



IRC

Achieving SDG 6 by strengthening the WASH system

Baseline study for IRC's International
Programme

September 2018

Supporting water sanitation
and hygiene services for life

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Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|---------------|--|
| AfC | Agenda for Change |
| ANEW | African Civil Society Network for Water |
| CE | Sanitation Coalition Eau in West Africa |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations |
| EWP | End Water Poverty |
| FANSA | Freshwater Action Network for South Asia |
| GLAAS | UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking water |
| IWRM | Integrated Water Resources Management |
| MWA | Millennium Water Alliance |
| RWSN | Rural Water Supply Network |
| SDG 6 | Sustainable Development Goal 6 |
| SuSanA | Sustainable Sanitation Alliance |
| SWA | Sanitation and Water for All |
| WSSCC | Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council |

Executive summary

This report provides a baseline for IRC'S International Programme. The baseline covers quantitative data and qualitative data collected by an external consultant, Ken Kaplan, in the first quarter of 2018, and validated by IRC staff during the staff meetings in April 2018 and again in September 2018.

There are three outcomes to be achieved by IRC's International Programme in 2021.

- Highest executive levels of national government (including Ministers of Finance) and development partners demonstrate high and sustained political and financial commitment to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) systems strengthening for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.
- A range of fit-for-purpose models for sustained, universal sanitation services and promotion of appropriate hygiene behaviours. Models are 1) well documented, and 2) being adapted appropriately for replication in different contexts.
- The most influential development agencies have the capacity to strengthen national and local systems.

These outcomes are quite broad in nature, but it is possible to set a baseline and track progress from 2018. We have combined the results of the qualitative baseline with the quantitative progress to define overall scorings. A five step scale scoring is used for the final summary score of each intermediate outcome.

● 5 = Dark green. All conditions are met and there is substantial evidence.

● 4= Light green. Most conditions are met and there is significant progress underway toward optimum conditions in the intermediate outcome.

● 3= Yellow. There is progress in some aspects, but more still needs to be done, or there is mixed progress across the intermediate outcome.

● 2= Orange. A few conditions are in place and/or there is some evidence of progress towards the intermediate outcome.

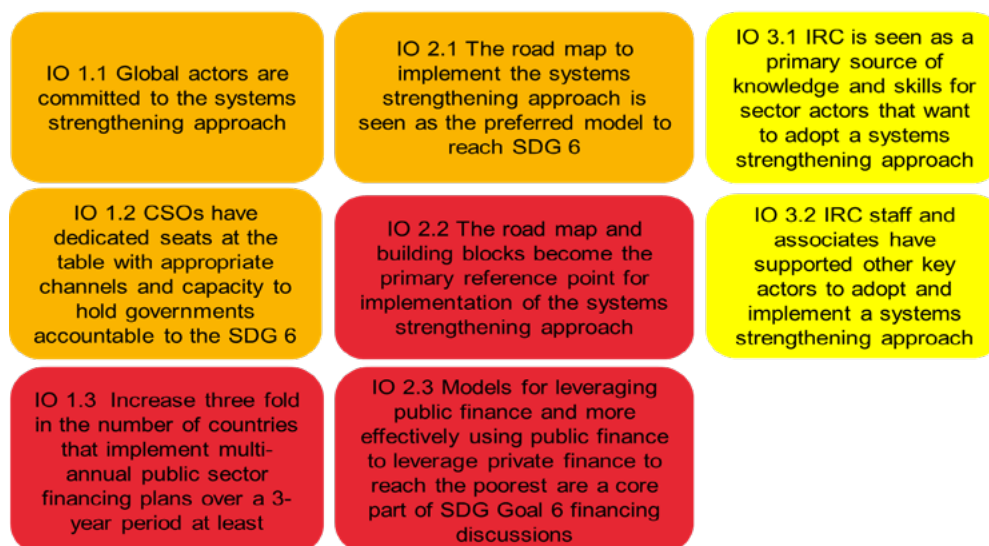
● 1 = Red. Most conditions are not yet in place, there are significant challenges and much still needs to be done in many areas of the intermediate outcome.

The diagram below shows the coded results for the eight intermediate outcomes (2021). The intermediate outcomes were scored by combining the results of the external interviews (qualitative part) with the quantitative indicators.

The main weaknesses in the sector globally relate to the lack of: political commitment; application of public finance models to finance SDG 6; and, application of a step by step roadmap for the implementation of the systems strengthening approach.

In terms of commitment to systems strengthening approach, there is some commitment from key sector organisations to the concept and to the general roadmap for its implementation. The capacity building component shows partial progress because although IRC is already seen as a primary source of knowledge and skills in the sector, most of the tools and training courses are still under development, for which tracking of progress can begin in 2019.

IRC's International Programme: the baseline 2018



1. Introduction

To reach the ambition of Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the institutional, political, regulatory and financial systems will need to change considerably in the next five years. Despite increases in investments in the sector, for many low and middle-income countries the provision of WASH services has stagnated. The finance required is simply much higher than the finance presently available.

For systems to change, many global players – inside and outside the WASH sector – will need to put much more emphasis on the development, strengthening and change of WASH systems in the countries they support or work. These players include bilaterals, multilaterals, INGOs and foundations, and various global platforms and networks focusing on WASH such as Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN), Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), SuSanA etc. There is the broader set of financing institutions involved in funding WASH, and networks and associations of civil society organisations (CSOs) that all need to partake in strengthening WASH systems.

Global actors can contribute to systems change at country level, by changing their own:

- discourse: this refers to the extent to which WASH systems change is internalised in global debates;
- policies: the formal policies and approaches of the various global actors;
- finance: the extent to which global actors actually change funding towards systems change;
- practices: the extent to which global actors apply certain approaches, methods and tools in their activities.

