



Ministry of Foreign Affairs



**A guiding document to addressing Integrated Water Resource  
Management in implementation of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
WASH strategy 2016-2030**  
*Contributing to water, sanitation, and hygiene for all, forever*

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This document was developed by the Watershed, Empowering Citizens Strategic Partnership programme to provide the Ministry of Foreign Affairs guidance on linking Integrated Water Resource Management in implementing its WASH strategy 2016-2030.

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

AAPP	Annual Analytical Progress Report	NIWA	Netherlands International Water Ambition
CSO	Community Service Organisation	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
DGIS	Directorate-General for International Cooperation	SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely
GWP	Global Water Partnership	SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
IGG	Inclusive Green Growth Department	VWI	Valuing Water Initiative
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management	WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
MDG	Millennium Development Goals	WRM	Water Resource Management
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	WWTP	Waste water treatment plant
MUS	Multiple Use Water Services		

## Executive summary

In most places, the water supply is decreasing while demand is increasing. For this simple reason, stronger links and cooperation between the drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector and the water resource management (WRM) sector are needed. This document acts as a guide to Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) staff, both in The Hague and at its embassies, and its partners for doing this within the context of the MFA.

Delivering water and sanitation services that last depends on a complex network of people and factors to work together effectively. This wider context is often referred to as a WASH system, water resources being one of its building blocks. When WASH systems are strong and resilient they deliver services that achieve better health, reduce poverty and encourage equity and inclusion. When they are weak, services are poor, unreliable or fail altogether.

Climate change is exacerbating the pressure on WASH systems, and whilst most pressing water resources issues occur at the local level, their resolution and/or impact may well have implications at a hydrological catchment or basin scale. The way forward is to understand how local, provincial and national levels are linked so that vertical linkages between them can be bridged and synergies created. This can be achieved by enhancing the space for civil society and by focusing on the interface of these linkages when, one, water is extracted for WASH services, and when, two, it is returned as waste water into the environment.

Once these are understood, financial, legal and policy instruments, and social movements can be identified to strengthen the WASH-IWRM linkages. This document follows the eight steps of the MFA project cycle and raises questions and points of attention for each of them. These include cross-cutting issues like climate change, gender and civil society participation. This should help MFA and its partners analyse and find ways to improve IWRM-WASH linkages, thereby strengthening the sustainability of long-term resource availability, as required in the MFA WASH strategy 2016-2030.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In most places, the water supply is decreasing while demand is increasing. For this simple reason, stronger links and cooperation between the WASH sector (drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene) and the WRM sector (water resource management) are needed. This document sets out how to achieve this within the context of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the MFA has identified SDG 6 on water as one of its key targets (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). Among its commitments are to:

- provide 50 million people with access to sanitation, and provide 30 million people with access to safe drinking water;
- continue to cooperate with other ministries on urban deltas – and their hinterlands – in line with the Netherlands International Water Ambition (IenW, 2019) in 15 countries; and,
- give greater attention to the impact of water scarcity on access to drinking water, especially in the Sahel, Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

In this context, MFA is strengthening the links between WASH, improved river basin management and the preservation of ecosystems such as rivers and wetlands. In addition, the MFA supports the creation of spaces where women and other vulnerable groups, with the assistance of local community service organisations (CSOs), make joint decisions on priorities, implementation and management of WASH and WRM services. In the focus regions, MFA is stimulating the scope for domestic financial resource mobilisation to fund essential infrastructure development.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) are closely intertwined, as adequate provision of WASH services depends on good water resources management, and good water resources management in turn requires WASH services to be provided in an adequate manner. The latter could be, for example, ensuring that untreated waste water is not disposed of in open water bodies or pollutes the groundwater. The demand for linkages has become stronger with both the covid pandemic amplifying the need for hygiene in any water programme, and the urgent need for climate adaptation requiring the WASH sector to work in the wider water context.

In Dutch development cooperation, some dedicated projects and programmes focus on WASH, while others focus more on IWRM. This allows for a stronger focus and specialisation in these projects and programmes. Moreover, the water sector in many partner countries is organised along these separate lines. In addition, there is a degree of separation within Dutch supported WASH programmes, with water projects having limited sanitation interventions and vice-versa.

The fact that there are two separate programmatic areas, does not preclude making linkages and interrelationships where possible and relevant. In fact, MFA's WASH strategy for 2016-2030, 'Contributing to water, sanitation and hygiene for all, forever' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016), outlines the MFA's approach to achieving these targets and emphasises the provision of WASH services within a broader framework of WRM. It states: *'From a sustainability perspective, long-term resource availability (quality and quantity) and service delivery need to be guaranteed – even in extreme conditions such as flooding or droughts'*.

In spite of the obvious linkages between WASH and WRM, systematically making these linkages operational within the scope of specific projects and programmes is not always straightforward. Hence, since the adoption of the 2016-2030 WASH strategy, the MFA has encouraged its staff (in The Hague and at its embassies) and its partners to identify and consider water management issues at project or programme level. It has also organised learning exchanges on making meaningful linkages, including linkages at activity and instrument level. It now aims to go a step further and support its staff and partners to take water management issues into consideration in WASH projects more systematically. This is one of the MFA's policy commitments for 2021 ([Ministerie van Buitenlandse zaken, 2019](#)) (in Dutch). Note that this document was drafted during the covid pandemic and may not include all the changes that may emerge from the *'Memorie van Toelichting'* (Kaag, 2020). More documentation on the Netherlands' policies are listed in the Annex.

## 1.2 Objective

The objective of this document is to provide guidance to MFA staff, both in The Hague and at its embassies, and its partners on operationalising sustainable water management in its WASH projects. This includes both the management and the implementation of MFA supported WASH projects.

Although not its primary objective, the document also expects to encourage WRM projects to support WASH services better.

## 1.3 How to use this document

Following this introductory chapter, chapter two gives the conceptual frameworks around WASH and WRM, and the linkages between them. The second chapter is intended mainly as a reference and is particularly useful for colleagues who are less familiar with the intrinsic aspects of WASH. Readers who are well versed in the sector, may decide to go straight to chapter three.

Chapter three is the essence of this document and contains guiding questions that help identify opportunities to strengthen links with IWRM processes in various stages of the MFA project cycle. Each of a project's steps (such as the proposal phase, inception phase etc.) is briefly discussed, questions posed and points of attention identified. It is not the intention of this document to provide exhaustive checklists of everything that needs to be done everywhere. Instead, it recognises that there is no one-size fits all, and it hopes that the process outlined will help identify the priority areas to address.

