

Ethiopia

Working with the Ethiopian government and partners to deliver universal access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services

IRC has been working in Ethiopia for more than a decade, and under IRCs new strategy (2012-16) a country programme has been established. It is one of our five focus countries in Africa. This summary gives a brief overview of the vision and activities of IRC Ethiopia.

At a glance

Main challenges faced by the sector

- Extending access to water and sanitation in remote and unserved communities
- Sustainability of rural water and sanitation
- Rapidly growing towns and cities with inadequate water and sanitation

Some key national WASH activities

- The One WASH national programme (SWAp) is getting underway
- Self-supply acceleration is being implemented by regions and NGOs
- The National WASH Inventory is being extended and updated through mobile monitoring

Ethiopia has made huge strides in extending access to water and sanitation and is judged to have reached the MDG target of 57% population having access to improved water sources.

However, the size of the country means that 39 million people are still without safe water. One in four communal water schemes are broken, and other challenges include poor water quality and long distances and times to collect water. Rapidly growing populations are outstripping the provision of sanitation and water in urban areas. The sanitation MDG was not met and there are concerns about sustaining open-defecation free status, the quality of facilities, and a lack of progress in improving latrines.

There are also major gaps in provision of water and sanitation outside the home, including in health clinics and schools.



Achieving the target of universal access to water and sanitation is our focus. IRC Ethiopia works closely with the Ethiopian government, especially the key ministries of water, health, education and finance. We support government and its development partners, including NGOs, to implement the 'One WaSH National Program' vision of an effective and co-ordinated sector in the country.

We do this by finding niches where we can add value to the efforts of others. We concentrate on finding ways to do things better and promoting learning from new evidence and uptake of ideas through our innovation hub. Our activities are focused in three main areas:

- WASH sector and project monitoring
- Innovation in service delivery models and financing
- Networking and knowledge management

WASH sector and project monitoring

We are concerned about sustainability, and we believe that sector monitoring is vital to drive improvements. This needs to be government-led and driven by the local needs of service providers. Data collected must be more widely used to improve services as well as for upwards reporting and regional and national planning. IRC Ethiopia have supported the MoWIE-led **National WASH Inventory (NWI)** since inception including a series of learning events and research publications. This included a seminar on the National WASH Inventory held preceding the international symposium we organised in Addis Ababa on Monitoring sustainable WASH Service delivery. IRC have also supported experimentation with **mobile-based data collection** by government leading to its use in the NWI for Somali region by Akvo and UNICEF.

Together with our partner Coffey we are providing **technical and managerial support in M&E to the One WaSH National Program (with DFID-funding)**. Starting in March 2015 this will help the National WaSH Coordination Office and its partner ministries improve and coordinate its national monitoring systems, update the National WASH Inventory and produce informative programme wide reports.

We are also providing independent external monitoring and evaluation services for Vitens Evides International including the **Sustainable Water Services in Harar Source to Tap and Back** (around Addis Ababa) projects. This involves mid-term and final project evaluations as well as documentation activities.



IRC Ethiopia with HOAREC are supporting UNICEF in the implementation of the **ONEWASH PLUS project focused on small towns** providing monitoring and related knowledge management services. This includes a quasi-randomised control trial to assess the impacts of combined WASH interventions in eight towns across four regions as well as the implementation of annual sustainability checks. Action research studies and documentation further support the project.

For UNHCR we undertook research on the long-term **costs of water and sanitation provision in refugee camps**, focusing on Bambasi camp (Assosa) close to the border with Sudan. The research was part of a wider study building on IRC's WASHCost project to apply life-cycle costs approaches in a humanitarian context.

Innovation in service delivery models and financing

Innovation in service delivery models, especially in institutional and financial arrangements, is a central focus of IRC.