IRC's International Programme has articulated its approach towards global change in the form of a Theory of Change. This report presents a baseline of the current situation of the various elements of that Theory of Change at global level (in 2018). Specifically, it presents the indicators – both qualitative and quantitative – used to assess the various elements of the Theory of Change. In addition, this report presents the baseline situation and a short analysis of each of these indicators.

The document starts with a summary of the Theory of Change in Chapter 3, followed by the methodology used for establishing the baseline in Chapter 4, findings of the baseline analysis in Chapter 5, and conclusions in Chapter 6.

2. The role of IRC at global level

IRC seeks to contribute to change processes at global level. This carries on from our original mandate: sharing our knowledge and experience of WASH on the one hand, and advocating our core messages on the other. We do this by drawing on our own and partners' experiences in our focus countries and districts (and beyond). We aim to feed the growing global demand for quality information about what works and, just as importantly, what doesn't.

The specific objective of IRC's International Programme is therefore to advocate at global level for systems change and building strong national systems as a required approach to reach SDG 6. We do this by:

- using evidence from our focus countries and districts for advocacy at regional and global levels;
- combining lessons learned from our focus countries and districts to gain new insights into building systems;
- bringing global innovations to our focus countries and districts;
- provide hub type functions such as facilitating and convening relevant international platforms for open discussions on key areas of the sector;
- coalition building and resource mobilisation for sector systems strengthening, mainly by capitalising on our position in existing partnerships (Sanitation and Water for All, RWSN, WSSCC, Millennium Water Alliance, End Water Poverty, etc.).

3. Theory of Change of IRC's International Programme

3.1 International WASH sector context

The challenge posed by the SDGs is clear: to serve the immediate needs of the unserved and at the same time build the national and local systems necessary to maintain and steadily improve services over time, and ensure long-term sustainability. A shift is needed from piecemeal project-based initiatives to a comprehensive long-term approach that supports permanent service delivery and strengthens local systems. Fragmented initiatives need to be harmonised under unified, government-led plans and the building blocks for sustainable service delivery put into place at all levels. Efforts need to be redoubled to enable sub-national (e.g. district and municipal) authorities to fulfil their decentralised mandates regarding planning, financing, managing and supporting service delivery.

There are also limited capacities for: global and regional CSOs to support their constituencies to influence national governments; public and private funders to ensure adequate WASH investments; running universal and sustainable WASH service delivery; and defining dedicated strategies to overcome increasing inequalities in access to WASH within countries.

Reaching SDG 6 is going to be very costly. Most of the cost and financing discussions in the sector focus on: the construction of infrastructure; promoting the private sector; and, creating markets and demand for infrastructure. These discussions are important, but they are still about construction costs. The major financial discussions we need to have in the sector revolve around the need for major, irregular maintenance and replacement of old infrastructure and, even more important, the costs of the people that ensure that services are provided and regulation is enforced. Different financing mechanisms are currently in place in the water and sanitation sector to address the yearly billion-dollar price tag that is required to reach SDG 6 by 2030. However, there is not a clear understanding, about what these mechanisms and instruments are, how they work and most importantly if they are accessible to the lowest income countries.

3.2 The role of IRC's International Programme

Strong partnerships with global actors will be created to push forward the approach as well as develop a considerable body of work on adequate financing models for SDG 6. The Programme will also advocate on global and regional platforms for CSOs to be considered an important pillar in the governance process and in holding governments accountable to SDG 6.

IRC's International Programme will document the rationale and tools to implement the systems strengthening and the roadmap. It will train IRC staff across all programmes and other organisations to use and implement the tools. It will measure and document the evidence of the impact of the systems strengthening approach in countries and at international level using a public reporting tool.

The vision of where we want to be in 2021 is that:

- the systems strengthening approach is being implemented by key agencies and governments in the sector and is part of the development discourse for the sector;
- the core building blocks for strong WASH systems are being implemented; and
- there is a public online reporting tool that shows the impact of the approach at national and district levels and that expands to districts beyond the IRC country offices.

We want several countries to develop, implement and monitor multi-annual sector financing strategies with more money disbursed for direct support and the enabling environment, that is, people and institutions required to deliver WASH services/SDG 6, more domestic resource mobilisation in the countries and districts where IRC works and advocate for more efficiency in public administration.

We want several countries to develop, implement and monitor multi-annual sector financing strategies with more money disbursed for direct support and the enabling environment. This entails the people and institutions required to deliver WASH services/SDG 6; more domestic resource mobilisation in the countries and districts where IRC works; and advocacy for more efficient public administration.

This cycle for multi-annual planning, budgeting and monitoring needs to be done using multi-stakeholder platforms including CSOs, thereby enhancing transparency and enabling improved accountability. We want to increase the active participation of CSOs in national and local WASH planning and budgeting processes.

We want all IRC staff to be able to gain a thorough understanding of the systems strengthening approach and employ the tools to implement the different building blocks. Additionally, we would like to be able to train others in implementing the building blocks tools. More specifically, we would like to be able to support the development of WASH master plans and budgets; implement the culture of asset management plans; support or advocate for the increase of the tax base at local level; and be savvy in discussing finance mechanisms to fill the gaps.

3.3 Results framework

IRC's international Programme aims to achieve eight intermediate outcomes by 2021, all interlinked with IRC's three Global Outcomes.



