

IRC

Annual Report 2014



Supporting water sanitation
and hygiene services for life

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Chairperson's message

In 2014 IRC had to go through a process of downsizing. From my position as chairperson of IRC's Supervisory Board, I have seen the organisation take sure-footed steps to reduce its staff in the Netherlands and at the same time grow its ability to fulfill its mission despite a contraction in funding.

Financial constraints are here to stay. Every government and every non-governmental organisation is learning to live with less, some more successfully than others. IRC has been innovative in addressing a shortfall in core funding.

IRCconsult, a joint venture with Aguaconsult that was launched in 2014, is one example of a creative solution: this new entity offers consulting services in water, sanitation and hygiene, thereby extending IRC's programmatic reach through contract assignments while providing new learning opportunities and projects for IRC's experienced associates and generating income for IRC's core activities.

As you read this annual report, you will see other evidence of adaptive management – an approach to challenges that IRC not only promotes but also practices – in response to change: the consolidation of website presence for more coherence and value, the fresh focus on outreach and communication of central messages, the importance placed on in-country, close-to-the-scene work.

You will also read about IRC's expanding influence – in particular, the achievements of the Triple-S programme, which wrapped up in 2014. Through persistence, commitment and focused effort, that project accelerated a change in the sector and helped put the sustainability of services on the world's agenda.

It is instructive to work with IRC's people and observe that they are always learning, always improving their operations, always seeking new opportunities and value, all while pursuing the real goal: ensuring that everyone, everywhere has access to safe and clean water, functional sanitation, and good hygiene that last forever.

Finally, as part of the internationalisation of IRC, I was delighted to welcome two new members – Meera Mehta and Henk den Boer – to the Supervisory Board in 2014.



Hans van Dord
Chairperson
Supervisory Board, IRC

CEO's message

IRC believes in the right of every human being to have a water and sanitation service that is safe, accessible, affordable, convenient and, above all, trustworthy. We do not provide new services directly. Many organisations already do that well and we work with them. Our niche is making sure that investments in water and sanitation hardware actually provide the intended services.

2014 was a tumultuous year for IRC that proved the old adage: "What does not kill me makes me stronger." We saw strong affirmation of our effectiveness while being forced to deal with unprecedented financial pressure. We have now entered 2015 a leaner, more resilient, more vigorous and more flexible organisation.

Two major external evaluations of our work both found that as a relatively small organisation, we are punching well above our weight, contributing to real change in how water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services are delivered to the poor. In particular, it was gratifying to see acknowledgement that we are achieving our primary goal and shifting the sector's paradigm away from simply delivering hardware (taps and toilets) and towards delivering services that last.

At the start of 2014 we launched our rebranded new website. By consolidating our digital presence – from more than 70 project and programmatic websites into one – we can better serve and engage with our partners and the sector as a whole. Another highlight of our year was welcoming 170 people to Amsterdam for the 5th Sustainability Forum, during which we addressed the pressing need for tools to provide sustainable services.

2014 was the last year of our Sustainable Services at Scale (Triple-S) project. Over its six years, Triple-S helped drive change in how our sector thinks. The ending of Triple-S coincided with the winding down of Dutch government subsidy, creating a financial challenge. To prepare for a post-subsidy future, and to continue the logic set out in our business plan of decentralizing our work, we reduced our Netherlands office by almost 30 percent, effective early 2015. This reduction in staff, though painful, was absolutely necessary and helped us achieve a neutral primary operating result (before the cost of redundancy measures is taken into account).

In 2014 IRC also continued to work on fundraising. With almost €10m of new projects identified in 2014 (up from €6.4m in 2013), the effort is putting IRC on stronger long-term financial footing. Contributing to this was the launch of IRCconsult, our joint venture with long-time partner Aguaconsult. In its first year IRCconsult provided expertise for 15 clients in 10 countries, ensuring the uptake of IRC ideas beyond our focus countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Mozambique, Uganda).

Despite the positive developments, continued support for core activities, like communications and innovation, must be a focus of future fundraising and lobbying. The sector clearly needs a strong lobbying and advocacy voice, and thus it was exciting to learn in early 2015 that our WASH IT! partnership with IRC, AKVO, Simavi and Wetlands International was one of 25 that will be supported by the Dutch government for 2016–2020.

It only remains for me to thank all of my colleagues, partners and donors for all of their support during what has been an extremely challenging year.



Patrick Moriarty
Chief Executive Officer, IRC



IRC at a glance in 2014

Inputs

11 programmes: **1** international, **3** regional and **7** country
4 country offices
51 active programmes and projects
103 staff
 Over **100** partners in development
32 funders
€10,3 million invested

Activities and products

IRC wrapped up its major Triple-S project
 IRCconsult launched
 IRC new website and brand launched
73 IRC-published research outputs
22,174 resources on IRC website
4 IRC events in the Netherlands
80 papers presented by IRC and partners at IRC (co)organised International conferences
1 journal article in peer-reviewed journal, Waterlines
1 IRC book: Priceless! Uncovering the Real Costs of Water and Sanitation
30 training sessions worldwide
300 digital and print communications
5 web-based collaborative initiatives on information and knowledge management
20 articles and press releases
20 videos on WASH issues
175 news items published on IRC's homepage
90+ blogs by IRC staff
10 E-source issues in two languages

Outcomes

87 WASH stakeholders worldwide now using terminology of service delivery
33 WASH stakeholders now applying service delivery tools and concepts in their programmes/ projects
42 WASH stakeholders actively funding service delivery approaches
47 new projects added to IRC's portfolio of initiatives
13 requests for IRC's consultancy service worldwide
19 non-focus countries with IRC engagement
31 working groups and learning platforms supported
1,000 participants to IRC (co-)organised events
 Nearly **1 million** interactions on IRC-managed websites
316,764 pageviews over **13,000** followers

Impact

2,618 water professionals trained worldwide
15.2 million people reached through work by IRC and its partners
 Service delivery approach adopted in **25** policy / planning documents for national and district-level implementation in several countries, and at global level

Locations

-  **7 focus countries**
Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mozambique and Uganda
-  **19 additional countries**
Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Cambodia, Chad, Columbia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, the Netherlands, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan and Tanzania
-  **4 country offices**
Burkina Faso, Ghana, Uganda, the Netherlands (headquarters)
-  **We are making a difference**
5 countries implementing a service delivery approach in policy: Burkina Faso, Ghana, India, Uganda, Bangladesh
... and at regional level in Asia by SNV

Achieving sustainable WASH services for all by 2030

In 2015 the international community will define the Sustainable Development Goals that herald a new approach: achieving a brighter future for the world by respecting all three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – of sustainability. IRC accepts the challenge of this post-2015 development agenda, and particularly welcomes the inclusion in it of a commitment to universal access to WASH by 2030. We commit to bringing to bear our more than 40 years of experience in working towards the principles of sustainable services at scale to achieving this!

