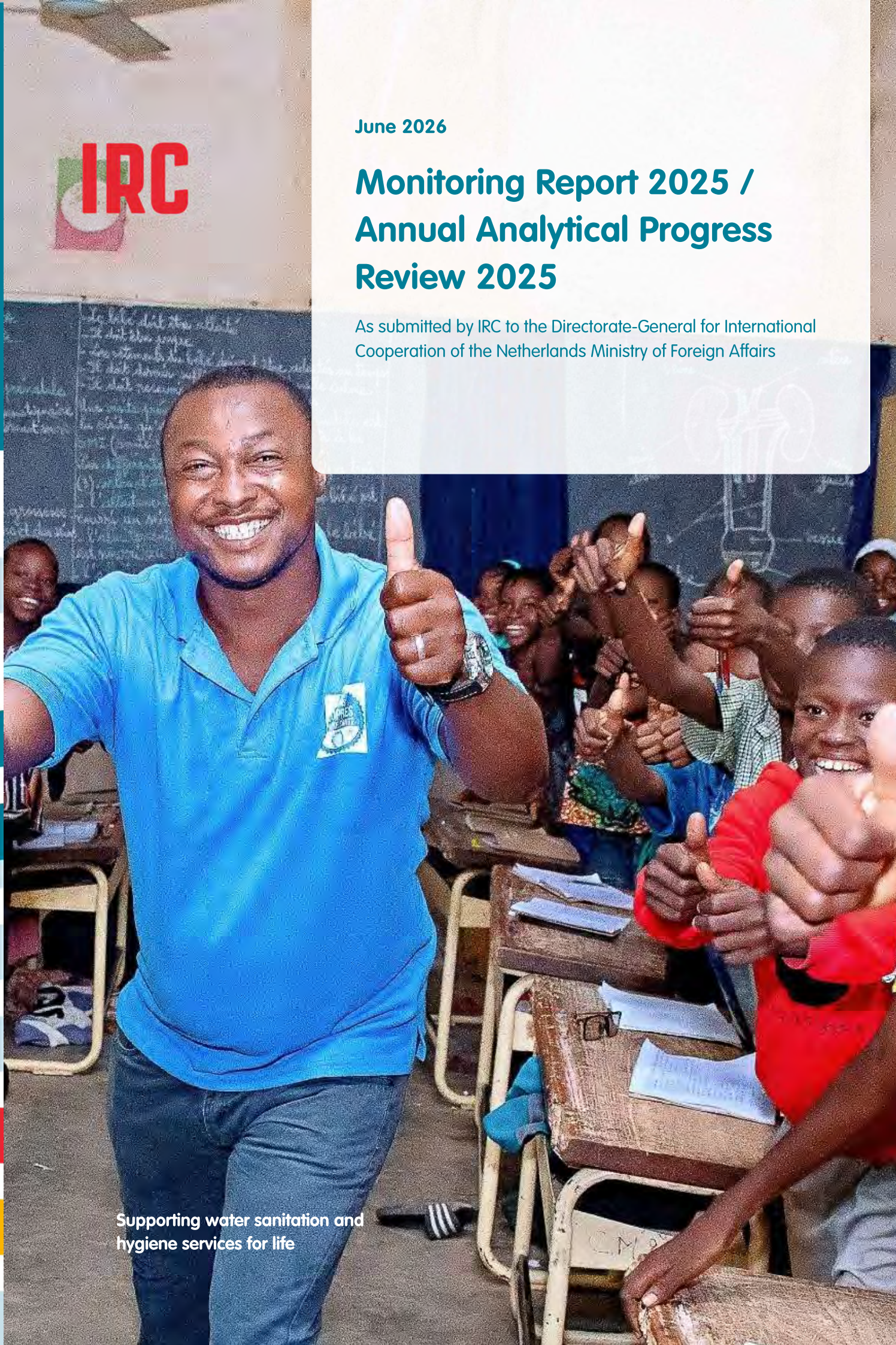
IRC

June 2026

Monitoring Report 2025 / Annual Analytical Progress Review 2025

As submitted by IRC to the Directorate-General for International Cooperation of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Supporting water sanitation and hygiene services for life

For questions or clarifications, contact IRC: info@ircwash.org

Authors: IRC
AI: Claude Opus 4.7 was used as tool to improve consolidation and harmonise style. All content remains the responsibility of the authors
Edited by Tettje van Daalen
Layout by IRC
Cover image: Clean hands good health campaign, Burkina Faso

IRC
Riviervismarkt 5
2513 AM
The Hague
The Netherlands
T: +31 70 3044000
www.ircwash.org

Monitoring Report 2025

June 2026

Abbreviations

A4C	Agenda for Change
AEPS	Adduction d'Eau Potable Simplifiée (simplified piped water supply system, Burkina Faso)
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
ASSERWA	Association of Sewage Emptiers (Rwanda)
ASWA	Accelerating Sanitation and Water for All
AU	African Union
BRAC	Building Resources Across Communities (Bangladesh)
CONIWAS	Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (Ghana)
CR-WASH	Climate-Resilient WASH
CSC	Community Score Card
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
D30	Destination 2030
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund (Ghana)
DGIS	Directorate-General for International Cooperation (Netherlands)
EKN	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK)
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
GESI	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
GLAAS	Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (UN-Water)
GWOPA	Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance
HCF	Healthcare Facility
HoSI	Heads of State Initiatives
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IGG	Inclusive Green Growth (DGIS department)
IPC	Infection Prevention and Control
IRC	IRC (the publishing organisation; not used as an acronym)
IWA	International Water Association
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme (WHO/UNICEF)
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Netherlands)
MIS	Management Information System
MLGCRA	Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs (Ghana)
MSWR	Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (Ghana)
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment (Uganda)
MWHWR	Ministry of Works, Housing and Water Resources (Ghana)
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDP	National Development Plan (Uganda)
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission (Ghana)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NWO	Dutch Research Council
NWP	Netherlands Water Partnership
OAC	Accountability (OFA Results Framework indicator prefix)
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
ODE	Demand (OFA Results Framework indicator prefix)
OFA	One For All (Alliance)

OFI	Finance (OFA Results Framework indicator prefix)
ONEA	Office National de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement (Burkina Faso)
OWNP	One WASH National Programme (Ethiopia)
PANAFCON	Pan African Conference on Sanitation
QIS	Qualitative Information System
RCC	Regional Coordination Council
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
SVL	Service Level (OFA Results Framework indicator prefix)
SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
SYS	Systems (OFA Results Framework indicator prefix)
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNC	University of North Carolina
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WASAC	Water and Sanitation Corporation (Rwanda)
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WASH FIT	Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool
WASHCO	WASH Committee (Ethiopia)
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRM	Water Resource Management

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Executive summary

IRC's approach to monitoring is underpinned by Destination 2030 (D30), a shared strategy developed with our One For All Alliance partners, Water For People and Water for Good. Together, we have a common Theory of Change and Results Framework. Our mission is to significantly improve the quality of life for more people globally over the next decade. Our ambition is structured around three impact levels: improving WASH services for over 20 million people in 150 partner areas; strengthening WASH systems for over 200 million people in at least 20 countries; and influencing global actors to drive transformative change for two billion people. One For All currently works in 17 countries and 56 partner districts.

This report presents IRC's specific 2025 contribution to that ambition, covering nine country programmes, two regional programmes, a global programme and 13 partner districts with a combined population of 2.2 million people. Progress is measured through activity and output monitoring, WASH building block assessments, Qualitative Information System (QIS) ladders, outcome harvesting, secondary data and direct service-level assessment.

What we do: In 2025, IRC supported 88 working groups and learning platforms, reached 4,900 attendees across 97 in-person capacity-building events, added 106 new resources to the IRC website, and ran 55 active Systems Academy courses with 5,800 enrolments. Cumulatively, 58 district water and sanitation master plans covering more than 15 million people have now been completed with IRC and partner support. Country teams continued to deliver across research and innovation, data and information, technical assistance, advocacy and co-investment — even as the wider context tightened, with USAID terminations hitting Ethiopia hardest, deteriorating security in Mali and Niger, and continued fragility in Burkina Faso.

What it leads to: Average WASH systems strength has improved by **11% nationally and 9% at district level since 2019**. The most striking shift this year is that infrastructure management has overtaken planning and legislation as the area of fastest district-level progress, driven by Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. Finance — long the weakest building block — is also starting to show progress at district level (+0.67), reflecting sustained work on costed master plans and local finance strategies. Water resource management at district level has slightly declined. Nine years of building-block data now reveal a recognisable pattern in our partner districts — an initial jump in systems strength after 2–3 years of sustained engagement, maturity after about 5 years, and resilience to shocks after about 6 years (Section 3.2 and Figure 5). 95% of Systems Academy learners reported applying what they learned within six months.

What it delivers: Across our partner areas, water access at basic level rose from 51% in 2023 to 58% in 2025, sanitation from 20% to 28%, and hygiene — static for years — moved from 11% to 14%. In total, **1.3 million people now have at least basic water services and 561,000 at least basic sanitation in our partner areas**.School WASH coverage improved (school water from 46% to 62%, but healthcare sanitation slipped from 11 down to 8%. Overall services at healthcare remains low overall, with nearly one in two healthcare facilities still without basic drinking water. At national level, the 36 million additional people with at least basic water services since 2020, across the countries we work in, shows service coverage expanding faster than population growth — though still well short of the SDG trajectory.

Four lessons stand out from 2025: embedding capacity within statutory bodies outlasts standalone training; costed plans are now the basis of finance dialogue with government; Heads of State Initiatives require multi-year accompaniment rather than one-off advocacy; and climate vulnerability is increasingly the principal driver of WASH inequality.

DGIS programmatic funding of €1.5 million in 2025 (13.8% of total income) continued to underpin the work that is hardest to finance through project funding: global influencing, the Systems Academy, the resource platform, harmonisation across the One For All Alliance, and the monitoring and synthesis work that holds the network together. It also leveraged additional resources, including EU funding in Burkina Faso and grants from Agenda for Change and the Clifford Chance Foundation in Uganda.

2026 will be a year of transition, as IRC formally launches as **Riva** in August — a decentralised, networked organisation of independent national member organisations. The D30 Theory of Change and the long-term commitment to systems strengthening remain unchanged.

IRC at a glance

What we do

At global level,

Global, regional, and multi-country, multi-sector partnerships

At national level,

Systems strengthening in **9 focus and 20+ additional countries**

At local level,

Supporting local governments to reach everyone with services that last in **13 partner areas** with **2.2m people**

Building resilient systems

Strengthening the system and its building blocks through research, innovation, technical assistance, co-investment, advocacy and influencing, and quality data and information

In 2025 we continued to support our network through:

88 working groups and learning platforms supported

4,900 attendees at our **97** in person capacity-building events

106 resources added to the website

55 active WASH Systems Academy courses

What that leads to

Outcomes

Accelerating progress through high-level political commitments, capacity building, citizen-led advocacy, collective action and organisational change in support of Destination 2030

In 2025 this led to,

2 Presidential Compacts signed (Burundi and Nepal)

58 District water and sanitation master plans covering 15 million+ people

5.8k WASH Systems Academy enrollments with 95% saying they'd applied the learning to their work within 6 months

What that delivers

Our 2025 impact

and contribution to the One For All target of 20 million people reached locally.

1.3m

people now have at least basic water services in our partner areas

561k

people now have at least basic sanitation in our partner areas

Our global vision

SDG 6

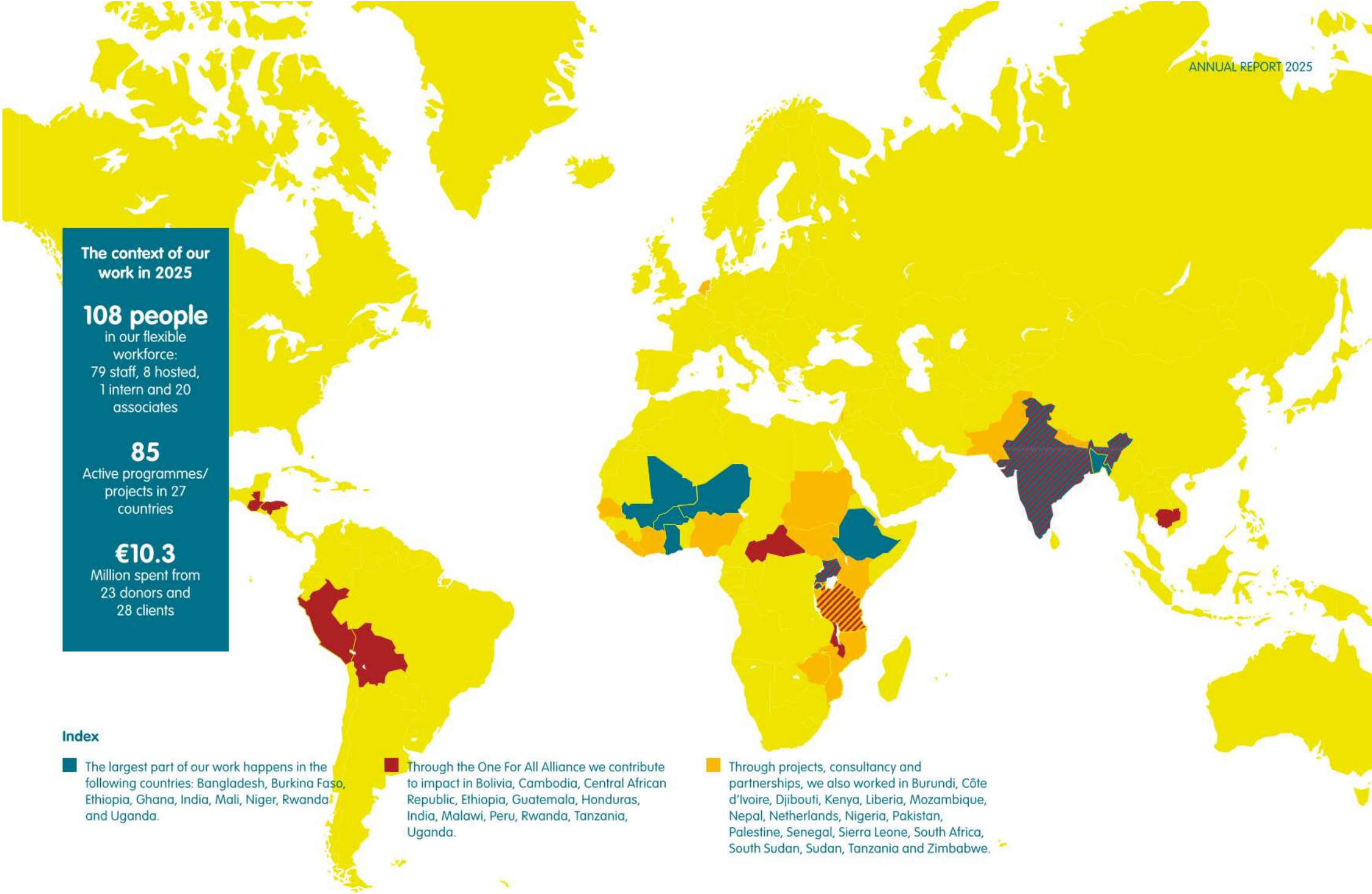
Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, including closing the gap for **over 2 billion** people globally

The context of our work in 2025

108 people
in our flexible workforce:
79 staff, 8 hosted, 1 intern and 20 associates

85
Active programmes/ projects in 27 countries

€10.3
Million spent from 23 donors and 28 clients



Index

- The largest part of our work happens in the following countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mali, Niger, Rwanda and Uganda.
- Through the One For All Alliance we contribute to impact in Bolivia, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Malawi, Peru, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda.
- Through projects, consultancy and partnerships, we also worked in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

1 Introduction

IRC is committed to Sustainable Development Goal 6: ensuring safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all. We focus on targets 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3—covering safe water, sanitation, and wastewater—while recognising that all SDG targets are interconnected. The SDGs prioritise reaching the most underserved communities, while also improving services for those who already have basic access.

Our approach is guided by Destination 2030 (D30), a shared strategy developed with our One For All Alliance partners: **Water For People** and **Water for Good**[1]. Together, we use a joint monitoring and results framework to track progress towards D30.

This report highlights IRC's achievements that contribute to the D30 Results Framework. It complements the IRC Annual report, and the **One For All Alliance Annual Report 2025**, which presents our collective achievements.

This report is structured around our Theory of Change and expands on each element in greater detail in the following chapters.

Chapter 2: indicates what we do (activities and outputs)

Chapter 3: highlights what this leads to (outcomes)

Chapter 4: reflects on what the progress is on service delivery

Chapter 5: focuses on results delivered with **DGIS** programmatic support

Chapter 6: provides conclusions.

Annex 1 highlights the methodological background. Annex 2 gives details of progress in the country programmes and Annex 3,4, and 5 gives details on progress of key outputs of IRC programmes in 2025. Annex 6 maps out the D30 indicators against the DGIS framework.

This report is also published on the **International Aid Transparency Initiative** (IATI), platform, where financial details of DGIS-funded programmes are made publicly available.

[1] December 2025, Water for Good indicated to leave the alliance. For all reporting purposes, they have been included in 2025 as full alliance member.

2 What we do (activities and outputs)

Figure 1 presents the matrix of core indicators. These are organised by level and by Theory of Change. This chapter discusses the "What we do component"

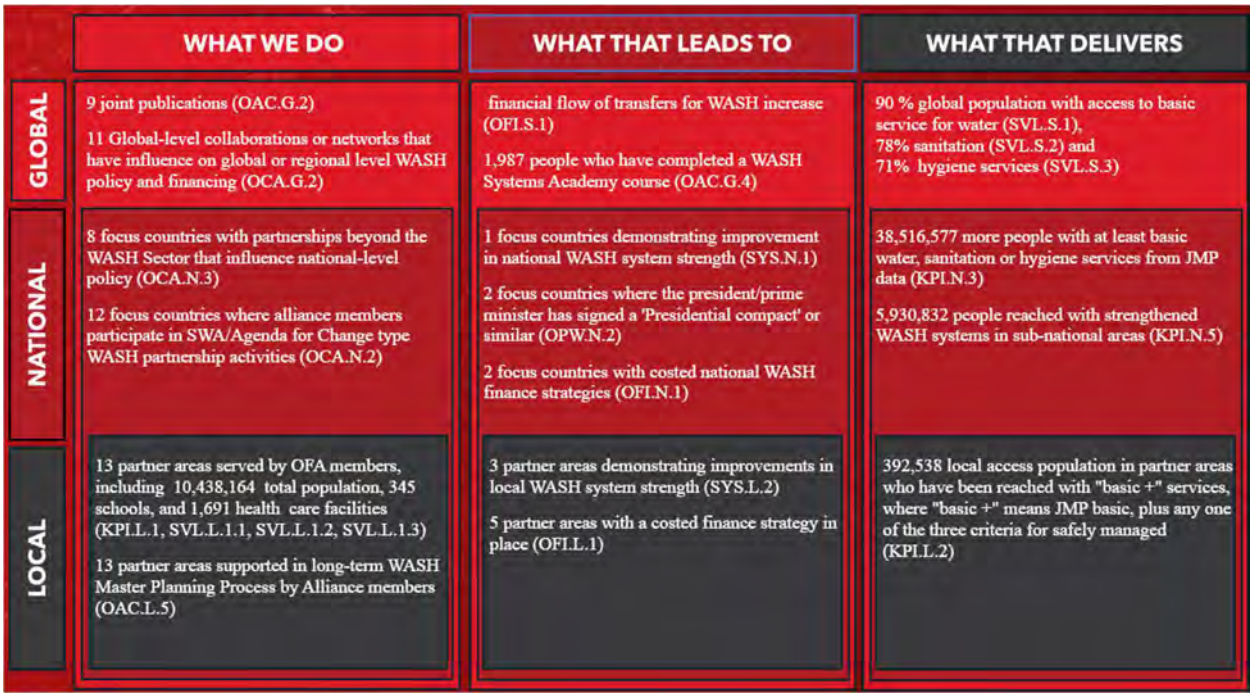


Figure 1: Matrix of selected indicators and their IRC 2025 values

2.1 The context of where we work

In 2025, we worked in nine focus countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India (Odisha state), Mali, Niger, Rwanda and Uganda. We also ran regional programmes in Africa and Asia and a global programme, with additional engagements in over 20 other countries.

Since the pandemic, the world seems to remain in permacrisis, and significant shocks take place each year. In 2025, the termination of major USAID-funded projects had a substantial impact across the network and the sector. Ethiopia was hit hardest, losing a significant share of its planned budget and having to release subnational staff and pause two planned recruitments. In Mali, the security situation has deteriorated significantly from September 2025 onwards, leading to the cancellation of the workshops to disseminate the national guide on promoting WASH in healthcare facilities and the 2025 round of JMP data collection. Burkina Faso's fragile political and security context, ongoing since 2021, persisted, although IRC progressively re-engaged in Banfora with new European Union funding. In Niger, the operating environment remained difficult following the 2023 coup.

Where the context was more stable, country teams were able to advance reforms. Ghana sustained momentum on the Presidential Compact through high-level dialogue with development partners and the sector minister. Uganda advanced the new Sanitation and Hygiene Policy, the WASH National Adaptation Plan, and the integration of District WASH Master Planning into the Fourth National Development Plan. The Rwanda programme bucked the global trend and could continue the *Isoko y'Ubuzima* programme — a USAID-funded initiative working with WASAC, the

national utility, and the Ministry of Infrastructure in ten districts. Through this programme, IRC continued to strengthen its operational presence and laid the foundations for hosting the Africa Water & Sanitation Systems Leadership symposium in 2026.

