

The Bangladesh WASH Alliance (BWA) is a nationwide network of around 6 partners working together to find innovative and effective solutions to every aspect of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene issues in the country. BWA relies on and works together with a nationwide network of governmental and non-governmental organisations to achieve this goal.

To better understand our contribution to the sustainability of WASH services of the last 5 years, at the end of 2015 an external validation of our Track Record was conducted.

In addition to validating our sustainability framework, we asked the assessment team to review our activities related to the five pillars of our main Theory of Change:

1. Increased access to opportunities for Microfinance Institutions for WASH Projects
2. Improved maintenance and use of disaster resilient WASH facilities by communities
3. Operationalization of the National Hygiene Promotion Strategy
4. WASH budget tracking at national and local level
5. Profitable small businesses by making low-cost sanitary napkins



The clear overarching message from the external assessment is that the Bangladesh WASH Alliance, by bringing local NGOs together into a country alliance, is making a contribution that is far more impactful than the sum of all the individual NGOs working separately. Private sector involvement makes it possible for this 'collective of specialists' to arise. This integration of different approaches is an impressive feature of the BWA approach and is created by means of two analytic tools.

First, FIETS (Financial, Institutional, Environmental, Technological and Social sustainability) recognizes the interdependency between water, energy, food scarcity and climate change. This framework acknowledges the importance of every aspect of sustainability. Providing training to private

entrepreneurs to start sanitation business (financial) as well as promoting rainwater harvesting (RWH) systems in Bangladesh (technological) or addressing menstrual hygiene management (social) are part of this sustainability approach. Secondly, the Development Aid Country criteria effectiveness, relevance and impact are always applied to remain focussed on the objectives and maintain the wide acceptability and credibility BWA receives.

These tools contribute to BWA's positive impact, especially considering the various sustainability risks that are identified. These cover both natural risks as political risks, such as lack of capacity by local authorities or inadequate budgets to sustain public services.

Conclusions & recommendations



The concept of sustainability is a clear priority for all partners and is ingrained in the vision, approach and strategy of the Alliance. The vision of tackling the many dimensions to sustainability in a holistic manner in specific locations has helped the partners, local governments and communities see the interconnectedness of water, sanitation and hygiene to finance, institutions, the environment, technology and society. The BWA has been part of changing mind-sets and showing that new approaches are possible.



BWA partners have demonstrated remarkable effectiveness of the majority of their approaches and WASH solutions. In the future BWA will focus on developing specific strategies to promote the solutions and business ideas it has developed that are ready for scale up.



The study has detected limitations among the beneficiaries and stakeholders in perceiving the possible risks in the services and structures created by the programme. This may jeopardize the sustainability focus of the programme as well. The BWA will make special efforts to strengthen the risk perceptions of all concerned, including the community groups and help them adopting necessary risk reduction measure.



The alliance and its partners have earned a level of recognition by which they can successfully approach and lobby with the highest level government authorities for policy making and change as necessary. In its future phase, BWA will continue to map out the main investors, government departments, development banks and lead agencies and develop a strategy for increasing BWA's lobby and advocacy capabilities.



The gender policy in the country programme needs to be strengthened and specifically focus on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. More attention will be paid to strengthen the gender equality perceptions for all. Partners will undertake project gender analyses to make sure interventions will also include social empowerment dimensions.



*This factsheet presents the overall conclusions and recommendations of the study. Read the full report [here](#).
The assessment team was headed by Piers Cross, an internationally renowned advisor on water and sanitation.*