

IRC

June 2020

Monitoring Report 2019

As submitted by IRC to the Directorate-General for International Cooperation of The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Supporting water sanitation
and hygiene services for life

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Its content is derived from monitoring and learning reports submitted by all staff from The Netherlands, United States, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Uganda and our New Focus Countries.

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Abbreviations

A4C	Agenda for Change
CAO	Collective Labour Agreement
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CWSA	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
DGIS	Directorate-General for International Cooperation
DWSPs	District Water and Sanitation Plans
HEWASA	Health through Water and Sanitation
HPMA	Hand Pump Mechanics Association
HR	Human Resources
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JMP	Joint WHO/UNICEF Monitoring Programme
LCCA	Life-Cycle Cost Approach
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MUS	Multiple Use water Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRDI	Natural Resource Defence Initiative
NSA	National Sanitation Authority
O&M	Operations and Management
ODF	Open Defecation Free
OWNP	One WASH National Program
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PTSP	Para Todos, Por Siempre (Everyone, Forever)
QIS	Qualitative Information System
RWSN	Rural Water Supply Network
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (Ethiopia)
SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
SWSSB	Subcounty Water Supply and Sanitation Board
ToC	Theory of Change
UWASNET	Uganda Water and Sanitation Network
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSCC	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council
WSUP	Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor
WWW	World Water Week
YEP	Young Expert Programme

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Executive summary

In the course of 2019, IRC spent EUR 11.85 million on our global portfolio of programmes and activities. A highlight in business development during 2019 was the awarding of EUR 6.5 million by DGIS to top up the programmatic funding for Building WASH Systems to Deliver the SDGs up to 2024. At the heart of what we channel these resources towards are our Partner Districts around the world, and their 2.2 million inhabitants.

In 2019 we saw promising progress, with WASH Master Plans for universal access to water and sanitation (in line with SDG 6) adopted in 14 districts. Measurable progress was made in district level indicators of access to water in Ghana and Uganda.

The highlight of the year was our **All systems go!** symposium that attracted more than 350 people from 50 countries and that served as a significant milestone in the development of systems approaches in water and sanitation.

Alongside this, we launched our **WASH Systems Academy**, a major initiative designed to provide a means to scale up the learning coming from our own and our partners' district and national level learning and insights about WASH systems.

Our signature **Watershed: empowering citizens'** initiative is providing powerful evidence for the potential for engaged and informed citizen advocacy to hold service providers and authorities accountable for their responsibilities, especially towards the poorest citizens.

Our **Expose the System** campaign reached more than a quarter of a million people - people who would not normally think about or engage with water and sanitation systems.

During the year we supported the production of master plans, capacity building events and learning platforms worldwide and worked on numerous resources, such as journal articles, newsletters, blogs and more. The complete numbers are added to the **IRC at a glance**.



Cecilia Abena Dapaah, Minister for Water Resources and Sanitation in Ghana giving a keynote speech at All systems go!

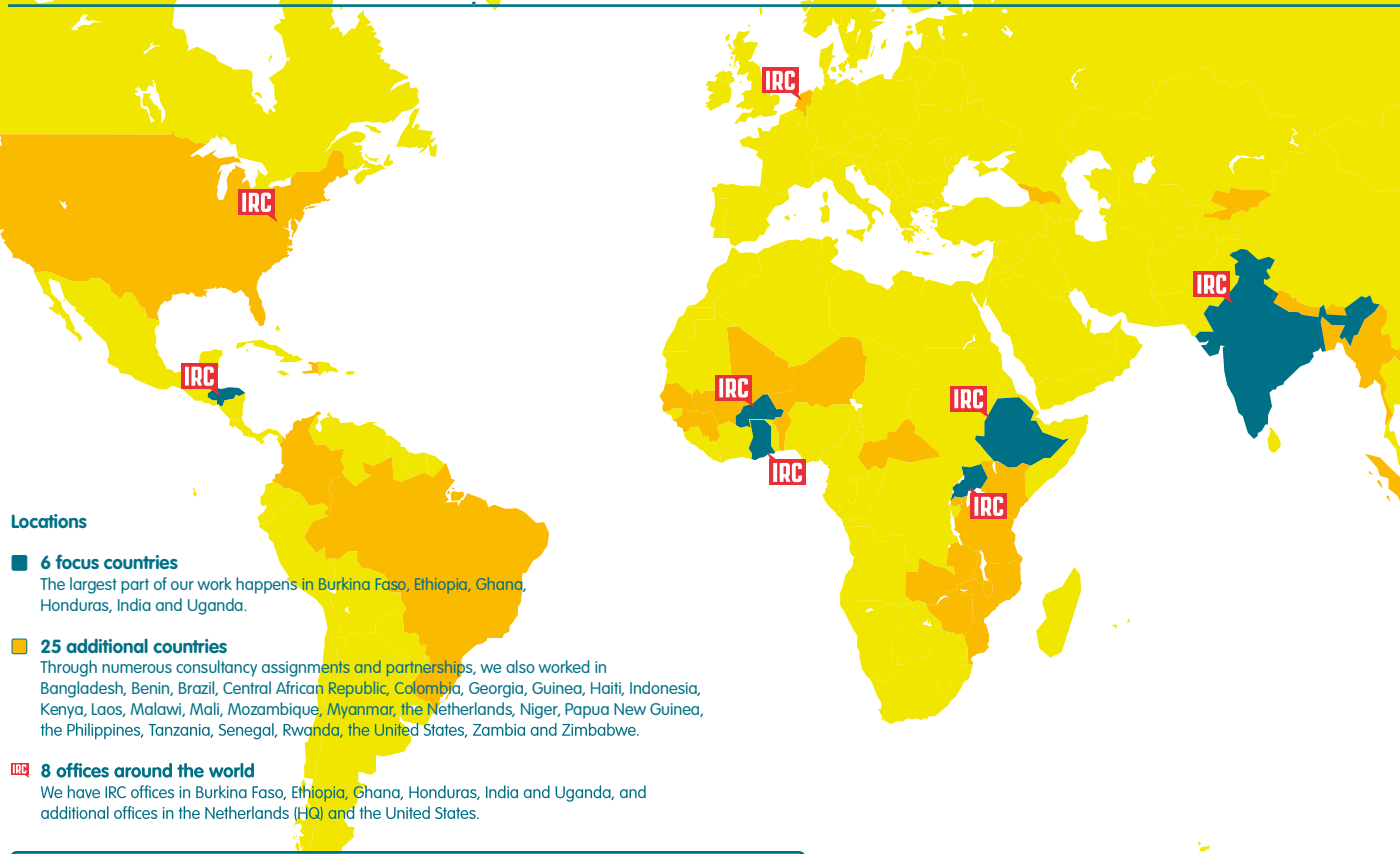
Overall, whether at district, national or global level, systems thinking and demand for systems approaches to water and sanitation is taking hold. While this does not mean that we are now on track to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, it does mean that the growing movement around systems provides a powerful platform from which to challenge received wisdom and business as usual thinking.

The challenge going forward will be to mobilise this energy and momentum within the sector to effect decision making outside the sector, and to multiply the lessons learned in 14 districts to thousands of districts globally. To this end, we undertook a light review of our strategy during the year to enable this. The recommendations that came from it will be incorporated in our activities in 2020 and beyond – notably the need to reach beyond the sector in our advocacy, and to begin creating the mechanisms by which our district level success stories can be multiplied.

At the time of writing, May 2020, the world is convulsed by COVID-19. Our offices are all locked down and our staff are supporting our partners in responding to it. Investments made in our communications infrastructure have enabled us to function effectively during lockdown. COVID-19 is highlighting the vital roles safe water and hygiene play in the fight against the pandemic. Access to safe water and sanitation in the household is not just a basic human right, but an enabler of social distancing. In fact, a health response is truly a WASH response. During and after the crisis, we will redouble our efforts to drive home this message to decision makers. WASH must be seen—and invested in—as a crucial foundation of a country's public health infrastructure, and the poor should not have to rely on unsafe WASH services.

1. IRC at a glance

WHO DID WE WORK WITH, AND AT WHAT SCALE?	WHAT DID WE PRODUCE?	HOW MANY PEOPLE DID WE REACH?
<p>6 focus country programmes and 1 international programme</p> <p>9 partner districts and 15 Para Todos Por Siempre (PTPS) partner municipalities</p> <p>8 offices including 6 in focus countries</p> <p>89 active programmes and projects</p> <p>47 country staff staff 36 staff in the Netherlands 1 staff in the United States 20+ associates and 6 interns</p> <p>633 IRC Consult advisory days over 21 assignments in 20 countries</p> <p>€11.8M invested from 27 donors and 49 clients</p>	<p>14 district WASH master plans supported*</p> <p>1 All systems go! WASH systems symposium</p> <p>77 other capacity-building events worldwide co-organised by IRC</p> <p>83 working groups and learning platforms supported in our focus countries</p> <p>1 WASH Systems Academy online learning platform launched with 2 courses 4 training sessions facilitated</p> <p>120 advocacy initiatives of civil-society organisations supported</p> <p>353 resources of which 106 research outputs 1 IRC booklet and 4 journal articles published on our website</p> <p>462 articles of which 103 news items and 103 blogs published on our website</p> <p>19 newsletters and 89 videos</p>	<p>2.78M people in the partner districts we work with directly</p> <p>400+ people attending the All systems go! WASH systems symposium</p> <p>10k people including 400+ civil-society and community-based organisations attending other capacity-building events worldwide co-organised by IRC</p> <p>814 participants in WASH Systems Academy courses</p> <p>37.7k unique downloads from our website</p> <p>18.7k returning visitors to our website</p> <p>46.9k social media engagements</p> <p>322 Google Scholar citations</p> <p>14 references to our work by global media</p> <p>30 policies adopted for sustainable and inclusive development</p>



Locations

6 focus countries

The largest part of our work happens in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India and Uganda.

25 additional countries

Through numerous consultancy assignments and partnerships, we also worked in Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Central African Republic, Colombia, Georgia, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Niger, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Tanzania, Senegal, Rwanda, the United States, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

8 offices around the world

We have IRC offices in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India and Uganda, and additional offices in the Netherlands (HQ) and the United States.



***About master plans**
Master plans are owned by our local government partners and guide our district work. Each one contains a statement of a shared vision and political commitment. They describe the current provision, highlight the gaps, and outline how to fill those gaps to achieve the vision of everyone being served with water and sanitation by 2030.

2. Introduction

IRC is dedicated to achieving SDG Global Goal 6 – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all - and in particular targets 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 (safe water; sanitation; and waste water). The SDG targets aim to ensure that no one is left behind whilst also lifting the level of services offered.

IRC's strategy is guided by a long-term Theory of Change (ToC) backed by an emerging praxis¹, whose closely interwoven theory and practice are both based on the understanding that only strong **local** and **national** systems can provide water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services universally and sustainably.

Figure 1 shows IRC's ToC at its highest level. IRC works as a change hub and capacity builder that contributes to strengthening of local and national systems; systems that in turn provide WASH services that will improve the health, education and livelihoods of the people in IRC focus contexts and around the world.

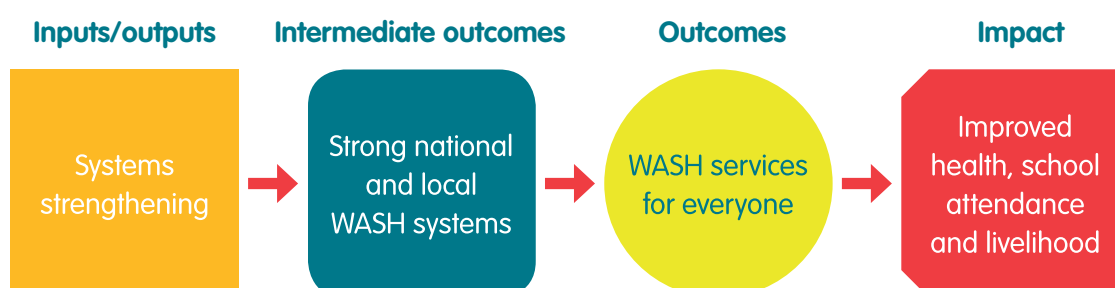


Figure 1: High level theory of change for IRC. The detailed theory of change is in **Annex 1**. See also **Figure 3**.

The strategy is underpinned by our experience which suggests that a presence at national level must be matched at the district level. If not, it is difficult to ensure that high-level interventions in policy and learning lead to real improvements in services. District level work makes it possible to fully test the effectiveness of interventions and innovations along the entire service delivery chain.

Since 2017, IRC has committed to partnering with districts in each of our six focus Country Programmes. We are committed to working with these districts to help them deliver their vision of providing water and sanitation to their more than two million inhabitants by 2030. IRC Country Programmes support local government partners' progress towards this SDG 6 vision. As a **Change Hub**, IRC builds capacity, strengthens local systems, and facilitates collective action with other stakeholders in the district.

Lessons learned in the district are brought to national level to promote learning and encourage policy change and adoption of proven practices and thus enable replication and scale. National level advocacy and capacity building are, therefore, also crucial.

At global level, IRC in turn shares knowledge and experience from our focus countries and districts while encouraging transfer of best practices across contexts and advocating for proven models and necessary change. Agenda for Change is one of the key platforms through which we do this. Above, all, we advocate on behalf of the water and sanitation sector to decision makers and political leaders; and we advocate for a systems strengthening approach. These activities help increase impact and help achieve SDG 6 globally.

¹ The word praxis means 'theory informed by practice, and practice based on theory' – we find it a useful word to describe our underlying philosophy as a think-and-do-tank.

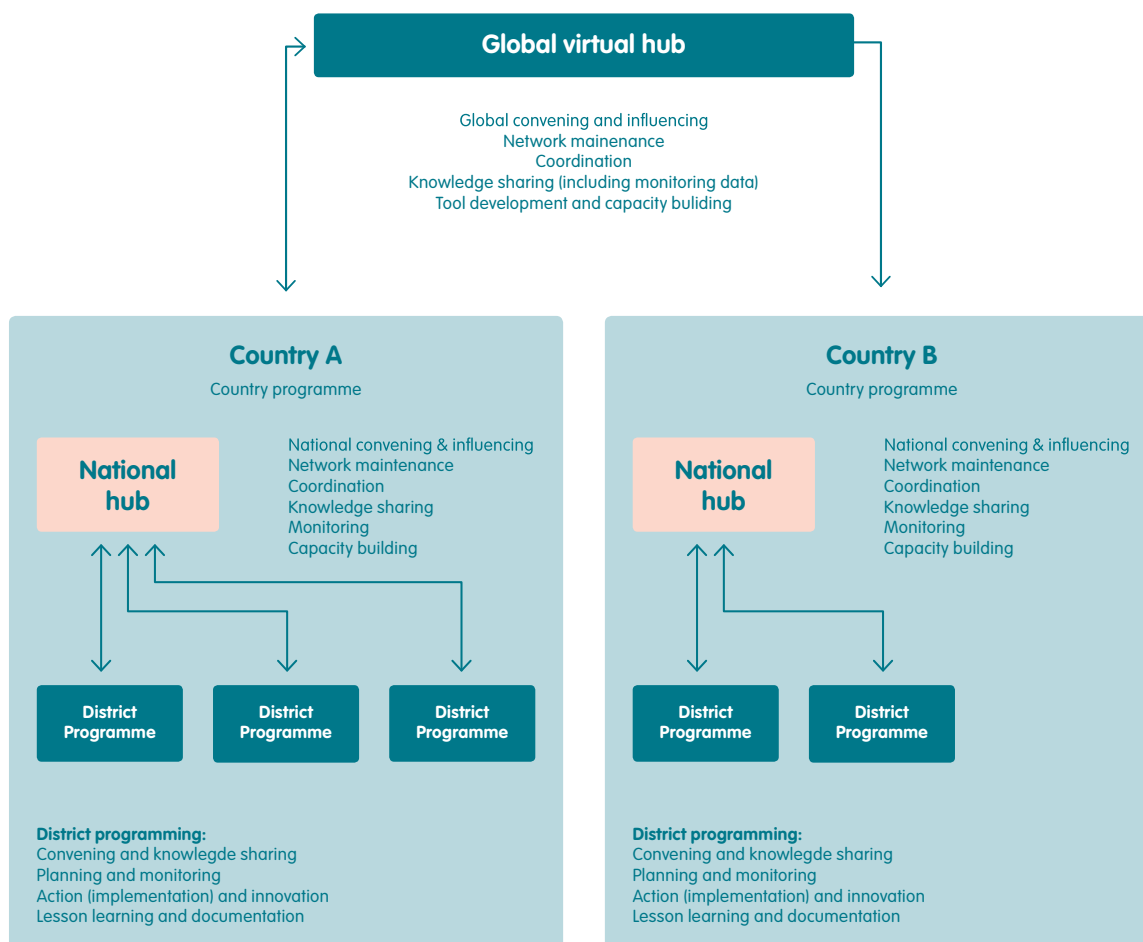


Figure 2: A multi-level change hub with links between global, national, and district hubs. From 'IRC Strategy Framework 2017-2030'.

