HRP 2019 Response Strategy:
The WASH Cluster will focus on improving and sustaining quality of WASH services to targeted people in 33 prioritized locations. For IDPs in out-of-camp locations, returnees and vulnerable host communities in four prioritized governorates, the WASH Cluster will continue to restore basic levels of water and sanitation services through the limited rehabilitation of dysfunctional water and sanitation facilities (e.g. water stations, water treatment plants) and short-term water trucking. The WASH Cluster will continue to meet the critical lifesaving WASH needs of an estimated 254,417 affected people in areas that may experience displacement or with critically limited WASH services due to natural hazards, waterborne diseases or other shocks. The WASH Cluster will prioritize piloting of new innovations in public and communal WASH interventions, while considering cross-cutting issues such as reducing instances of GBV, and assuring accessibility for persons living with disability and the elderly.
Since last week of November, 2018 intermittent torrential rainfall has resulted in significant flooding across numerous locations of Iraq, including camps in Ninewa namely Qayyarah Airstrip, Jeddah 1 to 6, Salamiyah 1 & 2, HAA 2 and Nimrud and off-camp locations in Salah Al Din such as Hureya, Al-Khadramiya and Shirqat town.

It has not only caused damage to the WASH infrastructure and shelters (in and out of camps) but also exacerbated storm water drainage due to topographical issues. Iraqi security forces have been deployed to some areas to rescue families affected by the rainwater, as reports continue to indicate additional instances of missing persons. Post-rain floods are a perennial issue in Iraq, caused in large part by chronically inadequate infrastructure, including inefficient or poorly-maintained urban rainwater management and sewage systems.

WASH Cluster partners including UNICEF, RNVDO, DRC, MC, TDH and Sorouh have already started responding to the needs in Ninewa and Salah Al Din.

WASH Cluster is currently working with partners to establish a preparedness plan keeping in view the ongoing intermittent rainfall leading to possibility to more floods.

**October 15 is Global Handwashing Day (GHD)**

A global advocacy day dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding about the importance of handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.

Global Handwashing Day is an opportunity to design, test, and replicate creative ways to encourage people to wash their hands with soap at critical times. In Iraq, it was celebrated through events held in several governorates including Anbar, Baghdad, Duhok, Erbil, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Sulaymaniyah conducted through many WASH partners.

Link to the WASH Cluster partners reports and pictures on GHD in Iraq:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1r0vBrC0tK0GUadDOKeYO1hqEERuO0Jjg?usp=sharing

**Flooding in Ninewa and Salah al-Din**

WASH Cluster Technical Working Groups (TWGs)

WASH Cluster worked on the activation and improving productivity of the existing Technical Working Groups on Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion;

**Water Supply System Technical Working Group**

WSS-TWG covers Ninewa Governorate only with focus on functionality of water infrastructure, identification of key gaps and resources to fill those gaps and providing technical support to the Cluster partners. This TWG has been led by Solidarites International so far. However, due to lack of resources, SI has informed the Cluster regarding withdrawal from leadership of this group. WASH Cluster is currently looking for a suitable partner to fill the role of Water Supply TWG Lead.

**Sanitation Technical Working Group**

S-TWG was also reactivated with leadership of BORDA having a national scope of work. One of the key deliverables of this group is to work on partner guidelines for sanitation in and out of camps with the target of standardization of response. Furthermore, identifying a range of technical option suitable for different geographical and cultural contexts that could be cost effective and at the same time efficient. It will serve at a technical platform for partners to discuss issues and explore suitable technical solutions.

**Hygiene Promotion Technical Working Group**

HP-TWG led by Oxfam was also reactivated in the last quarter of 2018 with a national focus. A task force with key partners was established to put together HP guidelines and first draft was developed. The TWG has been focusing on identifying key risk hygiene behaviors in Iraq and developing hygiene promotion strategy with use of specific tools and key messages targeting each group and situation.

WASH Cluster partners including UNICEF, RNVDO, DRC, MC, TDH and Sorouh have already started responding to the needs in Ninewa and Salah Al Din.

WASH Cluster is currently working with partners to establish a preparedness plan keeping in view the ongoing intermittent rainfall leading to possibility to more floods.