

MEDIA RELEASE

## WASH IT! Strategic Partnership signed

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs IRC, Simavi, Wetlands International and Akvo partner up to increase sustainability of water, sanitation and hygiene services

THE HAGUE, 20 November 2015 - Today IRC, Simavi, Wetlands International and Akvo signed the WASH IT! Partnership Agreement with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to jointly increase the sustainability of water, sanitation and hygiene services by improving the governance of water, sanitation and hygiene services and of the water resources on which they draw. This is a prerequisite to meet the target of Global Goal 6: universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene by 2030.

The partnership is part of the Dialogue and Dissent policy framework of Minister Lilianne Ploumen in which 25 alliances together with the Ministry will strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations in 'lobbying and advocacy' in low- and low-middle income countries. The focus on lobbying and advocacy is important for civil society to be able to hold governments and companies to account for contributing to inclusive growth and help reduce inequality.

The WASH IT! Strategic Partnership will be implemented at international level and in six countries: Kenya, Uganda, Mali, Ghana, Bangladesh, and India. In these countries the partnership will strengthen the capacities of national civil society to make the voice of customers heard to government and the private sector to ensure they respect the human rights to water and sanitation as well as sustainable management of water resources for future generations. A strong civil society is essential to hold service providers and governments to account. This will contribute to measurable improvements in the quality and sustainability of WASH services.

This partnership creates a great opportunity for the participating organisations to join their forces, use their knowledge and expertise in lobbying and advocacy to make the voice of civil society heard.

### More information

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## Editor's notes

### WASH IT! partners

#### IRC

IRC is 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 to find long-term solutions to the global crisis in water, sanitation and hygiene services. [www.ircwash.org](http://www.ircwash.org)

#### Simavi

Simavi realises structural improvement to the health conditions of people in marginalised communities in Africa and Asia since 1925. Simavi invests in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) because these basic services are vital for people to be able to lead a healthy life, build a better existence and find a way out of poverty. Therefore Simavi strives for a world in which basic health is accessible for all. Simavi aims to structurally improve the basic health of ten million people by 2020. Simavi works on this mission by collaborating closely with civil society organisations to build capacity and create structural, lasting change. [www.simavi.org](http://www.simavi.org)

#### Wetlands International

Wetlands International seeks to improve human well-being and local livelihoods through wise use of wetlands. Many of the world's poorest communities depend on wetland services and resources like fish, irrigation, water for livestock, sanitation and transport. Partnering with a broad range of development, civil society and community-based organisations, Wetlands International helps communities manage wetlands while enhancing their income and well-being. Wetlands International offers training modules on climate adaptation and the links between wetlands management and poverty reduction. [www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org)

#### Akvo

Akvo creates open source, internet and mobile software and sensors. It works with those that improve infrastructure and services, for disadvantaged populations. Akvo encourages and enables organisations to capture useful data in better ways, and provides training to improve skills in gathering, mapping and visualising data over time. Akvo helps partners integrate and analyse their data with our sources, to improve understanding of complex situations. Akvo tools also improve reporting, communication and collaboration, by making it easy to publish and exchange data to improve performance and build understanding and support for approaches, projects or programmes. Akvo also advocates the full adoption of open-source and open-data standards in the international development community. [www.akvo.org](http://www.akvo.org)