3.4 Quantitative and qualitative indicators

The intermediate outcomes can be tracked by combining quantitative and qualitative indicators.

| Intermediate outcome | Quantitative indicators | Qualitative indicators | Interview questions |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Intermediate outcome 1.1: Global actors are committed to the systems strengthening approach.</p> <p>IRC supports the Agenda for Change, Sanitation and Water for All and other partnerships focused on systems strengthening. IRC's role is to ensure that systems strengthening stays at the centre of these partnerships such as with SWA, WSSCC, MWA and others in terms of their strategies, workplans and messaging.</p> <p>This will be achieved by strong partnership with NGOs and philanthropists committed to the Agenda for Change, and IRC's active participation in the different governance bodies of the SWA partnership, its role in the MWA board and through an engagement with the GLAAS team, the expert group of SDG 6 of UN-Water and close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>No. of partnerships and networks IRC is engaging with on sector strengthening approaches, globally.</p> <p>No. of partnerships and networks that are promoting and supporting a systems strengthening approach or are focusing on specific building blocks.</p> <p>Internally</p> <p>Number of memberships within Agenda for Change (AfC).</p> <p>Analysis of the membership with AfC: do they have a Memorandum of Understanding, do they comply with principles, do they actively contribute to the global hub, do they shift the focus to their specific roles in the WASH systems, how many partnerships have demonstrated financial commitment?</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Quality of the engagement with the WASH systems strengthening approach of the partnerships and networks.</p> | <p>How would you gauge commitment from global actors to the systems strengthening approach?</p> <p>Which particular partnerships operating at the global level do you think are effectively promoting this systems strengthening approach?</p> <p>What are the strengths of these partnerships?</p> <p>What aspects could be strengthened to be more effective in terms of enhancing commitment from global actors to the systems strengthening approach at the national level?</p> |

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| <p>Intermediate outcome 1.2: CSOs have dedicated seats at the table with appropriate channels and capacity to hold governments accountable to SDG 6.</p> <p>IRC will continue to work with End Water Poverty (EWP), the African Civil Society Network for Water and Sanitation (ANEWS), Coalition Eau (CE) in West Africa and with Freshwater Action Network for South Asia (FANSA) in strengthening their evidence base to effectively advocate at the regional and global levels.</p> <p>The emphasis will be to: ensure accountability mechanisms are set in place for SDG 6 including WASH and IWRM; influence policy for adequate WASH investments that promote universal and sustainable service delivery for the poor.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>No. of lower and middle-income countries with formal government-led multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms for sector planning and review, and mechanisms that include non-governmental stakeholders.</p> <p>No. of CSOs that participate actively in national accountability mechanisms to hold governments accountable for national policy priorities and targets and/or SDG 6.</p> <p>No. of global and regional CSO networks that actively participate in international and regional policy influencing platforms.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Reflect on trends in CSOs holding national governments to account for SDG 6.</p> | <p>Do you think that CSOs have the appropriate channels (for example, dedicated seats at the table of global or regional partnerships) at international and regional level to hold governments accountable for SDG 6?</p> <p>At country level, do you think CSOs have the appropriate capacity to hold governments accountable for SDG 6? (Examples?)</p> <p>If not, what would enhance this capacity at global level? At regional level? At national level?</p> |
| <p>Intermediate outcome 1.3: three-fold increase in the number of countries that implement multi-annual public sector financing plans over a 3 year period at least (at national or district level).</p> <p>With the organisations and networks mentioned above, plus Water.org and Dutch finance innovators, we will need to develop effective advocacy strategies to create awareness that adequate multi-annual financial plans are essential to achieve SDG 6 and document and disseminate effective alternatives to financing the gaps to achieve SDG 6, i.e. rural WASH, the most excluded, not creditworthy small-town utilities.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>No. of countries for which IRC has tracked financial planning of WASH services.</p> <p>No. of countries tracked by IRC that have introduced multi-annual sector financing plans with engagement of sector stakeholders (or through multi stakeholder platforms).</p> <p>No. of countries tracked by IRC that have implemented multi-annual sector financing plans over a three-year period.</p> <p>No. of countries tracked by IRC that include the financing of the enabling environment in their financial planning.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Reflect on the quality of multi-annual financial planning of the countries tracked by IRC.</p> | <p>Do you know any country currently implementing multi-annual public sector financing plans over a 3 year period at least? For those countries that use multi-annual financial planning, how effective do you think these processes are? What gaps do you see in these processes?</p> <p>For those countries that use multi-annual financial planning, what has been the CSO engagement in it?</p> <p>What approach do you think has the greatest effect in influencing countries/ districts to adopt this approach?</p> |
| <p>Intermediate outcome 2.1: The roadmap¹ to implement the systems strengthening approach is seen as the preferred model to reach SDG 6 (mainly the WASH and IWRM targets).</p> <p>This requires successful advocacy for national systems building, increased finance and appropriate financial models for the sector; successful advocacy for service delivery; government leadership; use of national systems; public finance; research and learning in the global WASH arena and multi stakeholder engagement. We will also continue to support the development of the Theory of Change of other organisations as a key influencing strategy.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Number of partners that are committed to the roadmap to achieve SDG 6 or parts of it.</p> <p>Number of references to the roadmap as the preferred model for achieving SDG 6.</p> <p>Number of global networks and/or development partners that adopt the sector strengthening approach in their organisational strategies and promote the development of national or local roadmaps for its implementation in partner countries.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Reflect on the quality of the commitment of partners to the roadmap for achieving SDG 6. Do they subscribe to the concept/approach? Do they explicitly refer to WASH systems? Do they build specific capacities to support a WASH systems approach?</p> | <p>What tools does your organisation use to promote a systems strengthening approach?</p> |