2019 marked the third year in **IRC's Strategy Framework 2017-2030**. It also marked the half-way point in IRC's five year programmatic planning cycle (2017-2021). As a result, in addition to annual monitoring and reporting in 2019, IRC undertook a light mid-term review of its strategic planning framework, including a systematic review of our ToC .

During 2019, IRC programmes also completed the third year of monitoring under the results framework of the 2017-2030 Strategy. This allows us to begin to observe trends over time for key outcomes and intermediate outcome areas.

Our ambitious monitoring framework developed and extensively tested over the past three years is close to moving from research to full institutionalisation. During the year we published the delayed programme baselines (**Uganda, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Honduras** and the **International Programme**). The priority for 2020 is to visualise and publicly share the results and make them easier to use and analyse for IRC staff and partners. For several programmes, three years of time series data on key outcomes are already available in this report (see **Annex 2**).

This report presents an overview of IRC's programmes in 2019. Section 2 provides an overview of the results framework and monitoring methodology for IRC programmes. Section 3 provides a summary of IRC's approach to monitoring results in the 2017-2030 Strategic Framework. Section 4 gives an overview of progress against our main outcomes during 2019, then provides a summary of outcomes and key results from each programme during 2019. Section 5 focuses specifically on the contribution of DGIS funding of IRC programmes. Section 6 gives an overview of the inputs and the organisation's resources and staff that make programme delivery possible. IRC's annual analytical progress review is also available in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), where the financial flows of the DGIS programme funds are reported

3. Measuring WASH sector change and IRC programme progress

IRC's complete Theory of Change 2017-2030 ([Annex 1](#)) describes our vision and guides our actions for achieving the SDG 6 targets. It maps both the outcomes that we think are most critical for the sector to deliver WASH services, and our proposed contribution to those outcomes.

Because systems strengthening lies at the heart of our development philosophy and action, our results framework is designed to measure both **the development of the entire WASH system at district and national level**; and, **IRC's contribution to this development**. Given the understanding that sector strengthening requires collective action by multiple WASH actors, as well as IRC's desire to play a role in supporting the partnerships that will deliver this collective action, much of our impact will be in the form of contributing to shared outcomes: in monitoring terms, contribution is far more important to us than attribution.

3.1 Outcome monitoring

In line with this, our results framework for focus country work measures the following outcome level indicators.

1. The intermediate outcomes in the ToC (the four blue boxes in Figure 3).
2. The strength of the WASH system (the blue box in [Figure 1](#)), using nine building blocks at district and national level.
3. The WASH service levels (partner district and national level, as progress toward the goal (green box in Figure 3).

Our International Programme prioritises work on: championing water and sanitation; political leadership and financial commitment to the systems approach; global capacity; and innovations in service delivery models. It also measures progress toward these four intermediate outcomes using eight indicators.

Our programmes are increasingly supplementing our initial monitoring against predefined indicators with Outcome Harvesting, a tool that helps us identify the unexpected and emergent. A summary of the scores and outcomes harvested are presented in [Annex 2](#).

Theory of change: an overview

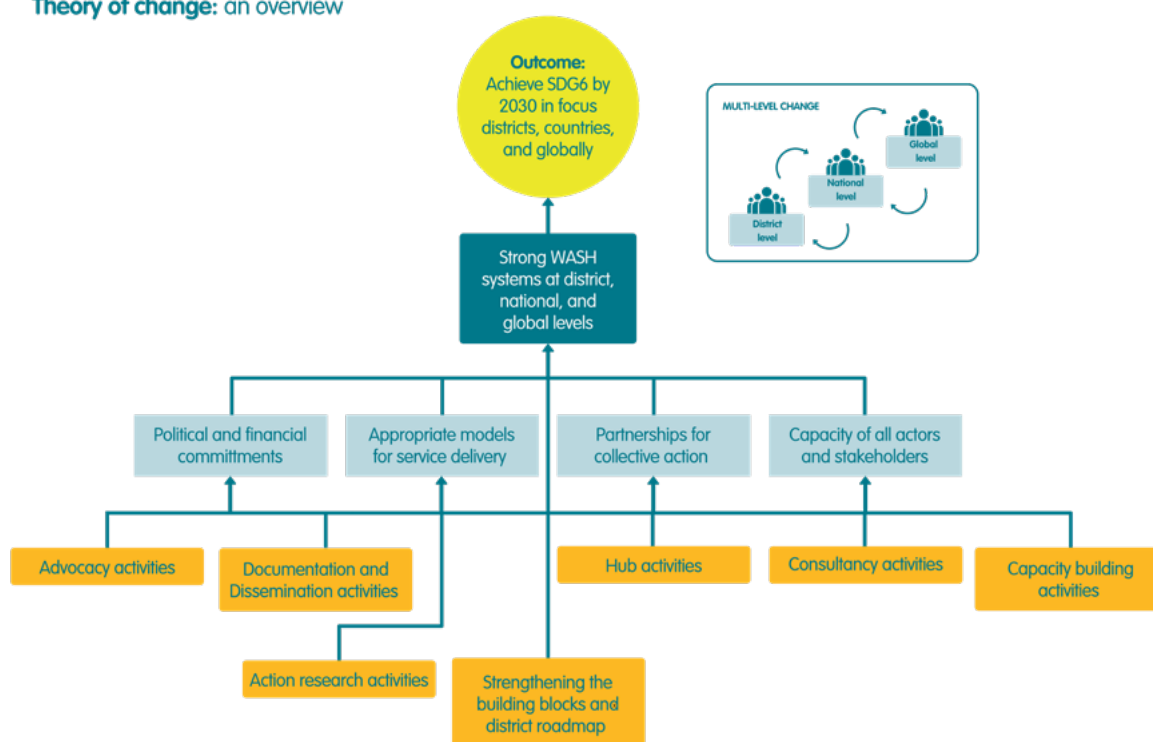


Figure 3: The core elements of the IRC Theory of Change. Activities (yellow boxes) lead to intermediate outcomes (blue) to the outcomes of WASH services for all, in partner districts, focus countries, and globally.

1. Monitoring the key intermediate outcomes needed for systems change.

The first intermediate outcomes in our ToC are:

- strong political and financial commitment;
- strong partnerships for change;
- strong Service Delivery Models;
- strong capacity of the key actors.

These are measured using Qualitative Information System (QIS) ladders² and are scored separately at both district and national level. These are the 'how' of delivering strong systems (intermediate outcome five is explained below).

Financial commitment and the availability of resources for WASH are important quantitative indicators. As part of the support to implement district level master plans for WASH, IRC and local authorities have now costed plans and have started analysing the financial gaps and annual monitoring financial resource availability. These are also key inputs for developing financial strategies for achieving the district master plans.

2. Monitoring the strength of national and district WASH systems: scoring the WASH system building blocks³

The fifth outcome of the IRC ToC is the overall strength of the WASH system. The building blocks are a way of breaking down the complexity of the WASH system and looking at it through different lenses that allow it to be more easily understood and measured. Each of the nine WASH system building blocks is evaluated and scored at the district and national levels using a set of 3-5 Likert scale⁴ indicators (benchmarks representing the key aspects of that building block). An abbreviated set of indicators are used to specifically assess the systems for hygiene and extra-household settings.

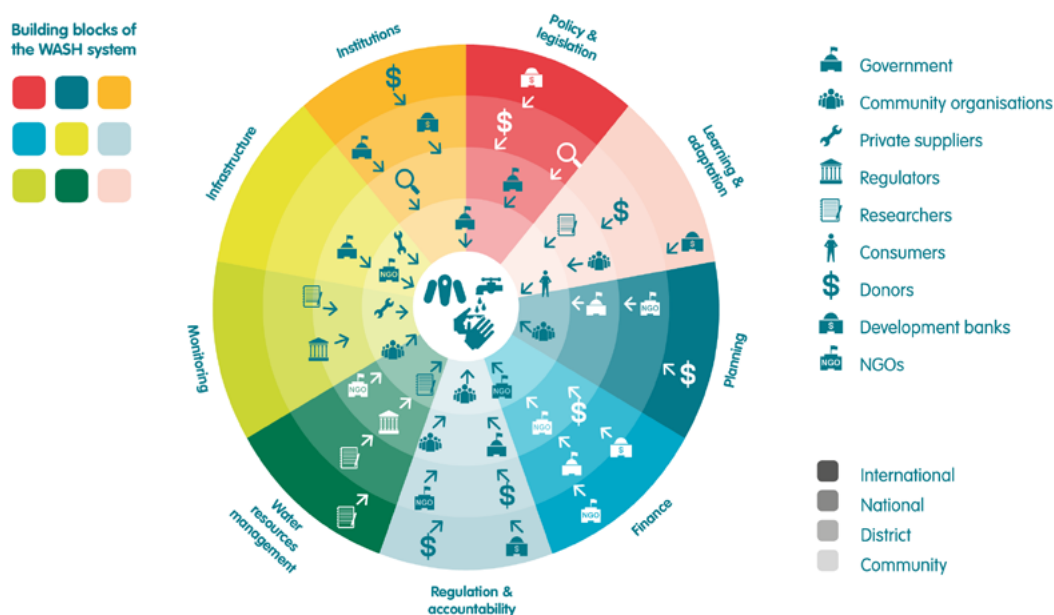


Figure 4: The building blocks of the WASH system involve a complex network of stakeholders at local, national, and international level. The nine building blocks are defined as: policy and legislation; institutions; monitoring; regulation; planning; finance; infrastructure; water resource management; and learning and adaptation.

² The Qualitative Information System (QIS) is a system for scoring qualitative information according to how it fits within a set of 'mini-scenarios' that progress from 0, no progress on the outcome, to 100, significant progress toward the ideal mini-scenario, whereby the outcome (100) is achieved. These 'mini-scenarios' are used to produce a score and rate progress on the outcome on a colour scale ranging from red (no progress) to amber (some progress) to green (achieved).

³ The nine WASH building blocks as defined by IRC are: policy and legislation; institutions; monitoring; regulation; finance; planning; infrastructure; water resource management; and learning and adaptation. For more information, see **Huston and Moriarty (2018)**.

⁴ A Likert scale is a common rating scale which offers balanced response, in our case, ranging from 0 to 5. The benchmark statements for the building blocks elements are scored from 0 (non-existent) to 5 (exists, and fully applied).

3. WASH services monitoring: our highest outcome level that measures the quality of services delivered.

For monitoring actual WASH service delivery, the IRC programme strives to follow the SDG 6 indicators using the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) definitions and methodology. At national level, we draw our data from the country-led monitoring system using both asset and household data; we collect this data from both JMP and national data sets (from ministries responsible for water and sanitation and/or national statistics agencies).

At district level, we work with government partners in the focus districts to adapt support and strengthen their own monitoring systems, and to bring these in line with JMP and national methodologies to enable the most resource-efficient and accurate methodology possible. Where these provide insufficient data we supplement government monitoring with our own survey data.

In 2019, WASH household service levels and assets were assessed in three of IRC's focus districts for a second time since the launch of the 2017-2030 strategy, and for the first time in one partner district. WASH service levels in households and schools were assessed in three partner districts.

3.2 Activity and output monitoring

In addition to tracking progress on outcomes, and IRC's contribution to it, Programmes also report against their 2019 annual plans, on:

1. planned activities;
2. planned outputs;
3. and, unplanned outputs and activities.

In addition, the current results framework asks the programmes to report on a set of numeric output indicators. These include published outputs, people trained, and platforms and networks facilitated.

The communication team of the Global Hub also keeps track of the number of social media engagements. The numeric results are summarised in the '**IRC at a glance**' table (chapter 1).

Annex 3 provides details on progress with key activities and outputs of IRC programmes in 2019.

4. Progress against outcomes in 2019

This section first gives an overview on progress toward WASH systems strengthening globally and in IRC focus countries. This is followed by a section for each IRC Country Programme and the Global Hub, with each showing progress toward key outcomes in the ToC. These sections also include an indication of IRC's contribution to these outcomes and mention key related activities and output.

4.1 Progress on WASH systems strengthening

There is growing traction for systems approaches at the global level. Beyond recognition of the central role of systems strengthening to achieve the SDGs, the global sector continues to search for solutions to WASH finance. The 2019 GLAAS status report, 'National systems to support drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene', was framed using systems strengthening concept and language, while reporting key enabling environment indicators. The Sanitation and Water for All partnership continues to be a driving force for strengthening national systems and performing global advocacy for financing and commitment to WASH, and the Agenda for Change partnerships attracted new members and gained attention and interest from more non-member organisations. Our showcase sessions on WASH systems strengthening, together with partners, at the Colorado WASH Symposium, the All systems go! symposium, Stockholm World Water Week, and the UNC Water and Health Conference were received with enthusiasm.

Global capacity for WASH systems strengthening

Interest in learning more about systems approaches was clearly demonstrated by the **All systems go! WASH systems symposium** on 12-14 March 2019. It was the first event exclusively dedicated to discovering and delivering systems-based solutions for WASH, building on the outcomes from the Sustainable WASH Symposium in Kampala in 2016. More than 350 participants representing over 165 institutions participated, and over half of them made contributions in the form of presentations or chaired sessions and developed content for the 52 thematic sessions under six different thematic tracts⁵

With systems approaches in WASH becoming more mainstream, there is growing demand for more tools and learning opportunities to guide their application in practice. The **WASH Systems Academy**, launched in 2019 at Stockholm World Water Week, has attracted more than 814 participants since its launch in August 2019. The Academy is an online learning platform that brings together existing and new tools and resources from IRC and partners for a blended learning opportunity. The WASH Academy has two courses so far: one on 'the basics' of a systems approach, and one on the building blocks of the WASH system. More modules will be added in 2020 as we grow and populate this platform which offers a very exciting opportunity to scale our work.

Global commitment to WASH systems strengthening

In 2019, we also took our campaigning to the next level. In May 2019, we developed and launched the **Expose the System** campaign that aims to continue promoting IRC's core mission - a systems approach to achieving the human right to safe water and sanitation services for everyone. The campaign was not intended to set out or explain what WASH systems are or how they work and function, but to reach beyond our usual sector technocratic audience and serve as a gateway to help drive interest and encourage conversation about systems, especially with priority non-WASH sector actors whom we are seeking to engage. The campaign, which was run on our website and social media channels attracted the interest of nearly 300,000 people.

⁵ The event was sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Aguaconsult, Aquaya, Aqua for All, Chemonics, DAI, Eawag, Osprey Foundation, The Smart Centre Group, USAID Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership, WaterAid, Water for Good, Water For People, WSSCC and WSUP.

NATIONAL LEVEL						DISTRICT LEVEL					
Country	Subsector	Political and financial commitment	Partnership	WASH models	Capacity	Country	District	Political and financial commitment	Partnership	WASH models	Capacity
Burkina Faso	Water	75	83	65	50	Burkina Faso	Banfora	56	67	61	43
	Sanitation	75	83	58	50		Ethiopia	Mille	12	53	33
	Hygiene promotion	70	58	42	50	South-Ari		13	53	38	20
	WASH in extra-hh settings	77	50	33	43	Ghana	Asutifi North	80	78	60	69
Ethiopia	Water					Honduras	Camasca	64		55	56
	Sanitation						Candelaria	48	60	55	42
	Hygiene promotion						Chinda	47	60	55	42
	WASH in extra-hh settings						Colomocagua	40	50	55	47
Ghana	Water	62	55	58	80		Dolores	75		66	70
	Sanitation	64	55	52	80		El Negrito	75	68	66	47
	Hygiene promotion	59	48	48	80		Enrique	60	57	55	47
	WASH in extra-hh settings						Gualcinse	40	50	55	33
Honduras	Water	60	55	62	56		Jesús de Otoro	72		66	70
	Sanitation	48	60	62	42		Marcala	58		55	47
	Hygiene promotion	47	60	62	42		Piraera	40	50	55	33
	WASH in extra-hh settings	45	60	62	42		San Andrés	40	50	55	33
India	Water						San Antonio de Cortés	75	68	66	70
	Sanitation						San Matías	40	50	55	33
	Hygiene promotion						Trojes	40	50	55	30
	WASH in extra-hh settings						India	Ganjam			
Uganda	Water	62	60	43	53	Uganda	Kabarole	50	50	73	64
	Sanitation	50	55	35	35						
	Hygiene promotion										
	WASH in extra-hh settings										

Figure 5: A summary of the 2019 QIS scoring against the intermediate outcomes in the IRC theory of change at National (left) and district (right) level. For national level, these are disaggregated by sub-sector; at district level where the same actors have responsibilities for a range of WASH functions, there is a single averaged score for WASH.