Across the network, 2025 was also a year of organisational transition, as IRC is transforming into a network of independent national member organisations. This involved the preparation of a charter, registration documents (Ghana, the Netherlands and Uganda), as well as the establishment of governance structures. It also included staff involvement through national and global works councils.

Within the country programmes, we worked in 13 *partner areas* (Table 1)— places where we have a local presence and long-term partnership agreements with government to support systems strengthening until services are universal and sustained. The total population of these 13 partner areas is approximately 2.2 million. The Bangladesh and Rwanda programmes work in large parts of the country (Bangladesh through a climate hotspot project covering 45 upazilas, Rwanda through *Isoko y'Ubuzima* in 10 districts), but these are not yet treated as partner areas because they do not yet meet all the criteria.

Table 1: Changes in partner districts

Country	District name	Population 2024	Population 2025
Bangladesh	No specific partner area		-
Burkina Faso	Banfora	187,597	190,629
Burkina Faso	Tenkodogo	184,683	189,206
Ethiopia	Negelle Arsi	315,074	315,074
Ethiopia	South Ari	198,715	198,175
Ghana	Asunafo North	156,595	158,787
Ghana	Asunafo South	95,598	96,937
Ghana	Asutifi North	73,656	76,037
Ghana	Tano North	97,595	98,961
India*	Ganjam district (Chhatrapur block)	179,898	179,898
Mali**	N'Goutjina	29,338	32,052
Niger	Kornaka	216,522	224,533
Rwanda	No specific partner area		
Uganda	Bunyangabu	218,723	224,925
Uganda***	Kabarole	383,213	243,500
	Total	**2,337,207**	**2,228,714**
* This was the 2011 census data, not corrected for population growth			
** Due to security limited activity			
*** Fort portal is now separate from Kabarole district, census 2024 provided updated numbers			

2.2 Key activities and outputs

This section summarises key activities and outputs organised by the approaches in our Theory of Change. For each activity, the level of intervention is shown in brackets:

- *(Local)* — direct work with one or more partner areas
- *(Sub-national replication)* — extending district-level approaches to additional districts within the same country

- *(National)* — engagement with national government and sector institutions
- *(Regional)* — engagement across a world region
- *(Global)* — engagement at international level

We work with and through partners. In 2025, we supported 88 working groups and learning platforms and reached approximately 4,900 attendees across 97 in-person capacity-building events.

Research and innovation

Research and innovation was guided by the OFA learning agenda and its Innovation and Learning Groups. The main outputs were:

- The working paper *Financial Credibility: Key to the Systemic Transformation of Water and Sanitation in Africa*, which introduces a four-pillar framework — leadership, regulation, professionalisation, and strategic public finance — and proposes a Financial Credibility Index to measure countries' readiness for investment. *(Global)*
- The *Global Outlook on Water and Sanitation Service Providers: Water for Sustainable Cities*, co-produced with Water For People, and commissioned by UN-Habitat for GWOPA. *(Global)*
- A thematic overview paper on regulation titled *Regulating Water Supply and Sanitation Services*. (*Global*)
- *Towards GESI-responsive WASH systems strengthening* and a new course on integrating gender equity and social inclusion into systems work. *(Global)*
- A hackathon, under the *Equitable and Sustainable WASH Services in Bangladesh Delta Plan Hotspots* project with BRAC, to identify climate-resilient WASH solutions for salinity-affected areas. *(Regional — Asia)*
- Dissemination workshop and published knowledge products for *Water4Change*. *(Regional — Asia)*

Quality access to data and information

IRC strengthens evidence-based decision making through improved monitoring and better access to data.

- **Burkina Faso**: Operationalised a digital reporting platform for delegated rural water systems across seven regions. Capacity strengthening for ten operators improved semi-annual and annual reporting; regional accountability workshops brought authorities, operators and technical services together to review performance. *(Sub-national replication)*
- **Ethiopia**: Continued strengthening of WASH Management Information Systems at sub-national level, and supported expenditure tracking in South Ari. *(Local)*
- **Ghana**: Supported monitoring systems in the Ahafo Region and facilitated community scorecard assessments, generating evidence on service quality and strengthening accountability between citizens, service providers and local authorities. *(Local)*
- **Niger**: Continued service level monitoring in Kornaka and supported development of data collection tools for the rollout of WASH FIT 2.0 — the WHO/UNICEF Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool. *(Local / National)*
- **Uganda**: Continued service level monitoring in Kabarole and Bunyangabu. Supported the National Planning Authority to carry out a comprehensive gap analysis of WASH planning frameworks, generating a shared evidence base for reform. *(Local / National)*
- **Mali**: Completed the N'Gountjina sector review. *(Local)*
- **Network-wide**: 106 new resources were added to the IRC website. *(Global)*

Technical assistance

We provided technical support to government and non-government partners at every level.

- **Cumulative**: 58 district water and sanitation master plans, covering more than 15 million people, have now been completed under our and our partners' technical support. *(Sub-national replication)*
- **Burkina Faso**: In Tenkodogo, completed the Zano rural piped water system and three new public standpipes, raising services to basic level for 1,500 people. In the Centre-Ouest region, drilled eight high-yield boreholes, completed feasibility studies for ten existing systems, and supported three municipalities in signing delegated management contracts with the private operator Vergnet. *(Local / Sub-national replication)*
- **Ethiopia**: Supported town water utility strengthening with UNICEF in three towns: Itang (concluded), Qoloji and Berhale. In South Ari, supported implementation of the costed master plan, including Water Safety Planning that restored compliance within seven months after mid-year water quality test failures. *(Sub-national replication)*
- **Ghana**: Supported six districts in the Ahafo Region to integrate WASH priorities into their 2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans, ensuring alignment with national planning guidelines and district master plans. *(Local / Sub-national replication)*
- **Mali**: Trained 20 health workers in Koutiala on WASH FIT 2.0. Developed a new WASH FIT Costing Tool and user guide. Continued to support the WASH/IPC Task Force through five meetings and three strategic activities on biomedical waste management. *(Sub-national replication / National)*
- **Niger**: Trained 14 health and WASH professionals as national WASH FIT 2.0 trainers and facilitated the drafting of Niger's first-ever national WASH standards for healthcare facilities. Supported Kornaka commune to develop its 2026–2030 local water and sanitation plan. *(Local / National)*
- **Uganda**: Completed the 9.3 km Buhara piped water extension in Kabarole, now serving 8,754 people in six villages. Delivered tariff modelling and regulatory training for water sector institutions. Supported the formation and training of District Water Supply and Services Boards in five further districts: Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kitagwenda, Kyenjojo and Ntoroko. *(Local / Sub-national replication / National)*
- **Bangladesh**: Continued the BRAC-led *Equitable and Sustainable WASH Services in Bangladesh Delta Plan Hotspots*, strengthening local institutions to reach ultra-poor populations in two climate hotspots. *(National / Local)*
- **Rwanda**: Through *Isoko y'Ubuzima*, supported district institutions in ten districts on planning, regulation and finance. WASAC installed bulk meters and replaced 12 km of pipelines at the Ntora pilot site, reducing non-revenue water from 41% to 23% in the Kacyiru Branch (with support from JICA). Trained 41 district officers in market-based sanitation. *(Local / National)*

Advocacy and influencing

Advocacy and influencing activities have mainly taken place at national and global level:

- **Ethiopia**: Sustained support to the Heads of State Initiative to finalise the Presidential WASH Compact. Co-chaired the national WASH financing working group. Contributed to the review of the One WASH National Programme Phase II and the development of Phase III, and provided technical input to the updated national water resources management policy. *(National)*

- **Ghana**: Facilitated high-level dialogue with development partners and the sector minister to advance commitments under the Presidential Compact, helping to initiate a financing strategy for the Ghana WASH Sector Development Programme. Co-hosted the *National Learning Exchange* in Accra with the National Development Planning Commission, WaterAid Ghana and CONIWAS, drawing over 95 stakeholders including representatives from 17 Municipal and District Assemblies. *(National)*
- **Uganda**: Provided technical advisory support to the Sanitation and Water for All Country Team on Uganda's emerging Presidential Compact. Contributed to three influential national policy documents — the new Sanitation and Hygiene Policy, the WASH National Adaptation Plan, and the Climate-Resilient WASH in Schools Manual. Hosted the SWA Country Team Meeting in September. *(National)*
- **Mali**: Organised a high-level roundtable on financing the National WASH Roadmap for healthcare facilities, and a national learning and sharing workshop on the WASH FIT approach. *(National)*
- **Burkina Faso**: Participated in sectoral reviews, thematic groups and working groups at national level. *(National)*
- **The Netherlands**: Through the NWP-NGO platform had regular meetings between NWP and the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. Also hosted a WASH debate on trends affecting water and sanitation. (*National*)

At global level, IRC — in partnership with AMCOW and the Government of Rwanda — announced the *Africa Water & Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium* to be held in Kigali in August 2026. The Symposium is being positioned as a continental platform aligned with the African Union's Year of Water 2026 and preparations for the 2026 UN Water Conference. We launched a new course, *Systems Leadership: the Basics*, on the WASH Systems Academy, and took part in major global events, including the UNC Water & Health Conference, the SWA Sector Ministers' Meeting, PANAFCON-3 (Lusaka), World Water Week, the Water and Development Congress & Exhibition (Bangkok), and the Africa Climate Summit.

Globally, two Presidential Compacts were signed in 2025 — in Burundi and Nepal — extending the reach of the Heads of State Initiatives. IRC's role in these two were minimal, but it does show the importance of the HoSI and the overall global uptake.

Co-investment

Under the One For All (OFA) structure, co-investment aims to unlock finance for sustainable services. IRC does not directly fund infrastructure but contributes through cost-sharing and by mobilising partner investment. In 2025:

- Burkina Faso engaged the European Union to secure additional funding to continue implementation of the Banfora strategic plan and to start the Koudougou strategic plan.

3 What this leads to (outcomes)

This section outlines the overall progress of WASH systems strengthening and related outcomes in IRC's focus countries and globally. Reference is made to Figure 1 that shows the core indicators and their value.

3.1 How systems are changing

Aside from the Building blocks, we use QIS tools to assess *how* our activities and outputs contribute to systems change (Annex 1). The methodology as used in previous years has been phased out (see last year's report). This year we have started to use the OFA QIS ladders at local/district level. Ethiopia, Ghana, India and Niger have been able to set the baseline in 2025.

Table 2: QIS values within OFA framework

Code	Description	Threshold	Ethiopia	Ghana	Niger	Uganda	# above threshold
OPW.L.1	Commitment to WASH master plan	70	70	70	70	70	4
OAC.L.4	Prioritisation of WRM and climate resilience	70	50	10	10	10	0
OFI.L.1	Costed local finance strategy in place	70	70	20		20	1
OFI.L.2	Financial gap understood for WASH	70	70		10		1
ODE.L.1	Functioning accountability mechanisms	70	10		30		0
ODE.L.3	Response to WASH service user demand	70	20		50		0
OFI.L.1	Costed national WASH finance strategies in place	70	70	20		20	1

As can be seen from Table 2, Ethiopia is scoring best. Commitments to master plans are performing strongest, with all four countries reaching the threshold value. The other processes build on the master planning and are still in progress.

3.2 WASH systems strength

We have been measuring systems strengths since 2017. This provides a long-term set of data with variables between national/district, but also between the various building blocks themselves and between countries[2]. With the help of the multi-year data (eight country-level series[3]), it becomes possible to identify long-term trends. Figure 2 shows the dataset of building blocks over time. There is quite a bit of fluctuations between the years, and changes between the various building blocks.

[2] We have used Claude Opus 4.7 to assist in finding trends and insights

[3] Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda at both district and national level. Mali, Niger and India don't have enough years of data to test. Care needs to be taken with this trend analysis, as monitoring has become less frequent due to reduced budget availability, and methodologies may have changed.

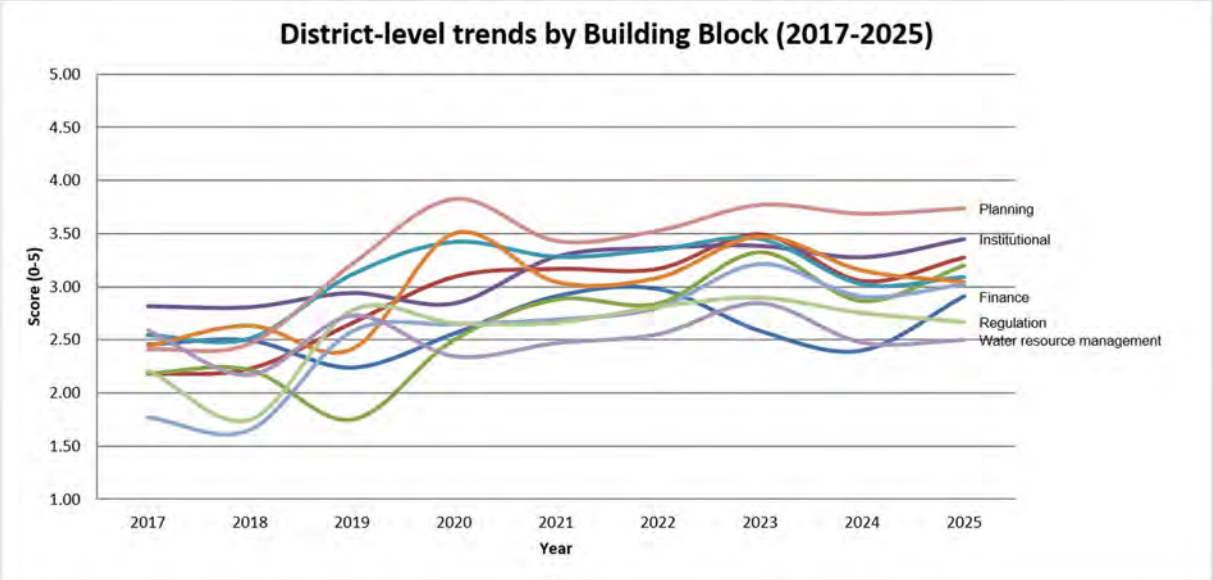


Figure 2: District-level trend per building block 2017-2019, district level

However, when looking in more detail, and across the various datasets, several trends are emerging. Figure 3 provides a schematic representation of this:

1. A **jump in systems strength** – after about 2-3 years of interventions, there is a jump in systems strength. Typically, when systems strengthening starts in an area the system is weak, with building blocks performing poorly. Once sustained support is provided, it gets traction and bigger improvements happen. After this, improvements are more modest, and sometimes even show a decline (supported in 5 of 8 series).
2. **System maturity** sets in as building blocks converge and become less dispersed. This stage is reached once the weaker building blocks have been strengthened and progress is more even. This seems to be after about 5 years (supported in 5 of 8 series).
3. **System resilience** takes place, where fluctuations of individual building blocks become less pronounced. This usually becomes visible after about six years. The system becomes resilient to shocks and changes. The planning and institutional building blocks in Figure 2 provide a good example (supported in 6 of 8 series).

While these trends are not universal, they offer a useful framework for understanding expected impact and changes from long-term systems strengthening.

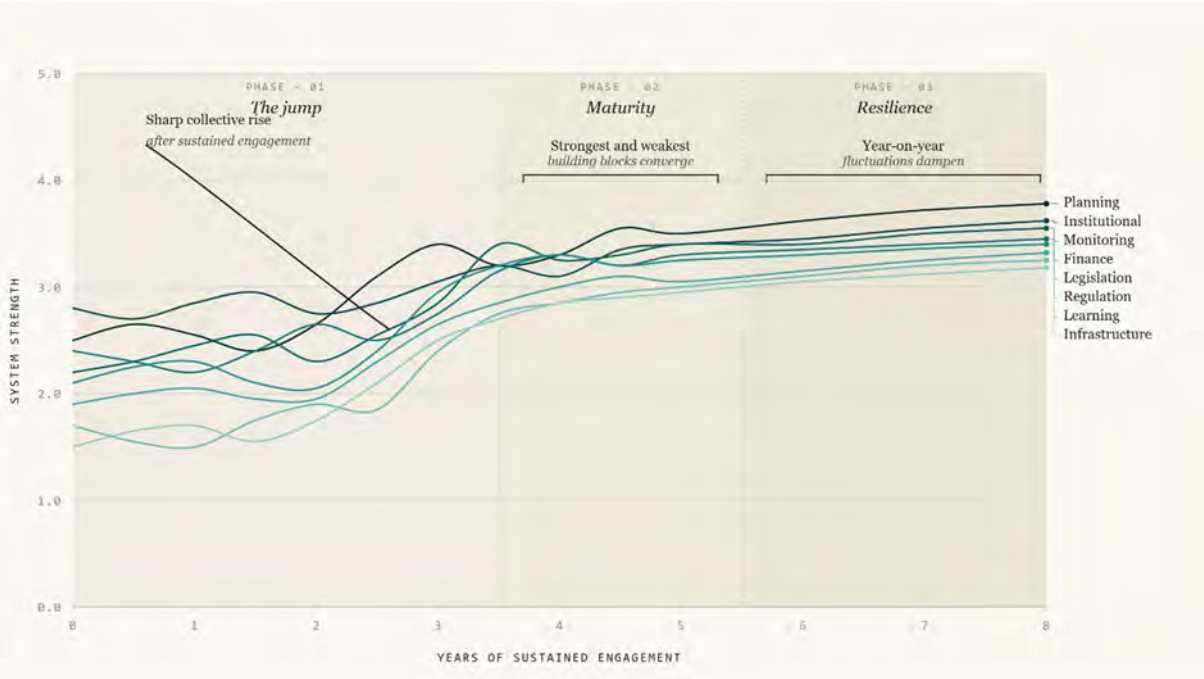


Figure 3: WASH systems strengthening trajectories

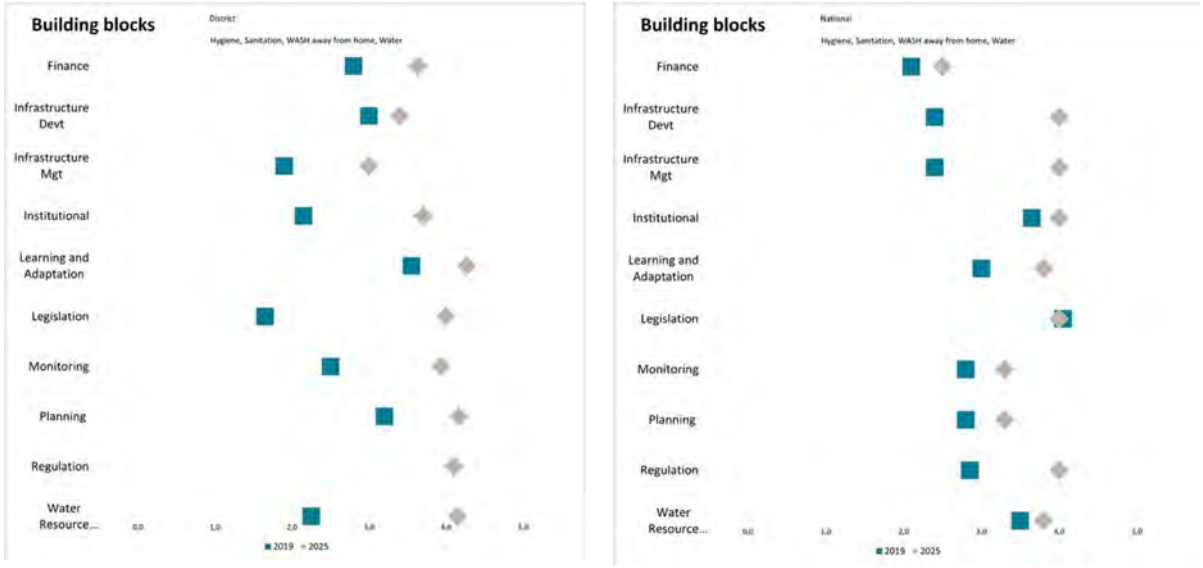


Figure 4: Comparison of the average building block scores at district (left) and national (right) levels from 2019-2025

Across the network, there are structural gains in systems strength at both national and district levels (Figure 4) since 2019. Eleven per cent improvement in average national systems strength and 9% improvement in average systems strength[4] in our partner areas. The pace of district-level change remains greater than national-level change, reflecting the slowness of national systems and the more dynamic district interventions.

At national level, the greatest improvements over the years are in **Ethiopia** and **Uganda** (Table 3). Burkina Faso is only achieving marginal improvements in their systems strength, highlighting the

[4] Since 2019 average national system strength has gone up from 2.8 to 3.3, and for partner areas from 2.7 to 3.1

challenge of systems strengthening in fragile contexts. Over a larger period of time (2019-2025), the national systems have gained strength in particular in:

- **Monitoring (+0.92):** Various national monitoring schemes have been promoted and supported in the sector, powered by the rapid developments in IT, increase in mobile phone availability.
- **Infrastructure development (+0.88) and Infrastructure management (+0.81)**. The primary driver is the gradual establishment and digitalisation of asset inventories (age + physical state), supported by clearer role definitions, project delivery manuals, and funding-linked verification. Without complete public access or full functionality data, the mere existence of such inventories pushed scores upward. A secondary driver is institutional reforms (e.g., ONEA in Burkina Faso, WASHCO legalisation in Ethiopia) that clarify ownership and maintenance responsibilities.