¹ Roadmap = Implementation of systematic strengthening of WASH building blocks using an iterative approach to assessment, participatory prioritisation with government and other stakeholders, and implementation of improvements.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Intermediate outcome 2.2: The roadmap and building blocks become a primary reference point/guide for the implementation of the systems strengthening approach.</p> <p>Firstly this requires the impact generated by the Agenda for Change and implementation of the systems strengthening approach to be documented and publicly monitored (with the development of an online dashboard and public reporting tool). Secondly it means we can consolidate lessons and evidence from the districts and from partner organisations that are using the roadmap and specific building blocks of the systems strengthening approach. It requires effective global sharing of news, evidence, experience, tools and approaches. In 2019, we will bring together the latest knowledge, thinkers and innovators from within and outside the sector and organise a systems strengthening seminar.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>No. of development partners that refer to experiences documented through Agenda for Change as an implementation model for WASH systems strengthening. No. of publications that mention Agenda for Change partners and their approaches as models for implementing WASH systems strengthening.</p> <p>Sources</p> <p>Reference checks Google scholar Media mentions</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>- Reflect on the quality of the references in publications and by donors to the Agenda for Change model for implementing WASH systems strengthening. Is the model supported/promoted? Are building capacities for a WASH systems approach supported?</p> | |
| <p>Intermediate outcome 2.3: Models for leveraging public finance and using public finance more effectively to leverage private finance to reach the poorest are a core part of SDG Goal 6 financing discussions.</p> <p>This will require the creation of a strong partnership of global organisations (including WASH and non-WASH) interested in developing and experimenting with appropriate financial models for the sector, and making financial discussions in the sector 'mainstream'.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>No. of international financing bodies and mechanisms that include specific measures for increasing public finance so that the poorest have access to sustainable services. No. of governments that take specific measures to increase public finance for ensuring sustainable services for the poorest.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Reflect on the quality of measures for public finance for the poorest and provide the narrative.</p> | <p>What do you think is at the heart of current financing discussions about SDG 6?</p> <p>Do you see these discussions meaningfully discussing ways to leverage public finance to reach the poorest?</p> <p>And using public finance to leverage private finance?</p> <p>Are models for either sufficiently well documented and shared?</p> |
| <p>Intermediate outcome 3.1: IRC is seen as a primary source of knowledge and skills for sector actors that want to adopt a systems strengthening approach.</p> <p>IRC's International Programme will focus on documenting the rationale ('why') of and tools ('how') for implementing WASH systems strengthening.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>No. of people trained in face-to-face sessions. No. of people trained in online training courses. No. of consultancy days contracted that address the systems strengthening approach. No. of positive evaluations of consultancy and training assignments.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Reflect on the quality and relevance of the training provided for strengthening local and national WASH systems.</p> | <p>Where do you go for information and knowledge around governance, systems, processes – i.e. the systems strengthening approach?</p> <p>What is your view of IRC in terms of its contribution in this space?</p> |
| <p>Intermediate outcome 3.2: IRC staff and associates have supported other key actors to adopt and implement a systems strengthening approach.</p> <p>IRC's International Programme will develop and deliver training for IRC programme staff on the building blocks and all its tools. It will also train other organisations to use and implement the tools and develop an online platform for doing so.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>% of staff in a given year that has completed the generalist training. % of staff in given year that has completed a specialisation module. Number of IRC projects that use IRC building block and systems strengthening tools in their monitoring frameworks.</p> | <p>Dashboard</p> <p>Reflect on the capacity of IRC staff and associates to support other organisations with implementing a WASH systems strengthening approach.</p> | <p>What do you think of IRC's capacity to support your organisation and other key organisations in the sector in enabling a systems strengthening approach?</p> |

4. Methodology for assessing the baseline

4.1 Data collection

Data collection methods were as follows.

- Desk study of relevant sector reports and documents. This includes background literature reviews, and the following five studies conducted by IRC's International Programme:
 - Systems Strengthening Approach, the building blocks;
 - Review of Accountability Mechanisms for SDG 6 for High-Level Political Forum July 2018;
 - The finance paper for the Ministerial Meeting March 2017;
 - Foundational elements for finance for World Water Forum March 2019;
 - Systems Strengthening Symposium proceedings 2019.
- Data collected from social media and through the IRC web presence.
- Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders done by an external consultant. The list of organisations and individuals interviewed is presented in Annex 3.

4.2 Scoring of the intermediate outcomes

A five step scale scoring is used for the final summary score of each intermediate outcome.

- 5 = Dark green. All conditions are met and there is substantial evidence.
- 4= Light green. Most conditions are met and there is significant progress underway toward optimum conditions in the intermediate outcome.
- 3= Yellow. There is progress in some aspects, but more still needs to be done, or there is mixed progress across the intermediate outcome.
- 2= Orange. A few conditions are in place and/or there is some evidence of progress towards the intermediate outcome.
- 1 = Red. Most conditions are not yet in place, there are significant challenges and much still needs to be done in many areas of the intermediate outcome.

The intermediate outcomes were scored by combining the results of the external interviews (qualitative part) with the more quantitative indicators.

5. The baseline (2018) for the intermediate outcomes (2021)

This section states the Intermediate Outcome (highlighted), describes the baseline status in 2018 and provides the scoring of the qualitative and quantitative assessments.

Intermediate outcome 1.1: Global actors are committed to the systems strengthening approach.

At the start of 2018, IRC manages a global hub to support the Agenda for Change, Sanitation and Water for All and other partnerships. IRC's role is to ensure that systems strengthening stays at the centre of these partnerships in terms of their work plans and messaging. This will be achieved by a strong partnership of NGOs and philanthropists committed to the Agenda for Change, engagement with the expert group of SDG 6 of UN-Water and close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 2/5

The general view is that this space is evolving with more global actors moving beyond lip service to actually developing strategies that translate into a more coherent, long-term way forward. Some are also seeing an easing up on the 'numbers game' from funders to a more systemic approach, though this is largely still based on the efforts of individuals rather than on an overarching approach from different organisations. The slow shift in approach is being strengthened by the SDG requirements to reach **all** with sustainable services, by discussions around SWA's Collaborative Behaviours, and through emerging evidence from district-wide approach work.

The key will be to link metrics, milestones, and then an objective analysis of progress to give confidence to government and funders about the most effective way forward. A number of conversations will support greater ownership – like between WASH and IWRM, between bottom-up and macro levels, and between water and economic development. Short-term political cycles and inappropriate financial targets (including through results-based programming) create perverse incentives that work against transparency as well systems strengthening more generally. There is limited confidence in global partnerships to shift the discourse in a practical way unless they can clearly point to actual evidence of impact at country level and call out underperformers.