This document builds on the policies of MFA and is combined with the knowledge and publications of the Watershed Programme ([www.watershed.nl](http://www.watershed.nl)), and international literature.

## 2 Conceptual framework

### 2.1 Conceptual framework

This chapter presents key concepts and the relevant terminology in relation to implementing IWRM principles under the MFA WASH strategy.

#### 2.1.1 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene service provision

Universal, affordable and sustainable access to WASH is a key public health issue in international development, and is the focus of Sustainable Development Goal 6.1 and 6.2.

- **6.1:** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.  
*Status: The proportion of the global population using at least a basic drinking water service increased from 81 per cent in 2000 to 89 per cent in 2015. However, 844 million people still lack even a basic water service, and progressively improving the quality of services to 2.1 billion people who lack water accessible on premises, available when needed and free from contamination (safely managed drinking water).* (JMP, 2018)
- **6.2:** By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.  
*Status: The proportion of the global population using at least a basic sanitation service increased from 59 per cent in 2000 to 68 per cent between 2000 and 2015. However, 2.3 billion people still lack basic services.* (JMP, 2018)

Delivering water and sanitation services that last relies on a complex network of people and factors to work together effectively. This wider context is referred to as a WASH system. It includes all the policies, processes, resources, behaviours, infrastructure and institutions<sup>1</sup> necessary for delivery of inclusive, lasting WASH (Angela Huston, 2018). When WASH systems are strong and resilient, they deliver services that achieve better health, equity and inclusion, and reduce poverty. When they are weak, services are poor, unreliable or fail altogether.

The responsibility for the provision of WASH services may lie with a variety of duty bearers, for example local government, private utilities, community groups, or even households themselves. Sanitation has both public and private initiatives. Service provision is more than one-off projects or programmes and needs to be planned and financed beyond mere construction. Sustainability is affected by other sector dynamics such as legislation, institutional performance, information systems and environmental conditions which bring opportunity and the need to work across the different SDGs.

There are several examples of the intersection with the different SDGs. One, women usually bear the responsibility for water collection and hygiene, so WASH has a strong link with SDG 5 on gender. Two, poor and vulnerable people pay more (WaterAid, 2016) and have less access to WASH, thereby linking to both equity (SDG 10) and poverty SDG 1. Three, globally, hygiene has become core to the covid response, but situations in health care centres (SDG 3) and schools (SDG 4) are particularly challenging (JMP, 2018). Finally, SDG 6 itself is an opportunity to bring the targets together by strengthening the water resource building block of WASH systems.

#### 2.1.2 Integrated Water Resources Management

IWRM is an empirical concept which was built up from the on-the-ground experience of practitioners. The Global Water Partnership's (GWP) definition of IWRM is widely accepted. It states: *'IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems'* (GWP, 2018). IWRM is the focus of Sustainable Development Goal 6.5.

- **6.5:** By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> These components are often referred to as building blocks of a WASH system. Water resources is one of the nine categorised (Angela Huston, 2018).

Status: 49% is the degree of implementation of IWRM at the global level, based on reporting from 172 countries (or areas) (UN Water, 2018).

Underpinning IWRM is a set of principles recommended in the final statement of the ministers at the International Conference on Water and the Environment in 1992 (the [Dublin principles](#)).

1. **Principle 1: Water is a finite and vulnerable resource.** Fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development, and the environment.
2. **Principle 2: Participatory approach.** Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners, and policy-makers at all levels.
3. **Principle 3: Role of women.** Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water.
4. **Principle 4: Social and economic value of water.** Water is a public good and has a social and economic value in all its competing uses

The GWP defines 'three pillars' in its toolbox for implementing IWRM (GWP, 2018).

- The creation of an 'Enabling Environment' through policies, legislation and investment structures.
- The utilisation of 'Management Instruments' such as economic incentives for controlling demand and supply, measures for encouraging efficiency, and decision-making processes backed up by data.
- 'Institutional Arrangements' such as regulatory bodies and responsible parties at different levels, capacity building programmes and water supply and sanitation utility providers.

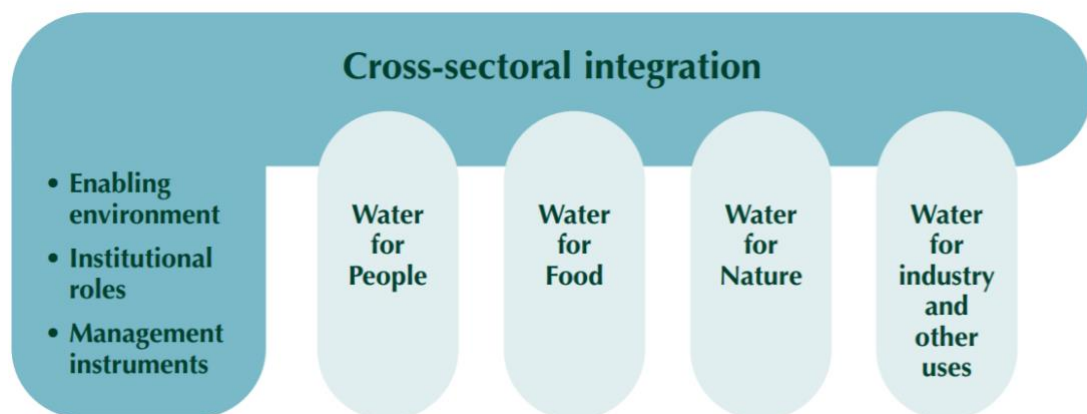


Figure 1. IWRM and its relationship to its subsectors – with water for people (WASH) being a 'client' of IWRM (GWP, 2018).

**Water resource management (WRM)** refers to the coordination and control of how water is allocated to different water dependent sectors such as agriculture, fishing, energy, industry and health, while maintaining the ecological functions of the waterbodies. WRM is needed to ensure sustainable access to water for all users, including WASH services for all. Development and water management need to take competing demands for water into account. It should also look at the needs of future generations while protecting the environment.

The terms WRM and IWRM are often used interchangeably, although they are different. IWRM takes a more holistic approach and it can be argued that there are many water resources management processes in operation that do not respect IWRM principles. These principles were defined to make water resources management more sustainable and equitable.

While WRM refers to the coordination and control of water allocation to different water dependent sectors, **water security** for all water users is its goal. Achieving water security is also MFA's goal.

