



IRC

Annual report 2021

Supporting water sanitation
and hygiene services for life

IRC Annual Report 2021

This Annual Report highlights some of our achievements in 2021, and focuses on how we work with others to achieve WASH systems change at scale. For more detailed information about our progress and finances, please read our [2021 Monitoring Report](#) and our [2021 Financial Report](#).

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Photos: Our cover photo with Sarahí Morales, coordinator of the Intermunicipal Technical Unit of MAMCEPAZ (Mancomunidad de Municipios del Centro de La Paz) in the middle was taken by Elias Assaf in Honduras; p7 IRC and Water For People; p8 IRC Niger; p9 IRC Burkina Faso; p10 IRC Ethiopia; p11 IRC Ghana; p12 Elias Assaf; p13 UNICEF India; p14 IRC Mali; p15 Ismael Ousmane; p16 IRC Uganda and p17 IRC.

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The following definitions apply to all infographics and narratives shared in this report:

1. Purchasing power parity (PPP) is a popular metric used by macroeconomic analysts to compare economic productivity and standards of living between countries. The numbers shared are 2020 World Bank data in international dollars (I\$) represented as: GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international \$) | Data (worldbank.org)
2. Measuring progress is complicated.

Throughout this report we use the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) definitions to assess the quality of services that people are receiving and to set targets for the future. We share progress towards the 2030 vision for WASH services at national and district levels (pages 8-16) but for detailed reflection on these please see our 2021 Monitoring Report.

The JMP identifies a 'service ladder' of five service levels for water and sanitation: no service (surface water or open defecation); unimproved; limited; basic; and, safely managed. Each level up from the bottom represents a significant improvement in the safety and security of the supply. A similar ladder exists for hygiene, and WASH in health care facilities and schools.

Like the JMP, we use a combination of household surveys, infrastructure, water quality, and administrative data to estimate the proportion of the population being served at each level. We also consider other criteria including technology type, protection from contaminants, distance from home and availability. Reported changes in service levels since the 2017 baseline are based on geographies in which two data points are available between 2017-2020.

The JMP definitions do not always match perfectly to national norms and standards. In particular, there is disagreement about what constitutes 'safe' services. Despite this, we believe it makes sense to use JMP wherever possible. For more information on the JMP methodology, go to <https://washdata.org/monitoring/methods>.

Message from the CEO and Chair

IRC is all about partnership for impact and 2021 saw us create exciting new partnerships and consolidate existing ones.

2021 was the final year of our medium-term strategic plan (2017-21), and we ended it on an upbeat note when, in August, we cemented our Alliance with Water For People and launched our visionary **Destination 2030 Strategy**.

Destination 2030 is all about a shared commitment to scale, impact and change, with the delivery of services to everyone in our partner districts at its heart. Four years after launching the first district 'master plan'¹ (in Asutifi North, Ghana, in March 2018) we continue to see the results that come from empowered local leadership and collective action around a shared vision of access to all. That **original master plan has now been joined by 18 others**, of which six were finalised, validated and approved by district leadership in 2021.

We continued to make good progress towards achieving master plan goals. This was particularly true for water but we saw promising progress on sanitation too, and initiated exciting work on water and sanitation in health care facilities. There were important new partnerships with professional service providers; public water utilities; and private water and sanitation enterprises. The expansion of professionally managed services – moving away from management by communities – is an essential step towards honouring the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) commitment to provide safely managed water and sanitation services to all by 2030. Partnership with national scale public utilities also provides an excellent way to expand impact beyond our partner districts.

As in every year, we faced challenges. Covid-19 tested our ability to work through sporadic lockdowns, while political conflict in many of our focus countries tested the resolve of our teams and the incremental improvement that lies at the heart of our systems strengthening approach.

The world is not on track to deliver its 2030 goals of delivering safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation to everyone. Efforts are confronted by a lack of high-level political vision and leadership in many countries. There are too few Swachh Bharats or Jal Jeevans², and too many countries and actors that still see providing a shared handpump or pit latrine as appropriate goals. They are not! Scaling the successes we've seen in our partner districts, especially the expansion of professionally and safely managed services, requires clear and strong political commitment not just to systems strengthening – but to profound systems change.

Triggering and supporting this change is at the heart of Destination 2030. It is also the reason for our continued support to key partnerships like Agenda for Change and Sanitation and Water for All. In order to widen and reinforce the network of likeminded partners committed to this change, we will host signature events in 2022 and 2023: All Systems Go Africa in Ghana in October 2022, and All Systems Connect in the Netherlands in May 2023. We hope you'll join us.

Patrick Moriarty,
Chief Executive Officer, IRC

Robert Bos,
Chair, Supervisory Board, IRC

1. Our flagship tools for visionary and technical planning are district **master plans**. These 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.

We act as a **hub** within and across the WASH system and help local leaders to lead and coordinate partners. A hub facilitates relationships, provides expertise and monitoring, helps share learning and ensures continuous communication among partners.

2. Swachh Bharat and Jal Jeevan are two national 'missions' undertaken in India with the support of the highest levels of national and state leadership, targeting universal access to sanitation, and a tap in every household respectively.

IRC at a glance

WHO'S INVOLVED AND WHAT DID WE INVEST?

8 focus country programmes **1** global programme
1 Africa regional programme

15 partner districts, and **16** Para Todos Por Siempre (PTPS) partner municipalities

10 offices around the world

130 staff in our flexible workforce: **35** international staff, **61** in focus countries, **4** interns and **30** associates

115 active programmes and projects, in more than **20** countries as well as at regional and global levels

10,484 days of staff expertise, including **1,285** IRC Consult advisory days spread over **47** assignments

€8.7 million invested from **37** donors and **54** clients

WHAT DID WE DO AND WHAT DID WE PRODUCE?

19 district WASH master plans supported

207 capacity-building events co-organised worldwide

107 working groups and learning platforms supported in our focus countries

11 new WASH Systems Academy courses launched and **7** blended learning trainings facilitated

57 research outputs, **4** journal articles published

128 news items and **47** blogs published on our website

18 newsletters and **48** videos

HOW MANY PEOPLE DID WE REACH?