Quantitative assessment: Scoring 2/5

- No. of partnerships and networks IRC is engaging with globally (specifically the number of memberships within Agenda for Changes): eight formal partnerships. IRC is working closely with many other organisations that are not officially members of Agenda for Change such as Safe Water Network and Catholic Relief Services.
- No. of organisations and networks that are promoting a systems strengthening approach or are focusing on specific building blocks: 18 (see annex). These are all Agenda for Change members, partners from the Sustainable WASH Systems work and all Hilton grantees we are working with. However, we cannot be fully sure if these organisations would meet IRC criteria for systems approaches/systems strengthening focus of their work.

Intermediate outcome 1.2: CSOs have dedicated seats at the table with appropriate channels and capacity to hold governments accountable to SDG 6.

In 2018, IRC works with End Water Poverty (EWP), the African Civil Society Network for Water and Sanitation (ANEW), Coalition Eau (CE) in West Africa and with Freshwater Action Network for South Asia (FANSA) in strengthening their evidence base to effectively advocate at the regional and global levels. The emphasis is to ensure accountability mechanisms are set in place for SDG 6 including WASH and IWRM and influence policy for adequate WASH investments that promote universal and sustainable service delivery for the poor.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 3/5

There is a general sense that NGOs have channels at the global level to influence, although it is always the 'same people showing up'. However, NGOs often lack capacity to inform high-level discussions, and their legitimacy is also a problem, often lacking a strong mandate from their constituencies. In terms of channels for engagement, as an alternative to global/regional forums, the UN Special Rapporteur can provide a more directly accountability-minded mechanism for civil society. Several key challenges revolve around whether the 'business model' of most CSOs restricts their voice, pressuring CSOs to address the safer (technical) issues. Thus begging the question whether CSOs are 'too close to government'. This is a key question.

Ideally, more balanced, less inflammatory, less complicated language about the effectiveness of enhanced coordination as coherent stories of success could be more effective in delivering the evidence. Whilst water allocations and expanding WASH coverage might be contentious, the service quality agenda is 'more mundane about getting service providers to do what they signed up to do'. The sense is that this should be the primary function of civil society for the WASH sector.

Quantitative assessment: Scoring 2/5

- No. of lower and middle income countries with formal government-led multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms for sector planning and review, and whose mechanisms include non-governmental stakeholders. At least the following: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Haiti, Kenya, Lao, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Zambia, Zimbabwe. (SWA, 2017)
- No. of CSOs that participate actively in national accountability mechanisms to hold governments accountable for national policy priorities and targets and/or SDG 6: Unknown.
- No. of global and regional CSO networks that participate actively in international and regional policy influencing platforms: 3 (ANEW, EWP and FANSA).

Intermediate outcome 1.3: A three-fold increase in the number of countries that implement multi-annual public sector financing plans over at least a 3 year period (at national or district level).

In 2018, with Water.org, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and Dutch finance innovators, we will need to develop effective advocacy strategies to create awareness that adequate multi-annual financial plans are essential to achieve SDG 6. At the same time, we will need to document and disseminate effective alternatives to financing the gaps to achieve SDG 6, i.e. rural WASH, the most excluded, and non-creditworthy small-town utilities.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 1/5

To this line of inquiry, responses were vague: the general sense is that countries are not effectively developing multi-annual public sector financing plans. Most countries have multi-year plans, but these remain unrealistic and insufficiently thought-through, seen as a funding wish list, and not genuinely connected to political will (including around tariff setting and other aspects). As a mechanism to 'raise funds', this may be insufficient as other enabling environment elements might need to happen first: around regulation, investment policy, taxation laws etc. Joint sector review processes are generally viewed as helpful but are weakly executed – seen as a proxy indicator that basic processes are in place rather than as an impetus for hard-nosed negotiation on prioritisation and planning. Where there is multi-year planning and budgeting, it does not practically translate into being able to keep unspent money for investment in subsequent years. Countries that generally came up in the interviews included Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, India and Brazil. Most respondents said they refer to GLAAS for further information.

Quantitative assessment: scoring 1/5

- No. of countries for which IRC has tracked financial planning of WASH services: 4 out of 37 countries (see Annex 4)

| | Yes | Partly |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Sector finance plan exists? | 4 out of 37 countries | 20 out of 37 countries and mostly for urban sub-sector |
| Are WASH government expenditure <u>reports</u> available? | 21 out of 37 countries | 10 out of 37 countries |
| Are WASH government expenditure <u>data</u> available? | 0 out of 37 countries | 12 out of 37 countries |

Source: SWA 2017

- No. of countries tracked by IRC that have introduced multi-annual sector financing plans = 0.
- No. of countries tracked by IRC that have implemented multi-annual sector financing plans over a three-year period = 0.
- No. of countries tracked by IRC that include the financing of the enabling environment in their financial planning = 0.

Intermediate outcome 2.1: The roadmap to implement the systems strengthening approach is seen as the preferred model to reach SDG 6 (mainly the WASH and IWRM targets).

This requires successful advocacy for national systems building, increased finance and appropriate financial models for the sector; successful advocacy for service delivery; government leadership; use of national systems; public finance; multi stakeholder platforms and multi stakeholder involvement; and, research and learning in the global WASH arena. We will also continue to support the development of the Theory of Change of other organisations as a key influencing strategy.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 2/5

The general sense from the interviews is that this is a confusing space with competing initiatives and too many tools taking users into more conceptual debates rather than looking at simple, small steps to strengthen systems. The SWA Collaborative Behaviours and the WASH System Building blocks were mentioned frequently at the macro level. Tools such as outcome surveys, citizen scorecards, budget tracking and other social accountability tools were remembered at the more local level. From the interviews, we infer that the roadmap has potential to take root in this space but the added value will only be derived from direct use in and clear documentation from a number of country contexts.