Water security can be defined as sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development; for ensuring protection from water-borne pollution and water-related disasters; and, for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and



political stability (UN-Water, 2013). A summary of the core elements needed to achieve and maintain water security, as found in a broad range of published definitions, are:

- access to safe and sufficient drinking water at an affordable cost in order to meet basic needs, which includes sanitation and hygiene, and the safeguarding of health and well-being;
- protection of livelihoods, human rights, and cultural and recreational values;
- preservation and protection of ecosystems in water allocation and management systems to maintain their ability to deliver and sustain the functioning of essential ecosystem services;
- water supplies for socio-economic development and activities (such as energy, transport, industry, tourism);
- collection and treatment of used water to protect human life and the environment from pollution.

### 2.1.3 Linking WASH and IWRM

At first sight, practitioners in the two sectors have different aims and approaches. WASH practitioners aim to improve health (and contribute to poverty alleviation) by increasing access to WASH, while IWRM practitioners focus on the larger scale and serve a multitude of sectors, of which agriculture and energy are the most visible.

WASH organisations often regard IWRM as being far removed from their day-to-day reality. Their most frequently heard arguments include: “the domestic sector only uses a relatively small amount of water” or “IWRM discussions deal with river basin level issues, while we work at the local level”. While it is often true that the domestic sector takes a relatively small share of total available water resources, the requirements of domestic users for a high quality and a reliable water supply mean that, at critical times of the year, domestic use can become significant. Equally, urban populations can represent an important local demand that may conflict with the requirements of farmers and the environment in the rural hinterland.

Increases in sanitation services delivery often lead to increased pollution if waste water is not properly managed (Wetlands International, 2010).

Whilst most pressing water resources issues occur at the local level, their resolution and/or impact may well have implications at the hydrological catchment or basin scale. The way forward is to bridge these vertical linkages between local, provincial and national levels, understand how they are linked and how synergies can be created (Figure 2). This section provides some suggestions.

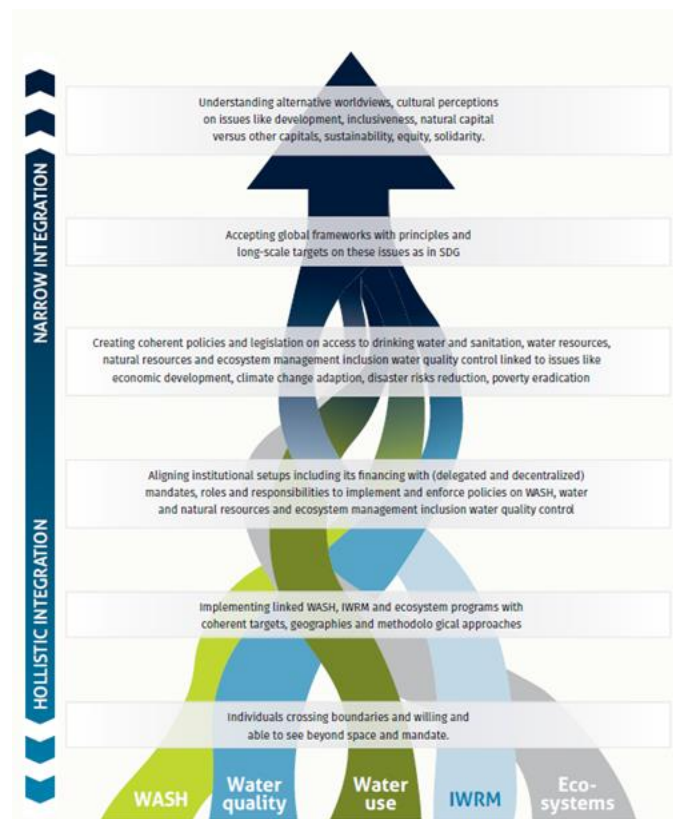


Figure 2. Ways of conceptualising the way IWRM and WASH overlap (Wetlands International, 2017)

To begin with, it is useful to take a step back and see where linkages actually are. Figure 3 shows a diagram of water linkages between IWRM and WASH institutions. Each of the various units (WRM, drinking water, sanitation) have different enabling environments, managing instruments and institutional arrangements (GWP, 2018). Typically, three institutions are involved.

- a) The institution responsible for ground water and surface water in a certain area: typically a basin or watershed authority. The area is often defined by natural watershed boundaries and is rarely aligned with administrative boundaries such as regional or district borders.
- b) The institution responsible for drinking water provision: a utility, a department under a ministry of public works and housing or similar. These service providers often operate at a lower administrative level, such as the district or municipal level.
- c) The institution responsible for the sanitation, waste water and faecal sludge management: responsibility is often poorly defined, and can fall under a ministry of health, ministry of environment or the utility itself.

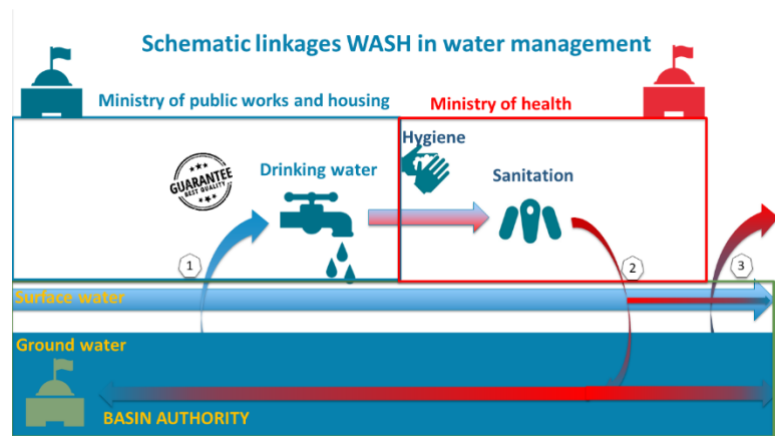


Figure 3. Diagram showing linkages between water management and WASH institutions. Adapted from: (Watershed, 2020).

Figure 3 identifies the two linkages between IWRM and WASH.

**1 Where does the water for WASH come from?**

Water is extracted from the available water resources and 'flows' from the responsibility of the basin authority to the service provider. The extracted water could be surface water (dams or river intakes) or groundwater (boreholes/well fields) and may or may not be regulated. Ideally, the drinking water is extracted from sources that are as clean as possible to avoid/reduce treatment costs. Pollution from agriculture or industry may compound this and climate change may influence availability.