3.6M people in our partner districts

355K people had their basic or safely managed water and **300K** their basic or safely managed sanitation services sustained in our partner districts in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda

16K people who stepped up the water ladder; **6.4K** people who received a higher level of sanitation service

8.7K people attending knowledge sharing and capacity-building events

1,099 participants in WASH Systems Academy courses in **87** countries

14.1K unique downloads from our website

7.7K returning visitors to our website

424K social media engagements and **788.8K** social media video views

512 Google Scholar citations

21 references to our work by global media

Locations

8 focus countries

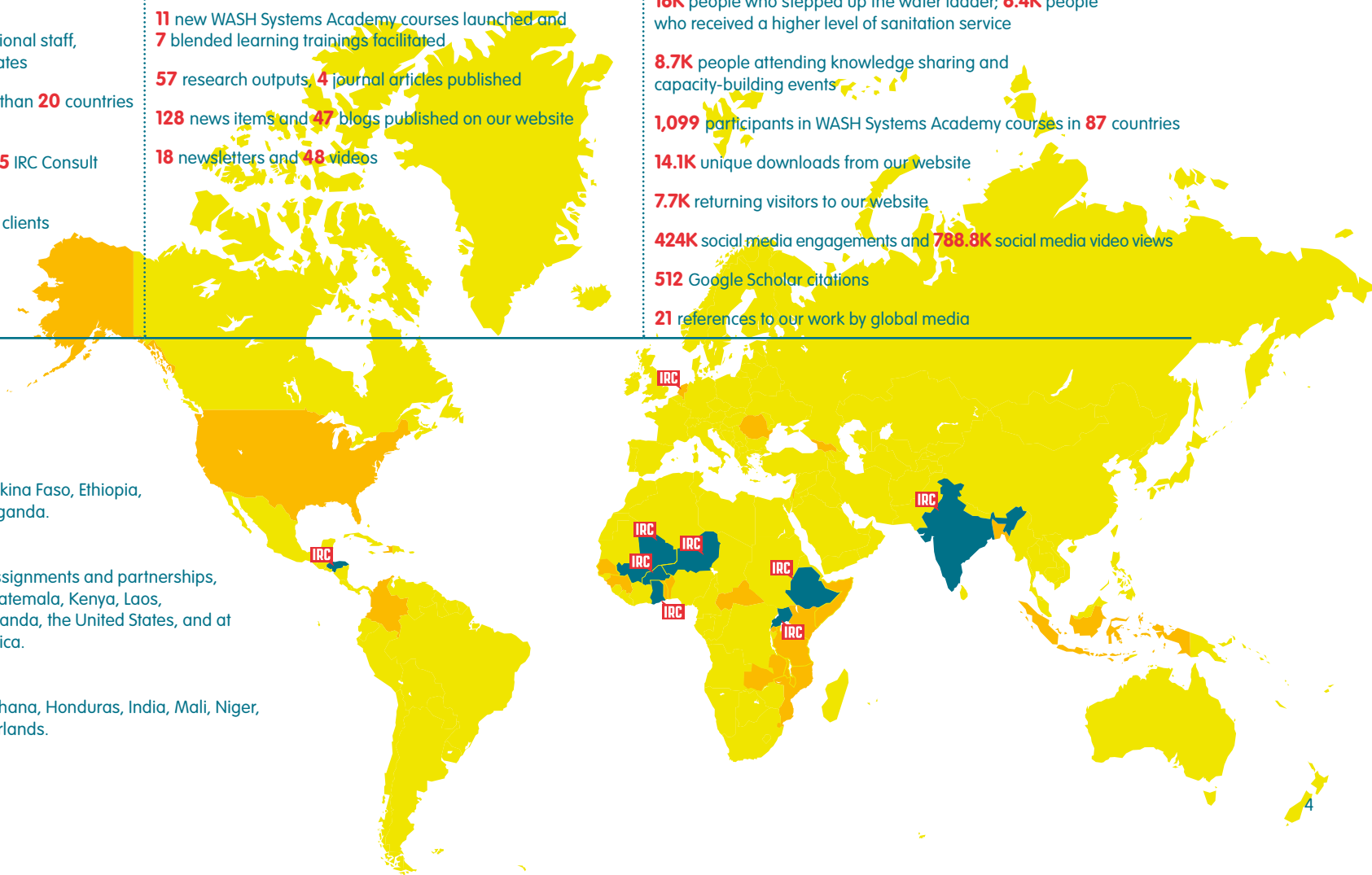
The largest part of our work happens in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mali, Niger and Uganda.

10 additional countries

Through numerous projects, consultancy assignments and partnerships, we also worked in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Guatemala, Kenya, Laos, the Netherlands, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, the United States, and at regional level in Latin America and West Africa.

10 offices around the world

We have offices in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mali, Niger, Rwanda and Uganda, as well as the Netherlands.



UGANDA'S LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR IMPACT

LOCAL IMPACT

Strengthening capacities, planning and co-investment to secure inclusive services for households, schools and health centres in partner areas. Current partner areas include:

Districts

- Kabarole (IRC)
- Bunyangabu (IRC)
- Kamwenge (Water For People)
- Luuka (Water For People)

Cities and Towns

- Kampala City
- Fort Portal City
- Kitgum Municipality
- Kole Town Council
- Nansana Municipality



NATIONAL IMPACT

National and Central Levels - Strengthening country systems through technical assistance and influence:

- Supporting the Ministry of Water and Environment, national programme working groups and platforms
- Engaging Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET) Civil Society
- Partnering with and engaging the National Water and Sewerage Corporation
- Building broader constituency for systems strengthening (through Agenda for Change and Sanitation and Water for All)
- Engaging with the National Planning Authority

Market Areas - Strengthening market systems and scaling products and services at subnational and national levels:

- Engaging with WASH private sector (including manufacturers, promoters, etc.)
- Researching and innovating sanitation and hygiene products and services

Subnational Levels - Scaling area-wide approaches through replication, technical assistance, and influence:

- Supporting regional utilities: Mid-western Umbrella and Eastern Umbrella
- Engaging Rural Water and Sanitation Regional Centres (formerly Technical Support Units)
- Partnering with Water Resource Management Zones: Upper Nile, Albert, Kyoga, and Victoria

GLOBAL IMPACT

Global - Engaging with global actors for learning, advocacy, and influence:

- Partnering with multi-national organisations and stakeholders
- Sharing best practices via global networks and platforms
- Providing thought leadership



Africa Regional - Engaging with regional actors for influence:

- Influencing and knowledge exchange
- Engaging and advocacy in regional platforms (African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and Nile Basin Initiative)

How we work

IRC looks at the WASH system as a whole as well as through the lens of nine critical building blocks: institutions, policy and legislation, planning, finance, regulation and accountability, monitoring, infrastructure, water resources management and learning and adaptation. A WASH system is at its strongest when all these **building blocks** are in place and working effectively together at all levels.