Quantitative assessment: scoring 2/5

- No. of partners that are committed to the roadmap

to achieve SDG 6 or committed to parts of it: 9 (see Annex 5).

- No. of references to the roadmap as the preferred model for achieving SDG 6: 0 (see Annex 6).

Intermediate outcome 2.2: The roadmap and building blocks become the primary reference point/guide for the implementation of the systems strengthening approach.

Firstly, this requires that the impact generated by the Agenda for Change and implementation of the systems strengthening approach is documented and publicly monitored (with the development of an online dashboard and public reporting tool). Secondly, it means we can consolidate lessons and evidence from the districts that are using the roadmap and specific building blocks of the systems strengthening approach in iterating the guide to implementation. It requires effective global sharing of news, evidence, experience, tools and approaches. In 2019, we will bring together the latest knowledge, thinkers and innovators from within and outside the sector and organise a systems strengthening seminar.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 1/5

In 2018 the dashboard will be published and stories of impact will be shared. Progress expected in 2019.

Quantitative assessment: Scoring 1/5

No. of donors that refer to the Agenda for Change as an implementation model for WASH systems strengthening = 0.

No. of publications that mention Agenda for Change as a model for implementing WASH systems strengthening = 0.

Intermediate outcome 2.3: Models for leveraging public finance and using public finance more effectively to leverage private finance to reach the poorest are a core part of SDG Goal 6 financing discussions.

Intermediate outcome 2.3: Models for lever

This will require the creation of a strong partnership of global organisations interested in developing and experimenting with appropriate financial models for the sector and bringing financial discussions in the sector to become 'mainstream'.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 1/5

There is a general sense that WASH professionals are not very knowledgeable about nor can they speak the language of finance, particularly about the benefits of investing in WASH interventions. Interviewees did not have much confidence in the discussions at the global level regarding finance for WASH, which generally

revolve around domestic resource mobilisation. None of the respondents questioned the domestic finance agenda, but did note that the level of sophistication at the moment does not seem very high.

Bringing the finance ministers in to Sanitation and Water for All was seen as an effective strategy but the sector was not prepared with evidence to sufficiently back up that conversation, particularly with regard to whether the sector is recommending debt and what that debt looks like practically.

A key requirement is to link up the IWRM (water for industry and agriculture) conversations with WASH and to embed these discussions into the economic development costs of not investing in water/sanitation. A lack of confidence from outside the sector revolves around factors including:

- The emphasis on big ticket items with high upfront costs and long repayment rates (with the presumption of rife corruption) juxtaposed against a sector increasingly focused on more localised community level responses (to ensure appropriate technologies, viable tariff structures, easier management and maintenance etc.). Finance usually talks in terms of hundreds of millions while the WASH sector is bringing in smaller and smaller-scale investments.
- WASH doesn't pay for itself – water tariffs are rarely in line with the costs of providing the service (at present and into the future).
- Emphasis in the sector is around finding efficiencies (to save money, to promote financial creditworthiness etc.) but with limited clarity/evidence around how these efficiencies are best achieved (leakage reduction, energy savings, recovering tariffs from non-payers etc.) and how these savings translate practically into expansion of services, greater sustainability etc. Thus, the sector has a lack of targeting and absorption capacity and does not recognise the costs of reaching the most marginalised. 'We are still in the cherry-picking stage early in the SDG era'.
- Under decentralised systems, the sector has not sufficiently worked out the approval and management mechanisms with capacity at decentralised local authority level quite limited.
- The water sector is not providing enough guarantees or other risk mitigation measures to safeguard investments.

Quantitative assessment: Scoring 1/5

- No. of international financing bodies and mechanisms that include specific measures for increasing public finance for the water and sanitation sector in such a way that the poorest have access to sustainable services = 0.

- No. of governments that take specific measures to increase public finance for ensuring sustainable WASH services for the poorest = 0.

Intermediate outcome 3.1: IRC is seen as a primary source of knowledge and skills for sector actors that want to adopt a systems strengthening approach.

IRC's International Programme will focus on documenting the rationale ('why') and tools ('how') of implementing WASH systems strengthening.

Qualitative assessment: scoring 3/5

Interviewees talked about a wide range of sources, and with IRC as the primary focus alongside Sanitation and Water for All and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Whilst IRC has a solid reputation in developing, framing and disseminating information, there was some general concern expressed in a variety of ways whether IRC is 'drowning our intended audiences in complexity'. One respondent explained that it is 'normal in our discovery of how things work to initially convey this learning through complexity'. IRC's job then is to 'reduce the complexity, show how things can be done, and not scare [target audiences] by making it into such a big deal'. At the end of the day, IRC needs to convey simple ways of coordination rather than the daunting task of 'systems change'. IRC tends to portray all its work in this 'newest, boldest' framing. 'Creating debate is good – creating confusion is bad ...'

Regarding IRC's credibility, this is increasingly coming from the organisation's relationship with government in country – this needs to be used effectively to frame IRC's engagement at the global level.

Quantitative assessment: Scoring 3/5

- No. of people trained in face-to-face sessions = 618.
- No. of people trained in online training courses = 454.
- No. of consultancy days contracted that address the systems strengthening approach = 0.
- No. of positive evaluations of consultancy and training assignments = 0.

Intermediate outcome 3.2: IRC staff and associates have supported other key actors to adopt and implement a systems strengthening approach.

IRC's International Programme will develop and deliver training for IRC programme staff on the building blocks and all its tools. It will also train other organisations to use and implement the tools and develop an online platform for doing so.

Qualitative assessment: Scoring 3/5

There is a general appreciation for IRC's forward-looking contribution. A number of recommendations were made as follows whereby IRC should do the following.