Strengthening WASH systems in IRC focus countries

Since the launch of IRC's 2017-2030 strategy, and our identification of partner districts in 2017, WASH systems strengthening in IRC focus countries has progressed significantly. Following the strong example set by pioneer districts Asutifi North in Ghana and Banfora in Burkina Faso, a Master Plan for 2030 was launched in Kabarole, Uganda, and further master plans were finalised in Dera, Farta, and North Mecha in Ethiopia. These have served as: both political and technical tools for the districts, thereby formalising political vision and commitment; and, both revealing gaps and offering solutions for district capacity, service delivery models, and WASH finance.

A critical next step in implementing the Master Plans is fundraising. The master plan in Banfora was used to develop a costed technical plan for phased implementation. **As of early 2020, 77% of the required funding was secured.** The Asutifi North District Assembly has focused on a detailed life-cycle costing to clarify the finance gaps for the different cost components and, despite a shortage of funding, has measured a 6% increase in safe water access since 2017. The district partnerships in Uganda and Ethiopia are planning financial gap analyses and will develop more detailed fundraising strategies for 2020.

Toward scale with our approach

Experience in partner districts generates the knowledge and skills needed to achieve national and global targets. We drive their uptake and application through a broad range of networks and partnerships of which we are members (this includes, but is not limited to: the Safe Water Strategy partnership, supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; the Watershed consortium, supported by DGIS; the Sustainable WASH Systems consortium supported by USAID; the Agenda for Change and Sanitation and Water for All partnerships; the Millennium Water Alliance). Partnership is at the heart of our ToC; is the basis for collective action; and runs through our organisational DNA.

It is through these partnerships that we develop, document, and promote promising practices and drive collective action toward national and global targets. We also promote the tools developed by IRC for service level and asset monitoring, life-cycle costing, and local government capacity building through learning alliances and action research.

These tools are also being used in other countries and by other partners, supported by IRC Consult assignments, and are featured in the WASH Systems Academy as ways to scale our impact. The Agenda for Change partners started a technical assistance facility which has extended the reach of the district roadmap and WASH systems strengthening tools whilst strengthening collaboration of members. In 2020, we are pursuing further opportunities to scaling the approach used in our partner districts, whilst supporting those partner districts to secure finance for implementation.

New financial models will be critical for strengthening WASH systems globally. With Sanitation and Water for All and through our financing work, we are aiming to develop these models and demonstrate the investment case for WASH.

Preparing for scale

Two thousand and nineteen was the third year of our 2017-2030 Strategy; and the second year of our 2017-21 planning framework. During the year we undertook a light review of progress to date, with the objective of informing and where necessary adapting our ToC and setting the basis for a new five year plan.

Overall, the review was positive and assures us that we are on the right track. We have achieved solid proof of concept for our district focus and master planning has proved to be an exciting tool for generating political buy-in and finance.

Our approach to partnership and a hub role are well established, leading to a focus on documentation and consolidation of proven tools for 2020.

At the same time, working within just one district, however effectively, is never going to deliver the SDGs. The review highlighted that having established a solid district base it is now time to consider questions of scale and the broader impact beyond the district more critically.

This in turn implies continuing to invest in and grow our national and global influencing and information sharing work. The WASH Systems Academy, All systems go! symposium and sector finance work all fit within this rubric. So too does our Expose the System campaign. Indeed, much more effective advocacy and communication on behalf of WASH and towards power brokers and decision makers is seen as a key area of future growth. Our in-house social consulting initiative, IRC Consult, is also proving to be an important channel for scale and influence.

While largely focused internally, our investment in improved IT infrastructure in 2019 (see section 6.1) and in particular in the virtual Teams Platform, has proven instrumental in maintaining not only our ability to work during the COVID-19 pandemic (at the time of writing this report), but also in continuing to actively support and engage with our different partners around the world.

4.2 Burkina Faso

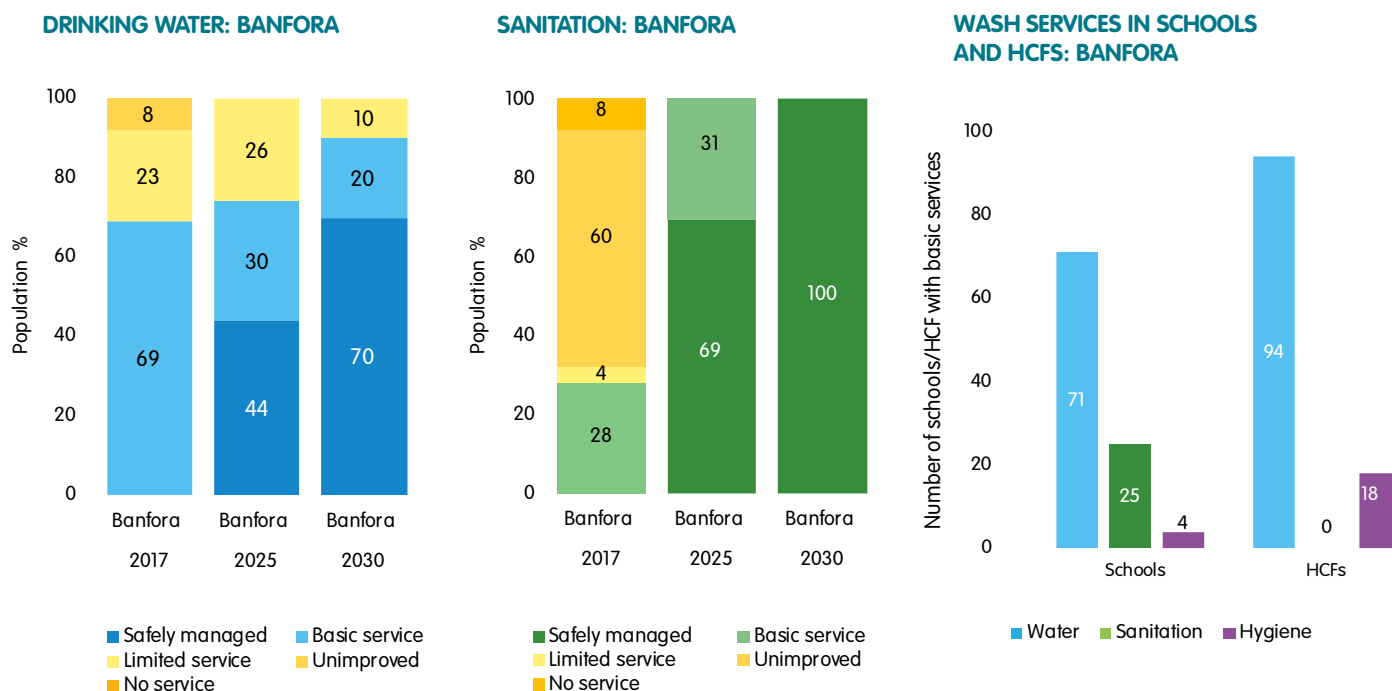


Figure 6: (Left and center) Water and sanitation service levels in Banfora, measured in 2017 and targets from the master plan. (right): Number of schools and health care facilities with basic services in Banfora (CDC/IRC, 2019).

IRC BURKINA FASO AT A GLANCE

- 9** staff
- 12** projects
- 8** donors
- € 550k** European Union / European Commission
- € 517k** Danida
- € 268k** Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- € 256k** Other
- Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 1,860**
- Population of Banfora district: **154k**
- Water coverage: **69%**
- Sanitation coverage: **28%**

Numbers based on 2017 data collected for the Banfora district WASH master plan

Partner district
Banfora

Context

The security situation in Burkina Faso continues to be fragile. The adjustment we are seeing at the moment in the sector is the growing importance of learning how to manage WASH for internally displaced populations. Its focus is shifting towards emergency response. However, we still expect to see development support with a long term vision in more stable regions. The challenge for the Government is how to deal properly and effectively with both. IRC Burkina Faso aims to continue being an effective partner in systems-oriented responses. In our advocacy to the Government and donors, we will emphasise the need to not neglect populations living in safe areas who do not have access to proper services.

District level results

Political and financial commitment and strong partnerships

At the heart of our work in Burkina is our partner district: Banfora. In 2018, led by local government and with support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and other partners, we launched a district WASH master plan.

In 2019, our focus was on implementing activities set out in this plan. District partners, that include local government and other local partners such as the Catholic Relief Services, the OneDrop Foundation, and ONEA, formally meet twice a year to evaluate implementation and plan for the next phase. In practice, in our hub role, we interact continuously with all the partners.

Due to the continued strong political leadership, Banfora district managed to mobilise 77.2% of the annual funds needed to implement its master plan. The Mayor of Banfora is actively seeking the additional funding needed to achieve SDG 6 in the district. This is all the more remarkable given the security challenges faced by the country, which has led to decreased budget allocations for WASH in general in Burkina Faso during the year.

District capacity

The district conducted a diagnosis of the organisational capacities of its communal technical service, accompanied by a training plan. The diagnosis and the plan were validated, demonstrating ownership for this document by local technical experts.

IRC and the municipality's technical service in charge of WASH form the working group of the Municipal Committee of Water and Sanitation. The communal budget covers all the operating expenses of the municipal technical service. IRC's main role is to support the municipality in setting up and managing this working group – or learning alliance platform – by identifying the subjects for discussion, facilitating, reporting, following up on the recommendations and monitoring progress of implementation activities.

District models

Citizen engagement, through municipal leadership, has grown as well. Latrines are being built thanks to fundraising campaigns led by the leaders of Banfora and supported by IRC.

District stakeholders are increasingly aware of their roles and responsibilities. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are beginning to hold the authorities accountable while partners jointly plan investments to ensure equitable, safe and sustainable access to WASH services in the district. IRC also supported the launch of a process for creating WASH social enterprises that support effective models for managing public WASH services. This process brought together 100 young people at an incubator workshop. The workshop helped identify 10 ideas for creating a WASH social enterprise of which IRC, the municipality and its partners will support developing three viable projects in 2020.

National level results

Political and financial commitment

An advocacy campaign focused on influencing Government to dedicate at least 10% of the national '11 December celebration budget' to WASH. This holiday commemorates the establishment of the Republic of Upper Volta in 1958. Despite the advocacy efforts, WASH was not included in the investment plan. Moreover, the overall budget commitment related to domestic resources in 2019 was even reduced compared to 2018 due to insecurity and the budget uptake by the Ministry of WASH was even more limited than in previous years.

IRC Burkina Faso continued working on the Fasotoilettes campaign which mobilises middle-class citizens to commit to investing in hygiene and sanitation facilities for their home villages. The campaign has reached 15,000 people and an evaluation of pledges actualised is in progress.

Partnerships

Partnerships with UNICEF, the European Union, GIZ and the Ministry of Water, Hydraulic Planning and Sanitation continue to result in national level collaboration. IRC's advocacy efforts for sector reform led to an international symposium on institutional reforms in the WASH sector to be held. The symposium was expected to be an opportunity for WASH sector experts to learn from other African countries (Morocco, Senegal, Rwanda and Benin). However, the symposium, originally due to take place in 2019, was postponed to 2020 by the Ministry. It is expected to be a key event to advocate to the highest government authorities for the sector reform needed to achieve SDG 6 in the country.

National capacity and models

In 2019, the Ministry of Water and Sanitation reviewed its monitoring practices and indicators on human rights principles. This followed a series of training on the human rights-based approach in Burkina Faso in 2018-2019 which reached more than 1,500 people, including national government representatives

As part of the events on implementing a human rights-based approach, in 2019 IRC organised 27 training sessions and co-facilitated training for over 700 local and national experts, Government representatives, CSOs and media practitioners. The training linked to financial strategic planning and sector monitoring as key aspects for delivering on the human right to water and sanitation.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

All in all, IRC Burkina Faso has seen continued political leadership and increased collaboration at the district level, leading to a successful first phase of implementing the annual budgeted work plan drawing on its master plan.

At the national level, with key partners, IRC continues to advocate for increased political and financial commitment, and sector reform.

The programme has achieved 94% of the total number of outputs planned for 2019, including publishing and disseminating communication outputs, facilitating capacity building training and participating in working groups and platforms at the local, national and international levels.

However, target outcomes by 2021 are being jeopardised by the continuing deterioration of the security situation. What is more, a frustrating lack of political prioritisation is hampering both financial commitments and essential institutional reform. Advocacy to tackle this will continue in 2020, however the reality of the security crisis makes it an uphill battle.

4.3 Ethiopia

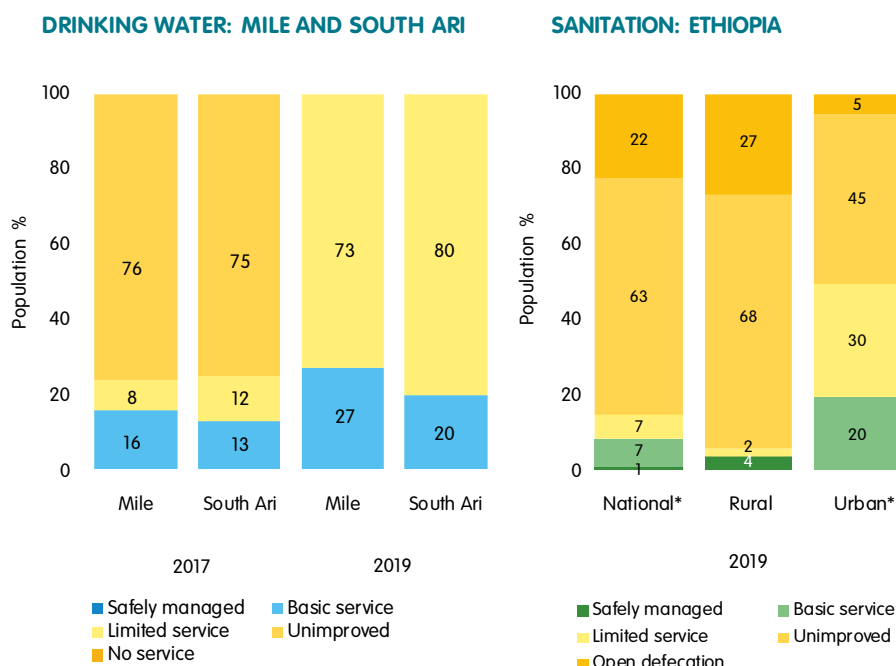


Figure 7: (Left): Drinking water service levels in partner woredas Mile and South Ari in 2017 and 2019 according to a combination of asset and user survey data (observed as improving) (IRC Ethiopia). (Right): National sanitation service levels (JMP).

IRC ETHIOPIA AT A GLANCE

- 14** IRC staff
- 15** projects
- 8** donors
 - € 615k USAID
 - € 307k UNICEF
 - € 170k Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
 - € 254k Other
- Gross Domestic Product in PPP: \$ 2,103**
- Population of partner districts: 1.4m**
- Access to basic water in partner district: 31% Dera, 21% Farta, 27% Mile, 42% North Mecha, 20% South Ari**

Based on 2017 data for South Ari and Mile (USAID Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership baseline) and 2018 data for Dera, Farta and North Mecha (Millennium Water Alliance baseline assessment).

Context

In 2019, after significant changes in the political environment of Ethiopia, the support to WASH at a national level has grown significantly. The One WASH National Programme (OWNP), which brings together ministries, development partners, academia and CSOs, has approved its second phase budget and plan to a total of USD 6.55 billion for the next five years. This means that the national WASH budget has almost doubled.

IRC’s position was also strengthened in 2019 by moving from a liaison representative office to a fully operating NGO under the name of IRC WASH. IRC Ethiopia supported six districts in 2019: Mile, South Ari, Woliso town, Farta, Dera and North Mecha.

District level results

Political and financial commitment

In 2019, Farta, Dera, and North Mecha woredas finalised their master plans for achieving SDG 6 in their districts and mobilised most of the funds needed to implement planned activities in 2019. These strategic master plans help the districts by giving them direction and outlining measurable goals and day to day priorities towards achieving SDG 6.

The sustainability of these funds is challenging as a large percentage comes from NGOs and there is no proper disaggregation of district budgets across the various expenditure components.

While political shifts in the country have positively influenced Mile and South Ari districts as well, only South Ari has increased its budget for water. Both districts are in the process of finalising their SDG strategic plans.

Partnerships

Learning alliances established in South Ari and Mile in 2017 have formally adopted an SDG related vision and continue building their capacity and profile as platforms for WASH systems strengthening (supported by the USAID Sustainable WASH Services Learning Partnership). The learning alliances showed signs of maturity in that members started to be more active between meetings and to propose topics and set the agenda for meetings.

Dera, Farta and North Mecha districts have successfully completed the first implementation phase of their SDG action plans, a result of the partnerships with the Millennium Water Alliance and local government. A series of jointly developed position papers on the topics of long-term, district-wide WASH planning, water service-delivery models, government-led WASH monitoring systems, financing to achieve the SDGs and capacities across the WASH sector were published to share learnings with the sector. IRC plays a key role in supporting monitoring and documentation related activities.

