2016 has been an important year for the WASH Alliance International. It was a year full of reflections, lessons learned and defining plans on how to successfully continue working together in the future. It was a transition year in which we further built on our experiences from the past and turned them into learnings for the future. It is a pleasure for me to look back at a successful year and to share some of the highlights with you.

This year our work focused on three result areas, which were joint learning, implementation of our programme and diversification of our funding base.

Our learning programme looked into topics such as acceleration, sustainability, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and innovative finance. For each topic, documents have been developed, workshops were organised and a frequent exchange of information within the Alliance across countries took place. This resulted in useful tools and approaches which we expect will help us to further integrate these innovative topics into our future programme. The learning topic innovative finance, for example, looked into using a business case for land and water management to attract funding for the conservation and restoration of landscapes. We already started experimenting with this business case to see how it can be applied to our programme in the countries.

In 2016, we also continued implementing our programme in seven countries. We very much built on our successful partnerships of the past years to improve the WASH situation of many people in Africa and Asia. At the same time we realised that it is important to increasingly look into the impact our programme has. Therefore we embarked on an impact journey with the Erasmus University of Rotterdam to not only define our desired impact but to also discuss how and where to achieve it. This approach will significantly define our way of working in the future.

Since our ambitions can’t be fulfilled without a stable funding base, we also set the goal of diversifying our funding sources in 2016. Apart from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we therefore looked into partnering with different donors. Since we realised that donors are increasingly channelising their funding through their in-country representations, we hired fundraising officers in our programme countries. They have been busy with drafting fundraising strategies, organising events, networking with different WASH actors and applying for funding opportunities.

As the years before, the WAI participated with a stand in the World Water Week in Stockholm from Aug 28th to 2 September 2016. For the first time, we invited some of our Country Coordinators to join us in Stockholm and they presented acceleration cases from their respective countries which received a lot of attention. During the week, RAIN organised an expert meeting on the business case for land and water to enrich their study with the knowledge of other sector experts and to share preliminary results.

Now towards the end of the year we are very busy with looking into options of continuing our partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry has shown interest and confidence in continuing working with the WAI which also proves that they believe in our work and approaches. We very much hope to be able to continue this cooperation in the long run.

A crucial year for the WASH Alliance International comes to an end and, on behalf of the WASH Alliance Management Unit and the Supervisory Board, I would like to thank you all for your commitment, work and energy. We are looking forward to more successful years to come.
In July this year Ingrid van den Burg started as the Interim Programme Manager of the WASH Alliance International in this WASH UP we interview Ingrid on her new role and motivation to work in the area of WASH.

**WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE AT THE WASH ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL, AND FOR THE WASHU?**

I am responsible for managing the WASHU team and for coordinating the WASH Alliance International programme with the supervisory board and the programme group.

**WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO WORK IN THIS SECTOR?**

There are still so many people in the world who do not have access to water and sanitation, although it is an essential factor for well-being.

**WHAT IS THE NEXT BIG THING IN WASH OR FOR THE WASHU?**

My hope is that we can continue with WASH beyond 2016. We have achieved so much during the last six years in all countries in which we work. It would be great to be able to further build on everything we have learned and achieved so far.

**WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM THIS?**

Water is life, although in many areas in the world people still don’t have access to safe water, whilst water sources are potentially available. There is a need to invest in more affordable technologies to access and use water, and more work needs to be done to give people in dry areas access to water.

**THE URBAN SPECTRUM: READING THE BANGLADESH URBAN CONTEXT**

University and Research Centre and have a Master’s degree in Social Sciences. In the past twenty years I’ve worked in project management in both the profit and the nonprofit sector and I gained valuable experience in the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes. My professional focus has been on behavioural change and improving the health of vulnerable groups.

Before joining the WASH Management Unit, I worked for more than 3 years for WASTE advisors on urban environment. I was responsible for managing the 5-year Management Programme of the WASH Alliance International and for further improving the quality of project planning and project management skills within WASTE. During this period I developed and implemented a planning and control cycle (planning, monitoring, evaluation, registration, administration and reporting), for country and project management contracts of the WASTE partners within WASH.

