

Editorial

Dear colleagues

It is with great pleasure that we present edition 43 of the SDC Water News, focusing on water related projects and programmes at the global level. With this, our "Grand Tour around the globe" completes a cycle, after having published issues focusing on [Latin America and the Caribbean](#), [Africa](#), [Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#), the [MENA region](#) and the [rest of Asia](#). As usual, the newsletter provides you with short glimpses on selected projects and programmes, along with contacts and links for further reading. We now also included a section on resources, which is only a highlight of recently published documents. For the full range of resources, please refer to the [respective site on ShareWeb](#), and keep up with sector news through our [news site](#).

The past few months have been extraordinary, in many regards. As we have been witnessing across the world, weak water and sanitation systems aggravate the COVID-19 crisis, which in turn imposes extraordinary pressures on already stretched water and sanitation systems. COVID-19 has exposed existing vulnerabilities and inequalities in our world. In a time of global health pandemic, it is even more urgent that resilient water and sanitation systems are accessible and affordable to everyone. The COVID-19 pandemic adds to existing inequalities. It is with this in mind that Switzerland endorsed the recent [call to action](#) for water and sanitation.

In addition, conflicts over the use of natural resources are on the increase. Cities and municipalities play a key role in overcoming these challenges. There is continuous rise in demand of water globally whereas the amount of water available remains limited and pollution levels are increasing. This situation is being exacerbated by climate change. Equitable access to water, sanitation and hygiene is also a key factor in public health and an important element in the prevention and control of all infectious diseases including COVID-19. Switzerland is aware

of this global issue. On 29 May 2020 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, Switzerland has therefore called for **joint efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the global water crisis**, as they all are transboundary, global and have implications on nearly every aspect of the 2030 Agenda.



Global communication on water, climate and COVID-19

In this newsletter, you can learn about tangible examples of how SDC addresses these challenges – from the landmark initiative on Blue Peace to cooperate water stewardship in Latin America (SuizAgua) and the support to the World Bank's Global Water Security and Sanitation Partnership or to global networks like SWA and RWSN, just to name a few examples.

We would like to thank everybody who contributed to this edition of the SDC Water News and wish you a happy reading.

[Daniel Maselli](#), RésEAU Focal Point

[Matthias Saladin](#), Editor RésEAU newsletter

Updates

Projects and Programmes

The Blue Peace Index

Duration: 2019 – 2023

Budget: CHF 769,000 (57% covered by SDC)

The [Blue Peace Index](#), developed by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) with the SDC and a large panel of experts, is built across five pillars of evaluation: (1) Policy and legal frameworks, (2) Institutional arrangements and participation, (3) Water management instruments, (4) Infrastructure and financing, and (5) Cooperation. The Index has many uses:

- assessing the level of good governance in the water management of a river basin, and monitoring it over time;
- identifying weaknesses and strengths, to balancing actions for improvement between those that deliver quick visible results and the more long-term interventions for systemic change;
- raising awareness and understanding about the elements and contextual factors for good regional water management;
- helping to guide smart and targeted investments in the region.

The inaugural 2019 index was applied to five river basins at different levels of development in different

parts of the world: Amazon, Mekong, Sava, Senegal, and Tigris-Euphrates. It has gained strong interest from different parties, such as a student, who applied the Blue Peace Index on the [Colorado](#) and Columbia rivers in 2019.

The application of the index to additional river basins is underway. If you are interested in applying the index to your own work and/or river basin, please reach out to [Stephanie Piers de Raveschoot](#).



Example of a river basin rating

For more information, contact [Stephanie Piers de Raveschoot](#) of the Global Programme Water

Transboundary Water Governance for Sustainable Development and Blue Peace

Duration: 2019 – 2021

Budget: USD 1.65 million (3 years)

The impacts of COVID-19 are being felt around the world and worsening existing challenges, including poverty, economic downturn, food and energy insecurity and political instability. Resilience at all scales requires everyone to have safe water, adequate sanitation and hygiene. This in turn depends on water resources that are dependable, accessible and good quality.

"Working together for better and more sustainable water management is as important in times of pandemic as it is in times of drought. In fact, cooperation around water is an excellent tool for resilience!"

Quote from a representative of the Ministry of Water in Senegal at a recent virtual online conference, Geneva, 26 May 2020

60% of global freshwater flow comes from transboundary basins. To improve the management of