District models and capacity

In South Ari and Mile, the Woreda Water Office engaged more with community level structures (WASHCOs) to better understand and support Operation and Maintenance (O&M). Six pilot villages completed an operation and maintenance overhaul, restoring the functionality of all non-functional schemes; revising tariff structures to increase revenue; and establishing a closer connection between WASHCOs and the Woreda Water Office. This work followed training led by IRC and initiated through the learning alliance.

Regional and national level results

Political and financial commitment and partnerships

Partnerships with government are improving at all levels - woreda, zonal, regional and national. They are also improving with other WASH actors in areas where IRC has an active presence: Oromia, Amhara, Afar and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) regions. The signing of cooperation agreements demonstrates political commitment towards strengthening WASH systems, and supporting but going beyond an infrastructure orientation.

Regional and national capacity and models

In 2019, several regional level learning alliance platforms and technical working groups were established and held learning meetings.

In the Somali region, stakeholders have taken ownership of their asset inventory and are now updating the asset data regularly. In Afar, installed sensors provide real-time data for the main regional monitoring system. Both monitoring systems are available online on user developed visualisation dashboards, but work to increase the capacity needs for using the monitoring system needs to continue.

Supported by the USAID Lowland WASH Activity, monitoring tools are now being transformed into fully automated asset management systems.

In addition, the Ethiopia One WASH National Program (OWNP) conducted its second national WASH inventory. The data collected from all the improved water systems across the country, including data from regional monitoring systems and asset inventory supported by IRC, was used for the national validation process.

In Amhara, Beni-Shanugul Gumu, SNNPR, Oromia, Gambella, Tigray, Somali regions and Dire-Dawa, learning alliances focused on sanitation. This was supported by USAID Transform WASH programme, which enabled IRC to facilitate 18 learning alliance meetings which included training, documentation and dissemination of study results.

With the many systems strengthening activities happening throughout the country, consolidation and synthesis at national level is starting to improve. At the national level, IRC has coordinated quarterly meetings of the Sanitation Marketing Multi-Stakeholders Partnership that serves as the secretariat to the Ministry of Health. This platform brings regional level discussions to the national level.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

IRC Ethiopia builds its systems strengthening work on strong multi-level partnerships with government, other WASH stakeholders and external donors. In 2019, IRC supported five partner woredas: two through the USAID Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership (South Ari and Mile) and three through the Millennium Water Alliance partnership (Dera, Farta, North Mecha). We also extended support to the Somali Region, the Afar regional Water Bureau, and worked in Addis Ababa on School WASH with Splash. There was a positive change in service levels in South Ari and Mile districts. Basic water services have increased from 13% to 19.7% in South-Ari and from 13% to 27.1% in Mile.

Our work in Ethiopia offered a diversity of experiences and contexts to develop, adapt and test our approach, and have impact. Still, we noted the challenge of working across a large number of geographies. In 2020, IRC will identify up to three woredas with which to continue partnering toward SDG 6 in 2030. We will also continue to support other areas through partnerships, networks, and consultancy projects.

Collaboration at the regional and national levels were effective in supporting learning and engaging Government in systems strengthening. Through learning exchange with the Ugandan Government, both Ethiopian and Uganda officials recognised challenges in finance and engaging the private sector in WASH. In collaboration with COWASH (Community-led Accelerated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and USAID Lowland WASH Activity, IRC organised a Water Supply Operations and Maintenance Policy dialogue for Government representatives from Uganda and Ethiopia and IRC staff in Addis Ababa. Participants included seven delegates from Uganda and 25 participants from the Ethiopian Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy, SNNPR, Afar, Somali and Amhara Water Bureaus and CSOs.

Output in focus: position papers by the Millennium Water Alliance in Ethiopia

As a member of the Millennium Water Alliance, IRC co-authored a series of jointly developed position papers on the topics of long-term, district-wide WASH planning, water service-delivery models, government-led WASH monitoring systems, financing to achieve the SDGs, and capacities across the WASH sector to share learnings with the sector. An article written by Laura Brunson (Millennium Water Alliance [MWA] Global Program Director) and John Butterworth (IRC, Head of Global Hub) with links to the different position papers is available.

4.4 Ghana

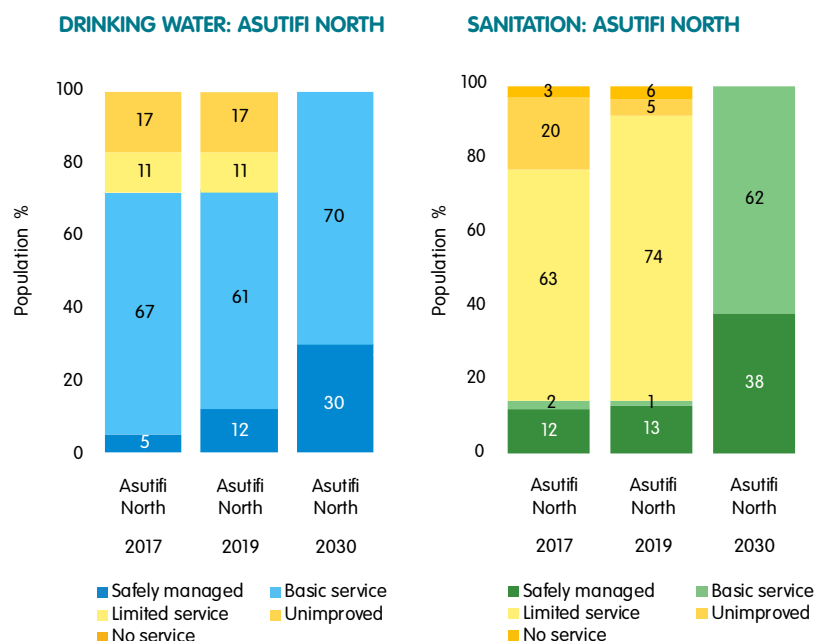


Figure 8: The water (left) and sanitation (right) service levels for Asutifi North District in 2017 (measured) 2019 (target) and the target for 2030.

IRC GHANA AT A GLANCE

11 staff, 1 hosted staff
17 projects
7 donors
 €400k Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS)
 €384k Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
 €135k Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
 €111k Other

Gross Domestic Product in PPP: \$ 5,194

Population of Asutifi North district: 66k*
**Projection for 2019*

Water coverage in Asutifi North district: 72%, with safely managed services growing from over 3k people in 2017 to over 7k people in 2019.

Sanitation coverage in partner district: 14%

Numbers based on service level monitoring conducted in 2019 supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and data collection for the REACH Empowerment in WASH Index project.

Partner district
Asutifi North

Context

The Government of Ghana launched its vision on Ghana beyond aid in April 2019 and has committed to enhancing its capacity to provide basic goods and services including water and sanitation for its citizens. A national programme for coordination and commitment to a water and sanitation for all agenda was developed to achieve this vision.

Even though Ghana's economy continued to expand in 2019, the World Bank estimates that maintaining growth and sustainability through the 2020 election cycle will be a challenge over the next two years.

IRC Ghana contributed to achieving the national WASH vision through: i) supporting strong national systems and Government leadership; ii) strengthening local government systems; and iii) leveraging partnerships for SDG 6.

District level results

Partnerships

In 2018, Asutifi North district, the District Assembly, local CSOs, NGOs, the private sector, traditional authorities and youth groups have committed to implementing a district WASH master plan to achieve universal WASH coverage by 2030. Twenty-nineteen was the first year that the plan was implemented under the name Asutifi North Ahonodie Mpontou (ANAM) Initiative.

The district partnership is a prime example of collective action. ANAM partners have invested USD 555,000 in water infrastructure development for water services to 23 communities in 2019 which represents 41% of the required capital expenditure.

IRC Ghana has continued playing the role of a change hub, with one full-time staff member (learning alliance facilitator and coordinator) and one junior documentation officer based in the district. Facilitating learning alliances, coordinating the organisations involved in implementing the master plan – Aquaya, CDC, NetCentric, Safe Water Network, World Vision – and supporting local government with capacities are amongst the key functions of IRC Ghana in the district. Together with NetCentric, IRC Ghana has supported network building activities in the district.

Political and financial commitment

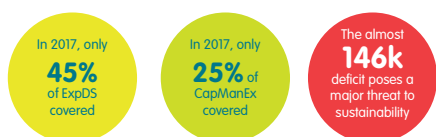
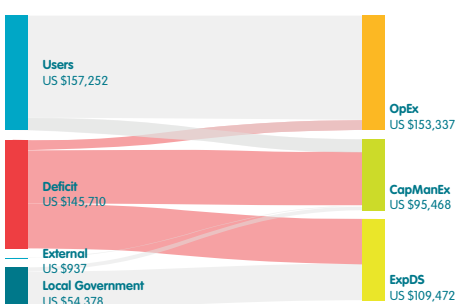
In 2019, political buy-in for the ANAM WASH initiative continued to be strong. District expenditure on WASH increased from USD 42,852 in 2017 to USD 86,184 in 2019 and political leaders are actively participating in district level project implementation activities, as well as advocating for replication and mobilising funds at national and global levels.

The partnership has put significant emphasis on identifying and filling the gap in finance needed to meet the targets in the master plan. A costing and financing study was done in 2019 to analyse the life-cycle costs of achieving the 2030 vision.

2017 recurrent costs

Where were the gaps?

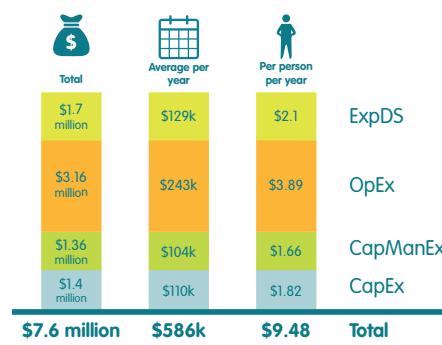
Required recurrent costs and the sources of funding.



Achieving the vision

What does it cost?

How the required costs break down across the four cost categories.



Creating the infrastructure

Who pays for what?

Total required CapEx for 2018-2030 and current commitments.

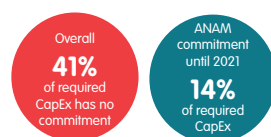
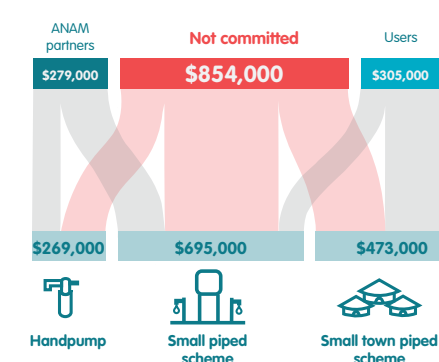


Figure 9: An overview of the costs and sources of finance for WASH services in Asutifi North, from the costing and finance study. The full infographic is available [here](#).

District capacity

Through the ANAM partnership, the District Assembly has increased its capacity to respond to WASH customer complaints and to respond proactively. In 2019, the Assembly established a WASH customer service desk and was able to resolve 61 of the 89 complaints from water users.

The District also strengthened its capacity and profile as a knowledge hub and leader for WASH. ANAM also established the [ANAM WASH website](#), which provides monthly updates to the interested public.

The partnership also hosts a monthly radio programme used for public education and discussions with communities.

The District Assembly has clearly acknowledged the capacity gaps that will need to be filled in order to achieve its vision. In 2019, IRC Ghana supported this with a capacity assessment, focused especially at the authority/regulator, service provider and user levels.

IRC supports capacity development by continuing to organise District Level Learning Alliance Platform meetings where local government, traditional authorities, NGOs and many more people come together to discuss WASH. Focus areas included empowerment in WASH in collaboration with the Stockholm Environment Institute and Queens University under the REACH, Empowerment in WASH Index project, or WASH in healthcare facilities supported by CDC.

District models

Partners working on collective action are introducing a variety of models. Aquaya is piloting a water kiosk, Safe Water Network is installing standpipes in urban areas while World Vision is working on rehabilitating hand pumps and drilling new boreholes where services were lacking.

Others are focused on service level monitoring, and an ANAM dashboard of service levels is shared and updated online. District enumerators were trained to carry out district-wide water and sanitation service monitoring. This is supportive of the monitoring, evaluation and learning framework developed by the district and partners for the master plan.

As there is still no strong focus on reaching sanitation SDG targets, in 2020 IRC Ghana will support the district to mobilise funds to address this.

National level results

Political and financial commitment and strong national capacity

In 2019, CONIWAS hosted the 30th annual Mole Conference where the Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR), Cecilia Abena Dapaah clearly stated the importance of WASH and WRM in her speech. CONIWAS bestowed a MOLE stewardship award on IRC for its outstanding role in research and development and for being a knowledge hub for Ghana's WASH sector.

The MSWR used her position to appeal for WASH prioritisation on the global stage. In 2019, IRC Ghana facilitated the participation of Honourable Cecilia Abena Dapaah at the All systems go! WASH Systems symposium in The Hague where she presented a keynote speech. The Minister also joined IRC for a SIWI Sofa interview on the role of political leadership for WASH delivery at the 2019 World Water Week in Stockholm. interview on the role of political leadership for WASH delivery at the 2019 World Water Week in Stockholm.

Government stakeholders (MSWR, Parliamentary Select Committee etc.) engaged with CSOs to discuss WASH and WRM. IRC organised a panel session at the All systems go! symposium and a side event related to work under the Watershed programme as a platform to connect CSOs with Government.

Partnerships

In 2019, the MSWR developed a Medium-Term Development Plan (2018-2021) and identified key partners within their SDG baseline report. The sector working group was revamped in 2019 with these development partners and regular meetings have been held with the Ministry to coordinate and implement programmes in the sector. However, with the rural water subsector experiencing increasing water utilisation, the roles and responsibilities going forward need to be clarified.

National models

The Sanitation Challenge for Ghana – initiated in 2015 – challenged Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to design and implement liquid waste management strategies to transform the livelihoods of urban centres. In July 2019, the award process was finalised with a ceremony in Accra. Nine MMDAs and six private sector partners were awarded prize purses of GBP 1,285,000 and GBP 225,000 respectively for excellence in implementing urban liquid waste management strategies and exploring strong inclusive partnerships to influence innovations, expertise and investments in the target localities, and for bringing transformational change to city-wide sanitation service delivery.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

IRC's overall ToC is being implemented and already shows signs of change in Ghana at the district and national levels. A round of service level data collection in 2019 already showed improvement in services: safely managed services in urban communities have doubled in 2017. IRC Ghana also continued working on empowering citizens through the Watershed programme. A mid-term review conducted in 2019 includes a key reflection on the importance of a clear definition and process for taking this work to scale.

One highlight of 2019 in getting the work at district level recognised at a global level was when IRC Ghana's Country Director was awarded the 2019 OFID (the OPEC Fund for International Development) Award for Development in July 2019. She received the award for her contribution to WASH in Ghana and the district-based initiative in Asutifi North.

Output in focus: Stories from Asutifi North district, Ghana

Documentation of the ANAM initiative in Ghana is ongoing. Two key outputs from 2019 are baseline stories of communities in Ghana which were published in [story booklet form and related videos](#), and another series of videos introduced in a [blog](#). These outputs provide a basis for capturing change stories as the master plan implementation continues.