**A great resource to understand the Bangladesh urban context including issues like WASH**

THE URBAN SPECTRUM: Metropolitan to Mofussils

**ABOUT NAHID**

Nahid Hassan Sumon is a Fundraising Adviser for WASH Alliance Bangladesh and has been involved in the WASH sector in Bangladesh and in the non-profit sector. Nahid received a degree in book reading and has experience in competitions in Bangladesh.

**WHAT IS THE BOOK ABOUT?**

The book discusses the topic of contemporary urbanisation as a whole and the scale and the paradoxes of contemporary urbanisation. It brings together different perspectives to pose major challenges to our mind-sets, our knowledge frameworks and our policy perspectives.

The book points out how analysis, drivers and patterns of urbanisation in Bangladesh can vary among different metropolitan and mofussils (secondary cities) within Bangladesh. They are also metropolitans and mofussils (secondary cities) in the world. The book discusses urbanisation issues like WASH and other issues.

**WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM IT?**

• Almost 100% of the population in Dhaka city and Chittagong city has access to some form of latrines, but also among family members, but also among households.

• There is a big difference in drinking water between the metropolitan and mofussils; for example, the dominant source of drinking water in secondary cities is tube-wells (pumps). (2012). Publicly supplied piped water is available for only 11.2% of households, with an additional 9.3% getting access from privately run tube-wells. (2012). In Dhaka, access to piped water is 96.65% (2012), but it is 59.25% (2016) in Chittagong.

• In Bangladesh, unlike India and Pakistan, local government reform has focused on rural areas. Thus, sanitation, water and other civil improvements are in the jurisdiction of city corporations (CC) and purbashoras (municipalities).

• When looking at urban engagement, funding is an important but also deciding how required funds are best sourced and mobilized and how to achieve the most promising outcomes.

**LEARNING FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The WASH Alliance International (WASH) has set up a learning programme in 2016. One of the topics included in the learning programme is environmental sustainability. As mentioned in the last WASH UP, the goal of the environmental sustainability learning programme is to build capacity with partners and develop a demand-driven and well-founded approach on environmental sustainability. This approach can be used in the 2017–2021 WASH programme. This WASH UP date shows the progress of the part of the learning programme and provides an outlook on the remaining activities.

After assessing the needs of the partners within the WASH countries, WASH developed a look at the implementation of environmental sustainability in the WASH Alliance International. The approach that was developed has been tested during 4-day training programmes in Ethiopia, Nepal and Kenya. Local WASH Alliance International organisation took part in these trainings, as well local government representatives, water user associations and WASH country coordinators. A group of 45 people working in the WASH sector within 3 in 41 organisations and 3 in 41 organisations in Kenya and 10 organisations were trained in Ethiopia. In Nepal and in 11 organisations.

UNDERSTAND RELATIONS WITHIN AND AROUND THE WASH SECTOR

The most important learning objective of the environmental sustainability training is to show participants how to map and understand relevant relations within the WASH sector. These water relations are multi-level and multi-sectorial (up- and downstream), in time (history, present and future), between different water resources and water users, or different NGO’s working in the WASH sector.

WASH programmes often lack access to these relations. The effect on the water quality should always be taken into account. For example, when constructing latrines, one could wonder if there is already pollution or if when aquifers are depleted. Construction is place-based and it is connected with many activities. What happens if the borehole dries up, especially when it’s the only source of water during the dry season?

What happens if the borehole dries up, especially when it’s the only source of water during the dry season? Too often, a lot of interventions do not provide solutions for the next generation whilst planning for environmental sustainability does. This training made sense!

WHAT IS THE NEXT BIG THING IN WASH OR FOR THE WASHU?

My hope is that we can continue with WASH beyond 2016. We have achieved so much during the last six years in all countries in which we work. It would be great to be able to further build on everything we have learned and achieved so far.

**THE URBAN SPECTRUM: READING THE BANGLADESH URBAN CONTEXT**

“MY DREAM IN WASH IS ACCESS TO WASH FOR ALL”

This training makes sense!

The training was also the sharing of knowledge between partners and from projects in other countries.