We help put these building blocks in place by supporting political and technical leaders to improve multi-level governance and strengthening the capacities, and models available to key actors. We also use partnerships, visionary planning, and technical assistance to raise financing and drive a collective action movement for WASH systems strengthening.

With growing proof of concept, we're showing what concerted action by multi-skilled, multi-level partnerships can do and how they can be leveraged - when allied with strong and committed government leadership - to achieve greater impact and real systems change.

The graphic shows how IRC and our Destination 2030 partner Water For People work through partnerships at different levels in Uganda.

A story of change influenced by our global activities

Welthungerhilfe is the biggest development and humanitarian NGO in Germany spending around € 250 million per annum. Twenty per cent of that money is invested in WASH. Stephan Simon, WASH Advisor at Welthungerhilfe, says that IRC's accessible frameworks and guidelines have been instrumental in how they invest in and work on strengthening WASH systems.

All together to serve everyone

LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILDING NEW RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR PARTNER DISTRICTS

Partnerships formed by the staff of governments, NGOs and utilities, along with experts, professionals, scientists and practitioners in our partner districts, continued with the aim of achieving one vision. The vision is that everyone in our partner districts (a combined population of more than 3.45 million people) has sustainable and affordable access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services by 2030.

These partnerships are guided by district WASH master plans, and to date we have supported the development of 19 plans across the world.¹

In Niger, our two partner districts are the only ones – out of 266 communes – to have master plans. Regular service level monitoring means that these district governments are also the only ones to base their decisions on accurate knowledge of WASH service levels in local health centres and schools.

In Ghana, the work of implementing the master plan in Asutifi North district has led to the creation of the National Development Planning Commission's WASH Toolkit for the sector. And some districts, like Asutifi North, are on track to reach their entire population with safe water services by 2030.

Other areas, like Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, are faced with continuous security challenges, and partners in these areas need to find new ways of working. In 2021, IRC and its partners started using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to

pinpoint the location of vulnerable populations and identify ways to reach them.

The move towards more professionally managed rural water supplies continues. 2021 was also the year where we showed how important it is to deepen our relationships with utilities, in rural as well as urban areas.

Professionally managed water services can contribute to overcoming common challenges related to rural water service provision, including low management capacity and performance of service providers, in order to ensure sustainable basic, and where possible, safely managed water services.

For example, in Uganda we formed a tri-partite partnership with the National Water and Sewerage Corporation and Kabarole District Local Government to extend a piped water system network to ensure 100% sustainable access to the 12,800 people living in Kabende sub-county. We also worked on influencing Burkina Faso's national utility, ONEA, to increase its focus on reaching people in small towns. This will include services for 10,000 people.

We have also developed a district master planning facility to support the scaling of plans and the investment they can leverage to improve services (www.ircwash.org/facility). This will go live in 2022.

Destination 2030: a vision of local, national and global impact and scale

PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPACT IS WHAT WE DO, SO WE ARE HUGELY EXCITED BY OUR NEW ALLIANCE WITH LONG-TERM PARTNER WATER FOR PEOPLE.

The vision is clear: the passionate pursuit of sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services for all. Working together to drive exponential progress in the delivery of WASH, and guided by our shared Destination 2030 Strategy, we will serve 20 million, reach 200 million and change the system. By 2030 we will have radically increased our impact while tripling the annual investment in water and sanitation systems.

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

Our new [Partnership for WASH Systems in Africa](#) with UNICEF and Water For People is strengthening national WASH systems in 19 countries in Africa. We do this by improving sector capacities, and knowledge management, advocating for systems change at national and regional levels and providing technical assistance in WASH systems strengthening to UNICEF country offices. An important part of this has been updating UNICEF's systems and finance courses on the Agora training platform together with our WASH Systems Academy.

This year, our WASH Systems Academy had 1,066 participants with 1,404 enrolments and 483 certificates. In Ethiopia we used the online WASH Systems Academy, together with in-person workshops, to tailor the course to the local context. (See page 10)

Public Development Banks are central to improving the financing of the water and sanitation sector, and it is only when the sector is strong that we can achieve SDG 6, the Paris Agreement objectives and enhance biodiversity protection. Building on studies conducted as part of our consultancy work, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) launched a [Water Finance Coalition of Public Development Banks](#). IRC acts as the Secretariat of the coalition.

We also contributed to other partnerships, networks and global platforms including Agenda for Change, Millennium Water Alliance, Netherlands Water Partnership NGO Platform, Rural Water Supply Network, Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), UN Water and Water Integrity Network. This included supporting the leadership of Agenda for Change to change its governance to one that puts country collaborations at the centre.





Snapshots from our focus countries

This photo gives a glimpse of one area we work in: Tenkodogo, Burkina Faso. It was captured during a Mains Propres Bonne Santé campaign moment. The initiative aims to motivate good hygiene behaviours in the country. It now has its sights set on the whole country. The next few pages are dedicated to stories from all of our focus countries. These highlights show how we are achieving systemic change around the globe, guided by our Theory of Change, our hub role and our focus on working in partnerships. For more detailed information about our country, regional and global programmes in 2021, please refer to our [2021 Monitoring Report](#) [here](#).



