



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

# Driving sustainable water management

The Sustainable Water Fund (FDW) is a public-private partnership (PPP) programme in the international water sector. Its goal is to enhance water safety and security in developing countries. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Directorate General International Cooperation (DGIS) co-finance FDW along with its PPPs. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) implements the programme.



Programme duration  
**2012**  
**2029**

150+ million  
✓  
€

24 countries  
86 companies  
59 authorities  
63 NGOs  
7 water boards  
7 utilities  
5 legal partners  
11 knowledge institutes

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

2,221,679 people with access to safe and affordable drinking water

826,951 people who gained access to improved sanitation facilities

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

268,091 people trained or skills developed

5,994 direct jobs created

42 projects/PPPs  
22 WASH  
10 Water efficiency  
10 IWRM  
Our 3 cross-cutting themes  
Climate  
Bottom of the pyramid  
Gender

FDW at a glance

## Public-Private Partnerships

**Public** Ensures regulatory consistency, upscaling and fosters effectiveness.

**Private** Offers cost-efficient solutions and innovative models.

**NGO** Empowers communities, builds trust and offers knowledge for solutions.

## Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)



Safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are crucial to human health and well-being.

## Water efficiency in agriculture



Efficient water use is essential for sustainable food production and nature conservation.

## Integrated water resources management (IWRM)



IWRM is essential for sustainable and equitable water use, restoration and ecosystem health.

### Examples of our approach



**Sanitation loans**  
Sanitation loans in Kenya via sanitation marketing.



**National utilities support**  
Supporting national utilities to increase WASH services for all urban residence via VEI-supported Water Operator Partnerships (WOPs) in Rwanda, Ethiopia and the Philippines.



**Paid water services**  
Transitioning from free to paid rural water services in Mali.

### Learnings

- Sanitation loans need aligning with government safety net programmes, ensuring lower-income households access toilets, which is essential for full sanitation coverage.
- Transitioning to paid water services requires supportive national market transformation policies, donor coordination, higher service levels and risk capital.
- Enhancing the operational efficiency of urban utilities does not automatically lead to improved WASH services for urban lower-income households.

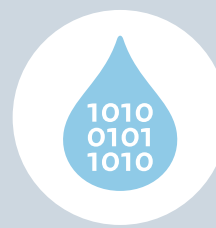
### Examples of our approach



**Technologies and practices**  
Adopting water-efficient technologies and agricultural best practices is vital for sustainable farming. Project examples include water harvesting ponds in India and drip irrigation in Burkina Faso.



**Strengthening value chains**  
Strengthening the entire value chain and introducing water efficiency at farm level is crucial for economic development. Improved inputs and access to markets are essential. Projects are working on organic cotton, sugarcane and corn.



**Collecting big data**  
Harnessing data, for example, remote sensing for biomass and water efficiency in India and groundwater modelling and monitoring in Mozambique.

### Learnings

- Overexploitation of groundwater for agriculture needs to be mitigated. This asks for sound monitoring and water allocation.
- The local context prescribes the water efficiency technology choice. The technology (and practice) is often adopted in phases. In remote contexts, the first step (usually) involves locally-made technology.
- Drip irrigation is not always the best choice. Improved furrow irrigation is sometimes the first step.

### Examples of our approach



**Fairness in water**  
Fair water distribution and pricing in Pakistan and Ethiopia by improving agreements and allocation plans between water users.



**Improved water quality**  
Enhancing water quality in India and Indonesia through cleaner leather production and monitoring/improving industrial waste for cleaner rivers.



**Increased water safety**  
Improving water safety by enhancing coastal resilience through nature-based solutions in Indonesia and implementing payment for ecosystem services in the Philippines.

### Learnings

- It may be easier for governments to replicate green infrastructure (for example, mangrove reforestation). Social mobilisation for building with nature approaches is more difficult to replicate.
- The value proposition of private sector engagement in IWRM projects has yet to be evident, although water users/private sector have a clear responsibility in water allocation.
- Long-term cooperation, Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), and project funding facilitate water authority support.

Want to know more about our programme?

Go to our website: [english.rvo.nl/subsidies-financing/fdw](https://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-financing/fdw) or check *A decade of RVO management*