A Crucial Ingredient

These principle questions may seem simple, but the answers could be different. Understanding complex subject like the environment and the human impact on it, is important to simplify these cases. In all three countries, participants fully appreciated the assessment and planning exercises on water consumption, a case study, to improve and not to deteriorate the water availability and quality.

Drought field exercises the reliance of up- and downstream relations in the capture, the competition between water users (domestic, agriculture, livestock, nature, including wild life) and the current and future challenges related to the availability of water become clear.

Existing tools such as

• Google Earth 3D visualization
• the FITS sustainability tool
• 3D water (surface and sub-surface cycle)
• 3R water (re-use, retention, re-use)
• catchment water balance, water demand and supply assessments were used to address the issues related to environmental sustainability. An important part of the training was also the sharing of knowledge between partners and from projects in other countries.

What is your current role at the WASH Alliance International?

Officer WASH. Since September 2016, she has taken up the role of country lead for Ghana within the WASH Alliance International.

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*The training on environmental sustainability is a crucial ingredient for any meaningful WASH programming and should be undertaken at all levels.*

Participants appreciated the use of Google Earth 3D visualization and the FITS sustainability tool, which gave them an important tool in the training to assess the up- and downstream relations in a catchment and to evaluate environmental challenges and opportunities. A participant noted: “Thanks to the preparation exercise in Google Earth the catchment area was easy to understand”.

**ABOUT SANDRA**

Sandra van Soelen has been working for Sima since 2015 as Programme Officer WASH. Since September 2016, she has taken up the role of country lead for Ghana within the WASH Alliance International.
Suggestions for improvement were to provide more background on aspects of sanitation, waste management, policies and climate change. Trainers and participants advised to squeeze follow-up training. These follow-ups should take place during the planning period of the future WAI programme.

TOOLKIT FOR 2017 PROGRAMME

The next step for this learning trajectory is the development of a standardised approach for environmental sustainability in the form of a toolkit. This will include presentations and exercises that can be used to train other organisations. This way, the environmental sustainability method can be applied in their own programmes. RAIN is also planning a feedback and presentation session in the Netherlands, with WAI-partners. During this session, the outcomes of this learning trajectory will be presented. During that workshop, questions about how to link up with fundraising opportunities, and how this in turn can enhance the learning trajectories, will be discussed.

READ & WATCH TO DEVELOP

Training on Environmental Sustainability

Together with RAIN and MetaMeta (local partner), the Ethiopian Wash Alliance has conducted training on environmental sustainability on October 10th - 14th. The training is meant to improve the understanding of EWA partners in integrating environmental sustainability aspects. Together with RAIN and MetaMeta (local partner), the Ethiopian Wash Alliance has conducted training on environmental sustainability on October 10th - 14th.

ABOUT ARNOUD

Arnoud Keizer is a hydrologist with a master degree in Water Management. He’s working at RAIN since 2016 and specialised in river basin management. His expertise lies in agricultural water use, water re-charging, retention and re-use of SC options. He’s found that drought assessments and river restoration are important ways to achieve sustainable and efficient use of available water resources. He gained working experience in several Asian countries, like Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

WASHUP

GROUP Participations in sustainable WASH practices in Kenya affecting the environment.

ABOUT JACQUELINE

Jacqueline is director of WASTE in the WASH Alliance International, a Steering Group member of the Steering Group.

YOUR REFERENCE ON LINKING & LEARNING IN THE ALLIANCE

Shaping acceleration: How to put acceleration into practice?

‘WASH Alliance International, Accelerating WASH’ is the official slogan of the WAI. But what does it mean? And, just as important, how do we put ‘acceleration’ into practice? In the May 2016 issue of WASH UP, internal starting points were discussed, such as:

- Working (local) systems are a prerequisite for acceleration
- Approach ‘acceleration’ as a straight line, it comes with ups and downs: an S-type curve
- There are no ‘one size fits all’ solutions. Adaptation for the local reality is a must
- The chances for a successful ‘design-for-acceleration’ are much higher when starting at the end (think big) than when thinking bottom-up.