We do not deliver or install new pumps, taps or toilets; many other organisations do that, and do it well. We work with them, and with Non Governmental Organisations, communities, businesses

and governments, so that this water and sanitation hardware is managed to deliver services – and so that these services are maintained over time.

Our strategic plan

In 2014 IRC ran eleven programmes

- One international programme, focusing on International Influencing and Innovation
- Three regional programmes: Africa, South Asia and Latin America
- Seven country programmes: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mozambique and Uganda

Of the seven focus countries, three (Burkina Faso, Ghana and Uganda) have IRC country offices staffed by local professionals. These three countries also received the most funding in 2014. Opportunities, issues and partnerships outside the focus countries were managed by IRC's regional or international programmes.

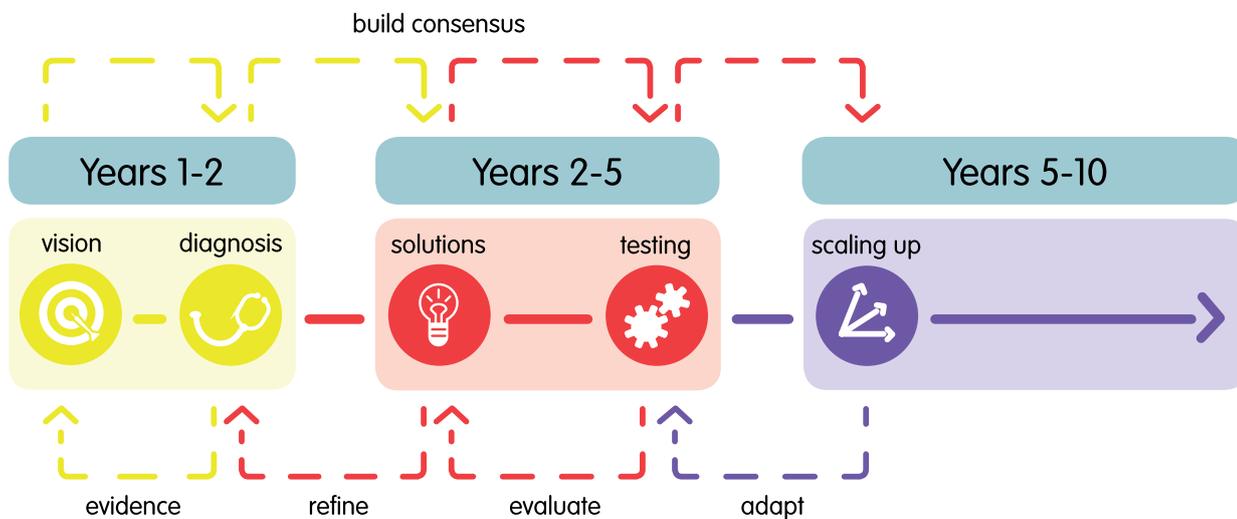
A major IRC project, Triple-S, wrapped up in 2014. We continued promoting the service delivery approach to improve access, the life-cycle costs approach to financing of WASH services, and the Everyone Forever initiative (a partnership of IRC, Water for People and Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor).

During 2014, IRC and its partners acquired, for a total of 51 active projects and assignments.

Our approach to catalysing systemic change

To achieve the goal of universal access to services that last, we seek to catalyse systemic change. We work to improve the provision of services in our focus countries and to provide proof of concept that others can adopt in other countries. We also engage internationally, advocating for change. We cooperate with national governments to ensure that district solutions feed into national plans and policies.

We share what we learn with international audiences through our media and our participation in international fora such as the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) and Rural Water and Supply Network (RWSN). As a World Health Organisation (WHO) collaborating centre, we contribute expertise and audience for international WASH standards and best practices.



A visualisation of the IRC approach to Sector change

We interact with the WASH sector as a whole. Effecting change means not just improving policy or technology but also addressing the underlying failures and challenges. Systemic failure can be remedied only by systemic action.

We work to change the sector through collaboration with governments, service providers and international organisations. We help them create systems and deliver services that transform people's lives.

We put knowledge into practice through innovative action research that helps people make cost-effective investments in WASH services.

We uncover the problems people face in maintaining services in the communities that need them most.

We help those who plan and provide services to adapt and change the way they think and operate.

We create learning communities that can develop affordable, lasting services.

We advocate policies that will ensure sustainability of services.

We share our expertise, experience and insights.



Achieving our goals: envisioning the future

The UN's proposed Sustainable Development Goal 6—"to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (by 2030)"—has long been the mission of IRC. We have been working to improve service levels, first by defining what 'service' actually means and then by developing indicators of sustainable delivery. To be sustainable, services must be monitored, and we are continuing to refine tools for tracking service levels and developing local capacity to keep water points and latrines in good repair. And of course, services need to be funded, a challenge that IRC addresses by helping stakeholders identify the life-cycle costs of water and sanitation systems and by advocating for sector budgets that will ensure sustainability.

Achieving sustainable, universal water and sanitation coverage requires systemic change in the sector. To catalyse change and innovation, IRC strives to reach four goals.

Service delivery approach (everyone forever)

Learning and adaptive sector

Government leadership (aid effectiveness)

Integration for maximum livelihoods impact

Changing the sector's focus

Service delivery approach (everyone forever). Official documents of government and international organisations should refer to access to services instead of access to taps or toilets. Access should be counted in terms of service provision instead of hardware. Countries must monitor trends in service delivery levels.

Access to water and sanitation really means access to services.

In 2014 our investments in making WASH infrastructure sustainable through a service delivery approach saw results. Stakeholders sought our help for monitoring service delivery and understanding life-cycle costs. The language of service delivery is now explicitly part of many countries' programmes and planning, and tools for its implementation are being adopted and adjusted to context.

The Government of India, the Government of Ghana, the Dutch WASH Alliance, the Millennium Water Alliance, the European Commission, the African Development Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development: these are among the 87 organisations worldwide that now speak the language of service delivery in their guidelines, policies or funding eligibility requirements. This uptake is the first essential step in changing institutional focus from hardware to services.

The concept of service delivery, including monitoring and public finance, gained traction in regional learning events, agendas, processes and outcomes. The [Africa Water Week 2014 report](#), for example, included explicit statements on reaching everyone in Africa with sustainable services.