Table 3: National systems strength of various countries

Country	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Burkina Faso	2.70	2.70	2.71	2.78	2.78	2.67	2.78	2.78	2.78
Ethiopia	2.40	2.40	1.66	3.08	2.82	2.82	2.71	2.93	2.93
Ghana	3.34	3.33	3.07	3.03	3.37	3.37	3.29	2.95	3.31
India	2.73	2.73		2.90	2.99	2.97		2.96	2.96
Uganda	2.88	2.86	2.96	3.83	3.83	3.83	4.01	3.63	3.63
Average	**2.84**	**2.83**	**2.76**	**3.06**	**3.09**	**3.06**	**3.06**	**3.07**	**3.15**

At **district level** (Table 4), the long term gains 2019 to 2025 have been in two other areas:

- **Infrastructure management (+1.45)**, this is linked to the various asset management initiatives, particular in Burkina Faso (Burkina Faso's Centre-Ouest delegated management arrangements with the private operator Vergnet) and Ethiopia (town water utility strengthening together with UNICEF).
- **Finance (+0.67),** this is related to the financing strategies and costed master planning that has taken place with for example Ghana's 20% DACF earmark at district level.

Water resource management is an unexpected decline at district level (–0.23) . This may in part be due a growing focus on climate, which may be drawing attention and resources away from water resource management.

Table 4: Building blocks in districts over time

Building block	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Finance	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.0	2.6	2.5	2.9
Infrastructure development	2.2	2.2	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.1	3.3
Infrastructure management	2.2	2.2	1.8	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.3	2.9	3.2
Institutional	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.8	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.4
Learning and Adaptation	2.5	2.5	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.0	3.0
Policy & Legislation	2.4	2.6	2.4	3.5	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.2	3.0
Monitoring	1.8	1.7	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.4	2.9	3.0
Planning	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.9
Regulation	2.2	1.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.7
Water resource management	2.6	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.5
Average	**2.4**	**2.3**	**2.7**	**3.0**	**3.0**	**3.1**	**3.3**	**3.0**	**3.1**

3.3 Progress on outcome indicators

Table 5 presents a selection of outcome indicators and their overall OFA target for 2030. It is exciting to see that progress is being made on all of them. Our analysis shows that more mature programmes, such as those in Uganda, Ethiopia, and Ghana, are leading in performance—demonstrating that achieving outcomes takes time.

Table 5: 2025 values of selected outcome indicators

Level	2023 value	2024 value	2025 value	Description	Comment 2025
Local	-	3	6	Partner areas with an operational funding and finance strategy. (Indicator OFI.L.1.n)	Asutifi North, Banfora, Kabarole, Negelle Arsi, South-Ari, Tano North
	9	9	9	WASH systems strength assessments conducted in partner areas since 2022 (Indicator SYS.L.1.n)	Almost all, except, N'Goutjina and Chhatrapur block
	-	3	5	Partner areas where an up-to-date local financial gap analysis is in place in 2025. (Indicator OFI.L.2.n)	Asutifi North, Kabarole, Negelle Arsi, South-Ari, Tano North
	-	3	4	Partner areas with a functioning accountability mechanism for service providers and service authorities increased in 2025 (Indicator ODE.L.1.n)	Asutifi North, Bunyangabu, Kabarole, South-Ari
	6	8	8	Partner areas that have regular progress review meetings for learning and reflection on progress towards district WASH targets in the last year (2025). (Indicator OCA.L.1.n)	Banfora, Negelle Arsi, South-Ari, Asutifi North, N'Goutjina, Kornaka, Bunyangabu, Kabarole
National	-	3	3	Countries with costed national WASH finance strategies (Indicator OFI.N.1.n)	Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India
	1	1	2	Countries where the president/prime minister has signed a 'Presidential compact' or similar (Indicator OPW.N.2.n)	Ghana, India
	1	2	3	The number of countries where WASH Master Planning has been scaled to cover at least 25% of the country, increased from 2022 (Indicator OAC.N.2.n)	Ghana, Uganda, Mali
Global	747	1526	1987	By 2025, a total of 1,987 WASH Systems Academy courses were completed by people from various countries. (Indicator OAC.G.4)	

Over the past five years, our work has led to positive outcomes at global, national, and local levels, influencing governments, donors, and NGOs *(see Annex 2 for details)*:

Globally, IRC has played a key role in building high-level political support for WASH. Since 2022, we have worked with partners to expand the Heads of State Initiatives. In 2025, 2 national pacts were launched by the Heads of State of Burundi and Nepal.

Furthermore, we capture stories of change through outcome harvesting and our monitoring cycles. Examples of such stories are presented below. Box 1 describes how the sector is becoming more professional, box 2 reflects on changing from planning to action and box 3 highlights how advocacy work has led to better budget allocation.

Box 1: From construction to professionalisation — delegated water service contracts in Burkina Faso's Centre-Ouest

For much of the past decades, the key issue for rural piped water systems in Burkina Faso has not been whether infrastructure exists, but whether it continues to function. A 2024 audit by the

Ministry of Water confirmed long-standing observations by country teams: technical capacity to build rural piped systems is strong, but the institutional capacity to operate and maintain them at scale remains fragile, particularly following the Ministry's reorganisation in January 2022.

In 2025, IRC Burkina Faso took two complementary steps to begin shifting this. First, **the digital reporting platform** (in mWater) was operationalised across **seven regions.** Ten rural water operators were trained to submit their own semi-annual and annual reports, and seven regional accountability workshops brought together contracting authorities, operators and technical services. Second, in the **Centre-Ouest region**, IRC's support led to the signing of **delegated management contracts between three municipalities and the private operator Vergnet** — a model in which a professional operator is contractually accountable to the municipality for service standards.

Why this matters. These two interventions together address the building block — infrastructure management — that has shown the fastest district-level gain network-wide in 2025 (+1.45 since 2019). Burkina Faso (+1.60) and Ethiopia (+2.48) are driving that average. In a fragile context where national reform has stalled, professionalising service management at sub-national level is one of the few realistic routes to sustainability. The mWater platform also creates the audit trail that any future regulator — domestic or donor-funded — will need.

Box 2: Turning master plans into action: District WASH Master Plans translated into Local Action plans

Uganda's **Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV)** sets the country's strategic priorities for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30. Following a retreat of the National Planning Authority (select technical committee) which was supported by IRC, it was agreed that while NDP IV prioritises integrated and inclusive WASH service delivery as a key driver of human capital development, there is a need to shift from fragmented long-term WASH master plans to context-specific Local Government WASH Action Plans. These plans are aligned with the NDP IV planning cycle, emerging realities, and evidence-based local needs.

Alongside this, IRC supported the National Planning Authority to conduct a comprehensive gap analysis of WASH planning frameworks. The findings — that while WASH is strategically recognised in NDP IV, implementation is constrained by fragmented guidelines, limited sanitation an`d hygiene financing, weak O&M systems, and inadequate local government financing — now form a shared evidence base for the next phase of reform. The **Sanitation and Hygiene Policy**, the **National WASH Adaptation Plan**, and a strengthened framework for interministerial WASH coordination were all advanced in the same year.

At sub-national level, **Kabarole and Bunyangabu** were gazetted as Water Authorities, and District Water Supply and Services Boards were formed and trained in five further districts (Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kitagwenda, Kyenjojo, Ntoroko).

Why this matters. Using NDP IV to transform master plans in action plans is a *systemic* outcome that distinguishes systems strengthening from project delivery. It means the next government cycle inherits the approach by default, not by choice.

Box 3: From advocacy to allocation — Ghana's 20% DACF earmark for WASH

For more than a decade, IRC Ghana and partners have argued that District Assemblies — the layer of government legally responsible for WASH service delivery — are systematically underfunded. The **District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF)** is the principal mechanism through which central government transfers resources to districts. In 2025, for the first time, **Government earmarked a minimum of 20% of the DACF for WASH at district level**.

CSOs in Ghana welcomed the directive as a positive response to their long-standing advocacy for increased and earmarked funding for WASH. In the Ahafo Region, the integration of district WASH Master Plans into the Medium-Term Development Plans enables assemblies to better align these resources with prioritised activities and investments identified in the plans.

The sustained high-level engagement under the Ghana WASH Presidential Compact—including the Minister's intervention at World Water Week 2025 and the SWA Sector Ministers' Meeting—has contributed to maintaining WASH as a national priority and strengthening political attention to the sector.

Why this matters. Across the network, finance has been the most persistently weak WASH building block. The DACF earmark is one of the clearest examples in this report of *domestic public finance* being unlocked — not philanthropic or donor co-financing.

The Rwanda district WASH investment plans (USD 1.3 billion identified across ten districts) and Ethiopia's National WASH Financing Strategy point in the same direction: costed plans backed by political commitment are starting to shift the conversation from 'we cannot afford WASH' to 'this is how we fund it'.

4 What this delivers: progress in service delivery

4.1 Global trends service levels

Ten years after the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals, none of the SDG 6 targets is on track. The latest JMP report (JMP 2025) confirms that despite a decade of effort, 2.1 billion people still lack safely managed drinking water and 3.4 billion lack safely managed sanitation. From 2015 to 2024, 961 million people gained safely managed drinking water (raising global coverage from 68% to 74%), and 1.2 billion gained safely managed sanitation (from 48% to 58%). These are real gains, but the pace falls well short of what is needed by 2030. The UN's assessment of SDG progress indicates that Goal 6 is making only marginal progress, with significant stagnation and regression across critical targets.

JMP also shows that the number of people with access to piped water grew from 3.5 billion to 5.3 billion between 2000 and 2022, with around three-quarters of that growth occurring in urban areas. The GWOPA report reports that 63% of surveyed utilities reported improvements in service levels over the last five years, due to fair tariffs, infrastructure investment, customer service and outreach to underserved areas; only 9% reported deterioration. But it also makes plain that progress depends on tackling the chronic weaknesses behind these averages: operational inefficiency, undercapitalised assets, weak regulation, fragmented governance, and a near-total invisibility of small, rural and community-managed providers in national datasets and financing flows. Climate

finance, although growing, remains largely inaccessible to the municipalities and utilities that need it most.

4.2 Service levels at national levels

As One For All, one of our key indicators (KPI.3) is to have an increase of 200 million people with at least basic services in the countries we work in. Based on JMP data and using 2020 as a baseline, we see an increase of about 38 million (25%) by 2025 for the countries where IRC is active[5] in (Figure 5). While the population has increased by 36 million (14%), while the population with at least basic services has grown by 26%, indicating that service coverage is expanding faster than population growth and we are closing the gap. However, despite this progress, the SDG target is unlikely to be met.

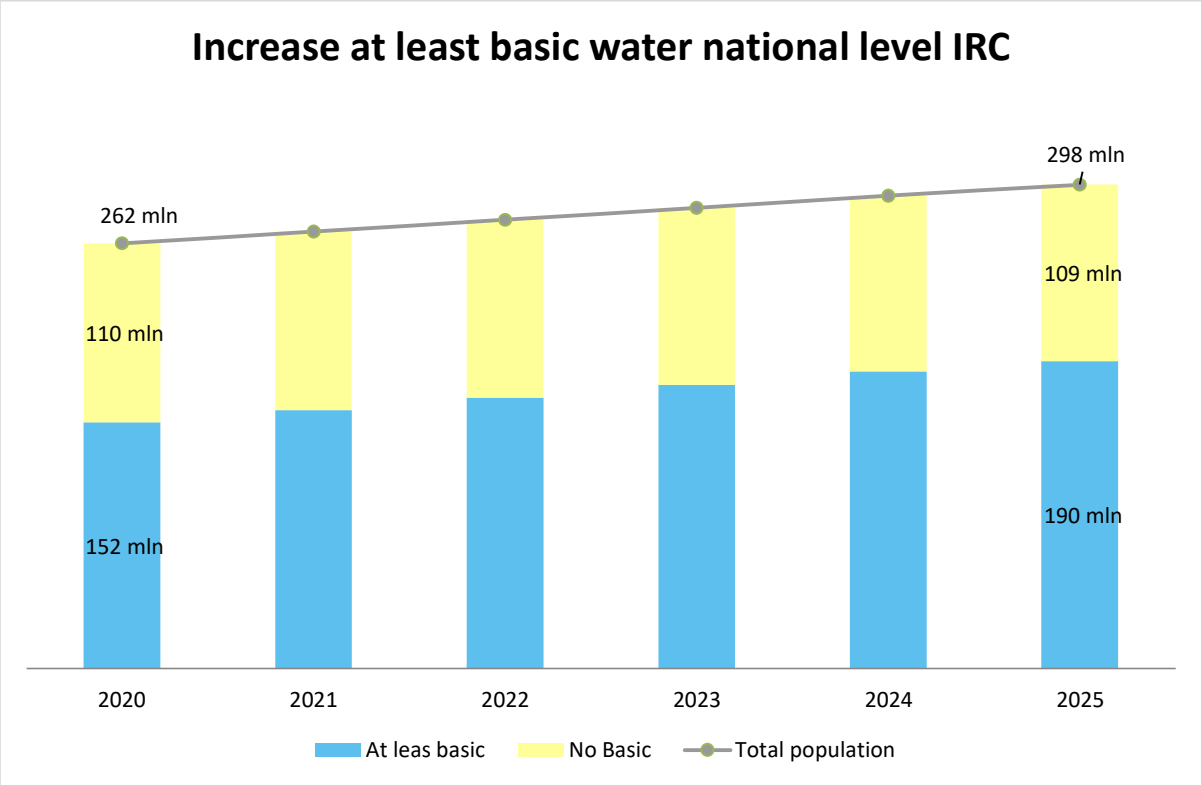


Figure 5: Population with water basic service levels across countries we work in

4.3 Service levels in partner areas

Table 6 provides the current status of service levels in the partner areas. The consolidated picture shows an impressive increase in basic service levels across the board, with access to at least basic water services rising from 51% to 55% to 58% and sanitation from 20% to 26% to 28% over the past three years. This shows a considerable increase in coverage and progress. In previous years, hygiene remained static, but this year, hygiene coverage increased from 11 to 14%.

Notable progress has also been made in schools in some of our intervention countries (Uganda, Mali), with coverage going up from 46% to 62% in water and from 46% to 57% for sanitation. However, this is partly because of inclusion of the data of Tano North and Asunafo South in Ghana – who have relatively better school coverage. The JMP report (JMP 2024) highlights the challenges with service levels in healthcare facilities, particularly in fragile contexts. These global challenges

[5] Only looking at Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Uganda. India, Rwanda and Bangladesh excluded as we haven't been active in whole country in that period.

are reflected in our partner districts, particularly in the increasingly fragile Sahel countries. In both Mali and Niger, our focus is on responding to this global challenge by working more closely with healthcare centres... The current status (Table 6) highlights the healthcare institutions need considerable attention. Still nearly one in two healthcare centres do not have access to basic drinking water, and only one in three have basic hygiene and only one in 10 meet the basic sanitation criteria.

Table 6: 2025 status of at least basic service levels in our partner areas

	Households			Schools			Health posts		
	2023[2]	2024	2025	2023[4]	2024[3]	2025[5]	2023[5]	2024[3]	2025[5]
Drinking water	51% 1,008,000 out of 2.0 mln	55% 1,280,000 out of 2.3 mln[1]	58% 1,282,000 out of 2.2 mln[1]	43% 461 out of 1,069	46 % 643 out of 1,394	62 % 1,059 out of 1,721	44% 111 out of 254	54% 224 out of 412	50% 218 out of 440
Sanitation	20% 402,000 out of 2.0 mln	26% 554,000 out of 2.1 mln[2]	28% 561,000 out of 2.0 mln[6]	48% 513 out of 1,069	46 % 638 out of 1,394	57 % 979 out of 1,721	7% 19 out of 254	11% 47 out of 412	8% 35 out of 440
Hygiene	12% 138,000 out of 1.2 mln[4]	11% 198,000 out of 1.7 mln[3]	14% 200,000 out of 1.4 mln[3]	42% 449 out of 1,069	30 % 412 out of 1,394	32 % 548 out of 1,721	31% 78 out of 254	31% 129 out of 412	32% 140 out of 440

Excluded the following due to insufficient data:
[1] excludes Mali
[2] excludes Mali, and Tenkodogo (Burkina Faso)
[3] excludes Mali, Ganjam (India) and Tenkodogo (Burkina Faso), Ghana - Tano North and Asunafo South
[4]excludes N'Goutjina (Mali) and Tenkodogo (Burkina Faso) and Ghana
[5]excludes Ganjam (India) and Tenkodogo (Burkina Faso)
[6]excludes Mali, Niger

Table 6 also highlights the various data gaps, with differences in population and institutes included per year and intervention type. Progress is therefore best assessed for each partner area (see Figure 6). Note that for some districts, i.e. Asunafo North, Asunafo South, Negelle Arsi, South Ari, Tenkodogo, no new service level assessments have been done since the baseline and therefore no change has been recorded. For others, significant progress has been made, most notably in water, for example in Bunyangabu and Kabarole. Data for Ganjam district, India, is based on government figures, and therefore reports 100%, likely reflecting the scale of programmes implemented there.

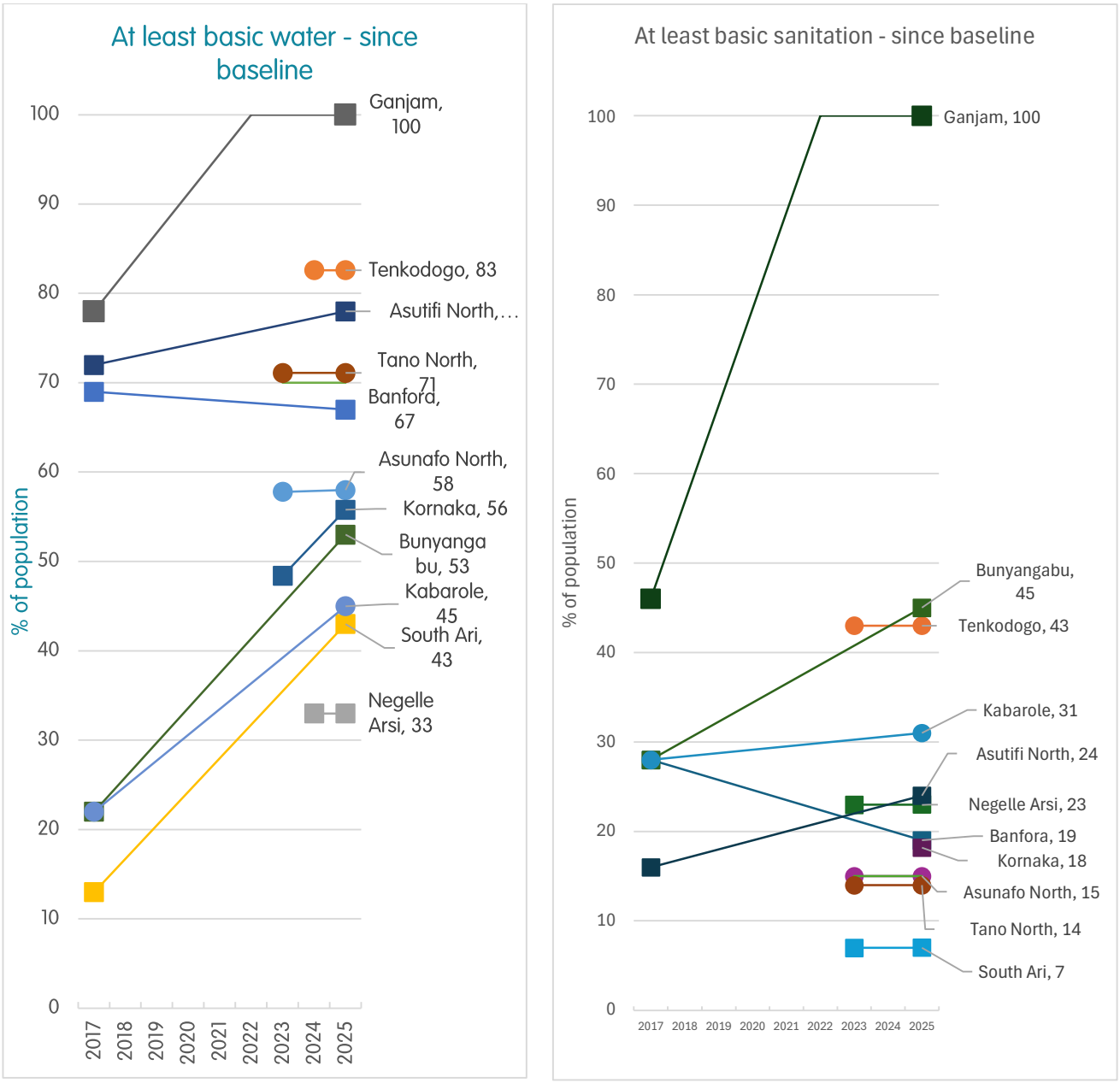


Figure 6: Progress access to at least basic water and sanitation since baseline, by partner area

5 Activities and outputs delivered with DGIS programmatic funding

This chapter highlights the activities and outputs that were carried out or substantially supported by DGIS under the grant agreement entitled 'IRC - Building WASH Systems for the Sustainable Development Goals' in 2017, and the addendum of September 2019 (application no. 4000000474), further referred to as "DGIS Programmatic Funding".

The activities under this agreement can be divided into three categories.

- Programmatic activities and outputs
- Programme management and support
- Organisational development

The next section summarises how IRC has used the funding as part of its overall programming. This is done using the five dimensions of harmonisation mentioned in the grant agreement. Following this, the activities and outputs in each of the three categories mentioned above are presented.

Annex 6 explores how the D30 monitoring framework can be used to report against the revised 2025 DGIS framework.

5.1 Programmatic outputs and activities

Overview of DGIS-funded activities and outputs

DGIS funding supports IRC's programmatic activities and outputs across all levels. Table 7 provides an overview of the main activities and outputs delivered by IRC in 2025 under each of the Theory of Change approaches. Reference is made to section 2.2 where some of these have been mentioned and to Annex 2 where they are described within their country contexts.