**2 Where does the water from WASH go?**

After usage, the waste water flows back into the environment and becomes the responsibility of a body such as a ministry of environment. This flow (by seepage, pipe, leaking treatment or disposal by tanker truck), often goes back into the environment untreated and pollutes existing water sources. This reduces the usability of these sources for further extraction (3 in Figure 3) for purposes such as agriculture, industry or other water uses.

Once these two linkages are clear, financial, legal and policy instruments and social movements can be identified to strengthen them. This helps overcome common challenges (Wetlands International, 2017), such as the following.

- WASH targets administrative units (district, municipality) while IWRM targets catchment or river basin areas. IWRM tends to work across larger geographical scales than WASH (OECD, 2015b). A synergy may be achieved by focusing on the local component, such as suggested by 'light' IWRM (Butterworth, Warner, Moriarty, & Smits, 2010) (Butterworth J., 2014) (Hamish Hay, 2018). In contrast to prescriptive top-down IWRM, light IWRM aims to be problem-focused, opportunistic and adaptive/iterative when applying core IWRM principles especially at the water-users level.
- Engineered infrastructure used for IWRM (dams, flood controls) often require decades to coordinate finance, come to a political agreement of the changed water allocation and ensure sound environmental governance. WASH on the other hand, encounters little objection and political resistance to improve the health status of people. IWRM thus needs a different sort of political buy-in and embedding into the society than WASH programmes.
- Both sectors depend on well trained specialists, but from different disciplines, with different methodologies, technologies, worldviews, and jargon. These specialisms tend to constrain integration or collaboration as they require people to get out of their comfort zone.

#### 2.1.4 Climate change

The global climate crisis is largely expressed through water, as consequences are felt in either too much or too little water. Climate change increases variability in the water cycle, reducing the predictability of water availability, affecting water quality and threatening sustainable development and biodiversity worldwide. Growing water demand simultaneously increases the need for energy-intensive water pumping, transportation, and treatment. Increased water stress and meeting future water demand will require increasingly tough decisions about how to allocate water resources between competing water uses – including water for climate change mitigation and adaptation activities (UN-Water, 2019). Climate change makes situations more extreme and therefore exposes poor WRM and threatens the sustainability of WASH systems. Droughts and floods are an increased risk for which longer-term WRM is needed, but inadequate WASH systems are a vulnerability that can and should be addressed much faster to reduce the impacts of such events.

Improved water management, including sanitation, is an essential component of successful climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, as called for in the 2015 Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015). Water is also key in attaining the goals and targets of the Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (UNDRR, 2015). Climate-resilient water management can therefore act as a mechanism of coherence among these global frameworks (UN-Water, 2019).

Strengthening water, sanitation and hygiene systems should be at the heart of climate adaptation efforts in most low and middle-income contexts. Good systems and services help make households and communities resilient in the face of climate change (SWA, 2019). The same skills and resources that will allow governments, service providers and other water and sanitation actors to face climate change (in the longer term), are the same ones that are needed now to tackle the pandemic, urbanisation, growing populations and growing demand (in the short term).

The above implies that climate change creates a stronger imperative to address WASH-IWRM linkages and motivates the WASH sector to reach out to WRM to secure sustainable sources for drinking water.

## 2.2 Projects in WASH services provision and IWRM processes

This section focuses on WASH or IWRM projects supported by MFA and is split into two parts. It first discusses the scope and content, after which it briefly presents the typical programme cycle.

### 2.2.1 Scope and content of WASH and IWRM projects

MFA works through partners who execute projects and programmes in the domains of WASH and IWRM. These are by definition limited in time, geography and scope. That means that projects/programmes cannot do everything, and it is important to establish areas of control, influence and linkages to other processes.

Typical WASH projects are understood to have one or more of the following attributes.

- Rural WASH projects typically consist of the development of basic water and sanitation infrastructure, hygiene promotion and the establishment of management models at community and local government level.

#### Box 1 Linking WASH to improved WRM and climate change adaptation and mitigation

From a sustainability perspective, long-term resource availability (quality and quantity) and service delivery need to be guaranteed – even in extreme conditions such as flooding or drought. This also applies to the need to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (SDG 6.6). Efficient use of water and environmentally safe waste water and sanitary solutions are key in this regard. It is also important to consider the links with water claims from other sectors such as agriculture and energy (nexus approach), and anticipate the expected impacts of climate change. Often, WASH services are more sustainable if delivered through multiple use systems that also take into account the requirements for food and nutrition security, or use waste as a source of energy. Increasingly, WASH service delivery organisations have to adapt to changes in the hydrological regime in their service area as a result of climate change. In addition, WASH services can contribute to climate change mitigation by using pumping systems that are energy efficient, and/or powered by renewable energy, or by using energy recovered from waste water facilities.

Source: WASH Strategy 2016-2030

- Urban WASH projects may focus on toilet systems for individual households and the promotion of entrepreneurs, including micro-entrepreneurs, responsible for emptying septic tanks and for transporting and processing faeces.
- Urban WASH water projects typically consist of the expansion and improvement of a larger urban water supply infrastructure and the strengthening of the performance of utilities.
- Urban WASH waste water treatment is related to a sewerage system covering part of the city, often only the city centre.
- WASH systems strengthening projects. These typically strengthen one or more of the building blocks in the WASH system.

When discussing the extent to which these projects take sustainable water management into consideration, understanding the expected scope is useful. A rural water supply project will address WRM issues differently to how a transboundary river basin management project addresses WASH.

### 2.2.2 Project cycle

MFA WASH projects follow standard steps in their project cycle, from the initial formulation to the end-evaluation. These steps, described here in brief, are the underlying structure of the next chapter (Figure 4).

1. **Proposal formulation.** This step is undertaken by the partner to define the project in broad lines. It broadly covers the main objectives, activities & instruments, partner selection, expected results, approach and methods, targeted geographies, quantitative targets and budget.
2. **Quality at Entry.** This is a peer review of the proposal, carried out by staff from different departments at the MFA, and external experts and results in a revised, better proposal.
3. **Appraisal.** This step is undertaken by the MFA, and takes the form of a *Beoordelings Memorandum* (BeMo), or appraisal note. The MFA checks the extent to which the proposal meets its policy priorities and its key criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. It is also the point to express areas of concern or attention that need improvement.
4. **Agreement/Approval (*Beschikking*).** This step consists of the MFA formally approving the project.
5. **Inception phase.** This step is undertaken by the partner and its purpose is to obtain details about identified risks and develop concrete approaches and plans to mitigate them.
6. **AAPP (Annual Analytical Progress Report).** This step is undertaken by the partner annually to show progress and demonstrate how risks are being managed.
7. **Mid Term Review.** This is undertaken by the MFA to adapt and change the programme where necessary.
8. **End Evaluation.** This is undertaken by the MFA and focuses on the outcomes and impact on the life of beneficiaries.