In Burkina Faso we helped the government define targets for hygiene and sanitation by 2030 and assess what is required to reach them. As a result, the principles of a service delivery approach were adopted in the national sanitation and hygiene programme for 2016–2030. IRC will serve on the team that will develop this programme.

In Ethiopia IRC began a major new project to provide independent monitoring for UNICEF's small towns programme (One WASH Plus). This large project will strengthen IRC's operations in Ethiopia.

IRC and HoA-REC&N¹ designed a trial to assess the results, and a baseline study of services across 16 small towns in four regions was completed in December. In parallel, IRC joined the [Millennium Water Alliance–Ethiopia programme](#) as an implementing partner and began testing self-supply acceleration as a complementary service delivery model.

In Ghana IRC staff embedded at the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) helped finalise a service delivery monitoring framework based on indicators piloted in IRC's Triple-S project. The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation asked IRC Ghana to apply the service delivery approach in the 10 districts where it is funding other NGOs that work on improving coverage. With the service delivery approach now adopted, Ghana is working on planning and investment to cover full life-cycle costs by local governments.

In Honduras IRC calculated life-cycle costs and provided recommendations to improve the tracking of costs and use of data on service levels.

In India, IRC has documented the interventions in Patharpratima and Sagar blocks of West Bengal in a Working paper '[Islands of success](#)'. This process in which IRC and Water For People closely worked is focused on establishing state hubs in India,

¹ Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network

these hubs are intended to facilitate and support the sector initiatives and programmes led by the government.

In Mozambique the Eduardo Mondlane University's rural engineering school added service delivery and life-cycle costs approaches to its WASH curriculum, and we provided training for the lecturer. Thanks to our work in promoting the life-cycle costs approach, operations budgets were considered during district planning, and the cost of monitoring boreholes was updated.

In Uganda the Triple-S supported Mobile Phones for Water system (M4W), triggered action on nonfunctional water supply facilities and guided allocation of resources for operation and maintenance. In one district, some 130 water sources were assessed, and the district water office used the reports to allocate 51 million UGX (€15,000) for major repairs for the financial year 2014–2015.

In Bangladesh, IRC provides development support to BRAC WASH. Over the last 8 years more than **51 million people** in rural Bangladesh have seen sustained change in hygiene behaviour. Of these, more than 37 million have gained access to a hygienic toilet that they are using; 2.3 million to a safe water source; and more than 5,000 schools improved their WASH facilities.

Follow up monitoring shows that 98% of the changes delivered by BRAC have been sustained. The **findings** provide the evidence that the BRAC WASH programme managed to provide access to a sanitary latrines at a very large-scale and with a very high degree of equity. 71% of the ultra poor have access to an improved toilet; compared to 80% of the poor and non poor.

“IRC has clearly developed and communicated a vision regarding service delivery. Results in the field of thematic innovation and innovative action research focused on [service delivery] and sustainability in focus countries have been substantial. These results are being spread to the global level in an effective manner¹.”

“The adoption by the sector of the service delivery approach in fact is the overarching outcome to date ... IRC has made very substantial progress against this outcome, particularly in the rural sector and with NGOs. IRC has played an important role in getting the service delivery approach high on the agenda².”

¹ B. van Woersem, K. Caplan, and T. Keatman, 'The IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre Business Plan 2012–2016 Mid-Term Review' (2014), p. 1.

² Ibid., p. 50.

Looking ahead

- The service delivery approach has become policy at international, regional and national levels. Although adoption of the actual practices of service delivery is far from universal, evidence of progress is beginning to emerge. Even though monitoring of rural water services is becoming institutionalised in Ghana, for example, monitoring systems are not yet fully scaled up, mainstreamed and linked into a national sector information system.
- Hastening change in implementation—for both water and sanitation services—is a major task for us in 2015.
- Generally, sector financing practices remain inadequate to ensure sustainability. Comprehensive 'how-to' guidance on life-cycle costing and asset management must be developed and integrated into national planning guidelines.

Building effective learning alliances

Learning and adaptive sector. National authorities must address the fragmentation of the sector by supporting formal platforms and networks that facilitate comprehensive and routine sharing of information. Experiences and information should be routinely shared. Sector stakeholders need to allocate resources to documentation, sharing and other forms of learning.

Innovation requires continual learning and sharing about what works.

In 2014 we continued to bridge the knowledge gap in international and regional platforms and conferences, share and manage information through our website, work with national and local governments on sector learning, and provide training and training materials to sector professionals. We supported sector learning platforms and helped organise, document, present, and disseminate knowledge.

In 2014 IRC (co) organised four international learning events that together drew more than 600 participants: a conference titled Unclogging the Blockages in Sanitation that developed strategies for managing sanitation like a business; a conference for Francophone Africa on monitoring decentralised services; a conference on menstrual hygiene management; and a sustainability forum focused on tools to keep WASH systems running.

Each IRC focus country now has a dedicated country-level learning platform that convenes regularly for sector dialogue and planning.

IRC Ghana facilitated a **study on learning alliances** to explore how learning could be made more effective. The study confirmed that the learning alliance platforms have enabled stakeholders to critique and review each other's initiatives. The platforms at national, regional and local levels answered a need and were appreciated by sector actors at all levels.

IRC as, a member of the **Rural Water and Sanitation Information System (SIASAR)**, contributed to this regional learning platform's regular meetings and helped put forward two proposals—for **improving the way it generates reports** and for **revising the sanitation indicators**.

In Burkina Faso we held four national workshops and more than 20 local and regional workshops on the service delivery approach.

In India IRC participated in several learning platforms, which gained visibility and importance after the government's announcement of its Clean India Mission.

In Mozambique we prepared locally relevant material in Portuguese covering WASH governance, service delivery and life-cycle costing.

In Uganda we continued to develop and promote learning about best practices. NGOs and two technical support units of the water and environment ministry adopted best practices in their ongoing programmes and began using the evidence generated from their implementation to guide reflection and learning.



Looking ahead

- Despite continued support for learning, especially about innovations in rural water service delivery, learning and reflection remain undervalued in the sector as a whole. Learning doesn't just involve workshops and courses—it must be understood as an active, ongoing, iterative practice that helps people become more effective and contribute to change. We need to further define mechanisms and channels to offer fully developed, tested and up-scaled concepts and methodologies to the sector.

"[The service delivery approach], as a major innovation, requires an active, iterative process¹."