Table 7: Overview of other DGIS-funded activities

D30 Approach	Local	National	Global / regional
Research and innovation		**Ethiopia: learning papers and policy briefs on CR-WASH, IWRM and WASH finance.** **Niger: paper review on solarisation.** Bangladesh: 2 knowledge products on climate hotspots; India: analysis of 15th Finance Commission funds (India).	Published *Financial Credibility* working paper; co-produced *Global Outlook on Water and Sanitation Service Providers* (with Water For People, for UN-Habitat/GWOPA) Blogs on climate resilient WASH, based on discussions in innovation and learning group; Blogs on social justice, based on discussions in innovation and learning group Blogs on finance, based on discussions in innovation and learning groups; Thematic overview paper on regulation. **Africa**: in progress: regional paper on solarisation initiated (publication 2026).
Quality and access to data and information	**Burkina Faso**: mWater digital reporting platform operationalised across seven regions. **Niger**: service monitoring in Kornaka. **Uganda**: service-level monitoring in Kabarole and Bunyangabu.	**Burkina Faso**: capitalisation document on professionalisation of rural water services in the Sahel. **Mali**: WASH FIT capitalisation; WASH FIT Costing Tool. **Uganda**: alignment of OFA monitoring with the new DGIS framework.	Refresh of the OFA Results Framework and indicators (see Annex 1); Maintenance and updating of IRC's website; Development and launch of OFA course; Publication of digital newsletter Amplify Development and launch of course on Systems leadership; Development and launch of course on improving utility performance

D30 Approach	Local	National	Global / regional
Technical assistance	**Mali**: support to WASH/IPC Task Force; Koutiala sector review. **Niger**: support to Kornaka and national authorities on decentralised WASH governance and 2026–2030 local plan.	**Burkina Faso**: delegated management contracts in Centre-Ouest. **Ethiopia**: contributions to National WASH Financing Strategy, OWNP Phase III, updated WRM policy. **Ghana**: support to NDPC on integrating WASH into 2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans. **Mali**: WASH FIT Costing Tool and user guide.	Designing of, and contribution to, Heads of State Initiatives strategy; Sahel professionalisation Academy concept.
Advocacy and influence		**Ethiopia**: co-chaired national WASH financing working group; sustained support to Heads of State Initiatives; OWNP Phase II review and Phase III input. **Ghana**: high-level dialogue with development partners and sector minister on Presidential Compact; support to officials at World Water Week and SWA. **Mali**: high-level roundtable on financing the National WASH Roadmap for HCFs. **Niger**: first WASH accounts cycle; drafting of first-ever national WASH standards for HCFs. **Uganda**: technical advisory support on emerging Presidential Compact; inputs to Sanitation and Hygiene Policy and WASH NAP.	Preparation of Africa Water and Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium with AMCOW and Government of Rwanda; Engagement at PANAFCON-3; Support to and participation in SWA Sector Ministers' Meeting (Madrid); Participation and presentation at GWOPA conference; Stockholm World Water Week; IWA Water and Development Congress (Bangkok), WASH debate on trends affecting water and sanitation.

Annex 6 (Table 13) provides a comprehensive list of lessons distilled from country reflections and internal reviews. The four most important lessons of 2025 are summarised in Table 8 below.

Table 8 Key lessons learned

1	**Embedding change in institutions ensures sustainability.** Embedding training and capacity within statutory bodies (Uganda's District Water Supply and Services Boards, Niger's national WASH FIT trainers) is far more durable than standalone workshops. Capacity developed within institutions tends to persist, whereas capacity built within one administration can be lost when officials rotate. The long-term collaboration between the Systems Academy and the Ethiopian Water Technology Institute is an example of such an approach.
2	**Costed plans now form the basis for finance dialogue with government** Rwanda's USD 1.3 billion district investment plans, Ghana's 20% DACF earmark, and Ethiopia's National WASH Financing Strategy all illustrate the same development: a credible costed plan unlocks domestic public finance conversations. Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) is most useful when it triggers government commitment, rather than substituting for it.
3	**Heads of State Initiatives need multi-year accompaniment rather than one-off advocacy** Two further Presidential Compacts were signed in 2025 (Burundi, Nepal) through the HoSI initiative, but Uganda's Compact stalled despite extensive technical work — confirming that strong technical content alone is insufficient without senior political sponsorship. Political economy considerations must be built into Compact work planning from the outset.

4 **Climate vulnerability is increasingly becoming a driver of WASH inequality**

Bangladesh's climate hotspot work and Mali's deteriorating security context illustrate the same point to the same underlying pattern: the populations being left behind in 2025 are disproportionately those exposed to climate and conflict shocks. This underscores the need for resilient systems that absorb shocks rather than simply expand services.

Focus on IWRM and leaving no one behind

Over the years, IRC teams have been prioritising areas of work related to IWRM and Leaving No One Behind. An overview of these activities and outputs is presented in Table 9, and more details can be found in Annex 6.

Box 4: From baseline to national standards — Niger's WASH standards for healthcare facilities

For years, the issue of WASH in Niger's healthcare facilities (HCFs) lay in a gap between two missing elements: reliable national data and any standard against which to measure progress. The 2024 national WASH survey in HCFs — itself an IRC-supported first for the country — closed the first gap. It found that **fewer than 1% of HCFs nationwide had basic sanitation**, and **only 3.4% had a toilet reserved for women and girls for menstrual hygiene management**. The conclusion drawn in the 2024 monitoring report was that a baseline is only useful when it leads to enforceable standards.

In 2025, IRC Niger focused on closing the second gap. With Vitol Foundation funding, IRC facilitated the drafting of **Niger's first-ever national WASH standards for healthcare facilities** and trained **14 national WASH FIT 2.0 trainers** — embedding both the standards and the capacity to apply them within the national system. The standards now provide the basis for the national roadmap and costed action plan for SDG 6 in healthcare facilities, prepared in collaboration with **WHO, UNICEF, World Vision, WaterAid, Save the Children** and **MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience**.

Why this matters. This is the clearest example in the report of a complete advocacy-to-policy cycle within a single grant period: evidence (the 2024 baseline) → standard (the 2025 national norms) → capacity to enforce (the 14 trainers) → costed roadmap. The gender-disaggregated baseline ensures that menstrual hygiene management is treated as a measurable national standard, not an optional add-on. In a country where institutional WASH coverage is one of the lowest in the network — and where the operating environment has remained difficult since the 2023 coup — this is the kind of foundational system-building that determines whether services for the most vulnerable improve in the next decade.

What didn't happen. State–NGO consultation frameworks and annual sector reviews have long been inactive, weakening the learning and adaptation mechanisms that would normally accompany a reform of this scale. The standards exist; the sector platforms to drive their adoption do not yet. This is the next constraint to address.

Table 9: Overview of DGIS funded IWRM and Leaving No One behind activities

Country/Region	IWRM	Leave No One Behind
Burkina Faso	No dedicated activities in 2025	All activities considered women, children and persons with disabilities; infrastructure designed to be accessible, safe and equitable; community engagement processes informed project decisions.
Ethiopia	Contributed to the Water and Energy Sector Working Group; conducted national assessment on IWRM policy and implementation; promoted CR-WASH through Water Safety Planning; technical review of updated national WRM policy.	Inclusion advanced through systems strengthening — equitable district master plans, monitoring of service gaps, targeted utility support for IDPs, refugees and underserved urban populations; active recruitment of female staff.
Ghana	Water resources concerns addressed through national policy and planning processes IRC contributed to.	Facilitated community scorecard assessments across six Ahafo districts, generating evidence on service quality and strengthening citizen–provider accountability.
Mali	Supported sustainability and durability assessments under ASWA III (with CPS-SEEUDE); sub-national sector reviews promoted stewardship of water points and prioritisation of vulnerable zones.	Embedded equity into systems strengthening rather than standalone activities; coordination platforms include diverse institutions and profiles; focus on rural and maternity-related healthcare services.
Niger	No dedicated activities in 2025	Kornaka Local Water and Sanitation Plan (2026–2030) developed through participatory approaches with women and vulnerable communities; first WASH accounts cycle identified financing gaps affecting underserved populations.
Uganda	Technical advisory support to the SWA Country Team on the Presidential Compact (linking service delivery, water resources protection and climate resilience); contributed to the WASH National Adaptation Plan; supported Albert Regional Water and Environment Week; gazettement of Kabarole and Bunyangabu as Water Authorities.	WASH service-level monitoring in Kabarole and Bunyangabu generating disaggregated evidence on who is left behind; partnered with Agenda for Change on the *WASH Away Inequality* campaign focused on women and girls.
South Asia	Contributed to BRAC-EKN WASH platform on WASH–IWRM integration; participated in NWO Coast-Water-Solutions consortium (Bangladesh); technical support to the WFP-funded FLOW project on life-cycle costs in rural Assam (India).	Published *Towards GESI-responsive WASH Systems Strengthening*; co-organised a SIWI session on human rights and WASH; BRAC partnership reaching hardcore poor populations in Bangladesh.
Global	Joined Africa regional Resilient WASH training under OFA in Rwanda. Global engagement on WASH–climate–IWRM links through the SWA Climate Working Group and the WASH Systems Academy's CR-WASH course.	Published *Towards GESI-responsive WASH systems strengthening*; launched new GESI course on the WASH Systems Academy; continued Innovation and Learning Group on inclusion.

5.2 Harmonisation

In delivering these activities and outputs, IRC has applied the five dimensions of harmonisation set out in the original grant agreement.

1. Harmonisation of vision (sector advocacy)

IRC continued to harmonise its vision with other key sector players through sector-wide platforms and initiatives, principally the Heads of State Initiatives, Agenda for Change, and preparations for the **Africa Water and Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium** (Kigali 2026). The Heads of State Initiatives extended their reach in 2025 with two further Presidential Compacts (**Burundi** and **Nepal**) joining the three signed in 2024 (Indonesia, South Sudan and Ghana). IRC also continued to serve on global and regional sector platforms, including **Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)**, **AMCOW**, the **Water Integrity Network**, the **Millennium Water Alliance**, **Align to Accelerate**, **JMP**, **AfWASA** and the **Africa Water and Sanitation Partners' Coordination Platform**. The **Agenda for Change India** alliance was firmed up in 2025, with a catalytic funding proposal accepted by the Secretariat.

Furthermore, we have a joined influencing calendar with One For All with 44 events, of which 11 were high priority engagements. This strengthens our global reach and strengthens our joined voice. We did have a core staff member on long-term sick leave from the middle of the year, but due to this OFA collaboration and internal shifting, little momentum was lost.

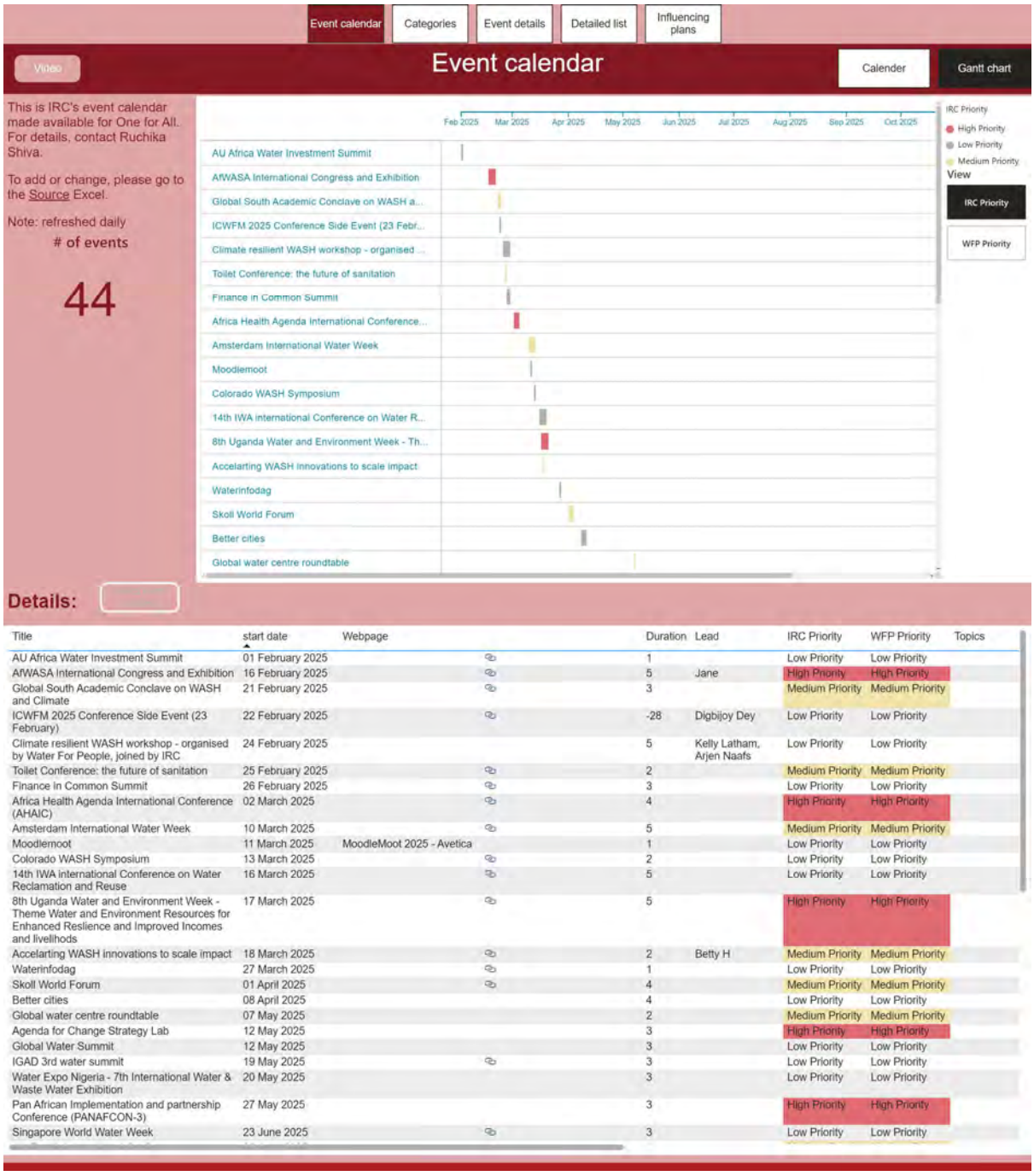
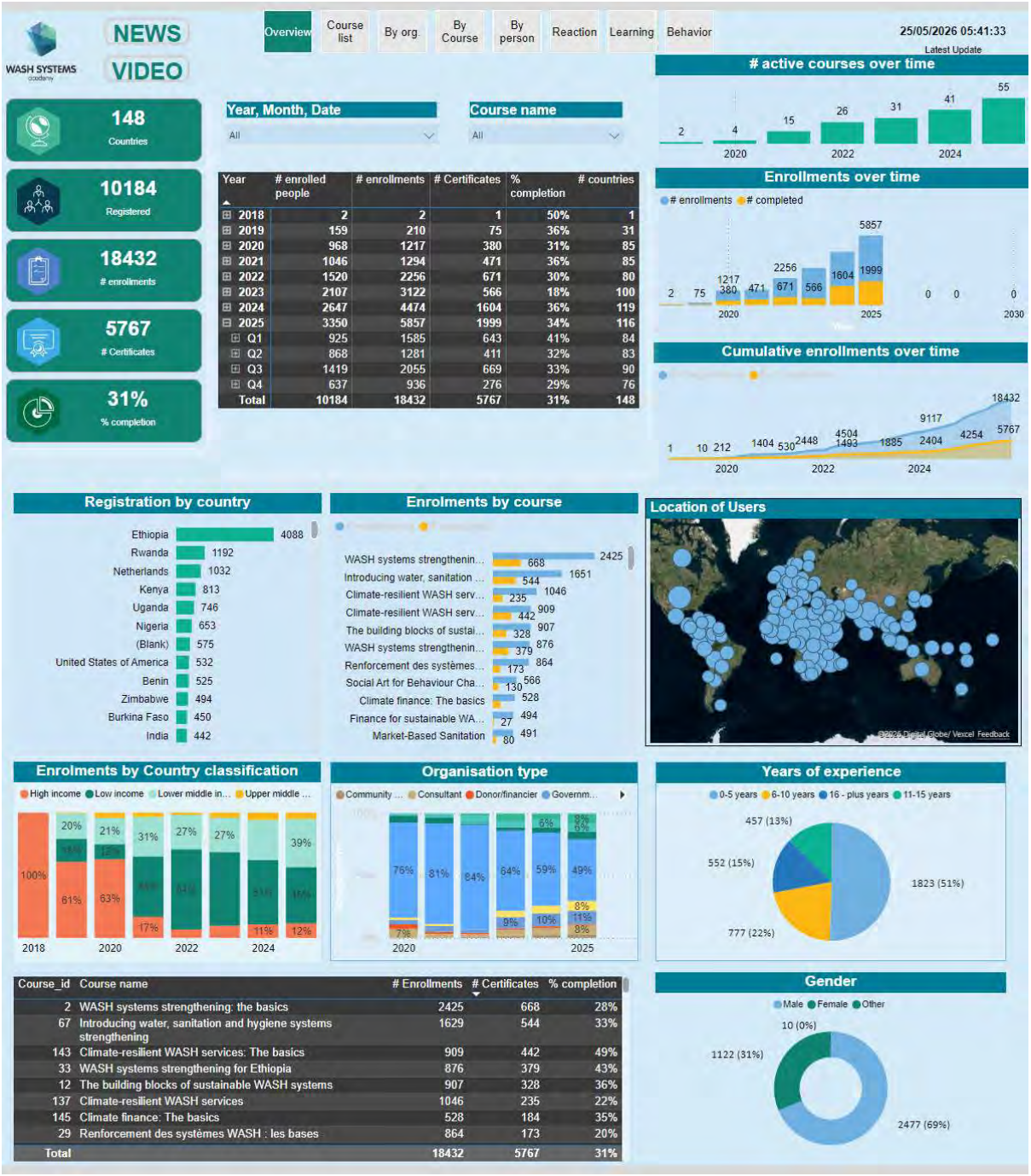


Figure 7: Harmonisation of priorities and events within OFA

2. **Harmonisation of knowledge (documentation and dissemination)** and
3. **Harmonisation of capacity (capacity building)**

Most of IRC's knowledge and capacity-building activities are generated through projects and programmes funded by others. DGIS funding underpins the global documentation, dissemination and synthesis work that is harder to finance through the market — including the resources section

on the IRC website (with **106 new resources** added in 2025), the monthly **Amplify** newsletter, podcasts, blogs, and synthesis research outputs. The **WASH Systems Academy** continues to be catalytically funded by DGIS, with **5,800 enrolments** and **55 active courses** in 2025 (Figure 8), including the new *Systems Leadership: the Basics* course. Follow-up confirms that the Academy is effective in translating learning into practice: **95% of learners** reported applying their learning to their work within six months.



Year	# enrolled people	# enrollments	# Certificates	% completion	# countries
2018	2	2	1	50%	1
2019	159	210	75	36%	31
2020	968	1217	380	31%	85
2021	1046	1294	471	36%	85
2022	1520	2256	671	30%	80
2023	2107	3122	566	18%	100
2024	2647	4474	1604	36%	119
2025	3350	5857	1999	34%	116
Q1	925	1585	643	41%	84
Q2	868	1281	411	32%	83
Q3	1419	2055	669	33%	90
Q4	637	936	276	29%	76
Total	10184	18432	5767	31%	148

Course_id	Course name	# Enrollments	# Certificates	% completion
2	WASH systems strengthening: the basics	2425	668	28%
67	Introducing water, sanitation and hygiene systems strengthening	1629	544	33%
143	Climate-resilient WASH services: The basics	909	442	49%
33	WASH systems strengthening for Ethiopia	876	379	43%
12	The building blocks of sustainable WASH systems	907	328	36%
137	Climate-resilient WASH services	1046	235	22%
145	Climate finance: The basics	528	184	35%
29	Renforcement des systèmes WASH : les bases	864	173	20%
Total		18432	5767	31%

Figure 8: The internal monitoring dashboard of the Systems Academy

4. **Harmonisation of approaches (hub activities, innovation).**

The **One For All Alliance,** with Water For People and Water for Good, remains the principal vehicle for harmonising approaches. In 2025, the Alliance continued to work to a shared influencing

strategy and joint learning agenda. Synergistic activities are visible in joint publications, the joint Rwanda engagement (with WASAC support), and Alliance-wide alignment of monitoring indicators.

Nine joined outputs have been developed within OFA: All Systems Connect: Uniting experts and activists to address the challenges of social justice; Experiences with transformation of water service delivery - The case of Colombia; Cross-sector Learning: Applying GESI in Climate Action; Global Outlook on Water and Sanitation Service Providers; Social inclusion in WASH systems strengthening: a framework; The Justice-based Approach; Pathways through the forest of systems change, and a set of country climate papers.

5. **Harmonisation of funding** (leverage).

Section 5.4 outlines IRC's overall financial leveraging position. Leverage of DGIS funds with other sources of funding is achieved primarily at global and national levels — for example, the **EU funding** secured in Burkina Faso to continue activities in Banfora and initiate Koudougou strategic-plan implementation, the **USD 20,000 catalytic grant** from Agenda for Change, and **£100,000** from the **Clifford Chance Foundation** secured by IRC Uganda.