Madame Sika Kaboré, First Lady of Burkina Faso



Partner district
Banfora

IRC BURKINA FASO AT A GLANCE

11 staff, **15** projects, **10** donors,
10 partners³, collaborations or working groups
€ 1.570 million total invested

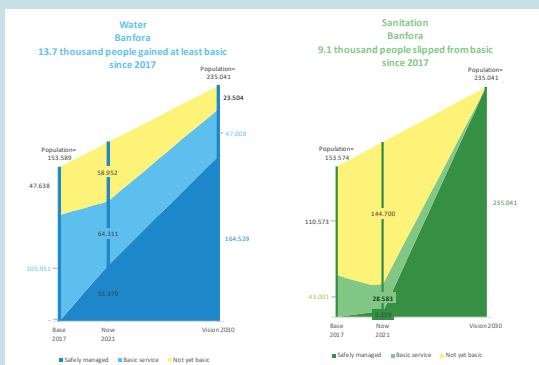
Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 2,274**

Human Development Index: **rank 182, score 0.452**

Renewable water resource per capita: **683.5m³**

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):

Water: **47%** • Sanitation: **22%** • Hygiene: **9%**



Progress toward the 2030 vision of Banfora district*

Burkina Faso High-level commitment to WASH in health care facilities

“Zero health facilities without effective water, sanitation and hygiene systems in sub-Saharan Africa by 2025, that is the vision I would like to share with you” - **Madame Sika Kaboré**, First Lady of Burkina Faso at the Panafrican Summit for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Health Facilities, 23 April 2021.

It is hoped that by mid-2022, Burkina Faso will be one of the first countries in West Africa to have a clear and robust government plan to ensure adequate WASH services in all health care facilities within the framework of SDGs.

Currently, a quarter of all health care facilities in the country lack safe drinking water services and more than 11% don't have access to a toilet. Even those facilities that have toilets are not maintaining them properly.

On 23 April 2021, the First Lady of Burkina Faso, Madame Sika Kaboré, and the Minister of Health, Professor Charlemagne Ouédraogo, took part in the Regional Summit of African Leaders on WASH in Health Facilities organised by WHO and UNICEF.

“I call for urgent action, not only to address the severe lack of WASH in health facilities in response to the global pandemic, but also to

address the massive challenges faced daily by the communities and to permanently eradicate water, sanitation and hygiene problems at all levels.” -Madame Sika Kaboré said in this meeting.

This high level commitment led to an initiative by the Minister of Health to develop a costed strategy for WASH in health care facilities. This strategy will guide authorities to invest in strengthening governance and management systems for WASH services.

The Minister of Health called on IRC to provide technical assistance in identifying the most effective solutions, and the work started in October 2021.

However, political instability and the limited capacity of the national authorities to mobilise the new partners and resources needed to implement this strategy efficiently, remain major challenges to achieving this goal.

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.



EWTI staff celebrating the completion of their WASH Systems Academy training in Ethiopia



IRC ETHIOPIA AT A GLANCE

13 staff, **20** projects, **11** donors,
34 partners³, collaborations or working groups
€ 992 thousand total invested

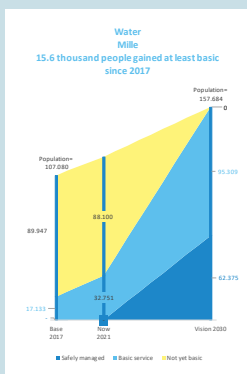
Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 2,423**

Human Development Index: **rank 173, score 0.485**

Renewable water resource per capita: **1,117m³**

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):

Water: **50%** • Sanitation: **9%** • Hygiene: **8%**



Progress toward the 2030 vision of Mile district*

Ethiopia

Training trainers to spread knowledge and skills

“I found this training very useful in that it provided me with an understanding that helps me see why most of the WASH endeavours are really not impacting after so much effort and resources spent on them. The quest for sustainable WASH became more systematic to me and I hope after completing the other two or three trainings I will be able to build a better perspective on WASH.” – **Daniel Dirba Megeresa**, Sanitary Engineer, EWTI.

A lack of capacity at different levels – including government – was one of the key gaps identified in the Ethiopian WASH sector⁴.

In 2013, the government established the Ethiopian Water Technology Institute (EWTI) to address this. But EWTI could only educate 1,300 people per year, so in order to reach more WASH professionals⁵, IRC Ethiopia started to collaborate with EWTI in 2019 on capacity building.

The partnership started by providing 25 EWTI staff with a training of trainers in the first half of 2021. We tailored four modules of the **WASH Systems Academy** to the Ethiopian context. Training was then provided to 37 trainees from the regional Water Bureaus, District Water

offices and urban utility staff in Oromia and Amhara regions.

Poor internet connectivity and a lack of hardware, meant that most trainees needed training in the basic use of computers.

Incorporating these skills, providing hybrid courses, and promoting them on social media means that the number of sector professionals, government and NGOs, university staff and students registered currently stands at 583.

Seven universities have also asked EWTI and IRC to start providing the training to their students.

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.

4. Growth and Transformation plan 1 (GTPI) 2011- 2015

5. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ethiopian Water Technology Institute Demand Survey on Technical and Vocational Education and Training Work Completion Report, December 2015 Japan International Cooperation Agency.



Ghana

Partnering to ensure safe water services in hard-to-reach areas

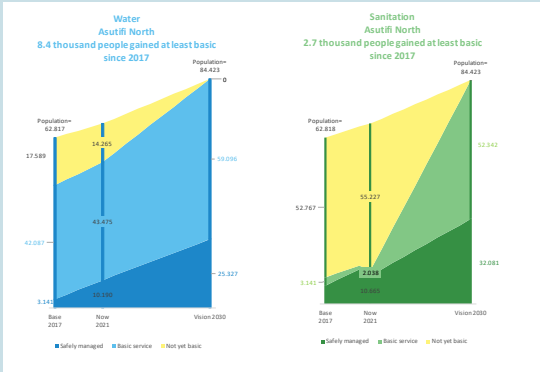
“The nearest water to us is a stream and that is what we used for everything. The water from the stream turned every food we cooked, like cassava and palm nut soup, dark. But we used it anyway because we didn’t have any safe and clean water close to us.” - **Emelia Agyewaa**, Farmer, Kokofu Awonsu community.

IRC GHANA AT A GLANCE

16 staff, **13** projects, **6** donors,
10 partners³, collaborations or working groups
€ 738 thousand total invested

Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 5,744**
 Human Development Index: **rank 138, score 0.611**
 Renewable water resource per capita: **1,888m³**

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):
 Water: **86%** • Sanitation: **24%** • Hygiene: **42%**



Progress toward the 2030 vision of Asutifi North district*

For the first time, in 2021, more than 2,500 people from five hard-to-reach communities and five deprived schools in Asutifi North district, Ghana, were able to celebrate having water, sanitation and hygiene services.