4.5 Honduras

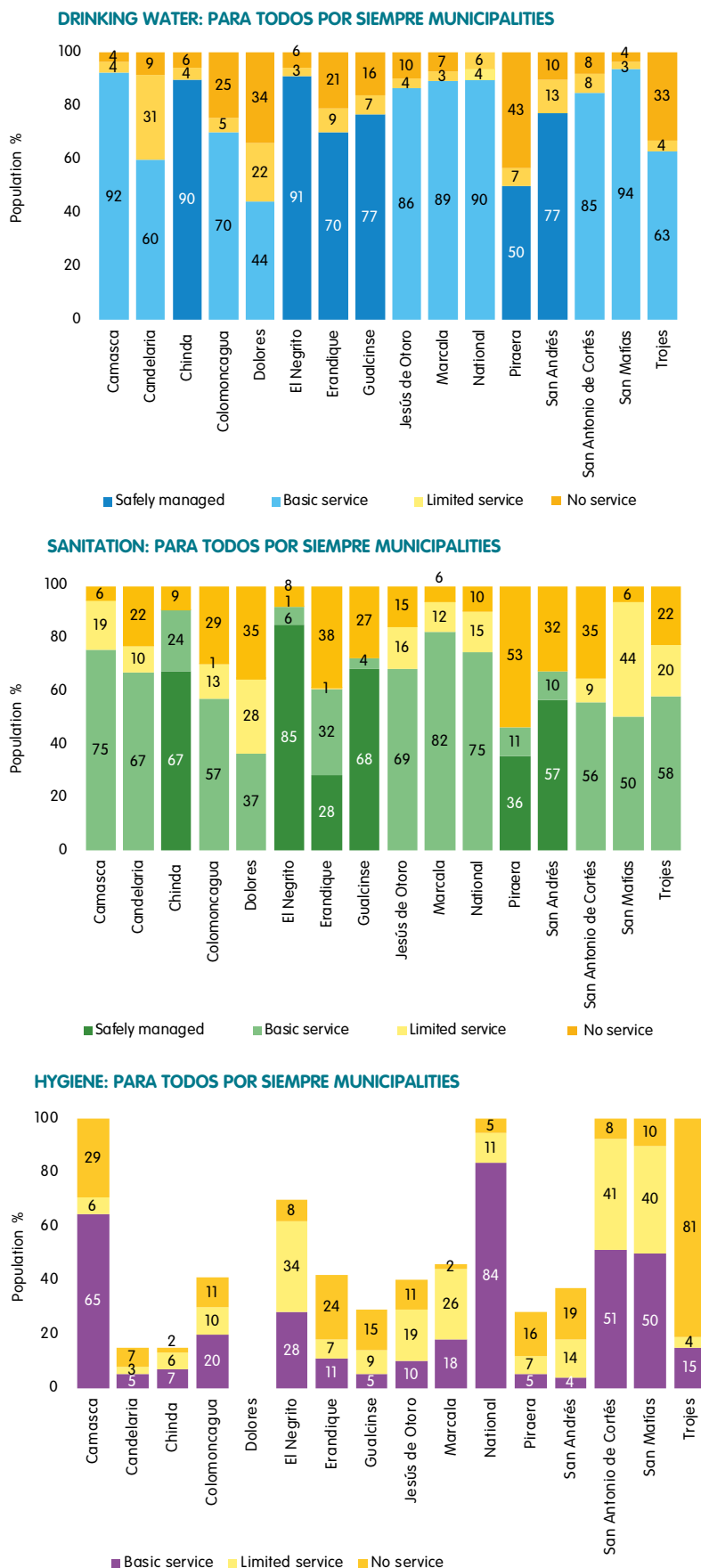
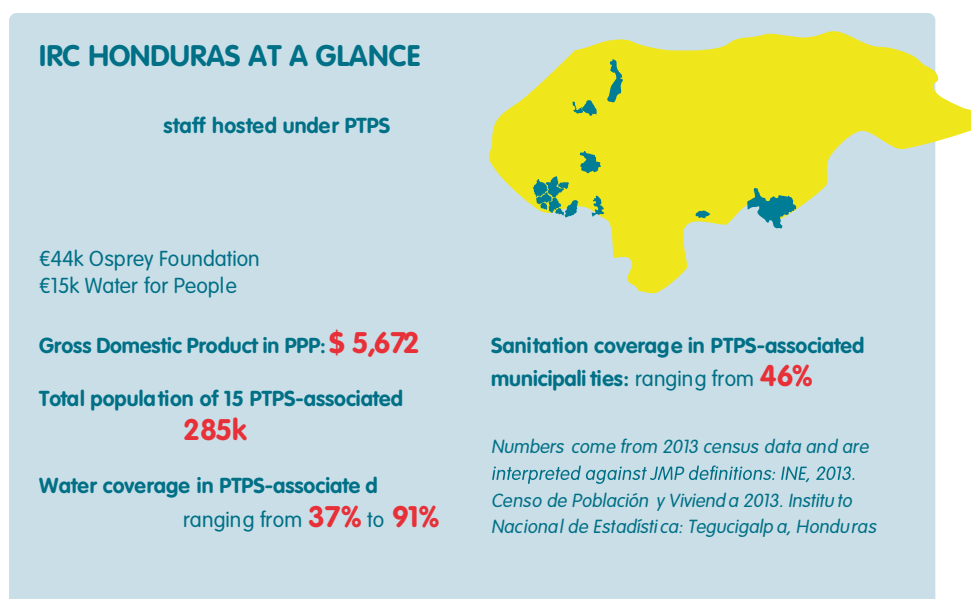


Figure 10: Service levels in the partner municipalities of Para Todos, Por Siempre as of 2019 .



Context

The main contextual change in Honduras was a rise in political attention to WASH issues. This was in part driven by activities undertaken by IRC through the Para Todos, Por Siempre (PTPS – Everyone, Forever) partnership (see below). It was also due to other factors. First and foremost, it was driven by the scarcity of water in the capital city, Tegucigalpa, and the transfer of that water supply system to the municipality. But, second, it was also the wider water resources situation in the country with drought in some departments. Third, a new general Water Law has drawn more attention to the sector. Finally, there were institutional changes in the sector that provide opportunity for stronger leadership for the sector.

Municipalities associated with PTPS

PTPS members have continued the process of supporting municipalities with their roadmap for WASH systems strengthening. In 2019, a longer-term progress review was undertaken and PTPS partners participated in a joint reflection on the past seven years. A report on this will be published in 2020.

One of the key reflections emerging from the annual and multi-annual monitoring is that many rural municipalities have insufficient economies of scale for a full institutional set-up that works effectively. Even the municipalities that put lots of consistent effort into systems strengthening have largely dysfunctional institutions. This has led to experimenting with a model of working through mancomunidades (associations of municipalities). These mancomunidades - typically bringing together around 10 municipalities - have more capacity to fulfil WASH related functions, and they avoid the duplication of effort in each and every small rural municipality. We see much potential in this model, and will give it more consideration in the years to come.

That the mancomunidades model has much potential emerged from the annual monitoring that is conducted across all PTPS municipalities. IRC leads on coordinating the monitoring which results in a report. It also contributes indirectly to the monitoring in three ways.

- Supporting PTPS members in associated municipalities with costing exercises to understand the costs and finances of services.
- Enabling monitoring and reflection meetings to be held in five of the associated municipalities. These meetings allow the municipalities to use the monitoring data to reflect on their progress towards an 'everyone, forever' status.
- Enabling capacity building activities such as training and workshops on specific aspects of the municipal roadmap process.

National level results

Political and financial commitment

Arguably most progress has been made in the past year in this outcome area. There is evidence of stronger institutional leadership by the Government in the field of WASH. A dedicated commission was established by the Government to address sector reform issues, a topic that was raised in a national reflection meeting hosted by PTPS. After the Government and PTPS identified the need to look critically at particular aspects of sector reform, the Government granted PTPS a dedicated seat on the commission.

A Mayors' Forum was held that brought together some 40 mayors, national Government representatives and members of the Association of Municipalities of Honduras. They issued a joint statement, urging the Government to give higher priority to WASH.

In 2019, after a long time of inactivity, CONASA (Water and Sanitation Council) became engaged again under new leadership of the Ministry of Health. This was the result of joint lobbying of sector entities and PTPS.

Partnerships

The PTPS partnership continued many of its recurrent activities in communication, networking, and internal capacity building. One particular challenge has been the financial situation of the secretariat of the partnership. But strong fund raising efforts are now making the outlook for the medium term funding of the partnership more positive.

Efforts were also put into engaging partners. Particularly relevant is engaging with the Association of Urban Water Service Providers. So far, PTPS has mainly focused on more rural municipalities. That said, some of these contain small and intermediate towns, with (nominal) urban providers. These are also an important advocacy ally.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

Overall, 2019 was a potential turning point in the WASH sector in Honduras. Prior to 2019, the sector seemed to be in a crisis, with ever reducing funding, less political attention and an inward-looking approach. The political advocacy activities of 2019 – particularly the reflection workshop, the Mayors' Forum and the establishment of a commission of reform – coupled with external factors, such as the water situation in Tegucigalpa and the broader work on WRM, have attracted more political attention to the WASH sector.

It is beyond doubt that PTPS played a key role in this. As a CONASA staff member said "the developments in the sector would certainly not have happened without PTPS." PTPS, by being a multi-stakeholder platform, has the legitimacy, and the convening power to lobby for WASH from within the sector and beyond. But to move forward, the sector needs evidence and well-thought through action plans. This is why we are putting much emphasis on documenting the lessons learnt with PTPS and on sector reform, and monitoring across the PTPS associated municipalities. The evidence gathered then needs to be fed into the institutional framework and will doubtlessly be accompanied by more lobby and advocacy. In parallel, there is also the need to innovate. The limits of the current system are clear, as evidenced for example by the low economies of scale at municipal level. Innovations that go beyond these limitations – such as the mancomunidad model – need to be further tried and tested.

4.6 India

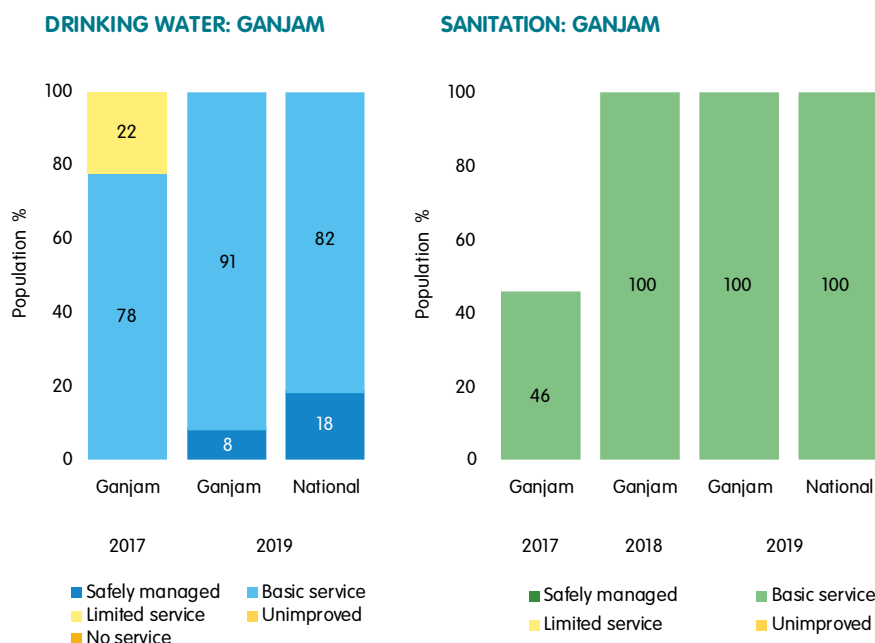
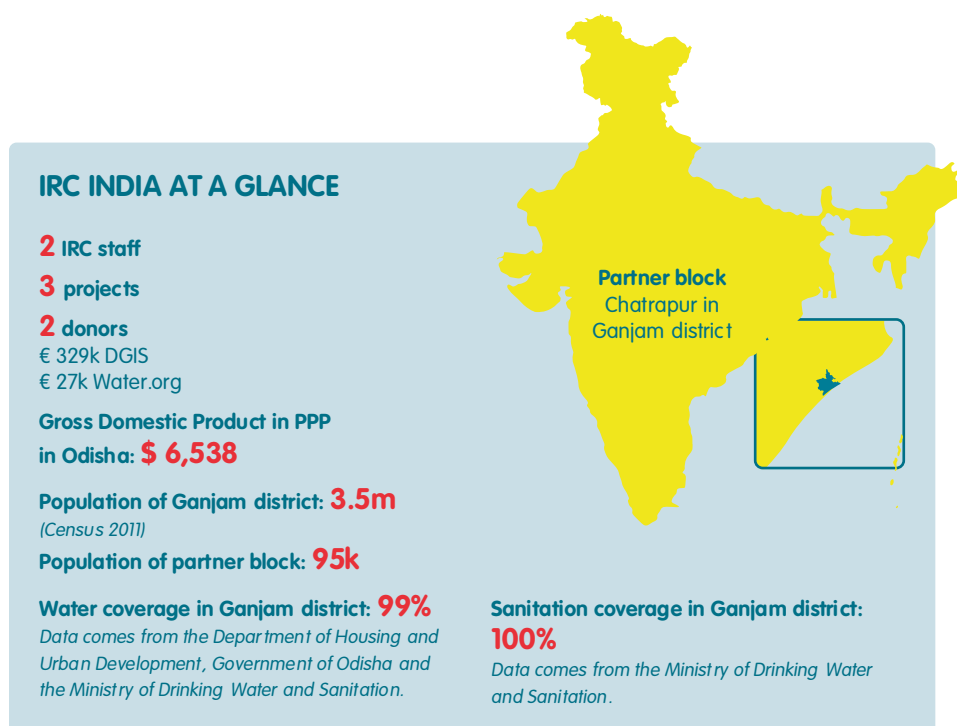


Figure 11: Service levels for Ganjam District and National for water (left) and sanitation (right). For more national data compiled by JMP see Annex 2.



Context

In 2019, the Government of India launched the Jal Jeevan Mission, a national programme to reach households with piped water supply. It also launched the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0, to move from large scale toilet construction to focusing efforts on reaching those households left out and on solid liquid waste management. Further, the 15th Finance Commission, in its draft recommendations, also emphasised the need for local governments to focus on water and sanitation services at the village and Gram Panchayat levels.

In 2019, the IRC India Country Programme aligned its efforts to support and share evidence and recommendations based on experiences from the Watershed programmes in the states of Bihar and Odisha with the 15th Finance Commission. The evidence and recommendations also informed the Jal Jeevan Mission guidelines submitted by IRC and its partners.

The programme focused on three selected WASH system building blocks: institutions, finance and planning (and inclusion). IRC focused on Ganjam district in Odisha (partner district) and more specifically Chatrapur, a small town where it supported a block-wide approach; and Samastipur in Bihar (Watershed). The IRC team in India also carried out some additional project work through IRC Consult which was relevant for IRC's learning and broader engagement in the sector. These projects are not further described in this programmatic report.

District and block level results

Political and financial commitment

Districts in India are committed to the state and national goals of reaching each household with water and sanitation services. There are dedicated programmes towards reaching this. IRC's work with Ganjam district highlights gaps and solutions around planning and finances for WASH.

The budget tracking work from national, state and gram panchayat levels has helped bring out issues on financial flows. The local self government leaders (sarpanchs) in various platforms have highlighted bottlenecks in the flow of funds in a timely and transparent manner.

Partnerships

The partnership with both local government and CSOs is strong. IRC and its partners have worked closely with the Gram Panchayat and have supported line departments. The collaboration with CSOs is founded on capacity building and a joint vision. IRC is working with Gram Vikas on service level data, and collaborating with the Aga Khan Development Network that has a strong local presence.

District capacity

IRC's work in the partner districts was specifically focused on budget-tracking and building the capacity of local governments and CSOs to do budget analysis as a means to strategically plan and improve WASH services.

The assessment of and discussion on the importance of capacity building for local authorities has led to a clear acknowledgment of the human resource gaps in providing water and sanitation services to all. District capacity for planning and budgeting processes remains limited but is improving.

District models

IRC's involvement at state and national levels, and its participation in global learning events and the collaboration with Sustainable Sanitation Alliance have continued to build the capacity of IRC staff and their readiness to carry out further work on service delivery models for water and, in particular, sanitation and solid waste management, when resources allow.

State and national level results

Political and financial commitment

There was an enormous political push towards toilet construction under the national flagship programme, Swachh Bharat Mission, and during 2019 the Mission reported India to be open-defaecation free. The Government has demonstrated commitment and resources, and the next phase of the programme is said to focus on sustaining the progress made and looking at addressing the remaining part of the sanitation chain and liquid waste management.

Moving ahead, the national Government is focusing on the new Jal Jeevan Mission, launched in 2019, to provide each household with a safe piped water supply. Certain states, including Odisha, have already committed to this goal in their previous election agendas and have committed considerable state budgets to water supply. Bihar has similar commitments but has used the untied funds from the centre to the gram panchayats for water supply and drainage.

Partnerships

Partnership is essential for achieving impact in such a large and complex sector. Watershed is a key partnership in India. IRC has worked closely with Wetlands International and Akvo for the Watershed consortium in India. Nidaan in Bihar and Gram Utthan in Odisha are the Watershed consortium's implementing partners in this programme. The IRC India team provided much support in organising the Annual Watershed Meeting in India in 2019.

The Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) is the technical partner for public finance work in the Watershed programme. In 2019, IRC also worked with WaterAid on capacity building for budget tracking, which led to a national level consultation and a policy brief for the 15th Finance Commission. IRC, CBGA and WaterAid jointly submitted recommendations for the national flagship programme on piped water schemes. A new partnership with UNICEF Odisha for technical assistance on urban water supply was formalised for 2020. During 2019, IRC collaborated with UNICEF Odisha on capacity assessment, documentation of best practices in school WASH, and other initiatives. UNICEF has also invited IRC to a series of key Government consultations to share experiences and input on the Odisha Rural Water Policy.

Capacity

The importance of building capacity in the sector has been recognised by the Government. An assessment was undertaken, in partnership with UNICEF, to understand the Government's initiatives in building staff capacity at different levels to ensure sustainable water and sanitation services.

The Watershed programme is focused on building capacities of CSOs on planning and budgeting for WASH at the local government level and on strengthening institutions through programme funding at state, district, block and gram panchayat levels. With current Government commitments and funding towards WASH, CSOs play a key role in ensuring that the benefits reach their respective communities and everyone in their communities. During 2019, IRC worked with CSOs to analyse local government budget allocations and spending on building the capacity of CSOs in financial analysis, helping them to work with relevant authorities and supporting their agenda.