5.3 Programme management and support

In 2025, IRC fast-tracked the transition to a **decentralised, networked organisation** of independent national member organisations — to be formally launched in **August 2026 as Riva**. Power and responsibility increasingly sat with country organisations, supported through the **Directors Platform** and a strengthened **Secretariat** led by the CEO and heads of business development, communications, strategy and administration. The national and global Works Councils contributed within the tri-pillar governance that is part of Riva's regulation.

Significant 2025 milestones included:

- **Local registration and legal autonomy** preparations across multiple countries — onboarding legal expertise in Uganda, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Niger; establishing or consolidating national advisory boards; drafting articles of association.
- The **OFA / Directors' Platform / Supervisory Board retreats** hosted by IRC Ethiopia in June 2025 (Supervisory Board 2–4 June; OFA retreat 5–7 June; Directors' Platform 9–11 June), strengthening alignment between country leadership and OneIRC priorities.
- Rebranding work in preparation for the Riva launch in August 2026.

5.4 Expenditure

In 2025, DGIS programmatic funding amounted to 1.498 million Euro. Table 10 presents how we have used these resources across different programmes. In line with our subsidy agreement, a majority of resources went to (new) focus country programmes (43%), whilst 47% was used for regional and global influencing. The latter includes our work in Asia, particularly Bangladesh. Some 12% was spent on management and support, including activities related to planning, monitoring and learning, and overall financial management.

Table 10 Overview of DGIS financial component

Programme component	Expenses 2025	% of total DGIS expenditure
Ghana	€ 100.308	7%
Burkina Faso	€ 100.475	7%
Uganda	€ 97.717	7%
Ethiopia	€ 98.234	7%
Mali	€ 102.341	7%
Niger	€ 93.692	6%
Sub-total country programmes	**€ 592.768**	40%
Rwanda	€ 46.433	3%
Sub-total new focus countries	**€ 46.433**	3%
Asia Regional	€ 98.853	7%
Africa Regional	€ 110.691	7%
Global influencing	€ 349.804	23%
Secretariat	€ 99.064	7%
One For All alliance	€ 24.977	2%
Knowledge development Dutch sector	€ 25.581	2%
Sub-total global and regional influence	**€ 708.970**	47%
Planning, monitoring and learning	€ 94.939	6%
Programme management and support	€ 55.018	4%
Sub-total management and support	**€ 149.957**	**10%**
	€ 1.498.128	

6 Conclusions

2025 marked another year of steady, measurable progress against the Destination 2030 framework, even as the wider sector continues to fall short of the SDG 6 trajectory. Across the nine country programmes and thirteen partner districts covered by this report, **1.3 million people now have at least basic water services and 561,000 people have at least basic sanitation** . Water coverage rose from 51% to 58% in three years, sanitation from 20% to 28%, and hygiene — static for years — finally increased from 11% to 14%. These are concrete gains for the 2.2 million people living in our partner districts.

Beneath these service-level numbers, the system itself is getting stronger. Average district-level building block scores have risen by **9% since 2019, and national scores by 11%** . The most striking shift this year is that **infrastructure management has overtaken planning and legislation as the area with the fastest district-level progress**, driven mainly by Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. Finance — long the weakest building block — is also starting to show progress at district level (+0.67), reflecting the sustained work on costed master plans, local finance strategies and gap analyses. Water resource management at district level remains a concern, having slightly declined.

Nine years of consistent building-block measurement across our partner districts now allow us to see a pattern that no single year of monitoring could reveal. After 2–3 years of sustained systems strengthening, partner districts typically experience a **jump in systems strength** — the early reforms (master plans, basic monitoring, finance strategies) start to bring about change. After about five years, the systems begin to **mature,** as weaker building blocks are strengthened and converge with the stronger ones. After about six years, we see indications that **resilience sets** in: individual building blocks fluctuate less, despite recent years being marked by various systemic shocks such as the cost-of-living crisis, and Russia's war in Ukraine. These findings can help explain the situation in the Sahel: programmes in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have been repeatedly interrupted by political and security shocks before reaching maturity. As a result systems strength is improving slowly, not because the approach is failing, but progress is interrupted.

Four lessons emerge from the year will inform our upcoming planning cycles. First, capacity institutionalised within statutory bodies — Uganda's District Water Supply and Services Boards, Niger's national WASH FIT trainers — proves more sustainable than capacity developed solely in individuals. Second, credible, costed plans are increasingly unlocking domestic public finance, as Ghana's DACF earmark and Rwanda's USD 1.3 billion district investment plans show. Third, Heads of State Initiatives need multi-year accompaniment rather than one-off advocacy — strong technical content is necessary but not sufficient. Fourth, climate vulnerability and conflict shocks are increasingly the dominant drivers of WASH inequality, meaning that resilient systems, designed to absorb shocks are now essential.

DGIS programmatic funding (€1.5 million in 2025, 13.8% of total income) continued to deliver on its intended objectives: underpinning the work that is hardest to finance through project funding. This includes global influencing, the WASH Systems Academy (5,800 enrolments, 95% applying the learning within six months), the resource platform (106 new resources), and the global documentation, dissemination and synthesis work that holds the network together. It also enabled the harmonisation work across the five dimensions of the grant agreement — most visibly through the One For All Alliance, the Heads of State Initiatives, and preparations for the Africa Water and Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium in Kigali in 2026. Co-investment leveraged additional

funding in Burkina Faso (EU), Uganda (Agenda for Change and Clifford Chance Foundation) and elsewhere.

The four case studies in this report — Burkina Faso's mWater platform and Vergnet delegated contracts (Box 1), Turning master plans into action: District WASH Master Plans translated into Local Action plans (Box 2), the DACF earmark for WASH in Ghana (Box 3), and Niger's first national WASH standards for healthcare facilities (Box 4) — are concrete examples of what can be achieved with one year of DGIS-funded systems strengthening.

The year was also marked by significant setbacks. The termination of USAID-funded projects had a significant impact across the network, with Ethiopia being hit the hardest. Deteriorating security in Mali led to the cancellation of the workshops to disseminate the national guide on promoting WASH in healthcare facilities and the 2025 JMP data collection round. In Uganda, the Presidential Compact and Interministerial Coordination Framework both stalled despite extensive technical groundwork — confirming that strong technical content is not a substitute for senior political sponsorship. **Progress in fragile contexts, particularly the Sahel, is slow**. Institutional WASH coverage — schools and especially healthcare facilities — remains low, with nearly one in two healthcare centres still without basic drinking water in our partner areas. Data gaps persist, no outcome harvesting was carried out in 2025 due to budget constraints, and several of the new OFA QIS indicators show low values.

Looking ahead, 2026 will be a year of transition. IRC's formal launch as **Riva in August 2026** — a decentralised, networked organisation of independent national member organisations — marks a significant change in organisational structure. The D30 Theory of Change and the long-term commitment to systems strengthening remain unchanged. The evidence in this report shows that the approach works where it is sustained, but that much remains to be done.

Annexes

Annex 1: Our approach to monitoring
Annex 2: Progress in IRC countries
Annex 3: Programme Scoring and time series data 2017-2025 (PDF)
Annex 4: Outputs, Outcomes (EXCEL)
Annex 5: D30 Indicator library and results (Excel)
Annex 6: Aligning D30 indicators against DGIS framework

Annex 1- Our approach to monitoring

Trends in monitoring and learning

Monitoring across IRC's programmes increasingly involves **tracking long-term systems change rather than only annual outputs**, in line with the **Destination 2030 (D30) results framework**. Many changes in WASH systems—such as improved governance, strengthened utilities, or better district planning—take several years to materialise. Monitoring therefore places greater emphasis on **multi-year trends and system performance over time**, rather than on single-year results. This reflects IRC's systems strengthening approach and the long-term ambition of achieving sustainable services.

Another important development is the **increasing integration of programme monitoring with national systems**. Several country programmes are using government monitoring platforms and sector information systems to collect and analyse data. For example, in **Uganda and Ghana**, programme monitoring is increasingly aligned with national sector monitoring processes and sector review mechanisms. This approach reduces the need for parallel reporting systems and strengthens government ownership and use of monitoring data.

At the same time, monitoring frameworks have expanded over time, with a growing number of **tools and assessment approaches** used to track service levels, financial performance, and systems strengthening. These tools provide valuable insights into the functioning of WASH systems, but they can also increase the reporting burden for programme teams and partners. Greater emphasis is therefore being placed on **streamlining monitoring approaches and improving alignment between tools within the D30 monitoring framework**.

Resource availability also influences monitoring practice. In several programmes, monitoring activities are still partly dependent on project funding rather than being fully embedded in programme budgets. This can affect the continuity and frequency of data collection and analysis. Strengthening the institutionalisation of monitoring within programme planning and budgeting is therefore an ongoing priority.

Finally, monitoring increasingly aims to provide **transparent and balanced reporting on systems change**. Progress in strengthening WASH systems does not occur evenly, and some activities or reforms advance more slowly due to financing, institutional, or policy constraints. Monitoring therefore seeks to capture both achievements and areas where progress remains limited, supporting learning and adaptive management across IRC programmes.

Overall, monitoring within IRC programmes is gradually shifting towards **more strategic and integrated approaches that focus on systems change, making use of national monitoring platforms, and supporting learning across countries within the D30 framework**.

D30 Theory of Change

Our work is guided by the D30 Theory of Change (Figure 9), which reflects our understanding of how water, sanitation, and hygiene systems can be strengthened to improve service delivery. Lasting change in these complex systems results from a combination of actions—often many small shifts in people, institutions, and conditions at local, national, and global levels that together drive major improvements.

Our Theory of Change shows how the activities, outcomes, and impacts of our work are interlinked. It is ambitious and visionary, aiming to inspire radical and transformational change rather than

simply replicate past approaches. The D30 Theory of Change, applied by all partners of One For All, is underpinned by our own IRC strategy framework (2017–2030) and consists of a long-term vision and 10 year strategy. This is unpacked in our strategic plan 2020-2025 and our medium-term strategy framework 2022-2025.

Each of our nine country programmes has a multi-year strategy (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Uganda, Global and regional programme) that is operationalised through annual plans. As an organisation, we produce an overall annual plan, which sets out the key activities and outputs to be achieved, and how these contribute to medium-term outcome targets. We report on progress on these through our Annual Reports and annual joint OFA Annual Reports.

In 2025, IRC continued to prepare for its transition into Riva — a network of independent member organisations to be launched in August 2026. While the organisational structure is changing, the D30 Theory of Change and our commitment to long-term systems strengthening remain the foundation of our work.

Each programme team reports and reflects on the implementation of its annual plan. These reflections are based on the progress against the D30 indicators and are complemented by analyses of national and global data sources and the information and insights obtained from different projects.
The Theory of Change outlines (from left to right):

1. the levels at which we work;
2. our approaches and efforts to strengthen systems ("What we do");
3. the outcomes we aim to achieve ("What that leads to"); and
4. the broader impact on systems and service delivery ("What that delivers").

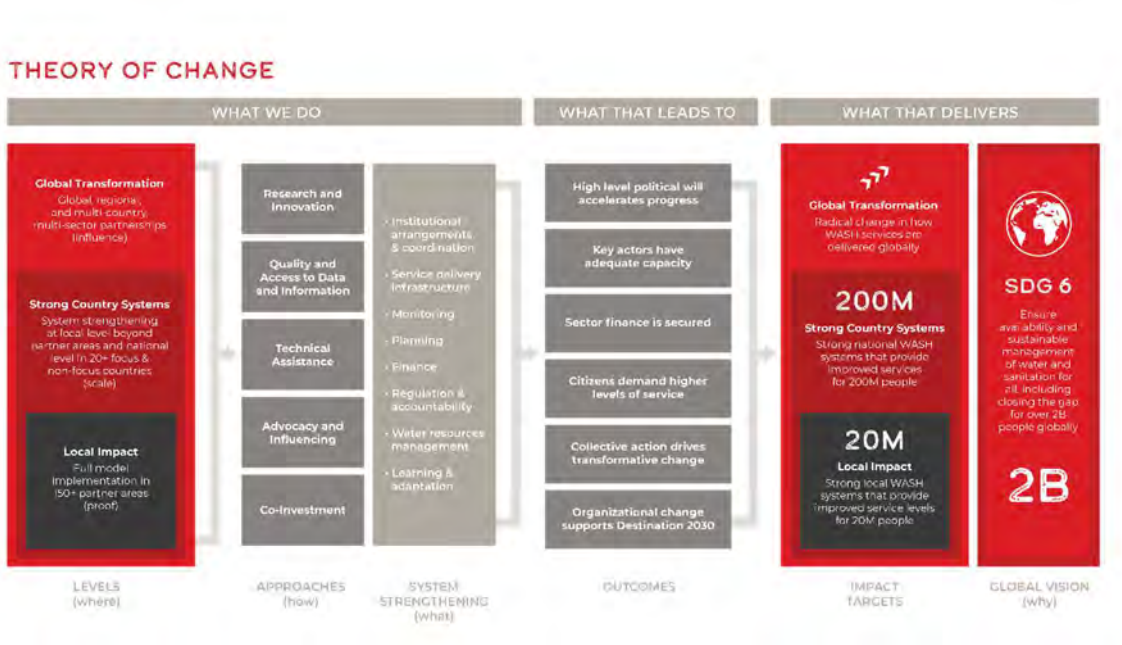


Figure 9: The Destination 2030 Theory of Change, described in the D30 Strategy

The Destination 2030 Results Framework

The D30 Results Framework is a mutual accountability and adaptive management tool that allows One For All members to track progress towards impact targets and anticipated results of the Theory of Change. The Results Framework supports One For All members to be consistent in measuring information, making reporting and synthesis possible at the global level. It is designed to be flexible and to enable different countries and member organisations to retain their context-specific and organisation-specific metrics.

The D30 Results Framework includes indicators for outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Outcomes are the results of an output or several outputs—these are changes in behaviour, policy, or context that we contribute to, but are not within our direct control. Impacts are defined as the longest-term outcomes of our work—the change we wish to see in water, sanitation and hygiene services for the populations we serve.

Figure 10: Local, national and global level impact

For each of the outcome and impact figures, targets are set at the level of One For All, and each contributing organisation (see Figure 10 for the impact targets for each level). Similarly, targets are set for outcomes (see Annex 5).

To cover the full spectrum of the three partners of One For All, the full framework includes 95 indicators. While this may appear extensive for data collection, a quarter are not mandatory and over a third are automatically calculated. See Annex 4 for the full list of indicators, over 1,000 recorded values, and coding principles. Figure 3 in chapter 3 presents the core indicators.

Our priority is to ensure that the monitoring we do aligns with government priorities and that the resulting insights or data are shared with governments and communities. Prioritising country alignment means that data from different countries or local areas may not always be fully aligned or directly comparable between countries. We allow an acceptable margin of error in our consolidated data to prioritise collaboration and support to key stakeholders in each context. We report our methods transparently and strive to reduce the margins of error over time as available data sets become stronger.

Since strengthening the sector depends on collective action, much of our impact will come through contributing to shared outcomes. In terms of measuring the overall impact of our work, contribution is more important to us than attribution. Our approach suggests that, to drive change in a complex system, the actors involved (including ourselves) must hold each other mutually accountable for achieving results that are beyond the control of any single actor.

We continue to learn about the challenges of sharing a results and monitoring framework among separate organisations. During this third year of the monitoring framework, the OFA Strategic Accountability Team reviewed the monitoring indicators and fine-tuned the indicator list.

Monitoring methods

We use a variety of tools to monitor progress, presented below. We track activities and outputs through activity and output monitoring (method 1), progress on systems strength through WASH building block assessments (method 2) and other outcomes through QIS analysis (method 3) and outcome harvesting (method 4). Secondary data collected and used to inform the building block and QIS analyses, and to inform changes in the global landscape and service levels (method 5). WASH service levels in our partner areas are mostly assessed through primary data collection and analysis (method 6).

Method 1: Activity and output monitoring

All programmes report on shared output indicators that help us track our scope and reach as an organisation. Many of these output indicators have been tracked since 2017 and include: published outputs, information on the people trained, the platforms and networks facilitated, and several indicators on the audiences reached through our communications. These results are summarised in the 'IRC at a glance' table (chapter 1), along with some D30 indicators, and are presented over the years in our data dashboard www.ircwash.org/data-behind-our-work and our annual monitoring reports.

Method 2: WASH system building block assessment

The building blocks[6] are a way of breaking down the complexity of the WASH system; looking at it through different lenses that allow it to be more easily understood and measured. Each of the nine WASH system building blocks is evaluated and scored at the district and national level using a set of 3-5 Likert scale indicators (benchmarks representing the key aspects of that building block). An abbreviated set of indicators is used to specifically assess the systems for hygiene and extra-household settings. The building block method has been widely adopted in the sector[7]. The assessments are normally conducted in conjunction with partners, during dedicated sessions or meetings. In some instances, more cost-effective hybrid approaches have been applied, with IRC taking the lead and requesting validation via e-mail.

Method 3: Qualitative Information Systems

Part of the outcomes are measured using Qualitative Information System (QIS) ladders. The QIS ladders use ordinal scoring scales to convert qualitative information (from participatory appraisals) into numbers, enabling the capture of rich descriptive information as well as semi-quantitative scores to help track change over time. In 2025, we have started to use the QIS approach with One For All as well. Seven indicators are based on QIS ladders (see Figure 11 for example), capturing

[6] The nine WASH building blocks as defined by IRC are: institutions and coordination; policy and legislation; regulation/accountability; finance; planning; monitoring; infrastructure; water resource management; and learning and adaptation. For more information, see Huston and Moriarty 2018.

[7] Over 300 participants from outside IRC completed the specialist WASH Systems Academy course on building blocks.

processes such as commitment to the WASH master plans (OPW.L.1.n), and gathering information on the costed local finance strategies.

Indicator OFI.N.1				
Costed national WASH finance strategies in place				
Step	**Benchmark statement**	**Is this statement true or false?**	**Score 0->20**	
Step 1	**A multi-year finance strategy** is in place **for any** of the water, sanitation, and hygiene sub-sectors.	TRUE	20	20
Step 2	The **sources and amounts of finance required** for some parts of the strategy have been clearly **identified**.	TRUE	20	20
Step 3	A multi-year finance strategy is in place **for all sub-sectors**.	TRUE	20	20
Step 4	The finance strategy has been **implemented and funding has been mobilised**, leading to **significant additional funding** allocations in comparison to previous years.	PARTIALLY TRUE	10	10
Step 5	**Funding increases and funding allocations are on track** to meet country goals on all WASH subsectors and achieve SDG6.	PARTIALLY TRUE	10	0
		Your overall score:	**80**	**70**
Narrative justification: In the box below, provide justification for your score using concrete evidence, names, and dates.				
There is a national WASH financing strategy. There is also the OWNP and Consolidated WASH Account that is available for devlivery of WASH services. However, there is still a significant gap in finance availability and implementation				
Data source, reference, or means of verification of score: In the box below, list documents, data sources, and evidence to support your narrative and score.				
OWNP phase I, II, and III documents. National WASH financing strategy document.				

Figure 11: Example of QIS ladder from Ethiopia

Method 4: Outcome harvesting

It is a tool that helps us identify the unexpected and emergent changes we contribute to. Outcome harvesting complements broader evaluation methods (e.g. service levels, building blocks) by capturing narratives around systems change. Outcome harvesting identifies outcomes, the significance of the outcome, and the contribution to the programme. It is a methodology that needs rigour, continuous capacity building, and when done with adequate resources, it supports collaborative strategic reflection. We have been harvesting outcomes since 2017, mostly on a project basis. Since 2024, we are using outcome harvesting Alliance-wide. However, due to budget constraints no harvesting was done in 2025, although some is scheduled for early 2026.

Method 5: Secondary data

Systems are complex and many interconnected factors give rise to the perceived performance (or lack of performance) of a service delivery system. To avoid excessive data collection, we also use secondary data to obtain insight into specific aspects of a system or building block. Data from SWA, GLAAS and JMP, for example, are used in the Results Framework.

Method 6: Service level monitoring

We strive to follow the SDG 6 indicators using the JMP definitions and methodology, and to align with national monitoring systems wherever possible. Like the JMP, we use a combination of household surveys, infrastructure, water quality and administrative data to estimate the proportion of the population being served at each level. Criteria include technology type, protection from contaminants, distance from home and availability.

We have added to the JMP ladders by introducing the concept of '**basic plus**'. The basic plus indicator is added to fill the globally undefined area between basic and safely managed services.

In the case of water, basic plus means that a water service must meet the definition of basic services as well as at least one of the three criteria of 'safely managed'.

This additional step on the ladder captures progress on service levels for populations that have moved beyond a basic service, but do not yet qualify as safely managed.

Making monitoring results accessible and available

The drive for monitoring is to understand what progress is being made, how change happens, what our role in it is and what we need to do better. We use this to account for our progress, to learn from what works and what does not, and to inform operational and strategic decisions going forward. An important tool is therefore to bring the information together and provide insights and consolidation.

We have been tracking activities and outputs and measuring the strength of district systems and service levels in our partner districts and focus countries since 2017. In 2020, we launched our results dashboard, which provides public access to our data. Since 2023, we extended it by combining our results data with those of the OFA members and created joined, filterable dashboards. This year we also added extrapolation towards 2030, to assess if we are on track for reaching our targets.

The dashboard enhances access to data, both internally and externally, enabling its use for accountability, learning and decision-making.