"... IRC's niche at country level is a combination of: 1) a good research agenda able to translate concepts into action on the ground; 2) balanced and appreciated position between NGO and government, seen as neutral and independent and not too close to government; 3) An international network of professionals on call; 4) a key potential player in monitoring; and 5) a leader in sector governance work whereby an evidence base is generated and then used for direct policy influencing in a "hands on", practical manner²."

¹Ibid., p. 51.

²Ibid., p. 2.

Enabling countries to succeed

Government leadership (Improved aid effectiveness). Sector stakeholders must understand the underlying conditions and resources required for sustainable service delivery. Countries should invest in strengthening capacity for planning processes and establish mechanisms for transparency and accountability. Government and non-governmental actors need to harmonise their approaches to policy and implementation. Resource allocation processes should be transparent: accountability is a prerequisite for progress.

Services must last; foreign aid cannot.

We conducted three assessments of the aid effectiveness of international organisations – in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Honduras – and gained visibility and influence in discussions about how donors can make the most of scarce resources. Results of these case studies were shared through the Sanitation and Water for All partnership (SWA).

IRC has positioned itself internationally as an advocate for aid effectiveness and particularly for strong national and local government leadership. In 2014, of the 14 requests IRC received for cooperation, four were related to aid effectiveness. For example, Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) asked IRC to advise on using sustainability checks for funding recipients and to help organise national and international events on the aid and trade agenda.

In 2014 IRC participated in the SWA high-level meeting at the World Bank. IRC published a statement of commitment to the partnership, pledging to help drive change, strengthen national leadership, lobby for the sector at national and international levels, and continue to innovate and research solutions to complex problems. SWA is a partnership of governments, donors, development partners and NGOs working to achieve progress in the sector through agreement on values and principles.

In Burkina Faso IRC conducted the sector's effectiveness assessment, which contributed to the national debate on effective aid for strengthening in-country sector capacities.

In Ghana IRC led a study on WASH sector alignment. The study appraised existing water

sector partnerships and fostered discussion about improving coordination with the government's own strategies for implementing the rural water programme.

In Ghana we also prepared a [study](#) on sector harmonisation and alignment, and we worked with stakeholders to define and publish nationally agreed sector operational documents and guidelines. The consultative approach promoted dialogue about sector harmonisation among agencies.

In Honduras partners have been funding short-term projects that were not fully integrated into the sector strategy. Based on a study of the situation, we recommended that both government and donors focus on longer-term programme funding, assist in monitoring and information management, and strengthen municipal and service providers' capacities.

In Mozambique we developed a sector-specific anti-corruption strategy to strengthen accountability in budgeting and planning; the plan was finalised and undergoing review by the sector directorate.

In Uganda we supported collaboration among stakeholders at the decentralized level, ensuring that service authorities, providers and users understood their roles and responsibilities.



Looking ahead

- Despite widespread formal acceptance of the Paris Declaration principles on aid effectiveness, true aid effectiveness remains elusive. IRC's work has shown that support for a country's administration makes it possible for the government to provide stronger leadership, with the result that donors and other actors start aligning their work.
- Nevertheless, progress remains slow and requires constant effort. The introduction of DGIS's sustainability check and sustainability compact for grant recipients will help ensure the effectiveness of Dutch government aid.

"... IRC is on track in becoming a leading, innovative and piloting organization that is an important and appreciated player in the international arena¹."

"... work at the international level [synthesizing, extracting, comparing and documenting] is crucial for IRC and at the end of the day it is IRC's core (non-project) funding that allows IRC to be an effective driver of change in the global WASH arena²."

"IRC as a medium sized player is one of the agenda shapers at global level ...³."

¹Ibid., p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 55.

³Ibid., p. 1.

Achieving synergies through integrated action

Integration for maximum livelihoods impact. The institutional plans of government departments, local governments, the private sector, donors and NGOs must be aligned with national WASH programmes and plans. Water and sanitation should be part of economic development plans and integrated with the education, health and environmental sectors as well.

Water, sanitation, development, human health, the environment: all are connected.

Ensuring access to WASH services to improve people's lives requires coordinated action across sectors, with planning for self-supply, multiple-use water services, and sanitation and menstrual hygiene in schools and other institutional settings.

The lack of coordination among the housing, energy, agriculture and health sectors (as well as between the public and private sectors) is a major problem that calls for holistic strategies and a cross-sector approach that leverages resources and expertise.

Two requests for IRC's expertise show how IRC's life-cycle costing tool for improving the quality and sustainability of WASH services can be applied in a wide range of circumstances. First, **The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** asked IRC to test a life-cycle costs approach to emergency services in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Chad. And second, Catholic Relief Services asked for IRC's help in piloting the life-cycle costs approach in refugee camps in Sudan.

In 2014 IRC concluded the multiple-use water services project, funded by the Coca-Cola Africa Foundation. The project addressed critical water problems in water-scarce rural areas. As a result, two regions of Ethiopia have now launched implementation programmes.

In Burkina Faso we contributed to inter-sectoral planning by adapting the methodology for hygiene cost-effectiveness to assess an Ecological Sanitation (EcoSan) implementation programme, and by applying human rights principles to WASH interventions.

In Uganda, where menstruation is an obstacle to girls' schooling, IRC and its partners held a **national conference on menstrual hygiene**. As a result, schools were required to provide girls with sanitary pads by the end of 2014, and the Ministry of Education is expected to address the issue in its 2015 WASH in schools policy. These are important developments in a region where menstruation is the subject of myths and taboos.

In Bangladesh girls in 4,600 schools gained access to latrines and menstrual hygiene through the WASH programmes of **BRAC**, IRC's partner in Bangladesh. And a business model for productive use of faecal sludge by micro-enterprises was developed and tested on a small scale. The model is expected to be scaled up as soon as BRAC obtains a license to process and market commercial bio-fertiliser.

In Indonesia IRC developed a **school sanitation monitoring tool** using mobile phones. The system will be integrated with the national monitoring programme.

In Kenya we developed master plans to provide a basis for future WASH interventions linked to overall development.



Looking ahead

- IRC is committed to continuing efforts to improve intersectoral planning in 2015, particularly through support for WASH in schools, multiple-use water services and service delivery for displaced people. Our work in helping the UN improve WASH services in emergency situations like refugee camps has opened the door for further cooperation in 2015.

“[IRC’s] WASHCost and Triple-S have influenced global level understanding of costing and service levels¹.”

“Financing remains a major bottleneck. Life cycle costing suggests that WASH needs continuous financing and consistent support for communities from local government and the private sector. The issue of public finance and financing mechanisms has not sufficiently been explored but is increasingly on the agenda ...².”

¹Ibid., p. 51.

²Ibid., p. 51.