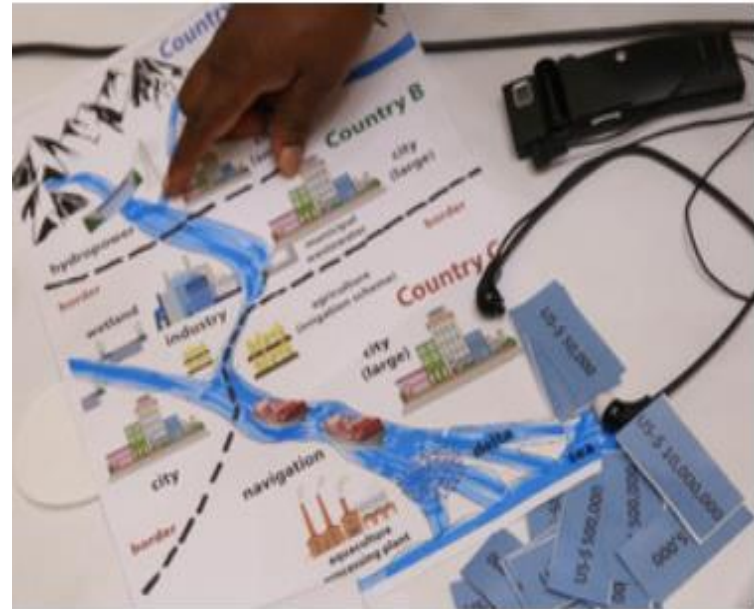
these, several activities and tools have been developed under the United Nations Transboundary Water Convention, supported by SDC's Global Programme Water. These support resource recovery and pollution prevention efforts in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Activities include:

1. capacity building on monitoring and effective information exchange;
2. Assessing options to enhance access to financing for transboundary water cooperation.

One example of how the project addresses the second aspect is by creating publicly available information and by increasing awareness and capacity on why financing access to water and sanitation and transboundary water cooperation are increasingly important to prevent future crises. However, crises are likely to affect the availability of financial resources to support transboundary water cooperation processes.

Currently, the Water Convention is preparing a background study on financing transboundary water cooperation. When complete, they will organize a global workshop on this topic, jointly with international financial institutions like UNCDF and GEF. Switzerland (through the GPW) is actively involved in this working group, together with Senegal and The Netherlands.

The Water Convention is open for new signatories. Senegal and Chad became new state parties in 2018/2019 and other African countries are in the process of joining, including Ghana.



60% of global freshwater flow comes from transboundary basins
© SDCs GPW

For more information, please visit this [website](#), this [factsheet](#) or contact [Isabella Pagotto](#) of the Global Programme Water

The World Bank's Global Water Security and Sanitation Partnership: Joint efforts to ensure water supply, sanitation and hygiene in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

Duration: 2017 – 2020/2021

Budget: USD 2 million per year

Switzerland, as a major supporter of the Sustainable Development Goal 6 for water and sanitation, contributes to the World Bank's [Global Water Security & Sanitation Partnership \(GWSP\)](#). Since its launch in 2017, the water trust fund has attracted many donors, including the bilateral agencies from the USA, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, The Netherlands, the UK, Australia, Switzerland, plus the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The World Bank immediately reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic and programmes adaptations were made, since water and sanitation play a central role, especially for preventing the spread of the disease.

For washing hands, enough water of acceptable quality is a key requirement. However, it is often not available in peri-urban and rural areas of low and middle-income countries.

Water affects all four areas of the World Bank support package:

1. Ensuring water, sanitation and hygiene in hospitals;
2. Emergency supply for vulnerable population groups without access to water,
3. Ensuring that water suppliers/utilities continue to function during the pandemic or prevent supply interruptions,
4. Support to the local private sector / SMEs so that they can offer fast and flexible solutions for water supply, sanitation and hygiene easily.

Equally, the World Bank is committed to maintaining the supply chains with materials and products that are necessary for wastewater treatment, irrigation in food production. An example of how this may look in practice has been documented for the case of Bangladesh [here](#).



Government of Bangladesh's Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) (© World Bank)

For more information, please visit this [website](#) or contact [Isabella Pagotto](#) of the Global Programme Water

SDC's Corporate Water Stewardship Programme in Latin America "El Agua Nos Une – SuizAgua América Latina"

Duration: 2016 – 2020

Budget: CHF 2 million

This project seeks to influence water governance in five countries - Colombia, Peru, Chile, Mexico and Brazil - through four lines of actions:

1. Corporate water stewardship;
2. Community of Practice on water management;
3. Strengthening instruments of Public Policy; and
4. Investing in ecosystem services.

The project operates as a public-private partnership, identifying and tackling water related risks through the evaluation and reduction of the water footprint in production processes. So far, fifty-one companies have been investing in improvements to their own efficiency in use, treatment and reuse of water.



Panel discussion at a regional event in Colombia in 2019

For more information, please contact [Kenneth Peralta](#) or [Lea Valauta Naamneh](#) of the Global Programme Water

Transboundary Water Governance: Foundations of International Water Security

Duration: 2019 – 2021

Budget: CHF 6.66 million (81% covered by SDC)

The BRIDGE (Building River Dialogue and Governance) programme works by supporting the capacities of countries sharing river or lake basins to implement effective water management arrangements through a shared vision, benefit-sharing principles and transparent and coherent institutional frameworks.