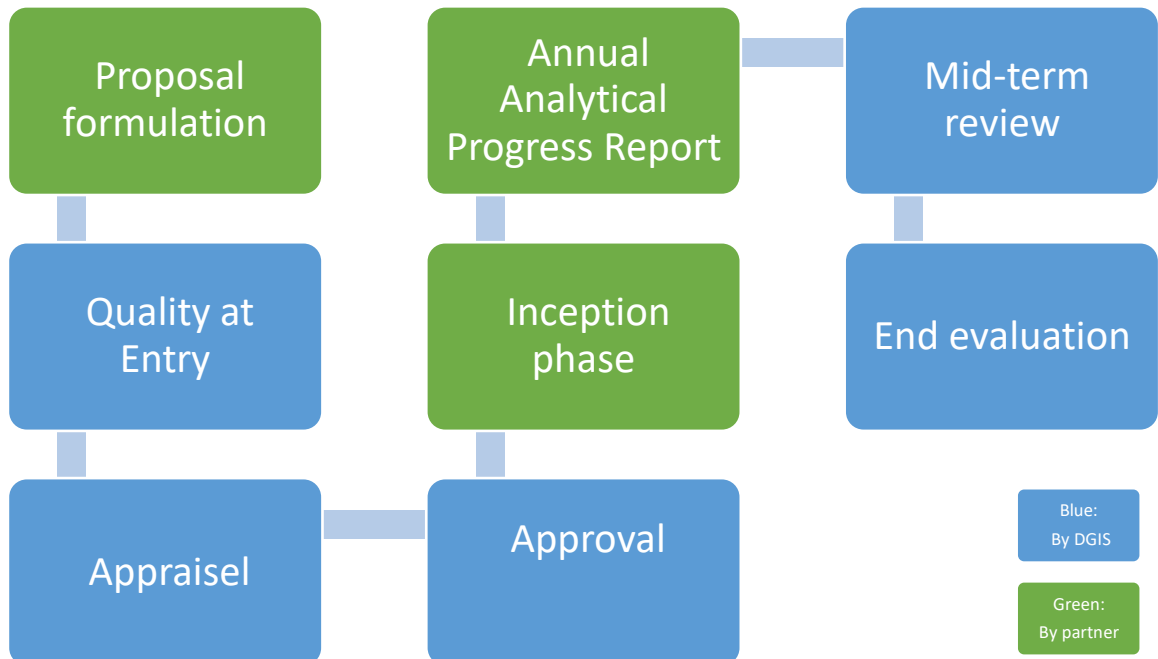


Figure 4. The programming cycle.

### 2.3 Summary

This chapter explained the principles of IWRM and WASH and discussed the opportunities and challenges in linking them. The linkage constitute: 1) where the water for WASH comes from, and 2) where it returns as waste water into the environment. Once these two linkages are clear, financial, legal and policy instruments and social movements can be identified to strengthen the WASH-IWRM linkages. Further, the MFA project cycle was presented briefly to guide the next section.

### 3 Guiding questions to address WASH-IWRM linkages in the project cycle steps

The previous chapter made the case for improving cooperation between practitioners of WASH and IWRM. It outlined barriers and highlighted issues in WASH and IWRM linkages. Using the MFA project cycle (section 2.2.2) as directive, this chapter aims to operationalise the commitment to sustainable water management in WASH projects.

MFA project cycles are inherently time bound – though the sustainability clause<sup>2</sup> has considerably lengthened the time horizon of WASH projects – and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Each approach needs to be contextualised and take the scope and limitations of time and space-bound projects into account.

This chapter provides guiding questions, supported by points of attention. These may help identify what is relevant to do where. The questions are designed not only for service delivery projects, but also for advocacy and systems strengthening projects.

While going through this chapter, please bear in mind the following.

1. The level and detail of analysis differs from one step of the project cycle to the other.
2. Some of the questions are more relevant to the partner (who will need to undertake more in-depth analyses and proposals) than to the MFA. The MFA's role is above all to ensure that the analyses and proposals are made.

#### 3.1 Proposal formulation

##### Objective

The guiding questions in this step are designed to identify the main opportunities, risks and implications for proposed projects, and thus define the scope of a proposed project in terms of interventions. The answers to these questions need to be reflected in the proposal.

##### Guiding questions for identifying opportunities to strengthen sustainable water management.

1. **Is there an opportunity to strengthen WASH sustainability by increasing the quality and quantity of water allocated to WASH?**

Specific points to consider in the answer.

- The opportunity within the current scenario on climate adaptation for addressing water allocation with a focus on poverty reduction and WASH.
- Whether the water resource for the WASH system is sufficiently protected within the current institutional arrangements of WRM.

2. **Does the country recognise the human right to water and sanitation and does this enhance the political environment?**

Specific points to consider in the answer.

- The extent to which the country supports the human right to water and sanitation, and the existence of a road map or framework for implementation.
- The political space and platforms for women and the marginalised to be part of decision-making processes concerning WASH project priorities (location, quantity and quality of water provided).
- The political space and formal platforms for civil society to hold service providers to account.
- In view of Covid pandemic, enhanced political space to address inequality in access to basic WASH.

##### Guiding questions for risk management

1. **Are there any major risks in the current WRM situation that could affect the proposed WASH programme?**

Specific points to consider in the answer.

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<sup>2</sup> It is a paragraph in DGIS funding agreements that stipulates that a check must be undertaken annually to ascertain the usage and functionality of WASH interventions up to 10 years after the end of a programme (IRC Consult, 2016).

- Does the information available on water resources over the last two decades show that there will be sufficient water available? Are potential water quantity limitations expected when developing and expanding WASH services?
  - Presence of threats to water quality which would make the treatment of the water supply too expensive or risky.
- 2. Does the proposed WASH programme entail any major risks that may affect the current WRM?**  
Specific points to consider in the answer.
- Waste water requiring excessively expensive treatment before disposal.
  - Are suitable sludge management arrangements, such as payment systems (tariffs), in place and is there a legal framework for untreated discharge?
  - Political understanding of the need for faecal sludge management.
  - Uncontrolled faecal sludge polluting water bodies.
- 3. Are there any specific climate change scenarios and if so, what are their implications for water availability and the proposed WASH programme?**  
Specific points to consider in the answer.
- Is there enough water for a time horizon of 20 years, given the economic and social development? Does climate change play a big role in this?
  - Does the envisaged impact of climate change massively amplify the water's natural variability, or is it a relatively small contributing factor?
  - Are extreme events expected to affect WASH services?