- In SWA, break down the sector strengthening agenda into bite-sized user-friendly pieces particularly to support those working at the more political edges of WASH advocacy and then specialise in a handful of these (particularly those that we understand less).
- Bring more rigour (including by teaming up with academics) to the evidence base around what is working (moving away from the diagnostics of what the problems are). Helpful documentation on sector strengthening approaches in action is seemingly not very prevalent and IRC should hence focus on communicating messages clearly (being mindful of not generating conflicting messages with other key organisations).
- Bridge the conversation between IWRM and WASH more effectively.
- Make the case for longer term funding in conjunction with developing forecasting tools.
- Analyse the education sector for guidance particularly through the Civil Society Education Fund/Global Campaign for Education, or Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (AADP) for agriculture.

Practicalities:

- IRC may need to revisit its own tariff structures, which may be prohibitive;
- IRC should bring in other expertise beyond what we already have in the sector;
- IRC should focus on tools for facilitators to help implementers, particularly around financial supply chain.

Quantitative assessment: scoring 2/5

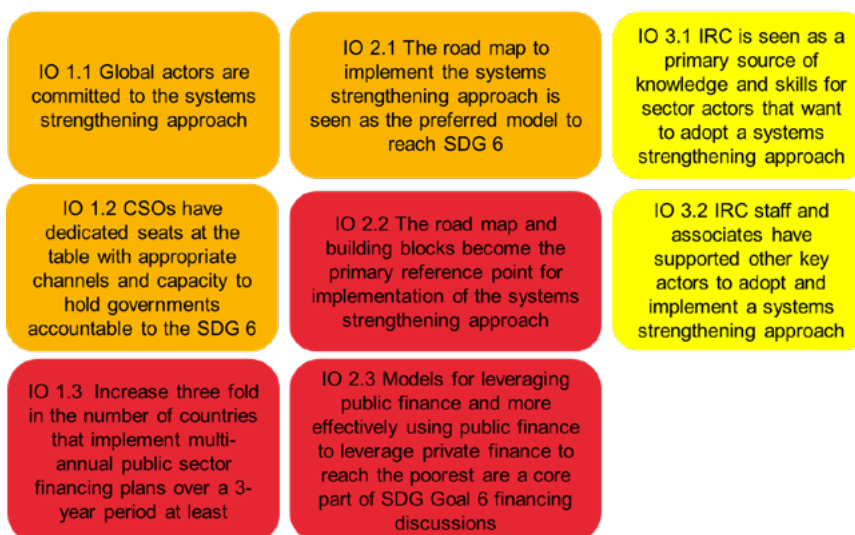
- % of staff in a given year that has completed the generalist training.
- % of staff in a given year that has completed a specialisation module.
- Number of IRC projects that use IRC building blocks and systems strengthening tools in their monitoring frameworks.

6. Conclusions

The main weaknesses in the sector globally relate to the lack of political commitment towards sector financing and the application of public finance models to finance SDG 6, as well as to the application of a step by step roadmap towards the implementation of the systems strengthening approach.

In terms of commitment to the systems strengthening approach, there is some commitment from key sector organisations to the concept and to the general roadmap for its implementation. The capacity building component shows partial progress because, although IRC is already seen as a primary source of knowledge and skills in the sector, most of the tools and training courses are still under development and we will be able to track progress in 2019.

IRC's International Programme: the baseline 2018



7. References

Fonseca, C., and Pories, L., 2017. Financing WASH: how to increase funds for the sector while reducing inequities. Position paper for the Sanitation and Water for All Finance Ministers Meeting, April 19, 2017. https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/2017-4-19_financing_wash_position_paper_final.pdf

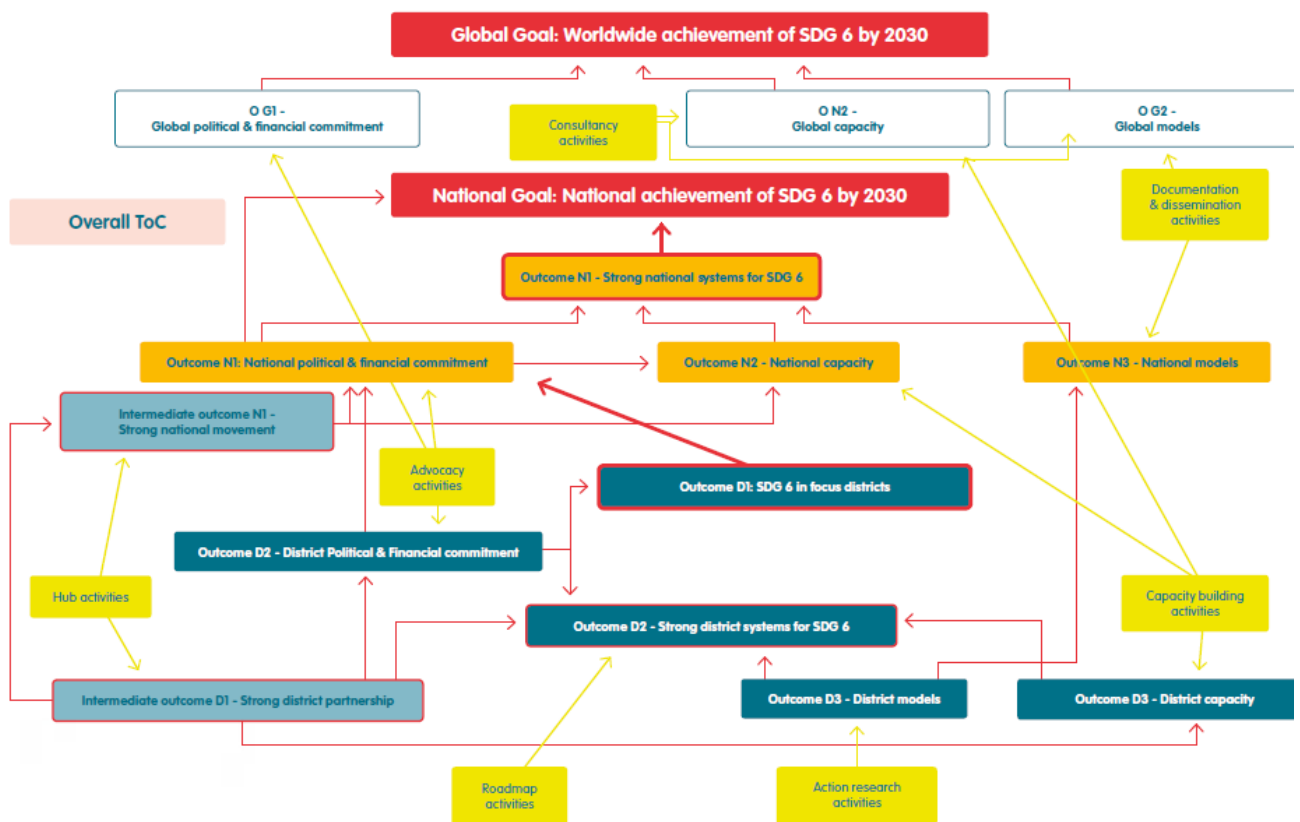
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Systems Strengthening All Systems Go! Symposium, March 12-14, 2019. Proceedings available here: <https://www.ircwash.org/proceedings>