Strong models

In 2019, there were no specific activities that contributed to this outcome at national or state level.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

IRC India was able to secure its place as a key stakeholder at the state level and support sector capacity assessment at all levels. This was achieved through new and stronger partnerships, and additional activities through IRC Consult. The focus of the India country programme was on the Watershed programme – building capacities of CSOs on planning and budgeting for WASH at the local government level and on strengthening institutions through programmatic funding at state, district, block and gram panchayat levels. The next steps are: a follow-up programme to Watershed; to use the limited resources planned for 2020 to respond to the capacity-related requests of partner organisations; and to capitalise on the technical assistance with UNICEF and the Department of Urban Development (Government Odisha).

4.7 Uganda

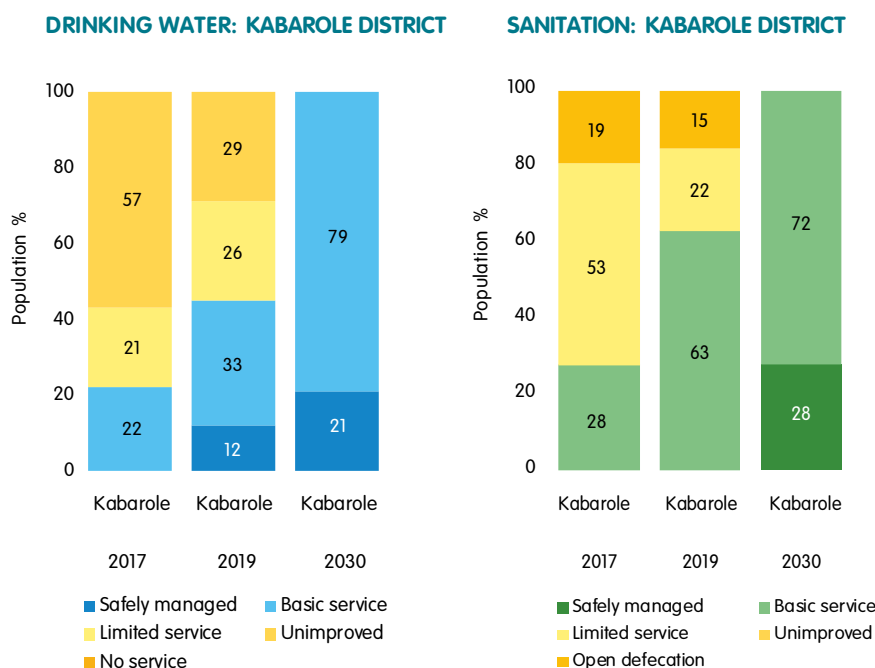
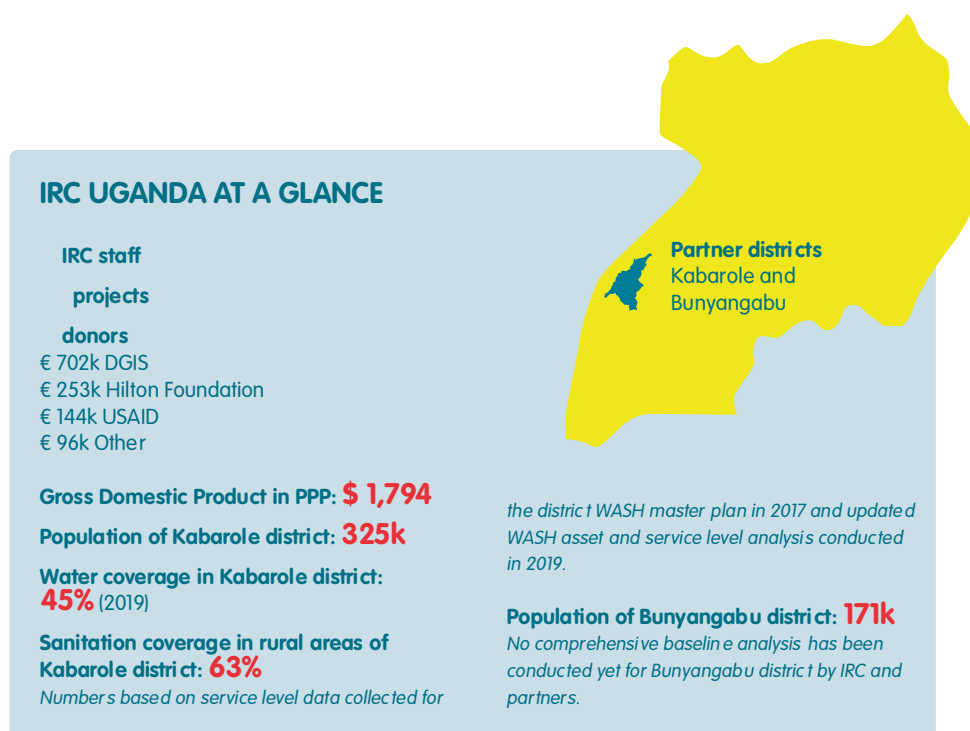


Figure 12: Drinking water and sanitation service levels as measured in 2017 and 2019, and targets for 2030 (IRC Uganda).



Context

IRC Uganda believes that achieving universal access to WASH by 2030 is central to Uganda’s attainment of its Vision 2040 for ‘A Transformed Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country within 30 years’. The Ugandan WASH sector remains progressive and proactive in driving positive change toward this vision. The sector has continued to encourage multi-level and multi-stakeholder learning and partnership through activities such as the Annual Joint Sector Review, Joint Technical Review and the Uganda Water and Environment Week, the latter which took place for the second time in 2019.

District level results

In 2019, IRC continued its strong partnership with Kabarole District in Western Uganda, where it has worked since 2008 and has had a permanent presence since 2014. IRC supported the launch and initial implementation of the Kabarole District WASH Masterplan for Universal Services by 2030, working closely with the District WASH Task Team. IRC Uganda also increasingly supported the District Local Government of Bunyangabu, a newer partner district formed in 2016 when it split from Kabarole District.

District political and financial commitments

In February 2019, the Kabarole District Local Government launched the Kabarole District WASH Masterplan for Universal Services by 2030, working closely with the District WASH Task Team (learning alliance). The Masterplan is a strong statement of political intent as well as a framework for planning, coordinating investments and guiding the implementation of the vision and it outlines policy objectives for water and sanitation delivery. The Masterplan articulates the long-term (2018-2030) WASH priorities of the District, reflecting national and international WASH priorities, as contained in Uganda's National Development Plan II and in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The implementation of the WASH masterplan is of key interest to the District authorities and it has contributed to forging a strong multi-stakeholder partnership. Still, the Masterplan revealed a significant finance gap for the necessary systems strengthening since most of the District's budget is reserved for capital expenditure.

The District WASH Task Team plans to break down the Masterplan into sections to implement these through fundraising grants and PPP. The Team also plans to help existing and new partners identify their contributions.

In 2019, IRC Uganda supported Bunyangabu District Local Government in establishing a District WASH Task Team (DWTT). The DWTT's terms of reference and workplan were approved by the District Council and Chief Administrative Officer, thus showing their recognition of the DWTT. The DWTT has so far made recommendations for sub-counties to support water source repairs and is promoting integration across water, health and community development departments for improved service delivery. Discussions on a roadmap for strengthening WASH services are ongoing. The WASH task team developed workplans for 2020 for the implementation of the WASH roadmap, strengthening the planning building block and raising awareness of aspects of the local system in need of strengthening.

District capacity

The Kabarole District Task Team has noted the gaps in capacity in the District and the learning alliance, and has made capacity building and systematic learning a key focus. Despite significant political commitment to WASH, District financial and human resource capacity remains limited in terms of budget and staffing. The District has asked for and continues to benefit from the support of IRC in facilitating the DWTT meetings and action-research activities. In 2019, IRC organised learning visits within and outside Kabarole for District technical and political leaders, WASH CSOs and hand pump mechanics to strengthen capacities for WASH systems change.

IRC has also been requested to support Bunyangabu District with WASH capacity. In 2019, IRC helped form a Bunyangabu DWTT and to facilitate its participation in key regional WASH events for learning and sharing purposes. The Bunyangabu DWTT influenced the Sub County Chiefs and Town Clerks to allocate a budget for the rehabilitation and repair of water sources.

District partnership

The District Partnership and leadership are strong and well-connected to regional and national levels. In particular, stakeholder awareness on catchment protection and the importance of catchment management have improved through collective campaigns. The Tooro Kingdom Cultural Institution has joined the WRM movement and has now participated in awareness raising and activities aimed at improving waste management practices.

The coalition of CSOs in the Albert Water Management Zone led by the Watershed partnerships comprising of IRC, Health through Water and Sanitation (HEWASA) and Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE) spearheaded advocacy for integrated water resource management in collaboration with Kabarole District Local Government, Tooro Kingdom and communities along the river Mpanga catchment. The plethora of actors involved in Kabarole presents a strong opportunity for collective action, but can also add to the complexity of maintaining a single, Government-led vision for the District. The partners were able to participate in the Rwenzoria Regional Water Week 2019, Save River Mpanga campaign and public dialogues.

District models

An updated asset inventory and survey in 2019 revealed that the majority of community management structures are inactive. There is growing interest among district stakeholders to improve on or replace this model and instead, emphasise strengthening tariff collection to raise funds for O&M, including preventative maintenance. This has been motivated in part by the joint data analysis with the learning alliance and a series of learning exchange visits with Whave (an area service provider that has improved handpump functionality through subscription-based preventative maintenance) in Kamuli District organised under the Sustainable WASH Systems learning partnership. Furthermore, the growing role of utilities — both municipal extensions by the National Water and Sewerage Corporation and the increasing number of schemes operated by the Midwestern Umbrella for Water and Sanitation — has motivated stakeholders to more closely consider the role of utilities in achieving universal services.

IRC supported the implementation of a Pay as you Fetch test model in collaboration with the Kabarole District Local Government. A new 'public public partnership' model to bring a piped water extension to the underserved rural sub county of Kabende was also tested. This model involved Kabarole District Local Government, The National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC), and IRC. A comprehensive assessment of WASH asset and service levels was completed in 2019, building on a 2017 assessment. In 2020, the report and the next steps for the use of data for district level asset management, will be followed up.

In 2019, IRC supported district partners in a WASH in Health Care Facilities (HCFs) assessment in Kabarole, which was followed by the provision of hand washing facilities and alcohol-based sanitisers in 40 health care facilities in Kabarole district.

National level results

At the national level, IRC is involved in coordination activities and collaboration with the line ministries of Water and Environment (MWE) and Health and Education. It is also involved in other partnerships and learning platforms that work towards achieving SDG 6. Its key national activities and outputs included: coordinating the WASH Agenda for Change hub; supporting the MWE to implement the sector performance-monitoring framework; supporting learning platforms for SDG 6; and strengthening the capacities of sector actors in WASH systems.

Political and financial commitments

The national sector priorities are clearly defined in the National Development Plan and Uganda's Vision 2040. The targets set are aligned with SDG 6 and call for the expansion of piped water to all by 2040. Despite funding gaps, investment and continued sectoral learning and reforms to improve water access are evident. In 2019 efforts were made to increase the sustainability of rural services through updating the rural Operation and Maintenance Framework and extending the role of utilities (NWSC and the regional Umbrella Utilities) in more small towns and rural areas. Through the national sanitation working group, the line Ministries of Water and Environment, Ministry of Health and the WASH CSOs have shared goals for sanitation improvements. However, there are still gaps in funding for the whole sector and the finance gap for sanitation is significantly less than for water.

National partnerships

Partnership development is a central part of IRC Uganda's change model at national level, and national partnerships for SDG 6 in Uganda are strong. IRC is also an active partner of the National Government and in sector working groups, and actively contributes to the development of the National Development Plan III. IRC is a member of the Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET) and is active in the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group. In 2019, IRC also convened events, supporting sector learning and carried out advocacy campaigns working through the WASH Agenda for Change partnership, Watershed partners, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Safe Water Partnership and the WASH Alliance.

National capacity

The national sector continues to strengthen capacity through structured learning and technical working groups. However, at times the capacity building is unable to keep up with the sector's ambitions. Capacity gaps in the sector remain a critical issue, particularly in newly created local governments, Umbrella Authorities and the Environment & Natural Resources (ENR) subsector. A series of national dialogues facilitated by the MWE over the past year have enabled an inclusive and consultative process to develop the new National O&M Framework. The dialogue series was supported financially and administratively by IRC. IRC and various CSOs invested in building broader sector capacity by organising learning visits and coordinating thematic working groups within the MWE's Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Division. Supported by IRC, several Ugandan stakeholders also had the opportunity to learn more about Menstrual Health Hygiene through participation in a national learning event in Kenya.

IRC contributes through participation, planning and financing of specific national activities and supports with documentation of major events such as the Uganda Water and Environment Week. In 2019, IRC supported the Ministry of Water and Environment to develop a proposal for TrackFin Phase 2. IRC also collaborated with the WHO and Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) to support the development of the draft Sanitation Policy Assessment Tool and the finalisation of the Sanitation Policy Case Study.

National systems

The building blocks for a strong WASH system are increasingly being well developed in Uganda and the national priorities are clear. The priorities guide national WASH planning and budgeting, though with limited donor consultation and budget allocations. Though the budget allocations are often insufficient, they are made for all WASH cost components.

Funding is a major gap at sector level and for individual institutions (especially for sanitation).

The annual Joint Sector Review and Sector Performance reports are key national learning and evaluation mechanisms. MWE's policy and planning department coordinates monitoring and evaluation activities and produces the quarterly and annual sector performance reports for planning and submission to the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Finance.

There are still gaps in the asset management system. In the national sanitation working group, the line ministries of Water and Environment, MOH and WASH CSOs have shared goals for sanitation improvements.

National models

In 2019, the MWE carried out a review and update of the rural water operation and maintenance framework. This included a critical analysis of the existing and prospective service delivery models in Uganda. At the same time, the Urban Directorate reviewed the regulatory framework for utilities and is supporting six new regional Umbrella Authorities that aim to improve the performance of small piped schemes. While all of these are promising, more sensitisation and communication of these policy changes will be necessary to ensure that all actors, particularly at decentralised level, have the capacity to implement them.

Research and learning on different models to improve service delivery are ongoing. IRC also documented and shared experiences from the Pay As You Fetch model testing in Kabarole. Through the national sanitation working group, the line ministries of Water and Environment, MOH and WASH CSOs have shared goals for sanitation improvements including specifications for how models are to achieve these.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

In 2019, the launch of the Kabarole District WASH Masterplan 2030 was a major milestone that demonstrated how strong partnerships can be used to develop innovative approaches to contribute to Uganda's National vision. The strong partnerships at national level enabled broader sharing and learning of the experience from Kabarole. Likewise, IRC's sector participation at national level was critical for bringing resources, experiences and capacity to district level.

In 2020, IRC Uganda will focus on strengthening the capacity of WASH stakeholders at national and district level to deliver on the policy ambitions, leveraging partnerships to improve IWRM/WASH service delivery and scaling up appropriate and innovative WASH service delivery through evidence generation and policy influencing. IRC Uganda will also continue to expand its support to the second focus district of Bunyangabu.

Output in focus: Evaluation of water, sanitation, hygiene and environmental conditions in 40 healthcare facilities in Kabarole District, Uganda: baseline report

A baseline of WASH in healthcare facilities in Kabarole district was compiled with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, IRC and the District Health Office. The assessment took place in 40 health centres, including all 30 public health centres and 10 private health centres, at the end of 2018. **The report** published in 2019, gives recommendations on what needs to be done to achieve full WASH coverage and waste management infrastructure in the district's healthcare facilities.

4.8 New Focus Countries

MALI AT A GLANCE

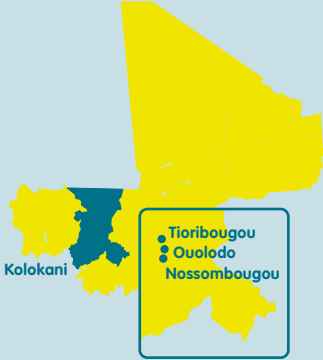
2 consultants, 2 projects,

2 donors

€282k DGIS and €121k Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. In addition, in December the Swedish Postcode Foundation allocated €250k to continue and expand the work on health care facilities in Mali and Niger.