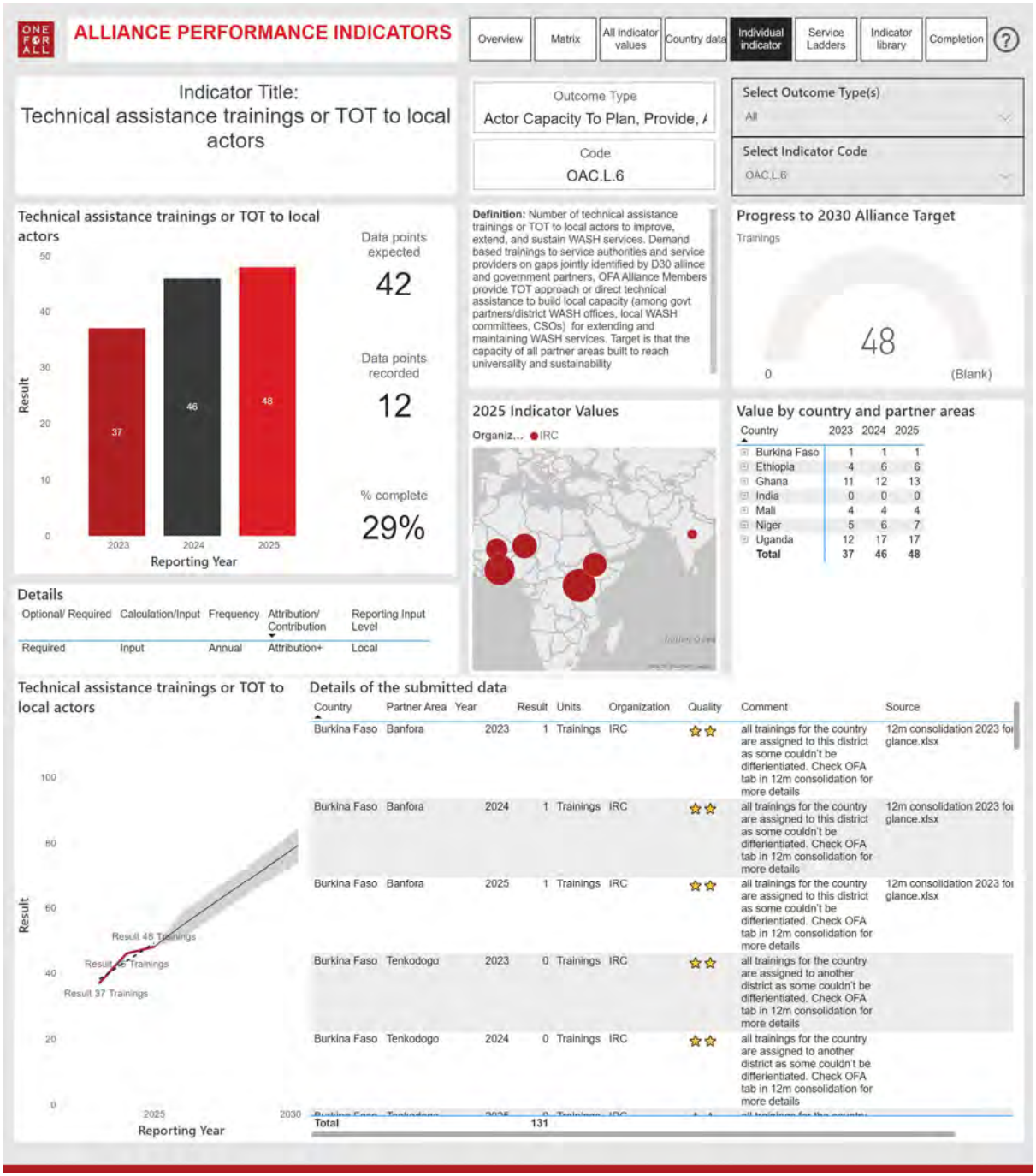


Figure 12: The One For All Data Dashboard

Annex 2 – Progress in IRC focus countries

The following pages present snapshots of context, progress, challenges and key results from our focus countries and regional programmes in 2025. Where 2025 data on building blocks and service levels are available, they are included; where gaps exist (notably Mali, due to the security context), this is flagged.

Burkina Faso

Context

Since 2021, **Burkina Faso** has been in a fragile political and security context, with little improvement observed in 2025. This continues to challenge progress towards the WASH-related SDGs by 2030. Despite these constraints, IRC has maintained its commitment by combining strategic investments, strengthened governance and the professionalisation of water service management. The year also marked a turning point, with new European Union funding enabling IRC to gradually re-engage in **Banfora**.

Activities and outputs

In 2025, IRC expanded access to safe drinking water for **1,500 people** in Zano, **Tenkodogo**, through the construction of a rural piped water system and three new public standpipes — completed in August 2025 and bringing services up to a basic level.

In rural areas, the team took an integrated approach: **eight high-yield boreholes** were drilled to support new piped water systems (AEPS), with contracting now underway, and **ten existing systems** requiring rehabilitation or expansion underwent detailed feasibility studies, producing fully validated technical and financial dossiers ready for funding.

At institutional level, the digital reporting platform (mWater) for delegated rural water systems was operationalised across **seven regions**. The platform now provides a shared evidence base for monitoring delegated rural water systems and strengthening accountability among relevant stakeholders. Technical workshops in 2025 strengthened operators' ability to collect, structure and report on their service data through the platform, enabling the production of performance reports. On this basis, regional performance reviews were conducted in each of the seven regions, bringing together contracting authorities, operators, regional water directorates, and civil society to examine results in maintenance, financial management and service quality standards, against a common set of indicators drawn from the national reform framework.

In the **Centre-Ouest region**, IRC supported three municipalities in formalising delegated management contracts with the private operator Vergnet, a concrete step towards more professional, transparent and accountable water service delivery.

Systems strength

Institutional capacity at national level remains fragile following the January 2022 reorganisation of the Ministry of Water, which was merged with Environment and Agriculture. Local-level gains continue, however. In Banfora, the municipal Water, Sanitation and Public Hygiene department has progressively gained autonomy and has initiated its 2026–2030 five-year plan to operationalise its WASH Master Plan. In Tenkodogo, local capacities are being strengthened for master plan implementation through coaching on project supervision, sector coordination and ownership.

Since 2019, the strongest movements have been in **planning**, **infrastructure development** and **infrastructure management** (Figure 13). The mWater platform and Vergnet contracts in Centre-Ouest represent significant gains in the infrastructure management block.

Service levels

Recent JMP data show modest progress nationally. Access to basic drinking water rose from 47% in 2022 to 50% in 2024. Sanitation data reflect a methodological reclassification: basic sanitation dropped from 22% to 7%, while safely managed sanitation rose from 0% to 24% as part of the population previously counted under basic services was reclassified.

District-level service monitoring could not be conducted in Banfora or Tenkodogo in 2025. Significant infrastructure improvements occurred nonetheless: in Banfora, ONEA commissioned a new drinking water treatment plant, increasing production capacity from 200 m³/h to 600 m³/h and improving services for approximately **187,000 people**. The conclusion from our 2021 review still stands — Burkina Faso is unlikely to meet the WASH SDGs by 2030 under the prevailing political economy and security conditions. This is most clearly visible in the Figure 14 in the sanitation. While it is recognized that the service level data has not been updated for three years, the change in sanitation is unlikely to happen.

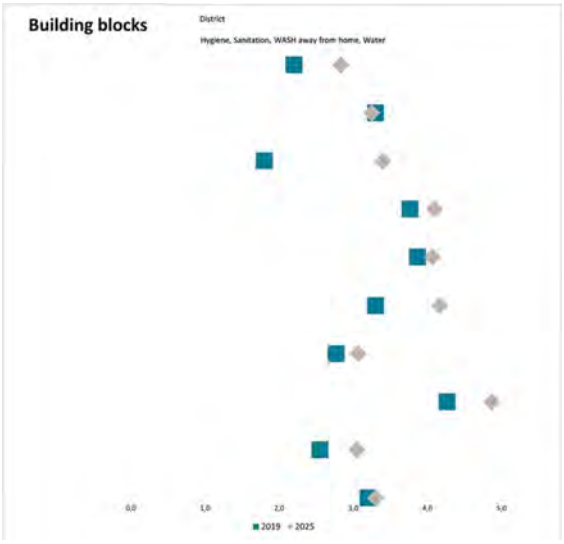


Figure 13: District building blocks from Banfora district 2019-2025

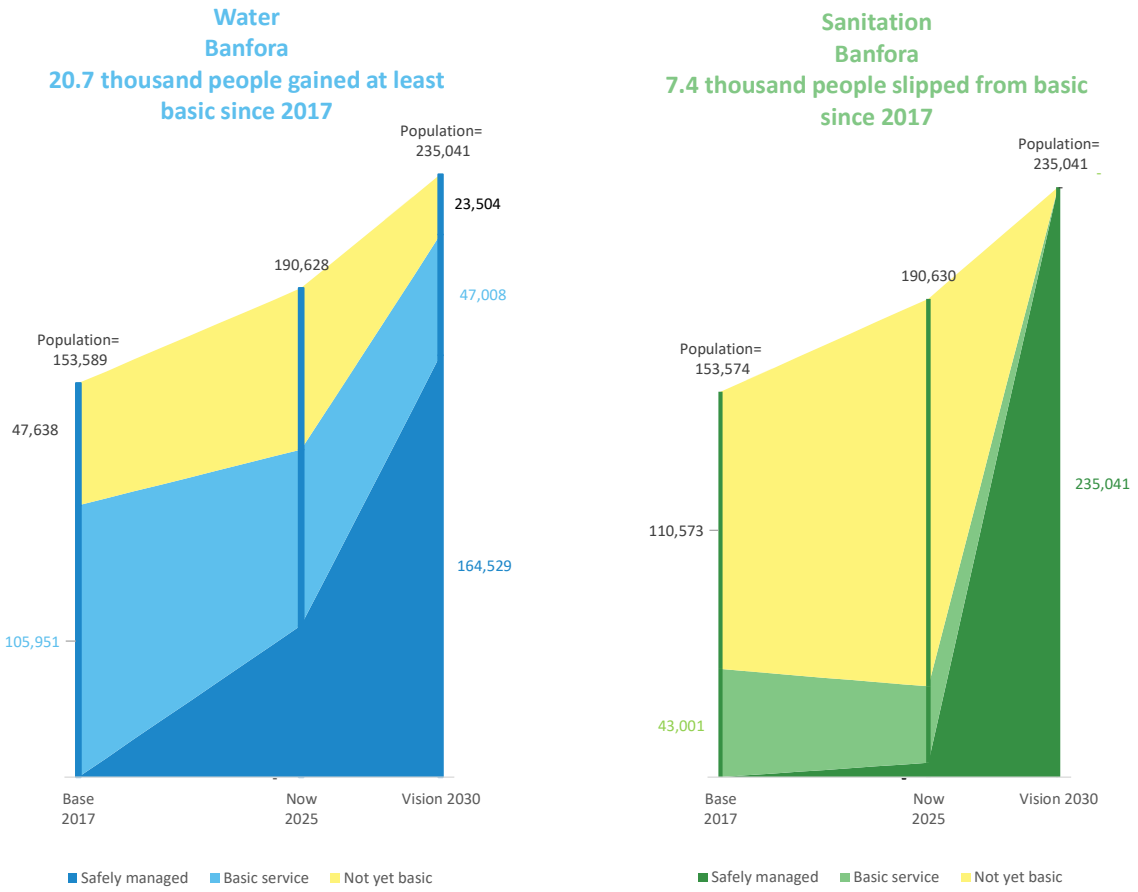
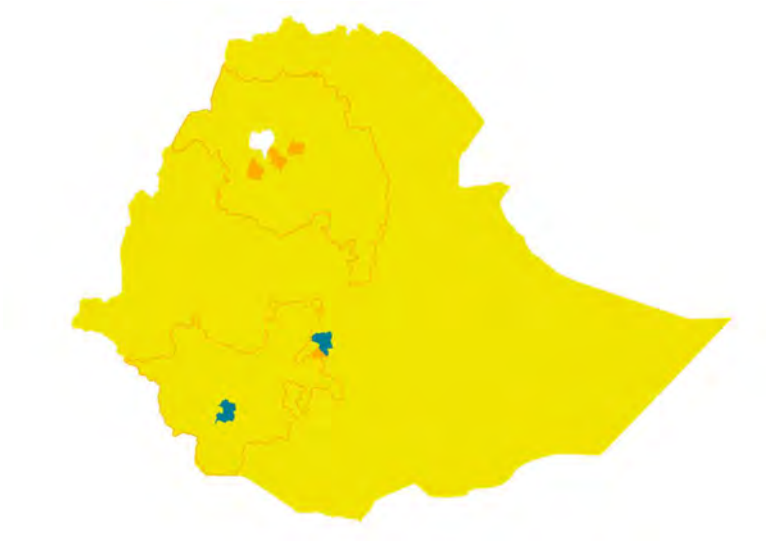


Figure 14: Progress towards the 2030 vision of Banfora district, Burkina Faso (household level)

Ethiopia



Context

In 2025, IRC Ethiopia advanced systems strengthening, political leadership and sector collaboration while responding to significant external shocks. The **termination of major USAID projects** had a significant impact, requiring staff and activity reductions. Despite this, the programme delivered on key milestones, including progress on the **Presidential WASH Compact**, professionalisation of WASH services, Water Safety Planning, and strengthening of WASH Management Information Systems (MIS) at sub-national level.

Activities and Outputs

At national level, IRC continued to facilitate Agenda for Change Ethiopia collaboration meetings, co-chaired the national WASH finance working group, gave support to the Heads of State Initiatives on finalising Ethiopia's Presidential WASH Compact, and contributed to the review of the **One WASH National Programme (OWNP) Phase II** and the development of **Phase III**. The team also provided technical inputs to the updated national water resources management policy.

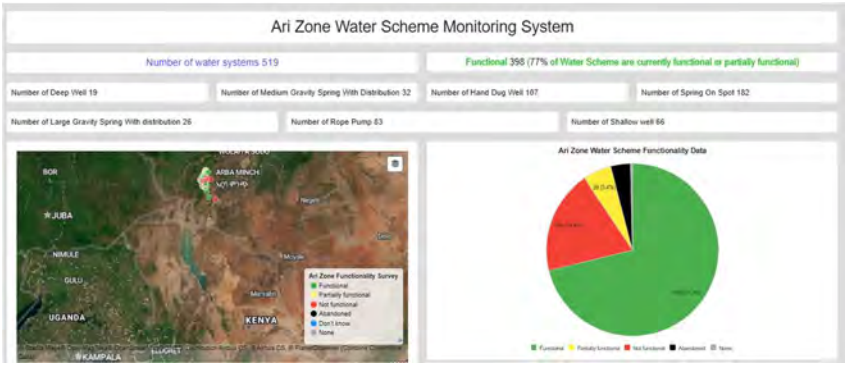


Figure 15: Screen shot of South Ari monitoring system

Also at national level, IRC has been focusing on the National IWRM Assessment, which is feeding into a policy paper to be published in early 2026.

In **South Ari**, implementation of the costed WASH master plan continued, mobilising local resources and partners to rehabilitate and construct water supply schemes. WASH expenditure tracking, Water Safety Planning, capacity building for government and service providers, and WASH MIS strengthening also continued (Figure 15). After mid-year water quality test failures, Water Safety Planning restored compliance within seven months.

Town water utility strengthening with **UNICEF** progressed in three towns: **Itang** (activities concluded), **Qoloji** and **Berhale**.

IRC Ethiopia hosted three key global events in June: the IRC **Supervisory Board** meeting (2–4 June), the **Directors' Platform** (9–11 June) and the **One For All retreats** (5–7 June). Progress towards the future networked structure continued through local registration consultations and capacity building.

Systems strength

Country teams have reported improvement across all building blocks in South Ari. At national level, IRC's contribution to OWNP Phase III, the financing strategy and the WRM policy review has supported gains in **planning**, **institutional** and **finance** blocks. The five-year picture remains one of substantial improvement; the 2025 USAID shock may slow momentum in 2026 if alternative resources are not secured.

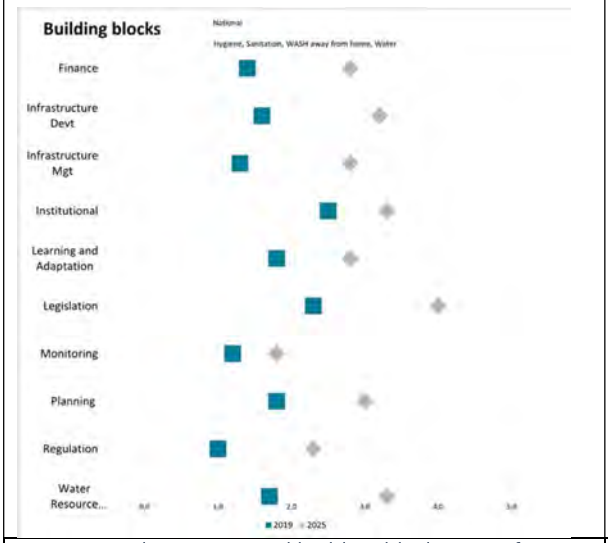


Figure 16: Ethiopia national building block scores from 2019-2025

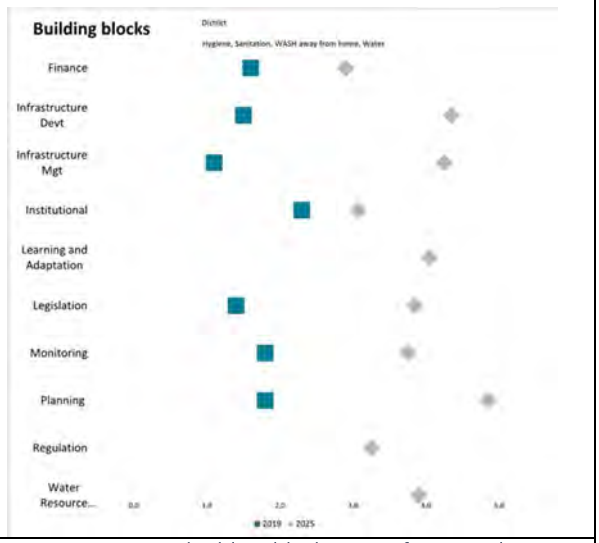


Figure 17: District building block scores from South Ari 2019-2025

Service levels

A service-level assessment was conducted for South Ari in 2025. Basic water and sanitation services remained at similar levels to 2024 (Figure 17), while **hygiene service levels improved by 17%**. Country teams attribute the hygiene improvement largely to better understanding of service-level indicators following capacity-building training for health extension workers and woreda health office staff on sanitation service-level definitions, which improved data quality.

At national level, Ethiopia is **currently not on track to fully achieve SDG 6 by 2030**, particularly for safely managed sanitation and safely managed drinking water. Progress towards basic services is more realistic. Disparities between rural and urban areas, and between regions, persist.

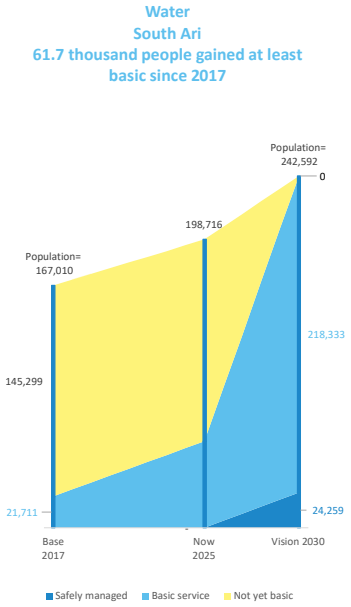


Figure 18: Water service level data of South Ari, Ethiopia (household level).

Ghana

Context

In 2025, IRC Ghana continued to strengthen the systems needed to deliver sustainable and equitable WASH services. Building on the Medium-Term Programme (2021–2025) and IRC's Destination 2030 vision, the programme focused on reinforcing political leadership, improving planning and financing systems, and strengthening citizen engagement.

The national institutional context shifted significantly during the year. The **Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR)** was dissolved, with responsibilities for water and sanitation split between the **Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs (MLGCRA)** and the **Ministry of Works, Housing and Water Resources (MWHWR)**. Many USAID grants were cancelled, reducing funding to NGOs and government partners.

Activities and outputs

At national level, IRC supported renewed momentum on Ghana's **WASH Presidential Compact**, facilitating high-level dialogue with development partners and the sector minister to advance Compact commitments. IRC supported senior officials to participate in **World Water Week** and the **SWA Sector Ministers' Meeting**, and helped initiate the development of a financing strategy for the Ghana WASH Sector Development Programme.

At sub-national level, IRC strengthened district systems for planning, monitoring and service delivery. In collaboration with the **National Development Planning Commission (NDPC)** and the **Ahafo Regional Coordinating Council (RCC)**, **six districts** in the Ahafo Region integrated WASH priorities into their **2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans**, aligned with national planning guidelines and district WASH master plans.

IRC also supported monitoring systems and facilitated **community scorecard assessments**, generating evidence on service quality and strengthening accountability between citizens, service providers and local authorities. The assessments highlighted relatively positive perceptions of water quality alongside gaps in water availability, time spent fetching water, service-provider responsiveness and communication during service interruptions. IRC Ghana also led the development of a draft comprehensive **Operations and Maintenance (O&M) framework** for water supply.

Working with national institutions, civil society and platforms such as **CONIWAS** and the **Mole WASH Conference**, IRC contributed evidence, learning and dialogue to advance sector reforms and the professionalisation of rural water services.

Systems strength

The picture is mixed but more positive than the 2024 monitoring report's headline. At **national level**, the country team reports that **eight of ten** building blocks improved between 2024 and 2025 (Figure 19, Figure 20). Over the five-year period, however, progress has been inconsistent: only three building blocks show sustained improvement; the others have remained unchanged or deteriorated. Persistent challenges remain in **water resources management**, **regulation**, **legislation** and the **institutions** building blocks — areas affected by the ministerial reorganisation.