Promoting change on the ground

We work towards our goals at all scales, not just international and regional, but national and local, too. Here, in their own words, are some of our country programme officers' successes in 2014.

Burkina Faso

"IRC is a relatively new player in the WASH sector. The first thing that we needed to do was demonstrate our added value in the sector. Our big success is the acknowledgement of IRC as key advocator of the service delivery approach in Burkina Faso. Many problems in the sector are not monitored and therefore not solved. Now any evaluation, any process involves IRC, and people are asking for our input. IRC plays a role in advocacy – we play a watchdog role."

Juste Nansi

Ethiopia

"We were awarded two large contracts, one for UNICEF (monitoring service delivery in 16 towns) and one for government (monitoring the very ambitious One WASH national programme, budgeted at US\$ 2.4 billion). These projects will change the sector. IRC now has the scale to work. Ethiopia is investing a lot of money, and it is important to know that things will change because of that.

Building upon further work that IRC funded, the Ministry of Water and Energy has developed a self-supply guideline which is being implemented."

John Butterworth.

Ghana

"We have applied the service delivery approach to 131 districts. We supported monitoring systems and continued advocating for improved service delivery in the WASH sector. We are asking, 'Are the people getting what the government says it provides?'"

We are looking at the quality of service, not just if a water facility is present. Is it functioning?

We have also supported the successful training of 854 regional and district government officials and coaching in application of service monitoring tools

for data collection. These skills have been applied by the trainees to collect data on over 14,000 water points in 119 districts in Ghana." **Vida Duti**

Honduras

"How much does a water facility cost? It used to depend on the donor, but now the price of water supply is clear. Now we have the figures, which can be used by the government in its negotiations with donors. This is going to influence the level of and quality of service that people are receiving. With the more realistic budget, the investment can be adapted to what is needed to reach the people targeted for service. The government has committed to use the reference data." **Stef Smits**

India

"In 2014 IRC efforts in India began to gain traction. We signed an MoU with Government of India for capacity building. For India this means a shift from infrastructure to service delivery focus. We bring in a different way of looking at WASH service delivery. The government has mobilised more resources, in absolute terms, with the Clean India Campaign. And we are in the Water for People partnership."

Kurian Baby

Mozambique

"Thanks to IRC WASHCost's work in promoting and embedding the life-cycle costs approach in sector practice, operations budgets were considered during district planning, and the contract cost of monitoring boreholes continued to be updated.

We continued disseminating effective WASH practices to sector professionals. Training materials on IRC's service delivery and life-cycle costs approaches were made part of the national WASH curriculum." **Alana Potter**



Uganda

“Based on the recommendation from Triple-S for improving operation and maintenance, a national strategy was adopted. The policy directive is now being drafted. Two districts started working with service contracts, supporting the local private sector. And as a result of a conference on menstrual hygiene organised by IRC and our partners, schools are required to provide girls with sanitary pads. The Ministry of Education is expected to address menstrual hygiene in its 2015 WASH in schools policy—very important in a region where menstruation is the subject of myths and taboos.”

Jane Nabunnya Mulumba

“...evidence alone does not convince stakeholders to change—change takes time and major effort. ...IRC makes major and consistent efforts to bring results of individual projects beyond the project’s life cycle to various levels within the context of limited resource availability for these efforts¹”

¹Ibid., p. 50.

Evaluating a major project

Our flagship six-year project, Sustainable Services at Scale (Triple-S), supported by funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, concluded in late 2014.

Triple-S had an ambitious goal: a paradigm shift in aid for rural water services in developing countries: from providing new infrastructure to ensuring reliable, lasting service. We examined why large investments in water infrastructure so often failed to improve access to water, developed a different model and demonstrated change in representative countries. Then we began advocating the new approach, engaging with governments, donors, bilateral aid agencies and financial institutions. It was a complex project, involving multiple country teams, government partners at different levels, and both academic and action research. But we

met our main goal, with this result: no longer can governments or development partners ignore the issue of sustainability.

In April 2014 we asked an independent team to conduct an end-of-project evaluation. Here are excerpts from the report¹:

The reviewers offered good recommendations for future projects, and we are incorporating their ideas for work in 2015 and beyond.

- Triple-S filled a niche in the international WASH sector as it placed sustainability at the centre of its discourse and activities. [Triple-S] developed a sustained and systematic approach to promote the sustainability of rural water services, and developed the Service Delivery Approach as a means of achieving this goal.
- Triple-S played a substantial role to place Sustainability and SDA at the heart of international discourse and practices in the WASH sector. ... Triple-S has been effective at conveying consistent messages about sustainability over several years, which has clearly helped the issue gain prominence in international discourse on water services in general. ... The project came along at the right time, as a growing part of the WASH sector community was starting to take more notice of the acute challenge of ensuring sustainability of existing investment ... This also coincided with a shift in focus within the international development community, as it is moving from an exclusive focus on providing access (as captured in the Millennium Development Goals) to one of delivering sustainable services (as captured in the Sustainable Development Goals). ...
- Adaptive management has been a key success factor for such a complex project. Key to the project's success was dedicated project management willing to adapt over time. ... IRC proved it had the capacity ...
- Triple-S played a significant role in changing perceptions and discourse around sustainability and adopting a service delivery approach in the target countries ... Triple-S articulated the concepts of sustainability and the service delivery approach in a clear manner and made them accessible to all. It also placed the spotlight on the "district" level (i.e. decentralised government level) as a key level at which to engage and provide capacity-building in order to strengthen decentralisation and coordinate stakeholders in complex systems. It further encouraged all WASH stakeholders to consider local governments as key partners for monitoring, planning and budgeting.

¹ Hydroconseil and Trémolet Consulting, 'End-of-Project Evaluation: Triple-S, Water Services That Last: An IRC Initiative, 2009–2014' (2015), available at <http://www.ircwash.org/resources/end-project-evaluation-epe-triple-s-%E2%80%93-water-services-last-irc-initiative-2009-2014-main>.



- **Simplifying and prioritising the messages around the Triple-S analysis frameworks and building blocks should be a key area** ... The approach articulated by the project is useful but not easily graspable for people looking to implement projects on the ground. ...
- **Triple S should refine its key messages to address the expectations of different audiences.** ... This could be produced as a very practical “how-to” guide for local governments. ... Clear guidance on support to service providers is critical ...
- **Triple S should improve communication about the actual impact.** ... Some of the tools could be refined, simplified and promoted. ... IRC could be more assertive in terms of measuring the scale and impact of what they have achieved, in communicating this impact and not focusing only on the pilot districts. ... IRC may consider adopting more of a “platform” approach ... to collate experiences, lessons learned and documentation ...
- Even though sanitation was not included in the project scope, the Triple-S approach could be applied to sanitation (with modifications) in order to maximise impact. ... The inclusion of sanitation in the final year of project implementation is a welcome development ...

