



IRC

There's a different
world water crisis
to the one
you know about

Supporting water sanitation
and hygiene services for life

www.ircwash.org

It's not just about scarcity: the systems that should give people access to safe water and sanitation either don't exist or are breaking down, on a massive scale, across the world.

Pumps break. Water stops flowing. Money is wasted. People drink dirty water and use open spaces as toilets. Lives are lost.

We're changing this, by working with governments, communities and NGOs to challenge 'business as usual' approaches and transform the way we all think and act.

Work with us to make water and sanitation a given, not a gift.

Photos: © Cover Narvik/Online Creative Media; © P.3 Bettina Flitner/laif; © P.5 Grossman/laif; © P.6 Carmen da Silva-Wells/IRC; © P.10 Peter McIntyre; © P.13 BRAC; © P.14 Hugh Sitton/Corbis

Copyright © 2013 IRC

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons license:

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike

View copyright terms here:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/nl/deed.en>



Where has the money gone?

Despite billions of dollars of aid and government spending, around one in three rural water supply systems in the developing world are not working.

Today, millions of people walked miles to fetch dirty, unsafe drinking water and have no choice but to urinate and defecate in the open.

For more than 40 years, aid agencies, governments and others have focused on short-term projects and new infrastructure, counting and celebrating new pumps and pipes. Far too often, these have been provided as isolated, unsustainable, one-off gifts. But what happens when that gift breaks?

We all - funding agencies, NGOs, country governments, district authorities, businesses and others - now know that simply installing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) hardware and infrastructure is not enough.

We can all do better.





What can be done?

People need water and sanitation services they can rely on every day, every year, forever.

It's a complex challenge. It requires collective action with different people and organisations from across the sector, working together to deliver a service that lasts. It means holding ourselves accountable, not for how many pumps or toilets we build, but for how many people have access to a service of an acceptable quality.

To do this, we need to take into account all aspects of running a service. This includes community and other forms of management; service monitoring and regulation; maintenance, repair and replacement of hardware; training and development; policy making and long-term financing of services - not just capital expenditure.

IRC is in a unique position to help the sector meet this challenge. We don't build pumps and pipes: we support the development of comprehensive services that last.

In 2011, we ranked fourth in Philanthropedia's list of highly effective international WASH NGOs. They said:

"They are smart, creative, and their WASHCost and Triple-S work could have significant impact in the sector".

What are we doing about it?

We're working with national and local governments, with NGOs and businesses, and with local communities to realise an ambitious vision: a world where no child or adult dies of causes related to water or sanitation. A world where everyone has access to safe and reliable WASH services, forever.

In Ghana, we are working with the government agency responsible for rural and small town water supplies to help it address a complex, but all too common challenge: inadequate access to safe water. It's a problem affecting millions of people, despite millions being spent.

What part are we playing?

We worked to understand and diagnose the nature of the challenges being faced: with representatives from local and district governments, the Community and Water Sanitation Agency, NGOs, donors, local communities and academic researchers from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

Collectively, we identified that about 1/3 of the systems were not working – and many more were not providing an acceptable level of service.

For the past four years we've been working with everyone involved to tackle each part of the problem, and to develop water services that last.

Together, we've gathered information to understand the provision, the problems, and how to put them right – and we're sharing this knowledge in Ghana and internationally.

What's changed?

In the districts where we work, local government is allocating budget for creating these services, and 23 organisations in three regions are supporting 'learning alliances' to spread this approach.

Furthermore, the national system for monitoring rural water supply will now include strengthened indicators for functionality, service levels and performance.

The transformation that's needed is reaching every corner of the WASH sector in Ghana – creating a real momentum for change across the country.

What impact have we had? In Ghana in 2012-13

50,000 people in three pilot districts can trust that if their service breaks down, it will be put right by local government.

1 million people can be assured that someone will be informed if their services fail – because there are service monitoring systems in place.

12 million people, in time, will have access to sustainable and safe water and sanitation services because their district governments are on course to deliver a sustainable service.

By 2030, we want this to be happening everywhere, to achieve our ambition of 'Everyone, Forever':

- Everyone expecting and receiving a reliable service
- Governments leading and championing work towards this goal
- Finances channelled to support this
- Problems and challenges identified and addressed promptly
- Water providers collaborating, not competing

We're working with Water for People, and Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP), and encouraging others to join us to achieve this ambitious goal. For us, this means:

- Everyone in the WASH sector committing to achieve Everyone, Forever by 2030
- Everyone in IRC's focus countries – Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mozambique and Uganda – having access to safe water and sanitation by 2030

Only collective action and systemic change can realise our ambition. We're on the journey to making that happen – in partnership with others who share our vision.



How we work?

We are a 'think and do tank'. Our approach is different, and it is transformational. It involves everyone, in every part of the process, thinking and acting in new ways.

We want to cultivate a new way of working: delivering sustainable services through a comprehensive approach to water and sanitation.