At **regional and district level**, the 2024–2025 assessment shows **five building blocks** improving: finance, infrastructure development, infrastructure management, institutions and monitoring. After five years of activities in Asutifi North, gains are visible in five blocks: finance, infrastructure management, institutional capacity, monitoring and planning. Progress on legislation and water resources management has been slow.

A notable finance gain: government for the first time earmarked a minimum of **20% of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF)** for WASH at district level.

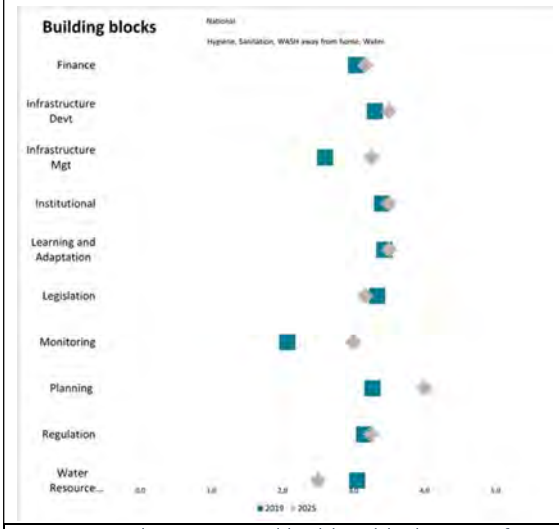


Figure 19: Ghana national building block scores from 2019-2025

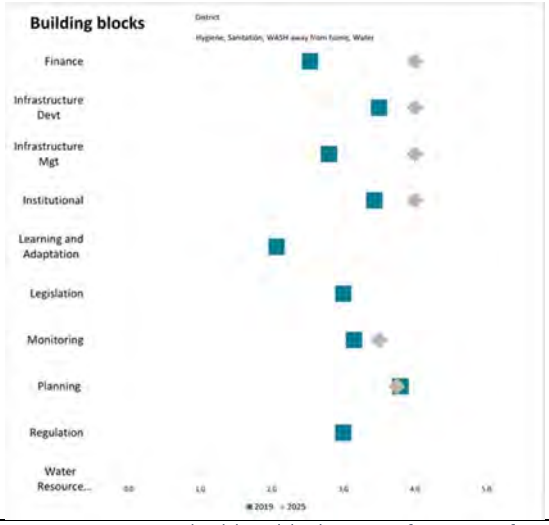


Figure 20: District building block scores from Asutifi North 2019-2025

Service levels

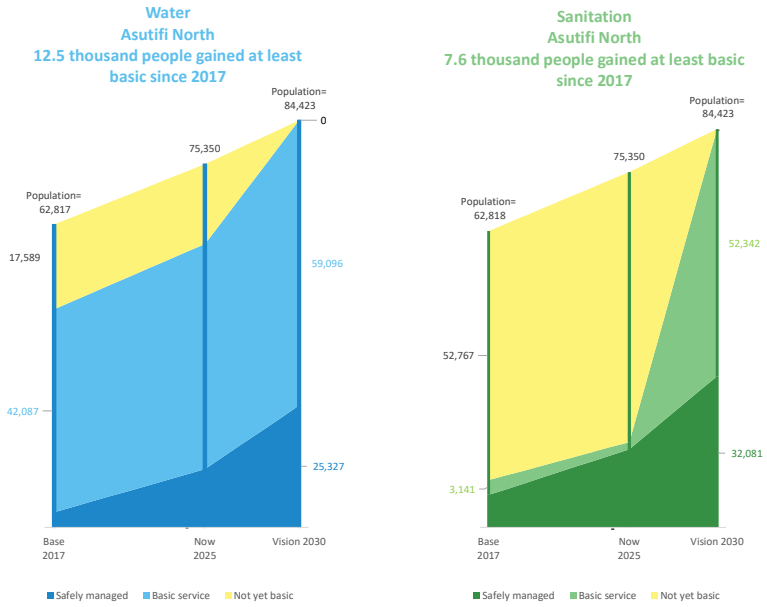


Figure 21: Progress towards the 2030 vision of Asutifi North district, Ghana (household level)

Mali

Context

In 2025, IRC Mali consolidated its achievements and made significant progress in strengthening WASH systems in healthcare facilities and at local level — until the **security context deteriorated sharply from September 2025**, after which several planned activities had to be cancelled. Looking ahead, IRC Mali is transitioning into **IRC Sahel** (with Burkina Faso and Niger), positioning itself as a reference actor for WASH systems strengthening in the region.

Activities and outputs

Key milestones included a **high-level roundtable on financing the National WASH Roadmap for healthcare facilities**, a national **capitalisation workshop on the WASH FIT approach** documenting best practices and lessons learned, and the development of the **WASH FIT Costing Tool** with its user guide.

IRC Mali supported Mali's participation in two major international events: the **World Water Day preparatory meeting** and the **SWA high-level meeting in Madrid**, strengthening the country's visibility on the global stage.

At local level, the **WASH sector review in Koutiala** was completed and **20 health workers were trained on WASH FIT 2.0**. The **WASH/IPC Task Force** continued to receive active support through participation in five meetings and three strategic activities related to biomedical waste management regulations.

The deteriorating security situation led to the cancellation of the workshops to disseminate the national guide on promoting WASH in healthcare facilities and JMP 2025 data collection.

Systems strength

Over the past five years, Mali has developed an enabling policy and legislative framework for WASH in healthcare facilities, anchored by the **National WASH Strategy for Healthcare Facilities** and the **National IPC Strategy**, and reinforced in 2025 by the WASH FIT Costing Tool and capitalisation work. The strongest building blocks remain **legislation** and **infrastructure development.** For example, the WASH/IPC Task Force has been significantly strengthened, now serving as a well-functioning coordination platform with improved planning and monitoring tools. The successful organisation of the high-level financing roundtable in 2025 demonstrated the Task

Force's growing capacity to mobilise stakeholders and resources. **Regulation** remains the weakest building block.

Service levels

The most recent published data show that in Mali, more households had basic drinking water in 2023 (86%) than in 2020 (81%), but with persistent rural–urban gaps (94% urban; 80% rural). Basic sanitation remains low at 48%, and hygiene services have not improved, staying at around 9%.

Progress in raising WASH service levels in partner areas continued in 2025, particularly through strengthened capacity and system readiness for WASH FIT improvements in healthcare facilities. In Koutiala, the sector review and WASH FIT 2.0 training strengthened local ownership of continuous improvement processes. Nationally, the focus shifted to supporting scale-up through coordination, learning and financing tools (including costing tool) to support implementation of the national roadmap. However, progress towards SDG 6 remains uneven, especially for sanitation and safely managed services, and insecurity constrained routine monitoring in 2025.

Without sustained funding and stronger local capacities — and in the absence of a near-term improvement in the security context — Mali is highly unlikely to reach universal and sustainable WASH services by 2030.

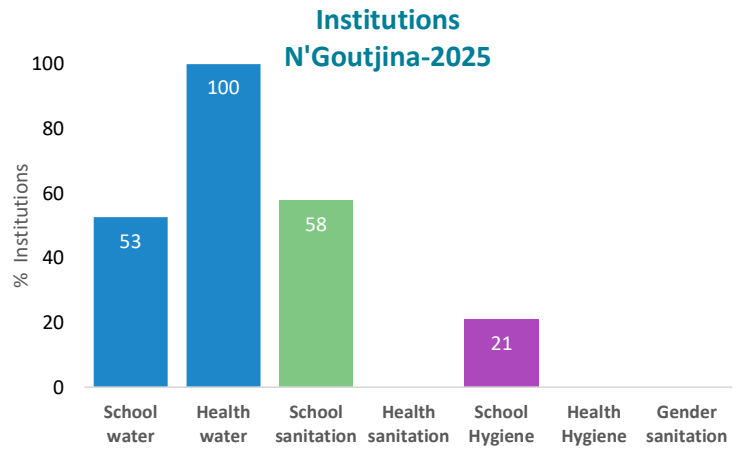


Figure 22: Institutional service levels, N'goutjina, Mali

Niger

Context

IRC Niger has been operating in a constrained environment since the July 2023 coup, with reduced and in some cases suspended official development assistance. In 2025, the programme deepened its sub-national strategy by strengthening local systems, capturing critical learning and laying the groundwork for future sustainability. Legal autonomy preparations were strategically managed at the regional level so that the country team could maintain focus on technical delivery.

Activities and outputs

At local level, in **Kornaka commune**, IRC supported the development of the **2026–2030 local water and sanitation plan** and trained municipal actors on their roles and responsibilities regarding public water services. This directly advanced the goal of supporting safely managed water services for 30,000 low-income persons.

At national level, IRC's technical and financial support to the national technical working group on **WASH FIT 2.0** was instrumental. The team **trained 14 health and WASH professionals as national trainers** and **facilitated the drafting of Niger's first-ever national WASH standards for healthcare facilities** — a foundational document for sustainable services in healthcare settings.

A key 2025 deliverable was the **capitalisation document on the professionalisation of rural water services in the Sahel**, consolidating lessons from Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

On business development, five proposals were submitted; a consortium project was awarded (mobilising USD 40,000 for IRC in 2026). The funding environment remains intensely competitive.

Systems strength

Over the past three years, Niger's WASH sector has faced significant setbacks, particularly following the 2023 coup, which led to the withdrawal of key traditional donors such as LuxDev and AFD, severely impacting sector financing. State-NGO consultation frameworks and annual sector reviews have also been inactive for years, weakening learning and adaptation mechanisms.

At the local level, the replacement of elected mayors with delegated administrators has disrupted institutional continuity, creating new capacity gaps that require targeted reinforcement of roles and responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, major achievements stand out: Niger launched its first WASH accounts cycle, a powerful advocacy tool that quantifies financial flows within the sector. Additionally, in 2025, we supported the commune of Kornaka in updating their Local Water and Sanitation Plan, a key strategic planning document that strengthens local governance and ownership of WASH services.

Regulation remains the most lagging area (especially the sanitation sub-sector), followed by governance and institutional coordination at both national and district levels, due to political instability and weakened multi-stakeholder platforms. Our 2025 systems strengthening efforts focused on supporting the WASH accounts process, developing Kornaka's local planning framework, and building capacities of newly appointed local administrators. These foundational efforts are critical to restoring sector functionality and ensuring long-term resilience of WASH services despite the challenging political context.

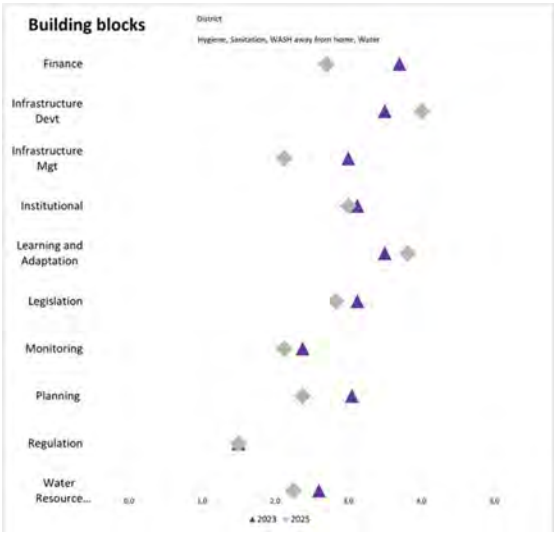


Figure 23: District building block scores from Kornaka district 2023-2025

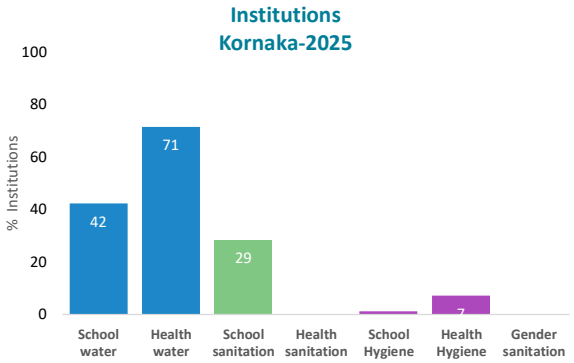


Figure 24: Status of institutional WASH in Kornaka district 2025, Niger

Service levels

JMP classifies Niger as **off-track** to achieve SDG 6 by 2030. At the current pace, universal coverage will not be reached without substantial investment. This is consistent across the country, including in Kornaka, where some indicators are stagnating and others deteriorating.

For institutional WASH, the most recent assessment (2024) showed **71% of healthcare facilities** had a basic drinking water service level, but **none** had a basic sanitation service level (largely because toilets lack functional menstrual hygiene management facilities). In schools, only **42%** have basic drinking water and **29%** have basic sanitation.

Rwanda

The Africa Regional Programme worked towards two strategic priorities in 2025: preparing the **Africa Water and Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium**, to be hosted in Kigali in August 2026, and consolidating IRC's operational presence in Rwanda. The year also laid the institutional foundations for Rwanda to host the broader regional programme.

Activities and outputs

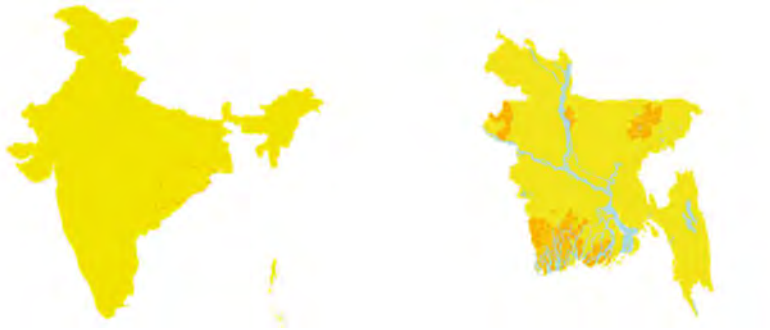
In **Rwanda**, IRC continued to strengthen its operational presence through the **Isoko y'Ubuzima** project — a US-government funded initiative implemented in partnership with Water For People and other consortium members. IRC works at national level with WASAC (the national water and sanitation utility), the Ministry of Infrastructure, Rwanda Utility and Regulatory agency, Ministry of Local Government, ASSERWA (association of sewage emptiers) and at district level, IRC works across ten districts: **Kayonza, Kirehe, Ngoma, Ngororero, Nyabihu, Nyagatare, Nyamagabe, Nyanza, Rwamagana** and **Ruhango**. Activities focused on capacity strengthening for district institutions, facilitation of sector learning and coordination platforms, and contributions to sector performance reviews. At the **Ntora pilot site**, WASAC installed bulk meters and replaced 12 km of pipelines (with support from JICA), reducing non-revenue water from 41% to 23% in the Kacyiru Branch. Forty-one district officers were trained in market-based sanitation.

Systems strength

At national and district level in Rwanda, **institutions and planning** improved most. Ten district WASH reflection meetings were conducted, reinforcing decentralised governance and formalising planning processes. Capacity strengthening of District Water and Sanitation Boards and CSC training enhanced accountability and citizen engagement. Integration of the WASH Systems Academy strengthened institutional capacity and learning mechanisms.

Finance remains the most lagging building block, particularly regarding sustainable operational funding and non-revenue water challenges at district level. This is not unexpected; financial reform typically follows institutional strengthening. The current trajectory suggests the foundations are being laid for more credible and sustainable financing in the next phase. Since 2022, the WASH sector in Rwanda has improved, with the average building block score increasing from 3.4 to 4 in 2025, particularly in policy and legislation, regulation and accountability, planning and finance.

South Asia



Context

In 2025, the Asia team provided technical assistance to governments and development partners across the region, focusing on institutions, WASH finance, planning and monitoring, and on the "leave no one behind" principle. Engagements ran in **Bangladesh** and **India**, with additional assignments in **Nepal** and **Pakistan**.

Activities and outputs

The team's anchor project remained the *Equitable and Sustainable WASH Services in Bangladesh Delta Plan Hotspots* (2022–2026), implemented with **BRAC**, which strengthens local institutions to reach ultra-poor populations and identifies climate-resilient WASH solutions in two climate hotspots. A hackathon was held to surface appropriate solutions for salinity-affected areas.

The **FCDO**-supported *WASH Systems for Health* project continued, with a focus on capacity-building for equity and inclusion in systems strengthening. Knowledge products were developed on **Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI)** in systems strengthening.

The *Water4Change* project (NWO and the Government of India's Department of Science and Technology), on water-sensitive cities, closed in **March 2025** with a final dissemination workshop in February and the publication of its knowledge documents. A new NWO supported initiative "*Coastal Water Solutions'* started end of 2025.

The **Agenda for Change India** alliance was firmed up in 2025: the team submitted a proposal for catalytic funding which was accepted by the secretariat. The team participated in the **International Water Association (Bangkok)**, the **Toilet Conference (Bangladesh)** and the **Global South Academic Conclave on WASH and Climate (Ahmedabad)**.

Systems strength

As a regional programme working across Bangladesh, India and Nepal, IRC engages with partners primarily at national and sub-national level. Work continues to focus on **institutions, planning and finance** — identified as the principal gap areas across the region.

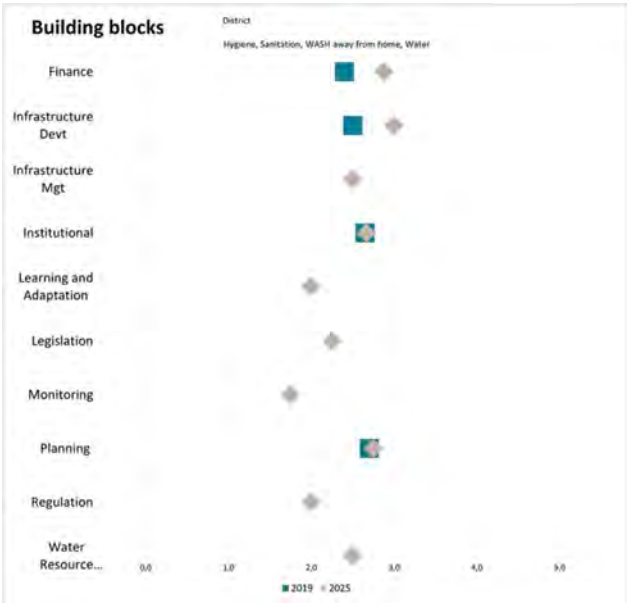


Figure 25: District building block scores from Ganjam districts 2019-2025

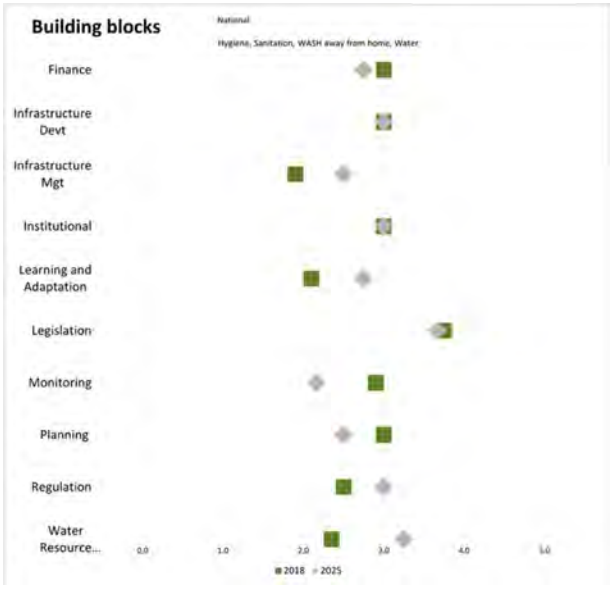


Figure 26: National building block scores from India 2018-2025

Uganda

Context

2025 marked a decisive shift from ambition to delivery for IRC Uganda. The year advanced policy reform, institutional coordination, district-level implementation and the organisational transition towards an independent national entity within the future Riva network.

Activities and outputs

At national level, IRC sustained close collaboration with Government and WASH CSO partners to advance the **Presidential WASH Compact** and to embed **District WASH Master Planning** within the **Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV)**. Hosting the **SWA Country Team Meeting** in September provided a platform to align stakeholders and review terms of reference for consultancy support to the Compact. IRC also supported the **National Planning Authority** to conduct a comprehensive gap analysis of WASH planning frameworks, confirming that while WASH is recognised in NDP IV, implementation remains constrained by fragmented guidelines, limited sanitation and hygiene financing, weak O&M systems and inadequate local government financing.

IRC contributed to three influential policy documents: the **National Sanitation and Hygiene Policy**, the **National WASH Adaptation Plan 2026-2030**, and a strengthened framework for **interministerial WASH coordination** (the latter still awaiting official launch and adoption).

Capacity strengthening remained central. Activities included **tariff modelling and review processes** (implemented under partnership with the Water Utility Regulation Department of MWE) for water sector institutions, and the formation and training of **District Water Supply and Services Boards** in five further districts: **Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kitagwenda, Kyenjojo** and **Ntoroko**.

At local level, the **9.3 km Buhara piped water extension** in Kabarole District was completed, now serving **8,754 people** across six villages. Catchment-level coordination was also strengthened through Albert Water Management Zone engagements.

Institutionally, IRC fast-tracked its transition to an independent national entity, onboarding legal expertise and preparing a national advisory board. The year closed with strong resource-mobilisation momentum: catalytic funding of **USD 20,000** from the Agenda for Change Secretariat

and a **£100,000** grant from the **Clifford Chance Foundation** to strengthen governance and investment readiness of rural water utilities.