Looking ahead

- With strong evidence that the service delivery approach is starting to work, the challenge now is implementing it worldwide, and to that end, we are taking up the reviewers’ recommendations.
- **Refined and simplified tools.** We agree: sector practitioners need basic tools for implementation. Based on our experience with what worked on the ground, in 2015 we will develop a comprehensive toolkit that conveys both the ‘what’ of the Triple-S vision—universal access to water services that last—and the ‘how’ of achieving it.
- **Sanitation in addition to water.** Yes, we must tackle sanitation as well as water. The service delivery approach that was tested for water access appears just as applicable to sanitation, and we are committed to extending our work into this critical area.

Helping donors and clients around the world

IRCconsult, a joint venture of IRC and Aguaconsult, offers expertise to accelerate progress towards sustainable service delivery: providing customised trainings, monitoring system updates, mapping and analysing waterpoints, and conducting community surveys.

In 2014 IRCconsult completed its first year of operation, with approximately €550,000 in contracts and more than 650 days sold through 15 assignments. Contract value averaged €40,000.

Demand for the new consultancy's expertise was strong. Assignments took IRC and Aguaconsult specialists to locations across the globe—India, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Bolivia, South Sudan, and the United States, plus the Netherlands.

IRCconsult's clients in 2014

- Coffey International Development Limited
- Concern International
- Cranfield University
- Catholic Relief Services
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (FORMIN)
- Royal Haskoning (RH DHV)
- RMSI
- Radio Netherlands Training Centre (RNTC)
- Netherlands development cooperation (SNV)
- Tetra Tech
- VNG International
- Water For People
- WaterAid America
- World Bank

Representative consulting assignments:

Bolivia Reviewing tools and approaches to reach universal coverage and building local capacity to use a survey monitoring system

Democratic Republic of Congo Advising on monitoring and the life-cycle costs approach to sustainable services

India Supporting the planning and implementation of communications and stakeholder engagement for community management of rural water systems

Kenya Helping county governments use a participatory process to develop policy and strategy for WASH

Niger Providing monitoring and capacity building expertise in the deployment of an Integrated Water and Sanitation Monitoring and Information System

Tanzania Verifying baseline data for monitoring of water supply and sanitation service delivery

Looking ahead

- We have big ambitions for IRCconsult and are aiming to double its volume of work in 2015, providing value to the sector through both small and large assignments.



Reaching out

IRC does not just conduct studies and accumulate knowledge about what works in WASH, we communicate what we learn. To disseminate information, we use the Internet, social media, learning alliances, workshops, conferences, books, briefing papers, research articles and other channels.

With more than 100 partners, 9,000-plus subscribers to our news service, our digital presence reached more than half a million people in 2014: 265,412 through the websites that IRC hosts, and 316,764 in various social media platforms. We counted 13,681 followers for our 1,187 posts. IRC is proud to be a trusted and reliable source of sector information and knowledge.

Steps to strengthen IRC's communications and advocacy work—to better deliver knowledge, innovation and action research in WASH—began in 2013. In 2014 communications became a central part of IRC's work. IRC launched its new website while building staff capacity to communicate with different audiences.

The new website, launched in May 2014, gathers all materials in one place (blogs, news, research outputs) in accordance with the new IRC branding strategy. For clarity and impact, the number of IRC-managed on-line media that we host was reduced, from 15 to 5 mostly by incorporating them into a new corporate website.

In 2014 we published more than 90 blogs and 10 issues of E-Source (six in English, four in French). The homepage of the website offered 175 news items and 22,174 resources. We continued publishing research results and analysis at three open-source knowledge portals:

- [AKVOPEDIA finance portal](#) (life-cycle costing)
- [Akvopedia Sustainability Portal](#) (sustainability framework, including the Dutch WASH Alliance's FIETS approach)
- [IRC Sanitation Pack within the Sanitation portal](#) (sanitation technologies for application at household and village levels)

In September, during the Stockholm World Water Week, we launched a WASHCost (e-book), *Priceless! Uncovering the Real Costs of Water and Sanitation*.

IRC's training activities (five online and 25 face-to-face) and materials on service delivery and the life-cycle costs approach were produced in English, French and Portuguese. For the second year in a row, Radio Netherlands Training Centre and IRC co-facilitated an intensive three-week training on Multi-Media Journalism and Water for participants from around the world. We also continued providing support to sector learning networks in Sierra Leone by organising writing workshops for WASH-Net and WaterAid Sierra Leone.

“Whilst IRC was always one of the primary go-to-groups for new entrants in the sector, IRC's recent efforts to ramp up efforts around communications and dissemination (particularly with the redesigned website) appears to have re-established IRC as a key repository for WASH information. Whilst others also manage and provide information, IRC's ability to maintain a communications presence has allowed it to reinforce and embed various messages so that they do not get lost in a busy and noisy sector¹”

¹van Woersem et al., op. cit., p. 47.

Selection of key events and outputs

		<p>IRC EVENT</p> <p>Death of the hand pump</p>	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>IRC becomes a member of Millennium Water Alliance</p>
<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>conference "Unclogging the Blockages in Sanitation"</p>	<p>TRAINING</p> <p>"costing sustainable services" online course offered free by IRC for WASH sector professionals.</p>	<p>OUTREACH</p> <p>2618 water professional trained 265,412 IRC website 13,000 followers social media 316,764 page views</p>	<p>MEDIA</p> <p>over 200 news posts 29 press releases and media mentions 8600 blog readers</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p>IRC launches new identity and Brand and the website</p>	<p>a bilingual conference on Monitoring and Evaluation of Local Water & Sanitation Services. IRC Burkina Faso & pS-Eau</p>	<p>IRC & Aguaconsult launch IRCconsult</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>"Sanitation updates" reached One Million page views in 2014</p>
<p>JUNE</p> <p>WASH Sustainability Forum</p>	<p>IRC EVENT</p> <p>Can we avoid rehabilitation programmes?</p>	<p>JULY</p> <p>Sanitation as a Business Journal article in Waterlines</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>"Breaking the silence" on menstruation, keep girls in school 1st Menstrual Hygiene Management Conference in East Africa</p>
<p>IRC first Book – Priceless! Uncovering the Real Costs of Water and Sanitation.</p>		<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Funding water projects: are donors flushing good money away? The Guardian interviews Patrick Moriarty</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Radio Netherlands Training Centre and IRC deliver the 2nd Multi-Media Journalism and Water Training</p>
<p>IRC EVENT</p> <p>The limits of aid, the future of trade?</p>	<p>IRC EVENT</p> <p>The role of public finance in reaching scale & sustainable WASH services View video impression</p>	<p>10 editions of E-Source in 2 languages circulation 11,000 22,174 Resources on IRC website 300 digital & print communications</p>	<p>The WASH cluster starts to use KnowledgePoint for as its Q&A on Ebola</p>

Governance staffing and partners

Guided by members of the Supervisory Board, IRC's headquarters staff is turning our many products, programmes and services into an essential resource on sector knowledge, analysis and capacity development.