This involves underpinning services with financial planning that takes into account both the start up and the ongoing life cycle of the service. At the heart of much of this work is the development of people's competency and their capacity to maintain services. We encourage them to learn and continually adapt based on hard evidence of what works, not just now, but in 10, 20 and 30 years.

IRC Fast facts

120 employees

60 in the Netherlands, 60 in the countries we work in

€ 10,750,000

Annual turnover (2012)

€2 - €16 million

The range of budgets for programmes we're leading

7 focus countries

Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mozambique and Uganda

Donor partners

The Dutch and Australian Governments, the European Union, the US Agency for International Development, UNICEF, the World Bank, African Development Bank, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Partners

National and local governments, WHO, universities, research centres, Water for People, WSUP, BRAC Bangladesh, WaterAid, private sector contractors, and local and regional partners in the areas where we work

Our five key activities

1 Supporting governments and WASH organisations to transform the way they work by providing coaching and consultancy.

- Bringing together all those involved – to pool resources in order to identify challenges and find solutions;
- Building people's capacity – to plan, manage and maintain services;
- Using structured approaches to make change happen in policy and practice – locally, nationally and internationally;
- Working together, rather than competing – to make money and resources go further and have far greater impact.

2 Experimenting to find solutions that work by leading multi-country, multi-million dollar research programmes that tackle complex problems.

- WASHCost, our US\$ 14.5m, five-year action research project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has gathered and shared information about the true cost of providing WASH services in Burkina Faso, Ghana, India and Mozambique. These 'life-cycle costs' take into account everything from construction, finance, and installation, to maintenance, repairs and eventual replacement. This helps people to make informed decisions, policies and practices. Watch the video: www.bit.ly/washcostexplained
- In Bangladesh, we're collaborating with BRAC, the world's largest NGO, to provide sustainable sanitation services for 37.8 million people. We're developing an innovative, large-scale outcome monitoring and learning programme to help improve the effectiveness of its nationwide sanitation movement. With BRAC we are generating evidence-led approaches that work at scale. Visit the webpage: <http://bit.ly/15pEH0y>

3 Advancing effective practice internationally by documenting research and sharing knowledge, through working groups, learning programmes, conferences and publishing.

- Our major transformation programme, Triple-S, has been running a six-year learning initiative focused in Ghana and Uganda and is expanding to Burkina Faso, Honduras, India and Mozambique. The programme uses a systemic approach to make services sustainable at scale. Watch the 'What if?' video www.bit.ly/IRCWhatif
- The MUS Group, a partnership of 15 organisations across the world, is helping people avoid the problems faced by water services created for just one use (domestic or productive). Partners are discovering a more cost-effective, sustainable way to work. Read the slideshow: www.bit.ly/musexplained



4 Catalysing change in districts by pioneering new tools and systemic approaches to planning, developing and delivering WASH services for life.

- Using our WASHCost calculator app, governments, NGOs and funders can now get a true picture of what investments are needed over the lifetime of a service, and how they can be best targeted to give good value for money. Try the app: <http://washcost.org/cal>
- In Uganda, we are supporting the Mobile Phones for Improved Water Access (M4W) initiative, collaborating with Makerere University and SNV Uganda to introduce using smart phones and new technology that monitor services and reduce downtime when breakdowns occur. Visit the webpage: <http://www.m4water.org/>

5 Transforming the way global decision makers address WASH challenges by campaigning and advocating, sharing what works, and lobbying for change.

- Elements of WASHCost, our life-cycle costs approach for planning and budgeting, have been adopted by more than 70 partners, including private sector organisations such as Coca Cola Africa, universities, and national governments including those of Sierra Leone, Uganda and Honduras. BRAC (Bangladesh), WaterAid, and Water for People are tracking costs and value for money in this way too. We're taking the lessons learnt on the ground into our work with local, national and international policy makers – and they listen.

Everyone loves a quick win, but it has to be sustainable.

Our work isn't about quick photo opportunities.

Replacing short-term projects with services that last is challenging and often unseen work.

But it is the only way...

The only way that all people can benefit from their human right to safe water and sanitation.

The only way that people will survive and thrive: empowered by services not charity.

The only way that really works.



“Only collective action that drives systemic change can solve the global water and sanitation challenge faced by millions.

We want to work with people who believe, as we do, that short-term, unsustainable projects must become a thing of the past; that everyone, everywhere, deserves water and sanitation services every day, every year, forever.

We want to work with people who do not accept the status quo and are impatient for change.

Let's talk about how we can make water and sanitation services a given not a gift.”

Patrick Moriarty, CEO IRC

Visiting address

Bezuidenhoutseweg 2
2594 AV The Hague
The Netherlands

Posting address

P.O. BOX 82327
2508 EH The Hague
The Netherlands

T +31 70 3044000

F +31 70 3044044

Join us on Facebook:

ircwash

Follow us on Twitter:

@ircwash

www.ircwash.org



RECYCLED
Paper made from
recycled material
FSC® C021795