utilisation of surge capacity needs to embrace multiple models of support including the likelihood of increased bilateral support missions between National Societies and options for utilising remote support. The use of National Society technical capacities should be maximized.