Supervisory board and CEO



Hans van Dord
(Chairperson)



Regien van der Sijp
(Member)



Robert Bos
(Member)



Meera Mehta
(Member)



Piers Cross
(Member)



Henk den Boer
(Member)



Gerhard van den Top
(Member)

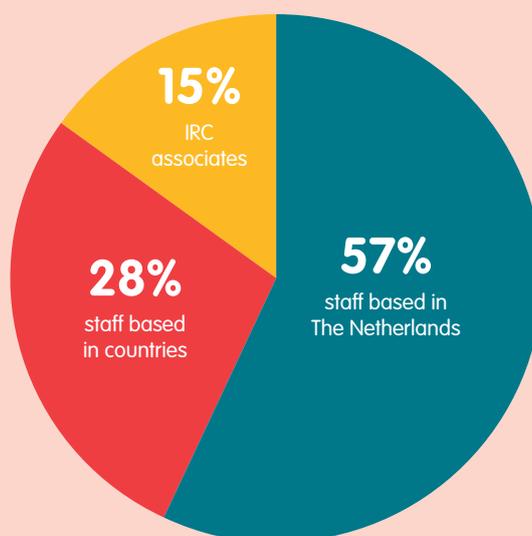


Patrick Moriarty
(CEO)

Staff

In line with IRC's 2012–2016 business plan, in 2014 we continued reconfiguring our staffing structure, de-emphasising the headquarters office and strengthening our country offices.

Faced with a challenging business environment, IRC made the difficult decision in the second half of 2014 to reduce staff in the Netherlands, down to 36 full-time equivalents (a reduction of approximately 30 percent), through a programme of involuntary redundancy. (This took effect in early 2015.)



In 2014 we invested €34,500 in development of staff and associates through a mix of collective training and individual coaching across a range of skills.

Partners

We collaborate with a wide range of partners: governmental and non-governmental, private and non-profit, national and international, local and regional. As we read the list below, we are moved to see just how many organisations support our work – essential work that is improving lives and would not be possible without their collaboration. We cannot fulfill our mission alone. Here, we thank all our partners whose vital support helped us reach millions of people in 2014.

- A** Acacia Water / Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) / Africa Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) / African Development Bank (AfDB) / African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW) / Aguaconsult Ltd / Akvo / Appropriate Technology Centre for Water and Sanitation (ATC) / Aqua for All
- B** BETHESDA Benin / BPD Water and Sanitation (BPD) / BRAC
- C** CARE / Catholic Relief Services (CRS) / Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) / Centro de Formação Profissional de Água e Saneamento (CFPAS) / Cinara (Instituto de Investigación y Desarrollo en Abastecimiento de Agua, Saneamiento Ambiental y Conservación del Recurso Hídrico) / Coffey International Development Ltd / Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) / Community-Led Accelerated WASH (COWASH) / Consejo Nacional de Agua Potable y Saneamiento (CONASA) / CONIWAS / Cranfield University
- D** DANIDA Burkina Faso / Delft University of Technology / Desert Research Institute / Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Water and Sanitation Programme / Direcção Nacional de Águas (DNA) Mozambique / Direction Générale de l'Assainissement des Eaux Usées et Excréta du Burkina Faso / Direction Générale des Etudes et Statistiques Sectorielles de l'eau et de l'assainissement du Burkina Faso / Direction Générale des Ressources en Eau du Burkina Faso / Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Dutch WASH Alliance (DWA)
- E** Eau Vive / Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) / Editions Le Faso / Empresa Pública Social del Agua y Saneamiento (EPSAS) / Engineer Aid / End Water Poverty (EWP)
- F** FIPAG Academy for Professional Development in Water and Sanitation / Florida International University (FIU) / Fondo Hondureño de Inversión Social (FHIS) / Food for the Hungry / Frisian Urban Sanitation Programme (FUSP) / Fundo de Investimento e Património do Abastecimento de Água (FIPAG)
- G** Global Environment & Technology Foundation (GETF) / Global Water challenge / Global Water Partnership (GWP) / Hararghe Catholic Secretariat (HCS) / Helvetas / Humanitarian Innovation fund (HIF)
- I** Institute of Development Studies (IDS) / INGO Accountability Charter / Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) / International Water Association (IWA) / International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
- K** Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
- L** Livelihoods and Natural Resources Management Institute (LNRMI) / London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) / LVIA Burkina Faso (Lay Volunteers International Association)
- M** Makerere University College of Computing and Information Sciences / Malawiya National Institute of Technology (MNIT) / Ministère de l'Eau, des Aménagements Hydrauliques et de l'Assainissement du Burkina Faso / Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana / Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing, Ghana / Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy Ethiopia / Millennium Water Alliance (MWA) / Multiple Use water Services (MUS) Group / Mundo (Maastricht University)
- N** National Institute of Administrative Research (NIAR) – Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) / Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP) / NETWAS Uganda
- O** Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
- P** Para Todos, Por Siempre (PTPS) / Partners for Water / Pegasys Strategy And Development (Pty) Ltd / PLAN / Practical Action UK / Programme Solidarité Eau (pS-Eau) / Promoción del Desarrollo Sostenible (IPES) / ProWater Consultores Lda / Public Services International (PSI)
- R** RAIN Foundation / Red de Agua y Saneamiento de Honduras (RAS-HON) / RedR UK / Research-inspired Policy and Practice Learning in Ethiopia and the Nile Region (RIPPLE) / RMSI / Royal Haskoning/DHV / Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN)
- S** Safe Water Network (SWN) / Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) / SeeSaw / SIASAR (Sistema de Información de Agua y Saneamiento Rural) / Simavi / Skyfox / SNV Netherlands Development Organisation / Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) / Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) / The Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) / Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development (SKAT)
- T** Training, Research and Networking for Development (TREND) / Tremolet Consulting
- U** Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET) / UMC Consultores, Lda. / UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education / United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) / Universidade Eduardo Mondlane Mozambique (UEM) Escola Superior de Desenvolvimento Rural (ESUDER) / Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Escola Superior de Desenvolvimento Rural (ESUDER) / University of Cape Coast, Ghana / UN Water
- V** Vitens-Evides International / VNG International
- W** Wageningen University (WUR) / WASH Institute / WASH Advocates / Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) / Water For People (WFP) / Water Institute, University of North Carolina / Water Integrity Network (WIN) / Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) / Water.org / WaterAid / Wetlands international / World Bank / World Health Organization (WHO) / World Toilet Organisation / World Vision International
- X** Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS)