If the answers to the questions above entail major relevant risks, then also address the following questions.

- 4. What major activities, if any, would the programme propose to include in its scope to mitigate these risks?**
- 5. If insufficient information is available, what major assessments would need to be undertaken in subsequent phases?**

This main source for this step will be secondary literature such as global or national assessment tools.

## Outputs

The output of this step is the inclusion of several paragraphs in the proposal describing the opportunities and risks identified, and the measures taken to mitigate them. It may also include a paragraph about detailed assessments that may be undertaken in the future during the inception and how the right expertise and competence for this will be ensured. Another output is a set of activities and financing schemes that allow for alignment of the SDG 6 targets.

## 3.2 Quality at entry

### Objective

The objective of this step is to get external perspectives on the proposal, and specifically on whether it has a credible approach to addressing relevant WASH-IWRM linkages. It may be iterative with the Appraisal stage.

### Guiding questions

- 1. Have water resources been included in the Theory of Change?**  
Specific points to consider in the answer.
  - Do the proposed activities, outputs and outcomes related to IWRM and WASH feel achievable?
  - Are the assumptions to achieve impact realistic?
- 2. Has the proposal considered and addressed potential water resources management risks and mitigating measures?**  
Specific points to consider in the answer.
  - The risk assessment is generally correct.
  - Proposed mitigating measures are appropriate and realistic.
  - All potential stumbling blocks have been noted.
  - Existing or expected complementary programmes on WRM with which alignment needs to be sought have been noted.

3. **Does the implementing organisation have the capacity needed to make a well informed assessment?**

Specific points to consider in the answer.

- Is the WRM expertise external, or is the consortium presenting combined expertise, which may be deemed more solid.

**Source of information**

This phase is based on the experience of the reviewers. External reviewers are often invited. It is recommended to involve a MFA colleague with specific WRM experience, in particular if the proposal has identified major risks.

### 3.3 Appraisal

**Objective**

The objective of this step (also called BeMo, *Beoordelings Memorandum*) is for the MFA to ensure that the partner meets its policy priorities. It must thus be determined if the principle of linking WASH to the wider water context has been given due attention in the proposal.

**Guiding questions**

1. **Has the proposal considered and addressed potential WRM risks and mitigating measures?**

Addressing these goes beyond generic formulations and shows that real attention has been paid to the relevant issues.

- Does the project guarantee the availability of enough water of good quality for the next 20 years?
- Are the water rights as foreseen in the project written down in a legally binding document?
- Does the project include measures to maintain the water quality in waterbodies for the next 20 years?
- Has the project identified how the various authorities (basin and/or environmental authorities) work with service delivery organisations such as utilities and local district government?

2. **Has the proposal considered climate change and climate justice?**

- Will the project's outputs be able to cope with the effects of climate change over the next 20 years?
- Does the project include measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions like increased energy efficiency, renewable energy etc.?
- Has the project formulated climate adaptation measures to be taken?
- Does the project target climate adaptation for those that are affected the most?

3. **Has the proposal considered cross-cutting aspects such as social inclusion and gender?**

Addressing these goes beyond generic formulations and shows that real attention has been made to these issues (Simavi, 2019).

- Sufficient resources (human and monetary) need to be available to address social inclusion in implementing MFA's WASH strategy.
- An in-depth situation analysis is needed to understand the situation on the ground to identify who is excluded and included, and why.
- Are women and local representation involved in the formulation of the project and in the institutions?
- Is there space and a platform for civil society to have a voice?
- Are there formal mechanisms for civil society to hold service providers to account?

4. **Has the project identified any existing additional or complementary programmes within MFA, or similar projects, with which alignment is needed?**

- Are there other MFA projects that it may be opportune to link with – particularly projects with a greater IWRM focus?
- Are there projects by other donors that are of similar scale and scope that it would be opportune to align with?

5. **Does the proposal include the relevant WRM issues, including risk assessment, partner selection, and monitoring framework, and has sufficient budget been allocated?**

**Source of information**

MFA staff should be able to rely on both the information provided in the proposal, and their own contextual understanding of the programme.



## Output

The output of this step is the inclusion in the appraisal form of paragraphs that indicate the extent to which the linkages are addressed.

## 3.4 Agreement

### Objective

This step consists of providing a formal approval of the project (in Dutch – *Beschikking*). In that sense, there are no specific guiding questions for this step. However, MFA can request specific attention following from 3.2 that would need to be addressed in the inception phase.

## 3.5 Inception phase

### Objective

This step's objective is to obtain details about the opportunities and risks identified during the formulation of the proposal and to develop concrete approaches to enhance opportunities and plans to mitigate risks.

### Guiding questions

#### 1. Have any risks been identified that could threaten the quantity of water?

Points of attention.

- Deforestation or soil erosion that may affect recharge and baseflow.
- Large-scale water intensive projects such as irrigation, dams or industries expected or scheduled.
- Large-scale industrial activities that may compete for the same water source. This includes mining, large factories and energy plants.
- Any dams or irrigation channels that are either scheduled or control the available amount of water.
- The monitoring processes and budget that will be put in place, and any triggers for action.

#### 2. Have risks been identified that could threaten the quality of water?

Points of attention.

- Any existing or planned large-scale industrial activity.
- Mining, such as sand or gold mining that may pollute the source.
- The monitoring processes to be put in place and any triggers for action.
- Expected increase in salinisation caused by either sea water intrusion or flood events.
- The monitoring processes and budget to be put in place and any triggers for action.

#### 3. How has faecal sludge management been arranged and does it avoid polluting water bodies?

Points of attention.

- Have both sewerage and point sources been addressed?
- Are the treatment options suitable and safe?
- Is there a regulatory framework to avoiding illegal dumping?
- A strategy to nurture political support for sanitation and faecal sludge management.

#### 4. Expanding on the climate change mitigation aspects identified in the proposal, what reductions can be achieved and how can they be accomplished?

Points of attention.

- Quantify the expected reduced greenhouse gas emission from faecal sludge treatment and what timeline and methodology would be needed for this.
- Quantify the expected energy reduction of water abstraction, treatment and distribution by defining baseline values, methodology and timeline, and identifying non-revenue water targets.
- Quantify greenhouse gas emission reduction from transport, offices and general operations and indicate methodology and timeline.
- Is there budget for this and/or opportunity to link with climate funding?