The key question is: How to put acceleration into practice? And how to turn concepts and ideas into practice? The acceleration team has been working on an Acceleration Manual. This manual includes, in addition to a theoretical part, practical tools and examples of cases where acceleration is already visible. Here is a short summary. The manual will be available by the end of this year.

1. Acceleration is a process. With the end-result in mind, ‘a roadmap’ can be developed.

2. Acceleration only happens based on functioning local systems.

3. Any acceleration programme should ensure that everybody is included, especially the poor and vulnerable (please notice that this does not mean that the focus should be on one point in time, the local WASH sector is responsible and the role of the NGO has been limited to that of coach or watch-dog).

4. Get-out: within a reasonable time-frame (2-5 years), the local WASH sector is responsible and the role of the NGO has been limited to that of coach or watch-dog.

How to accelerate?

WASH Alliance International has identified a list of points that indicate that acceleration is happening. Also, when you cannot detect any of these indicators, you should consider a signal that you need to change your approach. Obviously, the best indicator is that you see an exponential growth of the WASH service delivery. However, as it may take a while before this is visible, there are pointers indicating changes in the right direction (process indicators), e.g.:

- Number of companies involved in WASH
- Number of jobs created in WASH
- Unit cost of toilet or water facility going down
- Number of credit products developed/purchased
- Government budget for WASH increases
- Enhanced rules and regulation

1. Acceleration approaches. For water, sanitation and hygiene, there are different working methods. We can distinguish different parameters that can help you decide which approach is most suitable in the region you are working. Parameters are, for example, population density or water quality. If it is your challenge to realise accelerated access to water in a highly populated area without water pollution, then using a mini-water grid approach would work. However if you aim to accelerate access to sanitation in a highly urbanised area, then choosing a Diamond Approach makes more sense. We also distinguish different levels of approaches, some are more technical, whilst others are more facilitating (such as diamond approach).

In the manual we will give you examples of the following approaches (out of course there are related to improving the living environment of people. The faster (acceleration) the better with minimum quality standards and ensure availability of products and services. Other sustainability and acceleration is not relevant.

• Social: this is about social inclusion. When accelerating, the focus does not have to be on the poor exclusively, as such a narrow focus may even hamper acceleration. But obviously, the poor and vulnerable need to be included.

2. ACCELERATION MILESTONES

- Acceleration is not a straight line, it comes with ups and downs: an S-type curve
- Be aware, successes will not be instant, as acceleration is a process.
- Remember that FIETS is the Dutch word for ‘acceleration’ (fast improvement of Environmental and Social sustainability).

3. ACCELERATION MECHANISMS

- Are designed to accelerate that which is already working in the project.
- Are designed in a way that it can be replicated by others
- Are defined as milestones, e.g. a 3S approach (speed up, scale up, standardisation)
- Are related to improving the living environment of people. The faster (acceleration) the better with minimum quality standards and ensure availability of products and services. Other sustainability and acceleration is not relevant.

4. D/LAST BUT NOT LEAST

Making and shaping acceleration is a process and journey in itself. There is no truth, no clear pathway. We have to shape it ourselves! So, all remarks, suggestions, criticisms are more than welcome!
Realizing 100% WASH coverage: leaving no-one behind

Acceleration cases from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Uganda and Ghana

**How can we accelerate WASH in a sustainable way, whilst meeting the needs of a growing population?**

To realise full WASH coverage in our countries we need to drastically change our approach. Traditional solutions focused on building (subsidised) WASH infrastructure are not sustainable and cannot meet the needs of a growing population. To accelerate WASH we need to focus on sustainable WASH sector development. We need to develop a system wherein all stakeholders work effectively together on realising sustainable WASH solutions. This requires a multi-stakeholder approach, driven by demand and supply mechanisms, interconnects all stakeholders that are needed to develop a functioning and sustainable WASH market.

At World Water Week in Stockholm we presented some of our acceleration cases to illustrate how we put acceleration into practice in the different countries. Within our acceleration cases from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Uganda and Ghana different approaches, capacities and stages in the development of a sustainable WASH market are showcased.