Supporting our work

The period 2012–2016 is the last with direct subsidies from long-term IRC supporters Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS). Yet, as was highlighted in the mid-term review of our business plan, some level of what the reviewers called “judicious funding” will continue to be necessary for IRC to undertake its mission. Funding that is not earmarked to specific projects or budget lines is essential for us to continue our work on generating crucial public goods, particularly related to communications and innovation. What is more, as a Dutch-based organisation, it is critical that IRC maintain a strong relationship with DGIS—a major international WASH actor—going forward.

In this light, it was exciting to learn in early 2015 that our WASH-IT! “lobbying and advocacy” partnership with the ministry was one of 25 picked for funding in the period 2016–2025. Putting in place a critical first building block of a longer-term relationship with the ministry post-2016. Other partners in WASH IT! are Akvo, Simavi and Wetlands International. “We are also thankful and excited about our new partners the Osprey Foundation and Conrad Hilton Foundation who have had confidence in our work and provided us funding to realise our mission”.

New projects and funding acquired

Year	2012	2013	2014
New projects		35	47
Value	€2.3	€6.4	€10.1

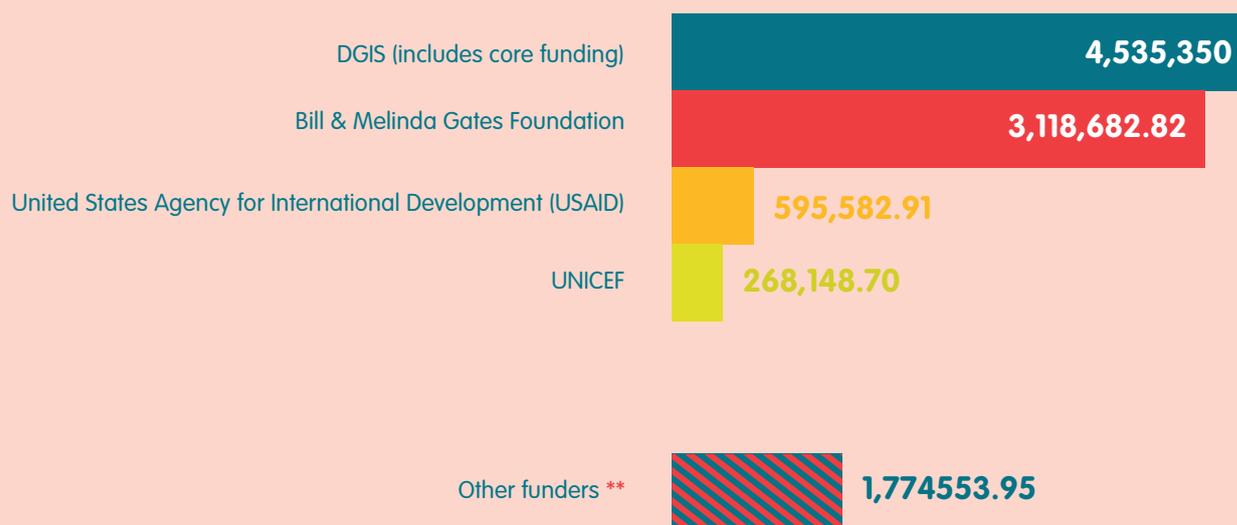
Income, 2010–2014, in thousands of Euro

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
DGIS Core funding	2,611	2,544	2,839	2,915	2,469
Project funding	7,304	7,199	7,237	7,015	7,823
Total	9,915	9,743	10,076	9,930	10,292

Donors, 2014

Effecting a paradigm change that increases access to water and sanitation services in the developing world requires a solid financial foundation. Our donors make our work possible, and we thank them all.

Top funders



Other funders**

Australian Aid / Catholic Relief Services (CRS) / Coca Cola Foundation / Conrad Hilton Foundation / DANIDA / Department for International Development (DFID) / Department of Water Affairs / Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) / Direcção Nacional de Águas (DNA) / Dutch embassies / Dutch WASH Alliance / European Union / FINNIDA / FUSP Consortium / GEFT / Helvetas / Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF) / Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) / Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) / Netherlands Water Partnership / Millennium Water Alliance (MWA) / Ministry of infrastructure and environment / Osprey Foundation / Overseas Development Institute (ODI) / Radio Netherlands Training Centre / Simavi / SNV Netherlands Development Organisation / U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre / United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) / VNG International / Vitens Evides International / Water for People / WaterAid / World Bank / United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Expenditure, 2010–2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Project and activity costs	9,554	9,354	9,592	10,235	9,837
General and administrative costs	354	394	471	355	457
Total	9,908	9,739	10,063	10,590	10,292

Expenditure per IRC programme, 2014

International Influencing and Innovation 4,799,423

Honduras
46,588

Latin America
71,494

Burkina Faso
747,963

Ghana
1,292,498

Ethiopia
341,867

Uganda
822,184

India
153,296

South Asia
1,429,326

Africa
587,379



“By all accounts, IRC’s reputation has grown leaps and bounds in recent years. WASH-Cost and Triple-S are widely seen to “have put IRC on the map”, particularly in the USA, making the organisation a credible global learning agency in WASH. ... There is a clear sense now that IRC speaks with authority and is strategically asserting itself into various discourses and debates in the sector. It has proven that it can manage major research programmes that work across countries¹.”

¹Ibid., p. 46.



At IRC, we believe that turning on a working tap should not be a surprise or cause for celebration.

We believe in a world where water, sanitation and hygiene services are fundamental utilities that everyone is able to take for granted. For good.

We face a complex challenge. Every year, thousands of projects within and beyond the WASH sector fail – the result of short-term targets and interventions, at the cost of long-term service solutions.

This leaves around a third of the world's poorest people without access to the most basic of human rights, and leads directly to economic, social and health problems on a global scale. IRC exists to continually challenge and shape the established practices of the WASH sector.

Through collaboration and the active application of our expertise, we work with governments, service providers and international organisations to deliver systems and services that are truly built to last.

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