The work began in 2018, when a partnership of local government, NGOs, service providers, traditional authorities and communities launched the Asutifi North Ahonidie Mpontuo (ANAM) initiative, supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. We’ve made steady progress since towards achieving our goal of reaching every person in the district with safe WASH services by 2030.

But in 2020, 21 of the 49 communities in the district – considered hard to reach with scattered settlements – still had no water services. And 27 of the 73 public schools in the district did not have basic drinking water services on school premises.

In 2021, the Latter-day Saints Charities – convinced by the partnership’s success so far

– embraced the challenge and invested in expanding water and sanitation services to the 2,500 people mentioned above.

Emelia is still collecting water, but now she does so from an improved source located at the centre of the community and in front of her house.

However, there are still 16 communities in remote areas of the district with no water services. These are small, scattered settlements that do not meet the population threshold for water service provision by government and have difficult groundwater potential. Reaching them requires new partnerships, funding, and an innovative mix of technologies.

While challenges remain, especially with regards to increasing access to safely managed services and achieving safe sanitation for all, the ANAM partnership continues its collective action towards ensuring that all people in the district can enjoy their human right to safe water and sanitation.

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.



Sarahí Morales, coordinator of the Intermunicipal Technical Unit of MAMCEPAZ (Mancomunidad de Municipios del Centro de La Paz)

IRC HONDURAS AT A GLANCE

1 staff, 1 associate
 5 projects, 5 donors
 5 partners³, collaborations or working groups
 € 180 thousand total invested

Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 5,420**
 Human Development Index: **rank 132, score 0.634**
 Renewable water resource per capita: **9,613m³**

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):

- Water: **96%**
- Sanitation: **84%**
- Hygiene: **84%**

Population of PTPS municipalities: **285K**

Drinking water service levels in PTPS municipalities: ranging from **37% to 91%**

Sanitation service levels in PTPS municipalities: ranging from **46% to 94%**



Honduras

Achieving scale through associations of municipalities

“We want to guarantee the sustainability of systems. So we are implementing a training plan and technical assistance plan for all water boards to make sure they improve their administrative, operations and maintenance and life cycle costing skills.” - **Sarahí Morales**, Coordinator of the Intermunicipal Technical Unit of MAMCEPAZ.

Many small municipalities in Honduras struggle to support water supplies in rural areas; they are simply too small to afford to provide technical services.

To overcome this, Water For People and IRC have been piloting the ‘mancomunidad’ model in three areas of the La Paz department. Under this model, mancomunidades – associations of municipalities – jointly establish a dedicated unit that carries out functions such as monitoring and providing technical support to water committees.

As a result, people like Sarahí Morales, who is a water and sanitation technician in La Paz, have

been able to provide technical support to at least 117 water committees, have improved water quality management in 38 rural supply systems, and have worked on the review of tariffs of 17 water committees.

We see this as clear evidence that the mancomunidad model is effective in overcoming the scale limitations of municipalities in Honduras.

But this model also has some inherent challenges. For example, having the shared human resources still comes at a cost to the member municipalities, and it takes a lot of convincing to get the municipalities to agree to share those costs.

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.



Shipra Saxena, WASH Specialist, UNICEF Odisha

IRC INDIA AT A GLANCE

2 staff, **8** projects, **5** donors,

22 partners³, collaborations or working groups

€ 120 thousand total invested

Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 6,504**

Human Development Index: **rank 131, score 0.645**

Renewable water resource per capita: **1,413m³**

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP, 2020):

Water: **91%** • Sanitation: **71%** • Hygiene: **68%**

Population of Ganjam district: **3.5m** (Census 2011)

Population of partner block: **136k**

Water coverage in Ganjam district: **99%**

Data comes from the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India

Sanitation coverage in Ganjam district: **100%**

Data comes from the SBM dashboard, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India

Partner block
Chatrapur in
Ganjam district

India

Strengthening institutions is key to sustainable services

“Panchayati Raj Institutions (rural local governments) play an important role in ensuring water, sanitation, and hygiene services, more so after the 15th Finance Commission guidelines (that recommend 60% of the rural local government funds to be spent on water and sanitation supply). It is, therefore, crucial that their capacities are developed to strengthen WASH systems.” – **Shipra Saxena**, WASH Specialist, UNICEF Odisha.

In India, national and state level governments are committed to ensuring water and sanitation services for everyone. The national government’s flagship scheme – the Swachh Bharat Mission – is geared towards safe sanitation. While the national Jal Jeevan Mission scheme, and the Odisha state scheme – Buxi Jagabandhu Assured Drinking Water to All Habitation (BASUDHA) – are aimed at providing safe water.

But the success of these schemes depends on the capacity of institutions to deliver the services. The grassroot institutions, particularly the local government, play a key role in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of water and sanitation services. But training programmes for staff are often one-off, use dated content and are of limited value. A 2018 study by IRC and UNICEF in Odisha found that the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to provide services steadily declined as they moved down the institutional hierarchy towards the grassroots. **The Watershed project** confirmed this gap.

In 2021, IRC supported UNICEF and the State Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (SIRD & PR), to develop and conduct trainings for the three tiers of rural local government. Making the training precise and easy to understand for a target group with low levels of literacy was challenging. The content is based on adopting a holistic and comprehensive approach to WASH, instead of looking at water, sanitation, and hygiene separately. It provides practical inputs for leveraging other development schemes/ programmes for WASH services.

Developing the training material gave IRC the opportunity to work on institutional strengthening, focusing on the sustainability of services beyond infrastructure creation, as well as time-bound schemes using the ‘leaving no one behind lens’. Plus, the development of this material was very timely as it would be used to train the newly elected local government representatives in 2022.

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.