Gross Domestic Product in PPP: \$ 2,317

WASH status in the districts*



	Nossombougou	Ouolodo	Tioribougou
Population	31k	16k	19k
No. of schools	28	9	9
School water coverage	64%	33%	56%
School sanitation coverage	57%	89%	78%
School hygiene coverage	4%	0	33%
No. of HCFs	4	3	3
HCF water coverage	25%	33%	67%

NIGER AT A GLANCE


2 consultants, 3 projects,

2 donors

€105k Conrad. N. Hilton Foundation and €10k UNICEF

Gross Domestic Product in PPP: \$ 1,063

WASH status in the districts*



	Makalondi	Torodi
Population	92k	138k
No. of schools	90	160
School water coverage	17%	16%
School sanitation coverage	10%	5%
School hygiene coverage	2%	5%
No. of HCFs	14	29
HCF water coverage	29%	45%
HCF sanitation coverage	36%	28%
HCF hygiene coverage	21%	24%

**All coverage data are showing institutions that have basic services. These estimates are based on a first diagnostic analysis in 2019.*

Context

IRC aims to spread its mission and find ways to scale up the (district) approaches and hub functions in those countries where our systems approach and way of working can add value. We have selected Mali and Niger to establish a longer-term presence. This is also in line with the priority of the Dutch Government. The Sahel constitutes a priority region for the Netherlands and IRC can contribute to strengthening partnerships with government organisations, civil society organisations and the business community.

Reflections on new focus countries

Twenty-nineteen was a year of exploring where to expand our systems approach, building on existing work carried out through different programmes. In the countries where we have worked through a series of projects for many years, we are exploring the demand and opportunities to establish a more permanent presence. Mali and Niger are selected as two new focus countries while we continue exploring possibilities in Benin and Bangladesh.

As both Mali and Niger have fragile contexts, we are looking at new ways to strengthen WASH systems in these countries. Our focus is on improving services in schools and healthcare facilities as an entry point for achieving SDG 6. IRC, in close collaboration with World Vision, supported two districts in Niger and three in Mali to develop baseline assessments and strategic plans for achieving SDG 6. In Mali, there will be an additional focus on the professionalisation of utilities. In 2020, these two country programmes will be expanded by doing baseline assessments on WASH systems to inform the development of country programme strategies.

Lower levels of effort will continue in Benin and Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, our MoU with the municipality of Bogura focuses on programme funding for sanitation businesses and waste to energy. We will also create synergies with the India country programme and link up with academic and research institutions like INE, the Water Centre of Excellence in Benin. Benin will also serve as a safe haven in an otherwise less stable area and provide the opportunity for synergy, regional exchange and learning with our country programme in Burkina Faso.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

One of the highlights of 2019 in Mali was the establishment of the Joint Union of Water and Sanitation agents. This is a municipal service dedicated to water, sanitation and hygiene. In Niger contracts and agreements were established with public drinking water delegations to ensure the management of public drinking water services.

IRC supported these achievements by: strengthening the organisational, technical and administrative capacity of the municipalities; supporting the development of the municipal Annual Work and Budget Plan; establishing a consultation framework with potential partners; and, enabling an inventory of schools and health centres to be made to monitor progress and set the basis for evidence-based monitoring.

Achievements in Benin and Bangladesh are in the realms of strengthening partnerships and supporting local authorities and partners through the Watershed programme.

While we have successfully started working on some of the building blocks – institutional development, planning, infrastructure with partners and monitoring – we have yet to assess whether this is the best approach for countries like Mali and Niger. With the decision to establish a more permanent presence in Mali and Niger comes the need to carry out baselines followed by developing a roadmap which can identify both the causes of fragility and the intersection of fragility and systems building blocks for reliable water and sanitation services. Mapping the fragility and how it links to each building block will highlight the issues that are well beyond the WASH sector and show the aspects that will remain weak for a long time. While fragility only increases complexity, efforts must be made to address the most difficult of contexts in order to achieve SDG 6 and ensure that no one is left behind.

4.9 International / Global Hub

Context

The IRC International Programme advocates at a global level for the systems strengthening approach and aims to increase sector financing and capacity to build the strong systems required to reach SDG 6. In late 2019, the International Programme was restructured into four teams and was renamed the 'Global Hub' to emphasise its role as the backbone and change facilitator – the Global Hub – at IRC and in global networks. The four teams are:

1. Adaptation and Accountability (formerly programme monitoring and learning)
2. Sector Communications and Knowledge Outreach
3. Sector Advocacy, Partnerships and Networks
4. Experts/Technical Assistance

As it was established in late 2019, the Global Hub worked closely with the Communication and Advocacy Department, seeking to extend IRC's influencing work to sector audiences and to increase our political and financing impact.

Partnerships

Partnerships remain a central part of IRC's Global Hub model for influencing and supporting uptake of systems approaches. The main partnerships in 2019 included: Agenda For Change; Sanitation and Water for All; Hilton Safe Water Strategy Partnership; Millennium Water Alliance; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands/DGIS; the Watershed Consortium; UNICEF; and, USAID through the Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership.

These partnerships all either explicitly or implicitly use systems approaches, and each offers opportunities to scale the IRC approach as well as to learn and adapt and improve that approach with partners. Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) continued to grow in number and influence and held a highly successful Ministers Meeting in Costa Rica in April 2019. The SWA reviewed and updated its strategic framework (publishing the Strategic Framework 2020-2030 in early 2020). IRC and IRC associates support SWA in numerous areas, including holding the position of Chair of the SWA Steering Committee (Patrick Moriarty) and being a member of the research and learning constituency.

IRC remained an influential voice in international fora on increasing WASH financing, and co-authored a paper with water.org and the World Bank entitled '**Mobilising finance for WASH: Getting the Foundations right.**' The Chair of SWA, Kevin Rudd, publicly referenced this document in Costa Rica in April 2019 and SWA has continued to promote the paper as a guide for finance ministers ahead of the SWA/World Bank finance ministers online meeting in April 2020.

The Agenda for Change membership welcomed new members in 2019 and recruited a full-time coordinator and another person for a strategic communications and knowledge management support role. IRC hosts Agenda for Change's Secretariat and has championed country (e.g. in Rwanda and Honduras) and global influencing activities, as well as established a Technical Assistance Facility with other members. Key learning on applying a systems approach are shared with the WASH sector and beyond through Agenda for Change.

IRC is an active member of the Millennium Water Alliance (MWA), and has strengthened the partnership through joint implementation of the MWA programme in Ethiopia, funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. In doing so, it used the district macroplanning and learning alliance approach to WASH systems strengthening.

The Netherlands WASH sector remains dynamic and shows commitment to a systems approach to achieving the SDGs, emphasising the importance of water resource management and governance. The Directorate on Inclusive Green Growth at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been using the WASH strategy 2016-2030, which was developed by IRC and the Netherlands Watershed Work Package. The WASH Debates in the Netherlands were well attended; the 2019 debates focused on the **role of civil society in achieving SDG 6** and on **sustainable WASH services delivery and water resources management in fragile states**. Following participation in the Symposium and a review of IRC systems reference documents, the Woord en Daad Sustainable Water programme lead recognised that their updated five-year strategy was influenced by IRC's systems approach and methodology.

Global capacity for systems strengthening

The uptake of the systems approach at global level is evident, and there is demonstrated demand for more learning and capacity building on systems strengthening approaches from actors at different levels. In 2019, the All systems go! symposium in March 2019 and the WASH Systems Academy online learning models both exceeded initial targets in terms of participation and positive responses from partners, clients and participants, evidencing demand for follow-up events and learning opportunities. These also offered an opportunity to synthesise and showcase knowledge and learning from IRC focus countries. Up to 14 April 2020, IRC's March 2018 publication Building blocks for strong and healthy WASH systems had been downloaded from IRC's website by 2,112 unique users.

During the All systems go! symposium on 12-14 March 2019, key leaders, including political leaders, in the WASH sector (e.g. SWA – Catarina de Albuquerque, Hilton – Peter Laugharn, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands DGIS - Dutch Human Rights Ambassador, Marriët Schuurman, Ministry for Sanitation and Water Resources Ghana - Cecilia Dapaah) expressed commitment to systems strengthening and recognised IRC as a systems leader. The event and the platform gave them an opportunity to express their commitment and their interest in working with IRC. On 12 June 2019, key WASH sector funders (Osprey Foundation, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation) declared themselves as WASH systems funders in an article in 'Inside Philanthropy'.

The All systems go! **Background note** and **Symposium Proceedings** offer significant contributions to the body of knowledge on WASH systems strengthening. The proceedings were published in two parts: Part 1 includes the 30 peer-reviewed papers authored for the symposium; and Part 2 summarises the over 52 sessions, the general programme and each of the event's five major themes — sanitation and hygiene, safe water, finance, fragile states and measurement and learning.

Strengthening the role of civil society worldwide

Through the Watershed programme, IRC, with Simavi, played a key coordination role in the design and implementation of a global study on national accountability mechanisms for SDG 6 in 26 countries. IRC worked closely with FANSA (Fresh Water Action Network South Asia) to conduct the study and provide support in eight countries. As a consortium, Watershed developed substantive supportive materials such as: policy briefs in three languages on national accountability for SDG 6; an animation; blogs and web articles; a newspaper; interviews; and other communication activities. The objective was to strengthen the capacity of CSOs around the world and to learn more about gaps in accountability mechanisms and best practices and use that learning to inform advocacy strategies and raise awareness among governments at the same time. Networks of global (End Water Poverty) and regional (ANEW, Coalition Eau and FANSA) CSOs and their partners, for the first time developed and implemented a joint advocacy and influencing strategy that was strongly underpinned by evidence on the effectiveness of the national accountability mechanism from the study. They jointly targeted global policy influencing platforms such as the 8th World Water Forum (Rio de Janeiro, March 2018), the UN High Level Political Forum (July 2018, New York), the South Asia Conference on Sanitation (January 2019), the 7th Africa Water Week (Dakar, November 2018), the SWA Sector Ministers meeting (April 2019) and the Stockholm World Water Week (August 2019).

Systems strengthening in IRC focus countries and around the world

The Global Hub works with all IRC country programmes and IRC Consult in delivering activities. During 2019, Global Hub staff worked in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Ethiopia, India, Honduras, Mali, Niger, Benin, Bangladesh, Guinea, Georgia, Kenya, Netherlands, Indonesia, Rwanda, USA, Mozambique and Brazil.

Part of the mission of the Global Hub is to support work in IRC focus countries and to document and synthesise experiences from the focus countries to share with the wider sector. This is primarily done through global events, communications, collaborative projects, research and synthesising working papers such as '**How to use learning alliances to achieve systems change at scale**', published in March 2019. Still, the flow of information between country programmes and the Global Hub could be stronger. One of the objectives of restructuring the International Programme and establishing the Accountability and Adaptation Team was to prioritise the strengthening of support to IRC countries in 2020.

Reflections on 2019 achievements

In 2019, IRC was an influential actor globally. It built on the strengths of our country programmes, partnerships and networks to effectively push the message that only systems can deliver sustainable and effective WASH services. Behind this message, our tools and 'how to' knowledge continued to be used to support our countries, partners and clients in the application of a systems approach. Nevertheless, financing in our focus countries and globally remains far from adequate and we increasingly see the need to speak effectively to audiences beyond the sector to mobilise that finance. There are too few success stories of services reaching everyone for good, and mechanisms to scale systems for a wide impact require many more years of effort. Our efforts focus on generating successful examples in our focus districts and influencing policies and practice at national level to scale impacts. Our scaling model needs to be strengthened and work started in 2019 to initiate a scaling facility to build on progress in planning at district level to leverage the resources required for implementation.

Output in focus: Working Paper: 'How to use learning alliances to achieve systems change at scale'

The first working paper in the IRC WASH systems series, 'Understanding the WASH system and its building blocks', was published in 2018. The second paper in the series, 'How to use learning alliances to achieve systems change at scale' by Bertha Darteh, Patrick Moriarty and Angela Huston was published in 2019. It sets out the thinking behind IRC's use of learning alliances, offers practical guidance on how to adopt the approach and build a change hub to support it, and discusses examples from Ghana and Uganda.

Output in focus: Mobilising finance for WASH: getting the foundations right

In cooperation with Water.org (L. Pories) and the World Bank (V. Delmon), IRC (Catarina Fonseca) wrote and published a paper about the 10 foundational issues required for the enabling environment to attract finance while leaving no-one behind. The paper unpacks what is meant by the enabling environment for finance in WASH and presents real examples of how these bottlenecks are being overcome by innovators in the sector. The paper inspired the SWA High Level Political Dialogue Group to develop and use a handbook on sector finance for the SWA High Level Finance Ministers meeting in 2020.

5. Inputs

5.1 Staff and offices

During 2019, the total number of staff employed by IRC increased from 75 to 84. Most of the staff are based in the countries where IRC works. This is critical to delivering the organisational mission of strengthening local and national country processes and systems.

By the end of 2019, 47 staff were working in our country offices: 14 in Ethiopia; 11 in Ghana; nine in Burkina Faso; nine in Uganda; two in India; one in Bangladesh; and one in Honduras. The Netherlands office had 36 staff and one colleague based in the United States.

In 2019, IRC also hosted the Agenda for Change Secretariat (two staff), the PTPS Coordinator in Honduras and the Resource Centre Network coordinator in Ghana.

The global associate programme counted more than 20 associate members, giving IRC access to a wide network of top international experts.

IRC also offered six internship positions to people who gained valuable international and multidisciplinary experience.

5.2 Organisational development

IRC's aim is to be a unified, decentralised organisation by 2021 with up to 10 country offices, district programmes, strong brand values and motivated staff working efficiently and professionally to deliver measurable results. To be successful, the enabling work environment and operating practices for dealing with financial and human resources must be fit-for-purpose and directly supportive of IRC's mission and decentralised organisational structure.

Significant measures have been taken in recent years in line with IRC's Business Model. They have included a staff reduction in the Netherlands; solidifying the organisational structure and governance; and the adoption of a Collective Labour Agreement (CAO) in 2017. At the end of 2019, the Employment Conditions for staff working in the Netherlands were revised and replaced by an Arbeidsvoorwaarden Regeling 2020-2022 (AVR, labour conditions). The AVR includes an annual salary increment of 2.5%.

During 2019, a Working from Home Policy and a Working Remotely Policy were agreed with the Works Council. The Working Remotely Policy is specifically written for staff working structurally outside the Netherlands, in for instance Poland, Switzerland or the UK. The Travel Costs Declaration Policy has been revised to include country-specific protocols. During the final months of the year, a refresher training on staff appraisals was organised for Line Managers.

IRC has introduced a Whistleblowing Policy. This entails a report being produced within the first three months of each year for the CEO based on any disclosures made in the previous calendar year. The report advises on the disclosure, relevant decisions and outcomes. This policy and the reports arising from it operate in conjunction with IRC's employment contracts which include a code of conduct addressing inappropriate behaviour both within and beyond working hours/locales. Further, as of the 2019 Annual Report, all annual reports will include a paragraph on the integrity policy and information on whether any cases have been reported. No cases were reported over the past several years, and this was also the case in 2019.

In 2020, IRC's policies will be overhauled and consolidated into a comprehensive suite of policies in line with Partos guidance.

An organisational capacity scan was conducted prior to the light Mid Term Review. The scan focused on the fit-for-purpose of existing support systems and procedures, resulting in recommendations to improve project management capacity and invest in '2020 solutions' for the financial and project management systems. It also pointed out that the CRM needs urgent improvement.

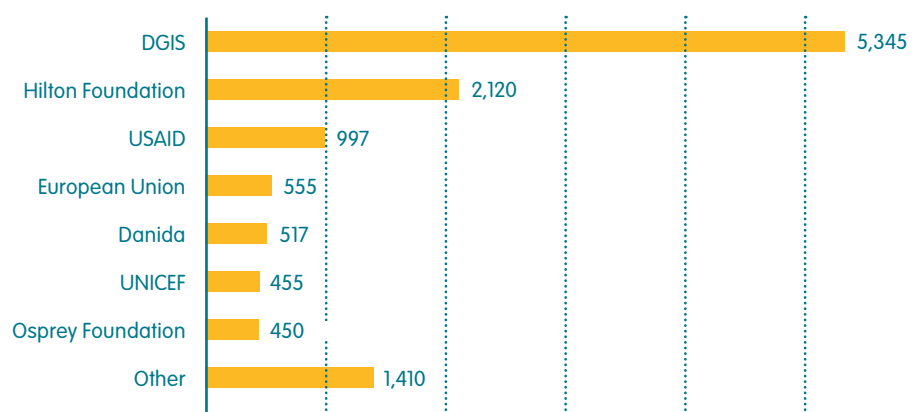
IRC's decentralisation, including district programmes, will have to be supported by systems that facilitate efficient and safe data sharing. To bring this about, IRC implemented Microsoft Office 365 Teams in 2019. The migration to Teams was completed in all country offices, immediately proving its value during the Covid-19 pandemic with all staff working from home.

5.3 Partners and funders

IRC's total gross revenue in 2019 was EUR 11.85 million, in line with the Annual Plan and some EUR 0.75 million higher than 2018. DGIS remained IRC's main donor, contributing 45% (down from 47% in 2018) of the total income. The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation was next at 18%. The portfolio projects funded by USAID, the European Union and UNICEF were also significant (8%, 5% and 4% respectively), but as none permits the use of full cost tariffs, they pose a challenge to IRC in terms of its indirect cost recovery strategy. In all, 27 donors financed the 89 operational projects in 2019.