**Accelerating WASH in...**

**BANGLADESH**

In Bangladesh, 63% of the population has access to safe sanitation and 87% has access to safe drinking water. A drastic change in approach is needed as we want to be able to reach full coverage, whilst adapting to population growth. The rapid urbanization in Bangladesh are empowered, organised and well informed about what is needed to realise this goal. By making use of a multi-stakeholder approach, building capacity and integrating business are crucial factors.

**Bangladesh**

- 61% of the population are employed in the informal sector.
- 48 unions have already shown this and this will increase to 240 unions.
- Local communities are represented and have realised this and this will increase to 240 unions.
- Functional partnership with the government and other stakeholders to create access to safe sanitation for 200,000 people here.
- 30 years of working experience with the WASH Alliance.
- 30 years of work with the WASH Alliance with a focus on changing mindsets to achieve the overall goal of the WASH Alliance.

**Ethiopia**

- In Ethiopia, WASH Alliance International is active in urban areas, focusing on slum communities. The slum communities face challenges in their solid waste management. Currently 38% of the people have access to safe sanitation and the municipalities have solid waste disposal sites. There are still many challenges, such as illegally disposed solid waste. To address such challenges within the existing cities, particularly in the newly created cities, the local communities are involved in the development and execution of solutions. This way, we work towards sustainable and affordable sanitation services that can accelerate WASH.

**Uganda**

- Uganda is a country with a rapid increase of urbanisation. The urban population is growing at a rate of 5% per year. Today, 24% of the population lives in urban areas. The demand for sanitation services and quality delivery will increase, creating a market for suppliers. However, the demand for sanitation services is not yet met, with only 7% of the population having access to improved sanitation facilities.

**Ghana**

- 50% of the population lives in urban areas.
- The demand for sanitation services is not yet met, with only 7% of the population having access to improved sanitation facilities.

**Accelerating WASH in...**

**ETHIOPIA**

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**About Tamene**

Tamene is working for WASH Alliance in the capacity of Country Coordinator. He has a business management background and works in the environmental sanitation sector. This way, he works towards the development of a system in which all relevant stakeholders work together on realising sustainable sanitation services.

**About Rashidah**

Rashidah is a social worker by profession with a Masters degree in community development and social work. She has interacted with a large number of people in the community and worked with various stakeholders, including local government agencies, NGOs, and private institutions. Rashidah focuses on changing mindsets to achieve the overall goal of the WASH Alliance.
From glimpses of success to full coverage

Even though acceleration is hard to organise and demands a different way of thinking and designing programmes, we have seen a glimpse of success in our countries Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Uganda and Ghana over the last five years. To take our work to the next level of acceleration, it is important to listen to each other, share experiences and learn from successes and failures.

In our work so far, we have seen that we can distinguish and make use of various acceleration mechanisms. Acceleration mechanisms are triggers that can be used in our programmes to encourage and speed up the process of sustainable acceleration. Below we list seven recurring acceleration mechanisms that we came across in our programmes. But we realise there are many more, so we welcome you all to share these with us.

Once demand for WASH is realised (and people have the funds in place to pay for their own WASH services), and the supply side is up and running, organising groups of consumers can help you to create economies of scale and reduce costs per person. For example, organised groups of consumers can demand discount from producers when they buy in bulk from them.

Governments are a crucial player in scaling up WASH. We should always involve the government one way or another. This is the only way 100% coverage can be reached. In the first place they can create an enabling environment with relevant rules and regulations. Secondly governments can contribute financially to the development of a functioning WASH sector.

In practice, subsidies may hamper development of local ownership and, therefore, sustainability. Many people are able to pay for services themselves, even the poor. Although there are always exceptions. The key word here is financing: pre-finance the WASH service and let the customer pay their bill over time.

When households pay for their own facilities, costs can be reduced and financial sustainability realised. However, when these new “WASH ambassadors” also spread the word and convince others to also build their own WASH facilities, acceleration gets an extra boost.

Another simple acceleration mechanism is to develop or use replicable training material, appropriate technical designs, communication materials and campaigns and to turn these into easy-to-use products. Making these available throughout the Alliance, paves the road for low-cost expansion to other villages or districts or even countries, boosting scale and acceleration.

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