Group photo at Maternity Hospital of Dourako, municipality of Nossombougou staff and partners

IRC MALI AT A GLANCE

4 staff, 6 projects, 3 donors, 3 partners³, collaborations or working groups

€ 315 thousand total invested

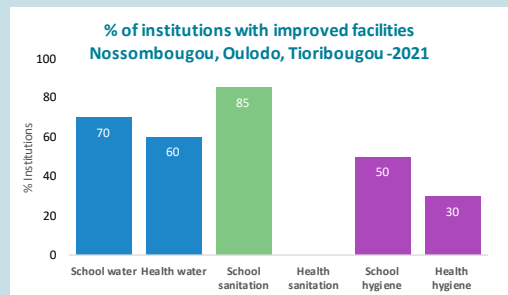
Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: \$ 2,348

Human Development Index: rank 184, score 0.434

Renewable water resource per capita: 6,290m³

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):

Water: 83% • Sanitation: 45% • Hygiene: 17%



Progress toward the 2030 vision of Nossombougou, Oulodo and Tioribougou districts in schools and health care facilities*

Mali

Saving lives by working with local health professionals

“From the WASH FIT⁶ trainings received from IRC Mali, we learnt that an improved water, sanitation and hygiene service not only helps establish good cleanliness in the maternity ward - by keeping toilets, equipment and the facility’s outdoor areas tidy - but is also linked to avoiding certain diseases and their transmissions, protecting staff, patients, visitors and even the community.” - Fatoumata Coulibaly, Matron of the Maternity Hospital of Dourako, municipality of Nossombougou.

Training in Mali has helped health care facility workers to understand the importance of WASH in their work and then apply it.

According to Fatoumata Coulibaly, an essential element of hospital cleanliness had been forgotten. *“Maternity speaks of childbirth, which also is inherently linked to the bed where a child is born. The very essence of our existence is linked to the latter.”*

Unfortunately, the beds in the hospital in Dourako were in poor condition. And it took another service assessment and visit by IRC along with World Vision and the senior district health leader from the Reference Health Centre in 2021, for the hospital and its staff to realise that they had not understood all the linkages WASH had to their work.

For example, a very rusty bed cannot be effectively cleaned and disinfected, and therefore increases the risk of transmitting

diseases from one woman to another and to their newborn children.

The training helped the hospital’s WASH team understand these essential linkages, and made this matter a top priority, which led them to advocate for the money needed to buy a new delivery bed.

Afou Chantal Bengaly, country coordinator of IRC Mali says these are the stories that make her believe that the mindset of people can be changed when provided with the right evidence and approaches to mobilise resources to address their challenges.

IRC Mali has been supporting rural health facilities in Nossombougou, Oulodo and Tioribougou districts to become more resilient since 2018.

Read more in [IRC Mali’s 2021 annual report](#).

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.

6. WASH FIT (the Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool) is a risk-based management tool developed by WHO and UNICEF for health care facilities, covering key aspects of water, sanitation, hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, health care waste management and selected aspects of energy, building and facility management. More here: [WASH FIT portal](#) | [WASH in Health Care Facilities \(washinht.org\)](#)



Health workers at a WASH FIT training workshop in the district of Torodi

IRC NIGER AT A GLANCE

2 staff, 6 projects, 5 donors,
4 partners³, collaborations or working groups
€ 242 thousand total invested

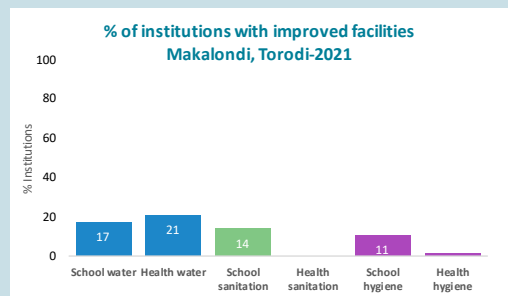
Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: \$ 1,288

Human Development Index: rank 189, score 0.394

Renewable water resource per capita: 1,517m³

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):

Water: 47% • Sanitation: 16% • Hygiene: 23%



Progress toward the 2030 vision of Makalondi and Torodi districts in schools and health care facilities*



Niger Improving biomedical waste management and environmental cleaning with World Vision

“I would like to thank IRC and World Vision for this training which strengthens our capacities in the management of biomedical waste and the cleaning of the environment. I take this opportunity to call on the authorities to assist us in our tasks in the health centres.” - Mr. Mounkaila Hassane, the cleaner of the Tiouridi health centre.

Using the WASH FIT risk-based management tool (see page 14) in 12 health care facilities in our partner districts, we found that the majority of health workers had not been trained in biomedical waste management and environmental cleaning. This could risk the safety of these health care facilities.

To address this and improve service levels, we have worked with World Vision to train 36 health workers (one manager, one cleaner, and one matron per health centre) on these two topics and on WASH standards.

As a result, standards improved. For example, in one health centre, the manager put a handwashing facility with soap and water in

front of the toilets (which was not the case before) and urged the cleaners to clean the toilets every day.

But one of the major challenges in implementing the WASH FIT process is in compensating the cleaners. Most work on a voluntary basis, or receive a small stipend that does not match the work required (this point was raised by cleaners during the training).

In its upcoming advocacy activities, IRC will highlight this issue and encourage the authorities, both local and national, to find a solution for the compensation of the cleaners, as maintaining the service levels depends on them.

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.

Uganda

Reviving good governance for safe WASH in health care facilities

“I am now motivated to change the current practices using available resources and seeking support to meet WASH standards at my health facility. I have copied several best practices from the learning visits which I wish my facility to adapt. If we maintain regular committee meetings, I am sure that will support sustainability of the good practices- I have seen that most facilities have improved since we got active again as HUMCs.” - Natukunda Paul, Senior C/O and in-charge, Mugusu HCIII.

Kabarole district is leaving no stone unturned in its quest to ensure safe water and sanitation services in all health care facilities.

But there are challenges such as meagre budget allocations, limited staffing, corruption, poor quality services and inadequate capacity in planning and supervision. National guidelines by the Ministry of Health include establishing community governance structures known as Health Unit Management Committees (HUMCs) to offer advisory, advocacy and supervisory support to the administration of health care facilities.

IRC supported the Kabarole district health department to revive the HUMCs, starting with the five health centre III⁷ facilities namely Kicwamba, Ruteete, Kijura, Mugusu and Kaswa. These have been transformed to model WASH in health care services in line with national and World Health Organization standards.

IRC ran capacity building workshops and peer learning exchanges to help the five HUMCs in

performing their roles, and to create awareness of the importance of WASH and infection prevention and control (IPC) in health care management.