IRC Ethiopia are supporting MoWIE and regions, including Oromia and SNNPR, to extend rural water services through the **Self-supply** approach. Self-supply is 'improvement to water supplies developed largely or wholly through user investment by households or small groups'. It can provide extra finance and capacity to fill some of the gaps in communal water supplies. Activities have included co-chairing the Self-supply working group and supporting the MoWIE to develop new policies and guidelines for Self-supply acceleration. Starting July 2014, we coordinate the Millennium Water Alliances Ethiopia Programme activities to extend Self-supply.

We are also a partner with Ramboll and Niras in **Community-led Accelerated WASH in Ethiopia (CoWASH)**, a sector support programme hosted by MoWIE working to scale up rural water and sanitation access through innovations in financing and project implementation. Our work has included developing approaches on behalf of SNV and UNICEF to adapt the successful Community Managed Project approach to meet new Ethiopian government requirements and procurement rules and advising on capacity building strategy and approaches.

A long-time interest has been to promote more integrated models of service delivery that meet the needs of rural and peri-urban families for productive as

well as domestic water. Our work on **multiple use services (MUS)** has included supporting WaterAid, World Vision, CRS and partner NGOs in the Millennium Water Alliance to develop such programming and deepen their interventions with funding from The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation.

Networking and knowledge management

We support the Ethiopian WASH sector in sharing new knowledge and best practices through dissemination of our research and communications work. We contribute to key sector platforms such as the Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF), Forum for Learning on Water and Sanitation (FLOWS), Water Sector Working Group, and Water Environment Movement.

We are a member of the **Millennium Water Alliance**, which counts amongst its members some of the largest NGO WASH programmes in the country.

In partnership with the **Dutch WASH Alliance**, we are conducting action research with AMREF in Afar on hygiene promotion. This includes measuring the effectiveness of current hygiene promotion implementation processes and recommending practical improvements.

A recent activity to support networking of projects and organisations receiving funding or with other links to the Netherlands has been the development of a **directory of water activities for the Dutch embassy in Addis Ababa**.



Some of our past activities

IRC Ethiopia was a core partner of the Overseas Development Institute-led **Research Inspired Policy and Practice Learning in Ethiopia (RiPPLE)** programme from 2006-2011 with specific roles in research on WASH services and the uptake of action research approaches through 'learning and practice alliances'.

IRC Ethiopia led the **MUStRAIN pilot project** (concluded end 2013 and supported by the Partners for Water Programme) focused on developing opportunities for multiple use water services in Ethiopia linked to innovative water harvesting technologies and household-led investment in water supplies (Self-supply).



All photos were taken by Petterik Wiggers, Panos Pictures.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

- Read our Ethiopia WASH blog at www.ircwash.org/ethiopia
- MUStRAIN project outputs including case studies and videos can be downloaded at www.ircwash.org/mustrain
- www.cmpethiopia.org provides more information on Community Managed Projects
- Chapters from IRC authors in the RiPPLE book 'Achieving Water Security' are at www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/achieving_water_security.pdf
- 'A hidden resource' reports research on Self-supply at www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/a_hidden_resource_web_version_aug_2013.pdf
- Self-supply acceleration guidelines can be downloaded at www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/self_supply_planning_guidelines_03062014.pdf
- Download a recent paper on Self-supply at <http://www.water-alternatives.org/index.php/alldoc/articles/vol6/v6issue3/225-a6-3-5>
- Read our work on the National WASH Inventory www.ircwash.org/resources/enabling-or-disabling-reflections-ethiopian-national-wash-inventory-process
- Read our latest book 'From infrastructure to services: trends in monitoring sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services' www.ircwash.org/resources/infrastructure-services-trends-monitoring-sustainable-water-sanitation-and-hygiene

IRC Ethiopia is a focus country programme of the think-and-do tank IRC, with its headquarters in The Hague. IRC's Ethiopia programme is implemented through local partners.

IRC Ethiopia has a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Water Irrigation and Energy (MoWIE) guiding the organisation's activities to support the sector.

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