Annex 1: IRC Theory of Change



Annex 2: List of stakeholders interviewed

1. Tom Slaymaker, Joint Monitoring Programme
2. Paul Deverill, DFID
3. Jesse Shapiro, USAID
4. Miguel Vargas, World Bank
5. Eleanor Allen, Water for People
6. Vincent Casey, WaterAid
7. Sean Furey, RWSN
8. Catarina de Albuquerque, SWA
9. Carolien van der Voorden, WSSCC
10. Lotte Feuerstein, Water Integrity Network
11. Al-Hassan Adam, End Water Poverty
12. Heloise Chicou, SWA
13. Samson Shivaji, KWASNET
14. Zobair Hasan, DORP
15. Niels Vlandereen, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, Government of the Netherlands
16. Muyatwa Sitali, SWA

Annex 3: No. of organisations and networks that are promoting a systems strengthening approach

1. Tetra Tech
2. Environmental Incentives
3. University of Colorado Boulder, Mortonson Centre for Engineering in Developing Communities
4. LINC
5. WaterAid
6. Water For People
7. Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment
8. Water4
9. Safe Water Network
10. CARE
11. Water For Good
12. Welthungerhilfe (SSI)
13. Aguaconsult
14. Osprey Foundation
15. Hilton Foundation
16. Splash
17. Millennium Water Alliance
18. USAID

Annex 4 No. of countries with financial plans

Source: SWA country scans 2017 + IRC country programmes

| Country | WASH government expenditure reports are available | WASH government expenditure data are available? | Central government exp data | State/provinci exp data | Local level exp data | Sector finance plan exists? | Urban sanitation finance plan | Rural sanitation finance plan | Urban drinking water finance plan | Rural drinking water finance plan |
|--------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Afghanistan | Partly | no | no | no | no | no | no | no | no | no |
| Bangladesh | yes | partly | yes | no | no | 2/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Bhutan | yes | partly | partly | partly | partly | no | no | no | no | no |
| Brazil | yes | partly | partly | partly | partly | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Burkina Faso | yes | no | no | no | no | 5/5 stars | yes | partly | yes | yes |
| Burundi | partly | no | no | no | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| China | no | no | no | no | no | no | no | no | no | no |
| Costa Rica | yes | partly | partly | no | no | no | no | no | no | no |
| Cote d'Ivoire | yes | no | no | no | no | 5/5 stars | yes | yes | yes | yes |
| Ethiopia | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Guinea | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | yes | yes |
| Haiti | no | no | no | no | no | 1/5 stars | no | no | partly | partly |
| Kenya | partly | partly | partly | partly | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Lao | yes | partly | partly | partly | no | 2/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Lesotho | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 4/5 stars | yes | partly | yes | partly |
| Liberia | no | no | no | no | no | 2/5 stars | partly | no | partly | no |
| Madagascar | yes | partly | no | no | no | 1/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Maldives | no | no | no | no | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Mali | yes | partly | yes | no | partly | 4/5 stars | yes | partly | yes | partly |
| Mexico | no | partly | partly | no | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Mongolia | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 1/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Mozambique | partly | partly | partly | partly | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Nigeria | yes | partly | partly | partly | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Nepal | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Pakistan | yes | no | no | no | no | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Paraguay | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 5/5 stars | yes | yes | yes | yes |
| Peru | yes | partly | partly | partly | partly | no | no | no | no | no |
| Rwanda | partly | partly | partly | no | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Senegal | partly | partly | partly | no | no | no | no | no | yes | no |
| South Africa | partly | partly | partly | no | no | 5/5 stars | yes | partly | yes | partly |
| Swaziland | no | partly | no | partly | partly | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Tanzania | yes | no | no | no | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Timor-Leste | partly | no | no | no | no | 1/5 stars | partly | no | partly | partly |
| Viet Nam | partly | partly | partly | partly | partly | 3/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | yes |
| West Bank and Gaza | partly | no | no | no | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Zambia | yes | partly | partly | no | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |
| Zimbabwe | yes | partly | partly | yes | no | 4/5 stars | partly | partly | partly | partly |

Annex 5: No. of partners that are committed to the roadmap for achieving SDG 6 or to parts of it:

1. Water For People
2. WaterAid
3. Osprey Foundation
4. USAID
5. University of Colorado Boulder, Mortonson Centre for Engineering in Developing Communities
6. TetraTech
7. Welthungerhilfe (SSI)
8. Aguaconsult
9. Millennium Water Alliance

Annex 6 : No. of references to the roadmap as preferred model for achieving SDG 6:

There are currently no references made to the roadmap, as preferred model for achieving SDG 6.

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