Today, each committee is actively involved in the budget process especially advocating for increased allocations to WASH and IPC services. They have work plans, filed records of meetings, reports of services monitored, and sustainability measures drawn. And they proactively reach out to the support staff responsible for hygiene (cleaners).

HUMCs are also actively facilitating staff Continuing Medical Education on waste segregation and hand hygiene, lobbying for water tanks, menstrual hygiene facilities, toilets adapted for people with disabilities and ensuring well-maintained drinking water stations at Patient Care Areas. Behaviour change has also been noticed in health workers as well as patients' compliance to handwashing, and waste management among other practices.



Joan Kabasumbi is a Mental Health Nurse and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Focal Person at Kaswa Health Centre III.

IRC UGANDA AT A GLANCE

11 staff, **12** projects, **6** donors,
7 partners³, collaborations or working groups
€ 697 thousand total invested

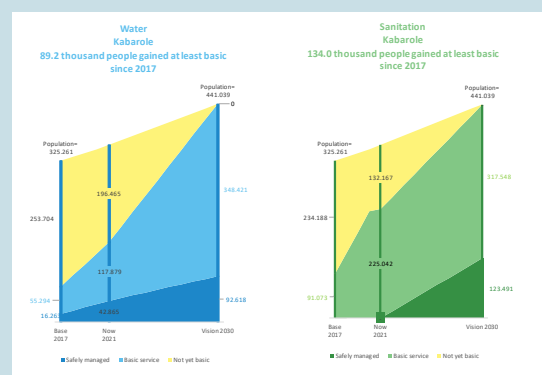
Gross Domestic Product per capita in PPP: **\$ 2,294**

Human Development Index: **rank 159, score 0.544**

Renewable water resource per capita: **1,407m³**

Percentage of population with at least basic services (JMP):

Water: **56%** • Sanitation: **20%** • Hygiene: **23%**



Progress toward the 2030 vision of Kabarole district*

3. Number of partners, collaborations, or working groups with whom we worked closely on programme implementation in 2021.

7. Health centre IIIs are expected to serve a population of 10,000 people with maternity services, out-patients consultations, immunisation and minor surgeries, special clinics such as ART and TB, all of which require keen attention to WASH services.

Global highlights

In 2021, our global teams continued to strive for impact at scale by influencing others on systems strengthening and systems change. We're making progress but not fast enough. Not prioritising WASH in global political agendas and the lack of funding strong WASH systems continue to be major barriers to achieving SDG 6. That's why this year we've formed even more ambitious partnerships.

The first phase of the strategy for 2022-25 includes a revised Global Programme and from 2021, a new Africa Regional Programme seeks to enhance our influence within regional agencies in Africa.

DESTINATION 2030

As already mentioned on page 7, with Water For People we have established Destination 2030, our collective effort to hasten progress towards SDG 6. Our global mission is to reach the people who still lack safe water and sanitation. The solution lies in government-led systems supported by strong professional service providers. The alliance is working to strengthen these systems:

- *Locally*: by strengthening local WASH systems to improve services for 20 million people by 2030.
- *Nationally*: by strengthening national WASH systems to improve services for more than 200 million people by 2030.
- *Globally*: by bringing transformational change in how services are provided for more than 2 billion people who still lack safe water and sanitation across the globe.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

COP26 raised the climate crisis further up everyone's agenda in 2021. IRC and Water for People jointly published '[Climate change, water resources and WASH systems](#)' providing an accessible resource for our teams and partners on the links between climate change, Water Resources Management, and WASH systems.

INFLUENCING BEYOND WASH

Our three-year Connect campaign is helping us to form new alliances with experts and activists in health, economic development, climate and beyond. The campaign includes '[Toilet Talks](#)' – interviews with experts and activists sharing their big ideas from the smallest room. ([Toilet Talks - trailer](#))

The Connect campaign will gather pace leading up to the All Systems Connect Symposium (The Hague, 2-4 May 2023) – connecting people and ideas, systems and solutions to achieve a better world.



Host Ikenna Azuike breaks taboos in exchange for frank conversations with activists, artists, authors, politicians in IRC's Toilet Talks. Among the guests, Okyeame Kwame, Ghanaian musician and philanthropist, shares his journey towards being a climate action champion.

Governance and staffing

IRC'S SUPERVISORY BOARD

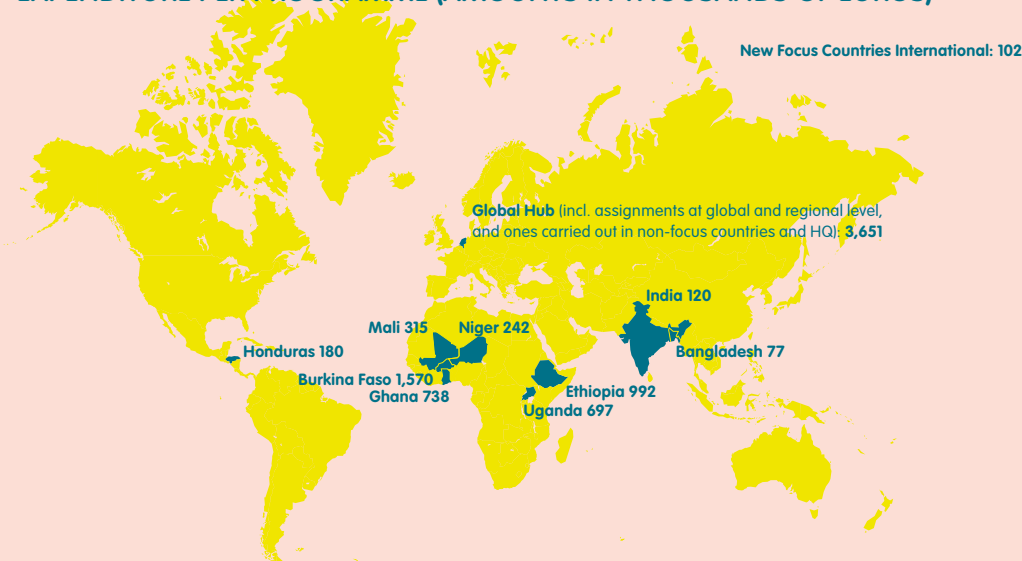
Robert Bos (Chair) – Henk den Boer (Vice-Chair and Treasurer) – Louis Boorstin – Clarissa Brocklehurst – Meera Mehta – Emiel Wegelin – Wambui Gichuri