#### 5. Expanding on the climate change adaptation identified in the proposal, what can be achieved and how can it be accomplished?

Points of attention.

- End dependence on a single water source by creating a portfolio of potential alternative water sources.
- Link to early warning systems, scenario planning and risk assessments.

- Long term water source protection.
  - Is the quality of the available water in decline due to flooding and saline intrusion.
  - Could extreme events wash away or damage the water supply infrastructure (sources, pipes, treatment plants).
  - Is flood-proofing of essential water related infrastructure such as water intakes, water treatment plants, pumps and power supply needed? Is there budget for this and/or opportunity to link with climate funding?
- 6. How will the various water resource authorities coordinate with the WASH sector?**  
Points of attention.
- Inter-institutional agreements between utility and environmental authorities.
  - Roles and responsibilities of local (district/municipal) and regional authorities (basin authorities).
  - Addressing potential difference in scale between basin level authorities and utility level.
  - Role for CSOs and representation of marginalised groups in decision making.
- 7. How will permits and licences for abstraction and permission for waste water disposal be set up?**  
Points of attention.
- Legal requirements and best practices.
  - Timeframe and costs.
  - Adherence to the licencing – monitoring and enforcement.
- 8. Have the WRM risks been incorporated in the monitoring framework, useful indicators designed and WRM budgeted?**  
Points of attention.
- To what extent will this contribute to SDG 6.4 and 6.5?
  - Are the indicators SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)?
  - Is the water resource component adequately budgeted?
- 9. How will the activity interact with existing or expected complementary programmes on water resource management?**  
Points of attention.
- Will it strengthen the human resources, or will it compete for sector attention and resources?
  - To what extent is the content either overlapping or complementary?
  - How will alignment be arranged in terms of roles and responsibilities, communication and lessons learned.
- 10. Do activities and instruments provide opportunities for both intra-WASH coordination and for WASH-WRM coordination?**  
Examples.
- If micro-finance for toilet systems for households is envisaged, can the financing of individual WRM measures such as rainwater harvesting tanks and systems be included in the micro-finance scheme?
  - If community systems such as building sand dams, are envisaged in terms of WRM, can financing of communal sanitation systems also be explored?
  - If support for sanitation and water provision micro-entrepreneurship is envisaged, can WRM micro-entrepreneurs (building of water tanks and systems) also be supported?
  - If a central city waste water treatment plant (WWTP) is built from public loans, can private finance systems be set up to enable sanitation entrepreneurs to deliver sludge/faecal waste to the central WWTP?

### Sources of information

When preparing this step, a balance needs to be struck between secondary and primary studies. The intention is not to conduct climate change modelling or hydrological modelling but instead, to map partnerships and do more in-depth risk assessments.

### Output

Should a major set of risks be identified and addressing these be a substantial part of the programme, the main output of this step will either be a dedicated report or a chapter on the inception of WASH-IWRM linkages.

Should only minor risks be identified that can be addressed relatively easily, the output is likely to be a section or set of paragraphs on the topic.

### 3.6 AAPP (Annual Analytics Progress Report)

#### Objective

This step is the annual report that partners submit to MFA. In relation to WASH-IWRM, the AAPP allows the partner to verify that progress is being made and risks being managed.

#### Guiding questions

1. **Has the partner reported on progress in any identified WRM risks?**

Points of attention.

- Are there any new emerging risks?
- Does the progress report use the indicators set out in the monitoring framework, and are any adaptations needed?

2. **Has the partner progressed against earlier identified opportunities on WRM or climate change?**

Points of attention.

- Are there any new emerging opportunities?
- Does the progress report use the indicators set out in the monitoring framework, and are any adaptations needed?
- Is the budget still on track?

#### Sources of information

These will be based on the monitoring framework that was established in the inception phase.

#### Output

Should a major set of risks be identified in the inception report and addressing these is a substantial part of the programme, the main output of this step will be a chapter on WASH-IWRM linkages.

Should only minor risks be identified that can be addressed relatively easily, the output is likely to be set of paragraphs on the topic.

### 3.7 Mid-term review

#### Objective

The Netherlands Government programmes often use the OECD evaluation criteria ([OECD.org, 2020](https://www.oecd.org)) for evaluations and reviews. The purpose of the mid-term review is to allow the programme to be adapted and changed where necessary. It is not yet to report on accountability over progress. The following three main considerations are thus relevant.

1. **RELEVANCE: Is the intervention doing the right things?**

The extent to which the intervention's objectives and design respond to: the needs of users at global or country level; the needs of partners and institutions; and policies and priorities. Will they continue to do so if circumstances change?

Points of attention.

- Were the water resource issues addressed at the appropriate scale?
- Is the intervention doing the right things?
- Is the intervention relevant for the context of the area and country?
- Does the intervention address the needs of targeted marginalised population groups?
- Is the Theory of Change still relevant?

2. **COHERENCE: How well does the intervention fit?**

This looks at the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution. Specifically, does the project link well with the existing initiatives of other partners, the government and the wider water authorities like basin authorities?

**3. SUSTAINABILITY: Will the benefits last?**

The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention will, or are likely to, continue.

Points of attention.

- Do the WRM measures improve the sustainability of the water resource for the WASH system?
- Do the WASH measures improve the sustainability of the water sources and ecosystems?

The following points are less of a priority in the mid-term review, but can still be considered.

**4. EFFECTIVENESS: Is the intervention achieving its objectives?**

The extent to which the intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups. Is the intervention doing the right things and doing them adequately?

Points of attention.

- Is the balance between physical interventions and institutional strengthening appropriate?
- Is the project effective in reaching the target groups (gender, wealth quintile etc.)

**5. EFFICIENCY: How are the identified WASH and WRM institutions collaborating?**

- What is the role of civil society organisations and marginalised groups in decision making on WASH and WRM?
- Are there formal mechanisms for civil society to hold service providers to account?

## 3.8 End evaluation

### Objective

These questions are to be answered by the party that carries out the end term evaluation and are similar to those in the mid-term evaluation. However, they focus more on the results for and impact on the life of beneficiaries, keeping in mind the focus on cross-cutting issues such as gender and poverty reduction.

Points of attention.

- Are there indications that the beneficiaries' access to safe water has not only been achieved, but its quantity and quality is guaranteed for the period of the sustainability compact (10 years)?
- Have the processes and institutional structures been strengthened so that they will stay in place for the period of the sustainability compact (10 years)? Are the WRM measures sustainable and are the WASH interventions sustainable.