Systems strength

Uganda's WASH system has strengthened structurally but remains constrained functionally in areas requiring sustained financing, enforcement and sub-national execution. Nationally, **average system performance reached 69%** by 2024. The most-improved block is **learning and adaptation**, now scoring 75% nationally and 94% at district level (Kabarole). This reflects deliberate investment in sector learning platforms, joint reflections and evidence generation supported by Agenda for Change partners.

Finance remains the most lagging building block nationally at **50%**, with **demand, behaviour and political will (55%)** and **inclusive planning (65%)** also trailing. The Ugandan team frames this as a *systemic* constraint, not merely a technical weakness, driven by chronic underfunding of sanitation, donor dependence, weak pro-poor subsidy mechanisms, and the absence of a dedicated WASH financing strategy.

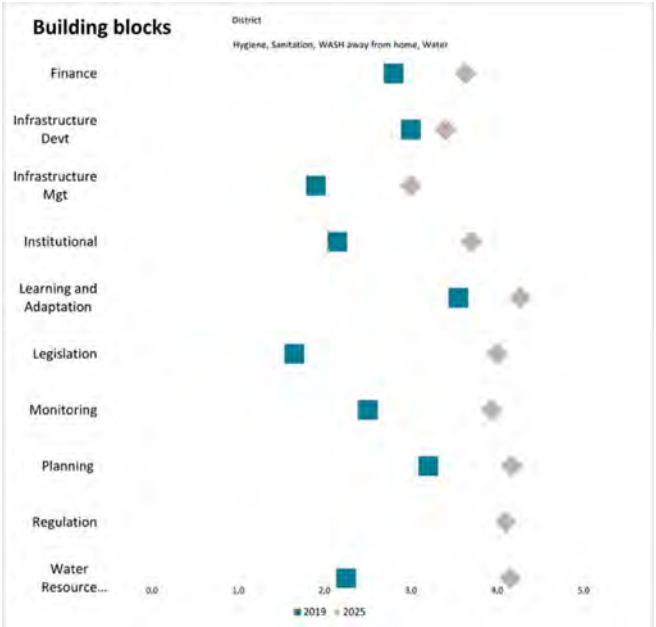


Figure 27: District building block scores from Kabarole district 2019-2025

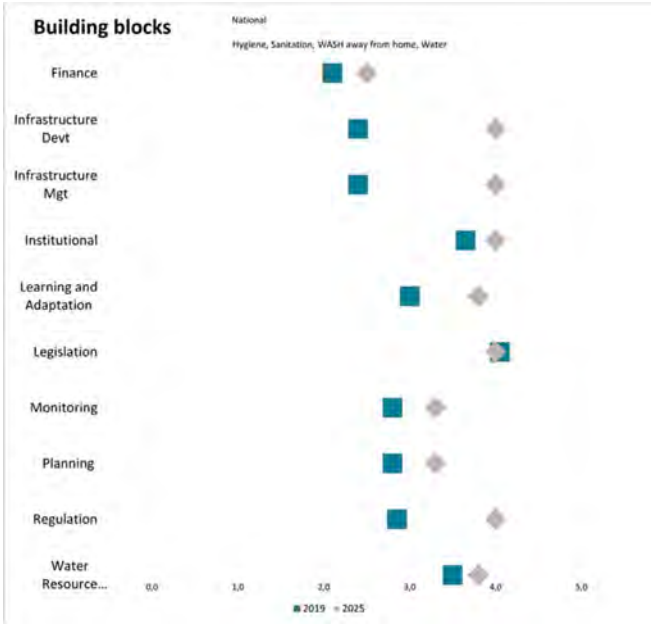


Figure 28: National building block scores from Uganda 2019-2025

Service levels

Updated **JMP 2025 data** show modest national gains: **18%** of the population now has access to safely managed drinking water, **20%** to safely managed sanitation, and **25%** to basic hygiene. Rural–urban disparities persist, and the pace of change is insufficient to deliver SDG 6 by 2030 at current rates.

At sub-national level, progress is more visible and instructive:

- **Kabarole** has improved safely managed drinking water from **0% (2017) to 15% (2024)** and safely managed sanitation from **0% to 9% (2022–2024)**, with sharp reductions in unimproved services and open defecation.

- **Bunyangabu** has improved safely managed drinking water from **17% to 20% (2022–2024)** and safely managed sanitation from **14% to 17%**, with consistent declines in unimproved services.

Across both districts the most significant improvements have been in reducing the unserved population, driven by infrastructure investment, clearer service-authority roles and stronger monitoring. Gains in safely managed services, while real, remain modest — reflecting systemic constraints in O&M financing, faecal sludge management and behaviour change. However, as is indicated in Figure 29 and Figure 30, both districts need a considerable step change to meet the 2030 targets.

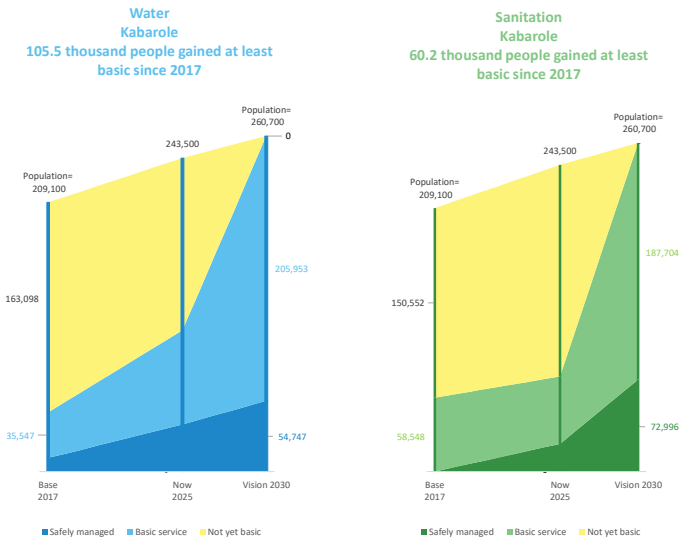


Figure 29: Service level trend in Kabarole (Households)

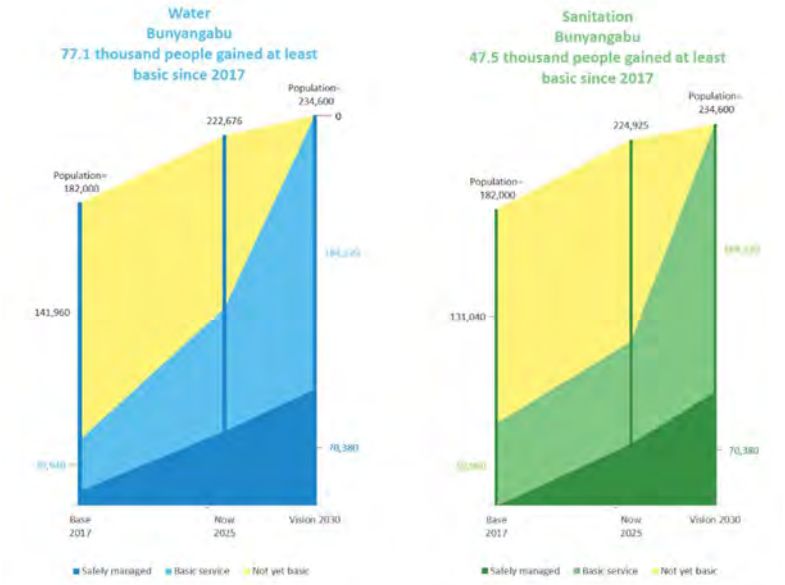


Figure 30: Service level trend in Bunyangabu (Households)

Annex 6 Mapping D30 indicators against the DGIS framework

IRC's reporting on the Results Framework IGG – Water 2025

In 2024, DGIS revised the 2022 results and indicator framework[8]. This provides a clear guidance for organisations to report on the progress made. This Annex reports against the DGIS framework. For details on this process, reference is made to our 2024 monitoring report.

Result area 1: Quantitative results

Within the D30 framework, we capture the increase in number of households with basic and safely management water/ sanitation in sub-national areas where IRC is undertaking activities to strengthen the enabling environment. The methodological notes supporting the framework indicate that *as a result of Dutch support* should be calculated based on the relative share of NL MFA funding compared to the overall budget ('pro rata'). This is about 14.5% in the case of IRC. Where DGIS funding contributes to overall funding of enabling environment activities, the number of people indirectly reached by DGIS funding is calculated pro-rata. These can be calculated based on the D30 indicators on which IRC tracks data every two years.

Table 11: Result area 1 IRC relevant indicators

DGIS	D30 Code	Indicator Description	Tools	2024 value	2025 value	DGIS pro rata
1a indirect	SVL.L.2.1.n	# of people in D30 partner areas with access to AT LEAST basic water services.	Calc/Household survey or asset-and-community-based SL assessment	1,161,383	1,282,994	186,034
1b indirect	SVL.L.4.1.n	# of people in D30 partner areas with access to safely managed water services.		240,999	345,114	50,042
2 indirect	SVL.L.8.1.n	# of schools with access to a basic level of water service (following JMP guidelines) in D30 partner areas. Basic = Drinking water from an improved source is available at the school at the time of the survey	School WASH survey or secondary data collection tool	643	1,001	145
3 indirect	SVL.L.7.1.n	# of Healthcare Facilities (HCFs) with access to a basic level of water service (following JMP guidelines) in D30 partner areas. Basic = Water is available from an improved source on the premises	HCF WASH survey or secondary data collection tool	224	217	31
4a indirect	SVL.L.2.2.n	# of people in D30 partner areas with access to AT LEAST basic sanitation services.	Household survey	447,812	561,068	81,355
4b indirect	SVL.L.4.2.n	# of people in D30 partner areas with access to safely managed sanitation services.		139,076	217,792	31,580

[8] https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/publicaties/2023/01/17/subsidieprogramma-bodemvruchtbaarheid/Appendix+4+-+Results+Frameworks+FNS+and+Water.pdf

Result area 2: Water resources

The DGIS results framework methodological note states the following about results area 2: "*In this result area, two types of interventions are included, namely 'interventions aimed at good water quality and quantity', and 'interventions aimed at protection and/or restoration of water- related ecosystems' (which refers to biodiversity).*"

IRC works on IWRM and the related climate issues (see also section 5.1). However, the scale of these activities is not sufficient to attribute specific areas or population figures to it. This result area is therefore not addressed by IRC.

Result area 3: Enabling environment

The DGIS results framework methodological note states: "*The results of result areas 1 and 2 are measured with indicators, while the results of result area 3 (enabling environment) are measured by result- and learning questions. These questions can be found in the results framework itself. Information on these questions should be included in the annual narrative report by a narrative text.*"

IRC monitors progress on systems strength and outcomes through its D30 indicator framework in line with its results framework (see also section Annex 1).

Several of the D30 systems and outcome indicators seem to match with the sub-result areas of the Results Framework IGG and can be useful for answering these questions in a consistent way. Table 12 below presents an overview of these indicators and their 2024 and 2025 values, only showing IRC's contribution to the One For All indicator values.

Table 12: Result area 3 IRC relevant indicators

DGIS	Code	Indicator Description	Tools	2024 value	2025 value
3.1 Knowledge development and research (knowledge for policy)	OAC.G.2	Joint research capacity	Publication tracker	8	9
	OAC.G.3	Research reach	Publication tracker	366	356
3.2 Regulatory frameworks and quality control	SYS.L.2.n	Local WASH systems strength	BB/Sustainable services checklist	3	3
	SYS.L.4	Examples of WASH systems strengthening	Outcome harvesting	5	5
	SYS.N.1.n	Countries demonstrating an increase in National WASH systems strength	BB/Sustainable services checklist	1	1
	SYS.N.2	Systems strengthening outcomes achieved with contributions from OFA Alliance Members - at national level	Outcome Harvesting	11	11
3.3 Capacity building and technology transfer (policy for knowledge)	OAC.G.4	# People completing a WASH Systems Academy course	WASH academy tracker	1526	5808
	OAC.L.6	Technical assistance trainings or TOT to local actors	Country reporting	16	5
	OAC.N.1	National training and accreditation programmes	Country reporting	2	2

DGIS	Code	Indicator Description	Tools	2024 value	2025 value
3.4 Empowerment of groups in vulnerable situations	ODE.L.1.n	Functioning accountability mechanisms	QIS ladder	3	4
	ODE.L.2	User perception of service and tariffs	Household survey	No data	No data
3.5 Market development and mobilising additional financial means	OFI.L.1.n	Costed local finance strategy in place	QIS ladder	3	6
	OFI.L.2.n	Financial gap understood for WASH service provision	QIS ladder	6	5
3.6 Policy development and diplomatic outreach	OCA.L.1.n	Learning events that include reflection on service levels	Country reporting	11	1

According to the Results Framework IGG – Water 2025, further reporting of this result area is to be done by answering two questions for each sub-result area. Table 13 lists the answers though note that these outcomes below are achieved in partnership with governments, OFA Alliance members, and other funders. DGIS funding is essential to the systems-strengthening role IRC plays across all six sub-result areas, but specific outputs are typically co-financed

Table 13: Outcome 3 achievements and learning

DGIS	What Has Been Achieved	What We Have Learned
3.1 Knowledge development and research (knowledge for policy)	• **88 working groups and learning platforms** supported across the network. • **106 new resources** published on the IRC website. • **55 active courses** on the WASH Systems Academy. • Published *Financial Credibility: Key to the Systemic Transformation of Water and Sanitation in Africa*, introducing a four-pillar reform framework and a Financial Credibility Index. • Co-produced (with Water For People, for UN-Habitat / GWOPA) the *Global Outlook on Water and Sanitation Service Providers: Water for Sustainable Cities* and a thematic overview paper on regulating water supply and sanitation services. • Finalised the *capitalisation document on the professionalisation of rural water services in the Sahel* (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger). • Closed and published knowledge products from the *Water4Change* project (water-sensitive cities, India).	• Flexible, non-earmarked funding remains essential for the kind of synthesis and learning work that is not picked up by project-specific budgets. • Research is most influential when tied to active policy windows — e.g. the Kigali 2026 Symposium, the African Union Year of Water, Heads of State Initiatives. • Capitalisation of regional learning (e.g. Sahel professionalisation) accelerates uptake in other contexts.
3.2 Regulatory frameworks and quality control	• Building block assessments conducted at local and national level in the focus countries. • In **Niger**, facilitated the drafting of the country's first-ever **national WASH standards for healthcare facilities**, and trained **14 national**	• Regulation remains the weakest building block at national level and requires sustained, multi-year investment. • Effective regulation needs

DGIS	What Has Been Achieved	What We Have Learned
	WASH FIT 2.0 trainers. • In **Mali**, developed the **WASH FIT Costing Tool** and user guide and capitalised lessons from the WASH FIT approach nationally. • In **Ethiopia**, contributed to the review of **OWNP Phase II** and the development of **Phase III**, and provided technical input into the updated **national water resources management policy**. • In **Uganda**, contributed to the **Sanitation and Hygiene Policy**, the **WASH National Adaptation Plan**, and to the strengthened framework for interministerial WASH coordination. • In **Burkina Faso**, supported three Centre-Ouest municipalities to sign delegated management contracts with the private operator Vergnet — a step towards professionalised rural water service management.	enforcement capacity alongside paper standards — a lesson reinforced by the Niger case, where new regulations only translate into practice when local officials are trained on them. • Institutional volatility (ministerial reorganisations in Ghana, Burkina Faso, leadership turnover in Niger) is a recurring headwind: regulatory progress can stall or reverse when ministries are restructured.
3.3 Capacity building and technology transfer (policy for knowledge)	• Approximately **4,900 attendees** participated in **97 in-person capacity-building events** across the network. • **5,800 enrolments** on the WASH Systems Academy; **95%** of learners reported applying the learning to their work within six months. • Launched a new course, *Systems Leadership: the Basics*, on the WASH Systems Academy. • In **Uganda**, delivered tariff modelling and regulatory training for water sector institutions, and trained **District Water Supply and Services Boards** in five further districts (Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kitagwenda, Kyenjojo, Ntoroko). • In **Mali**, trained **20 health workers** in Koutiala on WASH FIT 2.0. • In **Niger**, trained **18 health and WASH professionals** as national WASH FIT 2.0 trainers. • In **Burkina Faso**, strengthened the capacity of **10 rural water operators** to use the mWater digital reporting platform. • In **Rwanda**, trained **41 district officers** in market-based sanitation through *Isoko y'Ubuzima*.	• Online + in-person blended models continue to scale efficiently — the WSA application-to-work rate (95%) is the strongest evidence yet that the Academy translates into practice. • Embedding training within statutory bodies (e.g. District Water Supply and Services Boards in Uganda) is more durable than standalone workshops. • Capacity built in one administration is lost when officials rotate — so we are increasingly building it into institutional processes rather than only into individuals.
3.4 Empowerment of groups in vulnerable situations	• Published *Towards GESI-responsive WASH systems strengthening* and launched a new course on integrating Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) into systems strengthening. • In **Ghana**, facilitated **community score card assessments** across six districts in the Ahafo Region, generating evidence on service quality and strengthening accountability between citizens, service providers and local authorities. • In **Bangladesh** (through BRAC), continued the	• Inclusion has to be intentionally designed in from the start; bolt-on inclusion components rarely outlive a project. • Citizen-led accountability tools (e.g. Ghana's community score cards) are most useful when channelled into local-government planning cycles, not just into NGO reports.

DGIS	What Has Been Achieved	What We Have Learned
	Equitable and Sustainable WASH Services in Bangladesh Delta Plan Hotspots, focused on reaching ultra-poor populations in two climate-affected hotspots. • In **Rwanda**, *Isoko y'Ubuzima* extended sub-national support to **10 districts**, with WASH planning embedded in district-level institutions. • Of IRC's **13 partner areas**, 4 had a functioning accountability mechanism for service providers and service authorities.	• Climate-related vulnerabilities increasingly drive WASH inequalities — Bangladesh and Mali both illustrate this.
3.5 Market development and mobilising additional financial means	• Of IRC's **13 partner areas**, 6 have an operational funding and finance strategy in place; • In **Rwanda**, district WASH investment plans validated across **10 districts**; total budget required for universal coverage by 2030 estimated at **USD 1.3 billion**. • In **Ethiopia**, continued rollout of the National WASH Financing Strategy; co-chaired the national WASH financing working group. • In **Ghana**, government for the first time earmarked a minimum of **20% of the District Assembly Common Fund** for WASH at district level; IRC is supporting the development of a financing strategy for the **Ghana WASH Sector Development Programme**. • In **Uganda**, secured catalytic funding of **USD 20,000** from the Agenda for Change Secretariat and **£100,000** from the **Clifford Chance Foundation** to strengthen governance and investment readiness of rural water utilities. • In **Burkina Faso**, engaged with the **European Union** to secure additional funding to continue implementation of the Banfora strategic plan and initiate the Koudougou strategic plan.	• Credible costed plans (e.g. Rwanda's USD 1.3 billion gap analysis) are now the basis of finance dialogues with government and development partners. • Domestic public finance is the largest unrealised opportunity (Ghana's 20% DACF earmark is an early indicator of what is possible). • Catalytic philanthropic and EU finance is most useful when it unlocks government commitment, not when it substitutes for it.
3.6 Policy development and diplomatic outreach	• Of IRC's **13 partner areas**, 8 held regular progress review meetings for learning and reflection on progress toward district WASH targets in 2025. • **Two Presidential Compacts** signed in 2025 — **Burundi** and **Nepal** — extending the Heads of State Initiatives. • In partnership with **AMCOW** and the **Government of Rwanda**, announced the **Africa Water and Sanitation Systems Leadership Symposium** to be hosted in **Kigali in August 2026**, aligned with the African Union's Year of Water 2026 and preparations for the 2026 UN Water Conference. • In **Ghana**, facilitated high-level dialogue with development partners and the sector minister to	• Heads of State Initiatives continue to be one of the most effective levers we have for accelerating political commitment — but they require multi-year accompaniment, not one-off advocacy moments. • Co-convening with national institutions (Ghana NDPC, Uganda SWA Country Team) is more impactful than parallel NGO platforms. • Continental moments (Kigali 2026, AU Year of Water) create rare windows for sector reform — sustained preparation throughout

DGIS	What Has Been Achieved	What We Have Learned
	advance the Presidential Compact; co-hosted the **National Learning Exchange** in Accra with the National Development Planning Commission, WaterAid Ghana and CONIWAS, drawing more than 95 stakeholders including 17 Municipal and District Assemblies. • In **Uganda**, provided technical advisory support to the SWA Country Team on the emerging Presidential Compact; hosted the **SWA Country Team Meeting** in September. • In **Mali**, organised a high-level roundtable on financing the National WASH Roadmap for healthcare facilities. • Participated in major global events including the **UNC Water & Health Conference**, the **SWA Sector Ministers' Meeting**, **PANAFCON-3** (Lusaka), **World Water Week**, the **Water and Development Congress & Exhibition** (Bangkok), and the **Africa Climate Summit**.	2025 is what will determine whether those windows are used.

Across the world, essential public services - water, sanitation, health, education - are failing the people they exist to serve. Not because solutions don't exist, but because the systems that should deliver them are not strong enough.

That's the problem we exist to solve. And the stories in this report show what becomes possible when systems leadership takes hold - when the right people, at every level of government and society, work together with the confidence and skills to drive lasting change.

As the world has changed, so have we. We're stepping more fully into our role as trusted advisors to nation builders – working through and beyond water, sanitation and hygiene to inform, influence and inspire the leaders who can build resilient public services that transform lives.

But systems change is never the work of one organisation. It demands collective action –across governments, communities, civil society, the private sector and partners like you.

Leadership at every level and commitment that outlasts any single project. And as you're reading this, that includes you too.

If you're ready to think differently about the challenges you're facing, we'd welcome the conversation