Most donor funding is governmental, but the share from philanthropic foundations grew from 18% in 2017 to approximately 30% in 2018 and 2019.

OUR DONORS (AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS OF EUROS)



During 2019, IRC acquired EUR 12.2 million of new project work. These new acquisitions have meant that IRC has now secured 87% of its target budget of EUR 58 million for the Strategic Plan period 2017-2021. A highlight in business development during 2019 was the awarding of EUR 6.5 million by DGIS until 2024 to top up the programmatic funding for Building WASH Systems to Deliver the SDGs. Another remarkable acquisition was the EUR 2.5 million from the European Union to support the WASH Ministry in Burkina Faso.

The following donors and clients have joined and supported IRC in 2019:

African Development Bank / Akvo / Aquaya Institute / Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation / BRAC / Community Water & Sanitation Agency / Conrad N. Hilton Foundation / Conservation International / COWI / Cranfield University / Danish International Development Agency / Department for International Development / Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) / Eau Vive / Eawag Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology / European Union / European Commission / Finnish International Development Agency / Global Water 2020 / IMC Worldwide / KfW Development Bank / LVIA Solidarity and International Cooperation / MACS Energy & Water / Millennium Water Alliance / Natural Environment Research Council / Netcentric Campaigns / Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) / Netherlands Water Partnership / New Venture Fund / NIRAS Indvelop / Office National de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement / OneDrop Foundation / Osprey Foundation / Oxford Committee for Famine Relief / Oxford Policy Management / Oxford University / People in Need / Population Services International / Ramboll / Simavi / SNV / Speak Up Africa / Splash / Stockholm Environment Institute / Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency / Swedish Postcode Foundation / TetraTech / United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund / United Nations Office for Project Services / United States Agency for International Development / University of Colorado Boulder / University of Reading / University of Wageningen / Water for People / FHWater.org / Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council / Welthungerhilfe / Woord & Daad / World Bank / World Health Organisation / World Vision

5.4 Expenditure and financial balance

To achieve its mission and ambitions, as well as maintain organisational flexibility, IRC works with partner organisations, associates and consultants. Of its total gross revenue in 2019, 24% went to partner organisations and 10% to associates or consultants. An additional 23% was spent on other project costs including: travel, meeting venues and equipment. In total, almost 58% of the gross revenue of EUR 11.85 million went to third parties.

IRC closed the year with a positive Annual Result of EUR 97,471 – the fifth consecutive year with a positive Annual Result. Even though this Annual Result was some EUR 40,000 lower than planned, it is, nevertheless, encouraging considering the EUR 70,000 investment in temporary capacity in Finance & Control and an overspend of EUR 47,000 on the All systems go! symposium in March. Half of the Annual Result has been allocated to the general reserves, the other half to the earmarked reserves. The latter is earmarked for unemployment and exchange rate risks, investments in ICT and financial systems, as well as office overheads.

In 2019, EUR 37,485 was taken from the earmarked reserves for the migration to the Microsoft 365 Teams platform, as well as some additional unemployment benefits and a negative exchange change result. IRC's total reserves on 31 December 2019 was EUR 1,273,032 – including EUR 121,569 in earmarked reserves.

Business unit/programme	Ambition 2019	Budget 2019	Expenses 2019	DGIS Programme (% of expenses)
Burkina Faso	EUR 1,250,000	EUR 1,621,648	EUR 1,590,948	EUR 50,473 (3%)
Ethiopia	EUR 1,250,000	EUR 1,730,015	EUR 1,345,967	EUR 71,857 (5%)
Ghana	EUR 1,250,000	EUR 1,244,630	EUR 1,029,109	EUR 74,092 (7%)
Uganda	EUR 1,250,000	EUR 1,270,584	EUR 1,194,793	EUR 59,976 (5%)
Total country programmes	EUR 5,000,000	EUR 5,866,877	EUR 5,160,818	EUR 256,398 (5%)
Bangladesh	EUR 350,000	EUR 422,449	EUR 440,842	EUR 14,995 (3%)
Benin	-	EUR 7,175	EUR 10,236	-
Honduras	EUR 250,000	EUR 128,625	EUR 129,706	EUR 70,593 (54%)
India	EUR 500,000	EUR 352,491	EUR 355,867	EUR 60,907 (17%)
Mali	EUR 350,000	EUR 378,023	EUR 403,106	-
Niger	EUR 250,000	EUR 110,327	EUR 114,876	-
New focus countries mgmt.	EUR 50,000	EUR 76,875	EUR 77,844	EUR 77,844 (100%)
Total new focus countries	EUR 1,750,000	EUR 1,475,966	EUR 1,532,476	EUR 224,340 (15%)
Global Hub (International)	EUR 3,250,000	EUR 3,418,279	EUR 3,429,999	EUR 639,212 (19%)
IRCConsult	EUR 750,000	EUR 266,206	EUR 577,350	EUR 36,446 (6%)
IRC US	EUR 250,000	EUR 287,438	EUR 293,098	EUR 25,058 (9%)
Management & Support (HQ)	EUR 500,000	EUR 740,895	EUR 855,864	EUR 292,189 (34%)
Total Netherlands cluster	EUR 4,750,000	EUR 4,712,818	EUR 5,156,311	EUR 992,905 (19%)
Total IRC	EUR 11,500,000	EUR 12,055,661	EUR 11,849,604	EUR 1,473,643 (12%)

Total targets, budget and expenditure per programme and the contribution of DGIS Programmatic funding.

6. Conclusions

In 2017, IRC embarked on a bold new strategy that explicitly linked and held us accountable to a meaningful contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the heart of this strategy was a ToC that saw the District as a key locus for action; one where all the disparate parts of the WASH system come together. The ToC also clarified our role as a Change Hub that supports government led networks and partnerships to effective collective action.

Three years into that strategy, we feel confident in the proof of concept achieved so far. Intense partnership with our partner Districts has stimulated political leadership; has led to greater investment in WASH; and has led to improvements in the services provided to at least some of the 2.2 million inhabitants. Our Watershed initiative is demonstrating the power of grassroots voices to hold service providers and authorities to account.

What is more, the partnerships that we are supporting as a change hub are taking district level learning, applying it elsewhere and using it to drive positive policy change at national and global level.

The success of headline initiatives and events like the All systems go! symposium, the WASH Systems Academy, and many others demonstrate the growing traction in applying a systems approach in WASH. We are confident in the growing voice and competence of the core partnerships to which we are committed. Especially Agenda for Change and Sanitation and Water for All.

This is not to say that everything is perfect. Challenges abound, as they are bound to. While making strong progress on water, sanitation lags behind. Lack of political leadership and vision, instability and resistance to change all pose challenges. After three years of heavy investment in partner districts, it is essential that we find cost-effective means to scale the successes demonstrated. Even through partnerships like Agenda for Change, it is simply unrealistic to expect that every District in the world can be resourced in the way our Partner Districts have been.

Looking forward to 2020, we will take the lessons learned during 2019 into account as we prepare a new five-year planning framework. This will continue to be based on the District partnerships that form the basis of our approach. We are learning about different pathways to scale, and need to test, prove and help deliver them. Working out how to share lessons learned even more effectively and, above all, how to generate the political drive necessary to see these (and other) lessons taken up, funded and applied.

7. Annexes

Annex 1: IRC Theory of Change Diagramme (PDF)

Annex 2: Programme Scoring and time series data 2017-2019 (PDF)

Scoring methodology

For the scoring of the (intermediate) outcomes, generic qualitative information system (QIS) ladders have been drafted. For each Pathway of Change (PoCs), ladder are developed for each sub-indicator. The colour and score is determined by a participatory assessment of the programme stakeholders of the QIS indicator. Crucial are the narratives for each ladder that provide the explanation (which sub-sector, which actors, sub-systems) and justification of the score. The first scoring is done immediately after the programme Theory of Change is defined and this will be the baseline score.

As example, a more detailed diagram (figure 1) of the theory of change is displayed for the district level, showing the four Pathways of Change, one for each "hub-function" intermediate outcome. These PoCs together contribute to the intermediate outcome of "strong WASH building-blocks" and consequently to the overall outcome of "SDG 6 in focus districts". Figure 2 shows for the PoC "Political leadership in districts is political and financial committed", the three sub-indicators with QIS ladders that are used for the scoring. For each of the Pathway of Changes, similar QIS ladders are developed for both the national/sector and the focus district levels. The scores are summarised in the focus country tables "a" and "b" in section 2 of this annex.

The intermediate outcome "strong WASH building blocks" is measured in a slightly different way. For each building block four to six statements have been formulated, which sector stakeholders will score in a participatory way with a short narrative and where possible and relevant providing the source of information (see figure 3). The average of the scores of the statements will provide a scoring for the individual building block. Figure 4 provides an example of the overview of these averages that can be produced for the WASH system in a country. In the example of figure 4, only scores have been provided for the water and sanitation sub-sectors. The scores are summarised in the focus country tables "c" in section 2 of this annex.

Example of QIS ladders Pathway of Change "Political leadership in districts is political and financial committed"

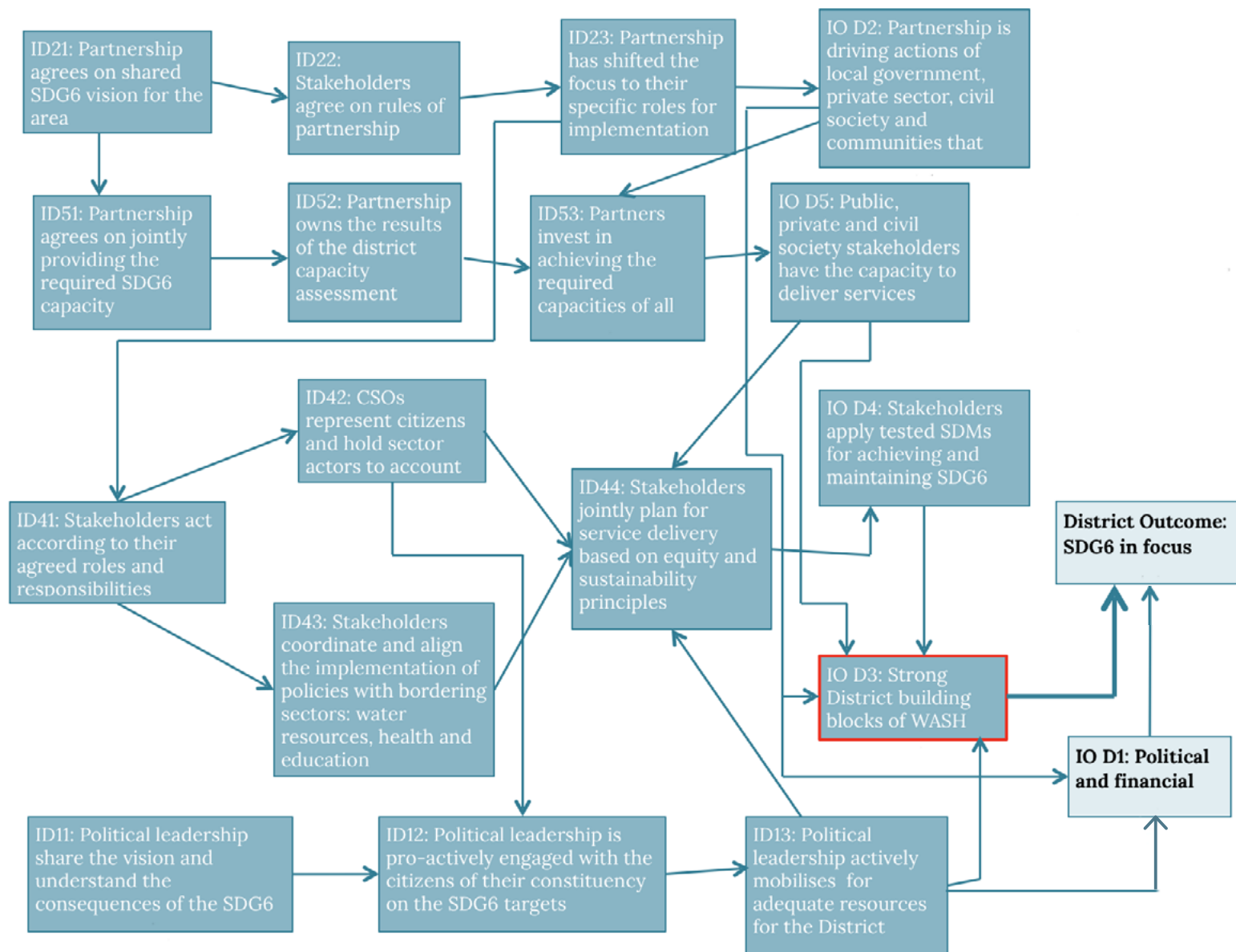
ID11: District political leadership share the vision and understand the consequences of the SDG 6 targets for their district

ID12: District political leadership is pro-actively engaged with the citizens of their constituency on the SDG 6 targets for their district

ID13: District political leadership actively mobilises for adequate resourcing for the District SDG 6

Score %	Mini-scenarios	Score %	Mini-scenarios	Score %	Mini-scenarios
100	District political leadership share and own the vision and understand the consequences of the SDG 6 targets for their district	100	District political leadership is pro-actively engaged with the citizens of their constituency on the SDG 6 targets for their district	100	District political leadership actively mobilises for adequate resourcing for the District SDG 6s
67	Some district political leadership share and own the vision for achieving SDG 6 by 2030 in their district	75	All political leadership engages with the citizens of their constituency on the SDG 6 targets	75	All political leadership commits resources with reference to a SDG 6 master plan
33	District political leadership are aware of the need for a shared vision and understanding what is needed to achieve the SDG 6 targets for their district	50	Some district political leadership engages with the citizens of their constituency on the SDG 6 targets	50	Some district political leadership commits resources with reference to a SDG 6 master plan
0	District political leadership feel no need for a vision for reaching the SDG 6 targets by 2030	25	District political leadership are aware of the need to engage with the citizens of their constituency on the SDG 6 targets	25	District political leadership are aware of the need to commit resources with reference to a SDG 6 master plan
		0	District political leadership sees no need to engage with the citizens of their constituency on the SDG 6 targets	0	District political leadership do not see the need to commit resources with reference to a SDG 6 master plan

District Pathway of Change



Example of scoring the Institutional building block

Institutional											
Country	Sector	Level	Responsibilities of the national and decentralized level bodies are clearly defined, and there are no gaps or overlaps between them.	Reference or source of evidence	Staffing requirements at the national level are clearly defined and the positions at national level institutions are filled.	Reference or source of evidence	The responsibilities and institutional set-up for service authorities for the different SDMs are clearly defined and understood.	Reference or source of evidence	The staffing requirements at service authority level are clearly defined, e.g. in terms of no. FTE, or specific job profiles.	Reference or source of evidence	Score
	Water	Sector	0		1		0		1		2
Narratives											

Example overview of scoring strength WASH building blocks

Country:					District:					
	Institutional	Legislation	Finance	Planning	Infrastructure Development	Infrastructure Management	Monitoring	Regulation	Leaning and Adaptation	Water Res Management
Water_Sec&Nat	2	7	6	4	9	2	5	5	6	5
Water_District	6	6	1	5		3	8	1	3	6
Sanita_Sec&Nat	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Sanita_District	na	na	na	na		na	na	na	na	na
Hygiene_Sec&Nat	na									
Hygiene_District	na									
Extra-hh_Sec&Nat	na									
Extra-hh_District	na									

Scoring colour coding for district and national outcomes 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Colour	Score range
	88-100%
	63-87%
	38-62%
	13-37%
	0-12%

Scoring colour coding for district and national building blocks (outcome 3).

Color	Score range
	4.26-5.0
	3.5-4.25
	2.6-3.4
	1.76-2.5
	1.0-1.75

Annex 3: Outputs and activities IRC 2019 (EXCEL)

We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make access to safe water and sanitation available for everyone, for good. The UN has set a target to achieve this by 2030 – known as ‘Sustainable Development Goal 6’ (SDG 6).

Resilient systems: the only way

We know that the only way to achieve this goal is through resilient water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) systems that transform lives. We know how to build and strengthen these systems - but we need to do it now.

It will take everyone, in all parts of the system, changing the way they think and work.

Everyone, together

Each part of a country’s WASH system must work effectively: from people using pumps, to monitoring tools, to finance systems. This can only be achieved if everyone in the system knows and plays their part.

Achieving universal access calls for collective action by a broad movement of government, civil society, private sector service providers, financiers, academia and others.

Our unique position

As a change hub, we are in a unique position to unite people to drive and champion change from the ground up. We need to convince district, country and global decision makers of what it will take to achieve SDG 6.

Now is the time

We need to act now. We are halfway through but not halfway there. We need everyone to commit to massive-scale change – and as you are reading this, that also means you.