## 3.9 Summary

Using the MFA project cycle, this chapter presented guiding questions, supported by points of attention, that should help MFA and its partners analyse and find ways to address the IWRM-WASH linkages.

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## Annex 1 – Political frameworks

### Policy framework

#### Global policies

There are a number of relevant global policies and commitments.

- In 1992, the **Dublin Principles** stated that water has an economic value and in its competing uses should be considered as an economic good; water should be recognised as a scarce and vulnerable resource; participatory approaches to water resource management are needed; and women play a key role in water management. These are now recognised as the principles of IWRM.
- **The UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 on Ensuring the Availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation.** Agenda 2015-2030. SDG 6 – the water goal – focuses on 'Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all'. The focus was broadened from drinking water supply and sanitation to the broader water resources management in which drinking water and sanitation service provision are embedded. It has also dedicated targets on water resources management.
  - 6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.
  - 6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.
  - 6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated waste water and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.
  - 6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.
  - 6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.
  - 6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.
  - 6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, waste water treatment, recycling and reuse technologies.
  - 6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

This means that there is a global policy mandate to both work towards universal access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as improved WRM, in terms of improved ambient water quality, water use efficiency, and ecosystem protection and restoration – within a framework of integrated water resources management.

#### Water in the Netherlands' development policy framework

The policies of the Netherlands with respect to water in development cooperation have evolved over time: from a focus solely on drinking water and sanitation to a dual one of WASH and IWRM. That dual focus is still there, but with increased emphasis on integration between the two domains. It is also driven by other factors such climate change.

From 2006, after a period of primary policy concern with drinking water supply and sanitation, improved water management became a second priority for MFA in development aid in the field of water. In 2011, water became one of the Dutch aid policy focus areas. There was a dual justification for this. First, severe and urgent water problems – water scarcity in some parts of the world and flooding in others, linked to issues such as increasing conflicts over catchment areas, exacerbated by population growth and climate change – affect the world's economy and sustainable development. Secondly, the Netherlands, as a world leader in water



management, has an opportunity, as well as a duty, to be a driving force and provide a fundamental contribution to solving these problems (MFA, 2012).

The 2011 MFA Focus Letter Development Cooperation to Parliament stipulated water as one of the four focus areas for development aid policy, along with safety and legal order, food security, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The water objectives became:

- (1) efficient, sustainable use of water, especially in the agriculture sector;
- (2) safe deltas and better management of river basins, including in the context of climate change; and
- (3) better access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Since then, two key evaluations on the MFA approach on water have been done. The first, 'From infrastructure to sustainable impact' (IOB, 2012), evaluated the WASH sector. This detailed evaluation highlighted nine interventions that had positive increases in access, but challenges in water quality, in particular at the point of consumption, limited health impacts and challenges in reaching the poor. Furthermore, it identified challenges in sustainability and points out that, despite numerous references to sustainable development, policies and programmes are still overly oriented towards short-term delivery of physical infrastructure and institutions, and are partially driven by the emphasis on visible short-term results and by spending pressure. This is reflected in the statement that 'not enough attention is provided to ecological aspects, in particular in the context of integrated water management and climate change'.

The second evaluation was '[Tackling major water challenges](#)' (IOB, 2016) which evaluated the water management sector. Enhancing capacity around IWRM/WRM awareness and IWRM-based policies was considered successful, but sustaining it was difficult, in particular at local, sub-national and national level. The evaluation also makes clear that IWRM in itself is sub-divided into several quite different sub-themes. The evaluation does not emphasise the link to WASH, and only reflects it as 'resource protection for drinking water purposes'.

From these two evaluations, the need to address IWRM principles in WASH services provision was considered more a point of attention than the other way round. This is reflected in the new WASH strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016) in which IWRM was later included to enhance sustainability (see box 1). This WASH strategy is strongly aligned with the SDGs and recognises the interdependency of SDG 6.

The current overall development policy of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (BHOS - Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking) is 'Investing in Global Prospects' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). It reiterates the dual importance of addressing both WRM challenges and WASH. It highlights that the Netherlands is internationally renowned for its innovative solutions aimed at protecting people and infrastructure from flooding, water scarcity and water pollution. Many countries need support to enhance their knowledge of solutions and strengthen the necessary institutions and infrastructure. The policy commits to:

- providing 50 million people with access to sanitation, and providing 30 million people with access to safe drinking water;
- continuing cooperation between ministries on urban deltas – and their hinterlands – in line with the Netherlands International Water Ambition (IenW, 2019) in 15 countries; and
- giving greater attention to the impact of water scarcity on access to drinking water, especially in the Sahel, Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

A cross-cutting goal of the policy is to advance gender equality and improve the position of women and girls. Discrimination against women is visible in all aspects of society, which means that gender equality requires active attention in all areas of BHOS policy. This focus on the vulnerable, marginalised and the poor reflects the human rights approach. The human rights approach to WASH and how to enhance social inclusion in the WASH Strategy is discussed in a separate publication (Simavi, 2019).

Further, the policy is influenced by the Valuing Water Initiative (VWI), launched at the World Economic Forum in January 2019. Using practical case studies, this initiative will showcase the implementation of the United Nations Valuing Water Principles to bring systemic change in the way water is valued in policy, practice, finance and behaviour, and to inspire others to do the same. The VWI aims to generate experience on how to

sustainably, efficiently, and inclusively allocate and manage water resources and deliver and price water services accordingly. The five Valuing Water Principles (Valuing Water Initiative, 2020) are:

1. **recognise and embrace water's multiple values** to different groups and interests in all decisions affecting water;
2. **reconcile values and build trust** – conduct processes to reconcile values in ways that are equitable, transparent and inclusive;
3. **protect the sources**, including watersheds, rivers, aquifers, associated ecosystems, and used water flows for current and future generations;
4. **educate to empower** – promote education and awareness among all stakeholders about the intrinsic value of water and its essential role in all aspects of life; and,
5. **invest and innovate** – ensure adequate investment in institutions, infrastructure, information and innovation to realise the many benefits derived from water and reduce risks.

Finally, the policy framework is shaped by the Netherlands' International Water Ambition (NIWA) (IenW, 2019). This sets out a set of overarching principles for any activities the Netherlands undertakes in the field of water internationally. It outlines a more demand driven approach with greater participation (in line with IWRM principles) and a stronger Netherlands contribution and expertise.