INCOME STATEMENT 2017 - 2021 (AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS OF EUROS)

Income	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Programmatic Funding DGIS	1,402	1,281	1,474	1,611	1,397
Other project funding	10,590	9,804	10,376	9,112	7,287
Total income	11,992	11,085	11,850	10,724	8,684
Expenses					
Personnel expenses	3,341	3,590	4,067	4,240	4,173
Direct project expenses	8,153	6,911	7,275	5,981	4,275
General admin expenses	360	402	455	215	488
Total expenses	11,854	10,903	11,797	10,435	8,937
Operating result	137	182	52	289	-252
Financial expenditures	79	69	-45	200	-241
Annual result	58	112	97	89	-12

“In the first year of Isoko y’Ubuzima, our new project in Rwanda, we worked on a capacity building strategy and conducted a roll out of the WASH Systems Academy both at national and district level. In May 2022, a multilateral validation workshop for the national building block assessment will take place with IRC being one of the key organisers. I enjoyed playing my small part in the IRC ‘systems thinking’ movement in Rwanda.” – **Pascaline Kayitaba**, WASH Governance Officer, IRC.

EXPENDITURE PER PROGRAMME (AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS OF EUROS)



ORGANISATION AND STAFFING

In line with our public commitment made in 2020 we undertook a baseline assessment of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion across IRC in 2021. This baseline report was adopted by IRC's management who are now working to implement its recommendations. IRC is proud of its diverse staff, a growing proportion of whom are from the countries in which we work. At the end of 2021, our total flexible workforce consisted of 130: 35 contracted through the Netherlands; 61 in one of our focus countries; interns and 30 associates, including 8 staff members we hosted for partner organisations.

In November 2021, IRC's Supervisory Board agreed with a management proposal to map out a path to further decentralisation with the goal of creating a Networked Organisation with its centre of gravity in the Global South. This is in line with our desire to increasingly put decision making power on the ground where our impact is delivered.

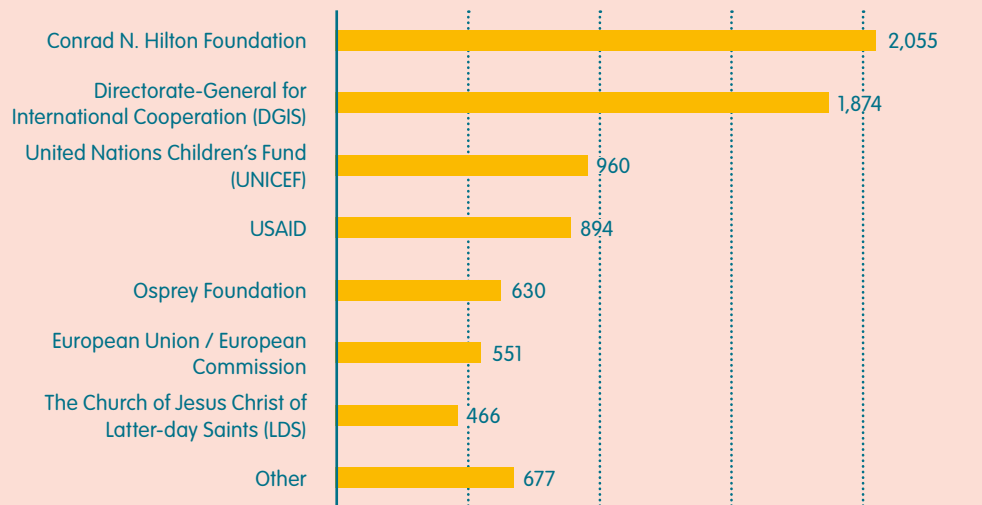
In 2022, an internal task-force will identify different options for creating a network of increasingly independent and self-contained country offices supported by a secretariat and shared services, with the intention to start implementing this from 2023.

Supporting our work

By working effectively together through collective action, we can drive systems change and build resilient local and national WASH systems that will achieve universal access for all by 2030. We are grateful to our partners and funders for helping us to move forward and for supporting us in our role as a hub for systems change.

“We are thrilled to collaborate with IRC to support their sustainable, systems-strengthening approach in the WASH sector and are inspired by their commitment to improve the lives of families in the communities they work with. We’re pleased to support their work in Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Honduras and look forward to exploring additional opportunities to collaborate!” - **Matt Gardner**, Latter-day Saint Charities, Manager Consultant – WASH and Food Security

OUR DONORS (AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS OF EUROS)



We thank the following donors and clients - including those who support our consultancy work - for joining and supporting us in our WASH journey:

Zie Institut International d'Ingénierie de l'Eau et de l'Environnement / Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG) / Agence Française de Développement (AFD) / Aguaconsult Ltd / Akvo / Amref Flying Doctors / Anesvad Foundation / Aqua for All / Aquaya Institute / Association Africaine de l'Eau (AfWA) / Conrad N. Hilton Foundation / Conservation International / Cranfield University / Databoom / Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) / Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) / DT Global / Dutch Research Council (NWO) / Eau Vive / European Union - European Commission / Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) / Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) / ForthInvestment / Gatsby Africa / IKEA Foundation / Institute for Water Education Delft (IHE) / Institute of Development Studies (IDS) / Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) / KfW Development Bank / MACS Energy & Water / Millennium Water Alliance (MWA) / Netcentric Campaigns / Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) / Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP) / Niras Indevelop / Nuffic / OneDrop Foundation / Osprey Foundation / PNE Benin / Population Services International (PSI) / Sanitation and Hygiene Fund / Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) / Simavi / SNV Netherlands Development Organisation / Splash / Svenska Postkodstiftelsen / Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) / TetraTech / The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) / Unilever / United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) / United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) / United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / University of Colorado Boulder (UCB) / University of Wageningen / Vitens Evides International (VEI) / Vitol Foundation / WASHNote / Water For People (WFP) / Waterloo Foundation / Water.org / Welthungerhilfe / World Bank / World Health Organization (WHO)

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 local and national 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’re 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’ll take to achieve SDG 6.

Now is the time

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