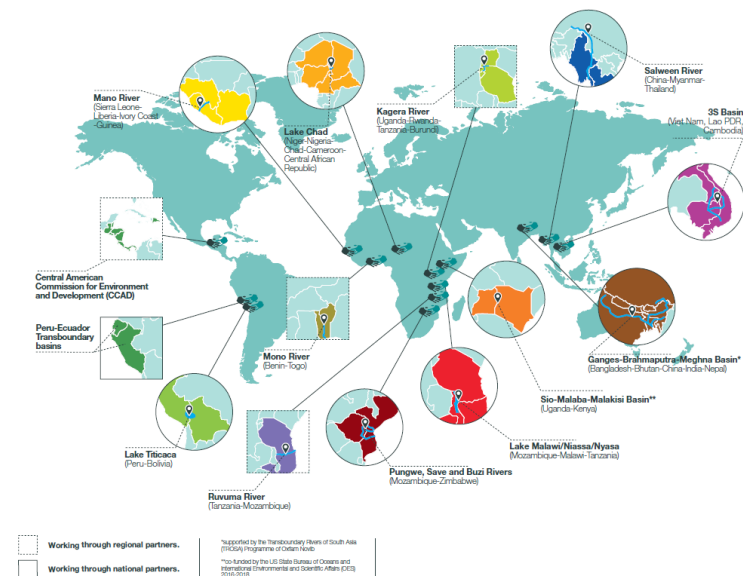
Implemented by IUCN and regional partners, BRIDGE works at the interface of hydro-diplomacy and local governance to promote new approaches in transboundary water management by:

- Facilitating cooperation;
- Strengthening inter-governmental capacities; and
- Creating spaces for dialogue and agreements.

BRIDGE works from national to international levels to support cooperation between stakeholders and States for good water management. The programme focuses on supporting stakeholders to reduce tensions and improve cooperation over shared water resources. In doing so, reducing the potential for conflicts through enhanced regional cooperation.

Launched in 2011, the programme has expanded its work from nine to fourteen transboundary basins across Asia, Latin America and Africa. Linkages are made from the river basin to the regional entities (such as the Regional economic communities of Africa) to share and use knowledge and lessons generated throughout the regions.

BRIDGE-Building River Dialogue and Governance Areas of Work 2019-2021



Areas of Work of the BRIDGE Programme 2019-2021

For more information, contact [Stephanie Piers de Raveschoot](#) of the Global Programme Water

Human Rights to Water and Sanitation - Water Security for Human Health - Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Platform in Geneva

Duration: 2020 – 2022 (current phase)

Budget: CHF 1.5 million

The aim of SWA is to provide water, sanitation and hygiene for everyone on a long-term basis, as decision-makers bring about local changes through increased political will, better use of funds and targeting of vulnerable population groups.

SWA brings governments and other partners together to commit to a common vision, share experiences, identify gaps, and search for solutions that have been tested and supported by reliable data.

Water has the potential for conflict between different users of water - this conflict potential is particularly evident in times of pandemics. Since the

outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, SWA has organized virtual seminars on COVID-19 and provided educational work. This culminated in a global call for action in May 2020, which was signed by heads of government and ministers including Switzerland, representatives of the private sector, civil society, and international organizations.

This contribution is a unique opportunity to promote resilient water, sanitation and hygiene systems as a fundamental determinant of health and to maintain Switzerland's strong position in the WASH sector.

The opening of an SWA operational office in Geneva will enrich this growing community of global water players and enable SWA to work more closely with key human rights and public health actors based in Geneva.



Panel discussion at the global meeting of WASH sector ministers in Costa Rica, April 2019 (© SWA)

For more information, please visit this [website](#) or contact [Nadia Benani](#) of the Global Programme Water

Swiss Water and Sanitation Consortium (SWSC) – eight Swiss NGOs are joining forces for greater impact

Duration: April 2020 – September 2023

Budget: CHF 14.8 million (phase 3)

Organisations: Caritas Switzerland, Fastenopfer, HEKS/EPER, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Solidar, Swissaid, Swiss Red Cross and Terre des hommes

Outputs: Improved WASH access for 45,000 pupils (127 schools) and 38 health care facilities covering 380,000 patients

Created in 2011, the SWSC brings together eight Swiss organizations implementing jointly a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programme in Africa and South Asia. Besides providing access to WASH services to over 850,000 people in communities, 160,000 students in schools, and 1.6 million patients in health care facilities, it also proved successful in experience-sharing and learning, as well as strengthening the Swiss profile in advocacy and policy dialogue. The development of the [Blue Schools kit](#) was a major achievement of the Consortium and demonstrates how joining forces can yield greater impact.

After completing two successful phases, Phase 3 has just been launched, with WASH in institutions as an

entry point to increase water and sanitation coverage. The focus is on rolling out SWSC's signature approaches (Blue Schools and WASH in Health Care Facilities) and to build solid evidence of their effectiveness for further advocacy.



A child washing his hands in a Blue School in Benin (EPECS project, Helvetas)

For more information, please check [this website](#) or contact [Pierre Kistler](#) of the Global Programme Water, or [Daya Moser](#) of the SWC

Spotlight on Humanitarian Aid

The mandate of Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SHA) is to save lives and alleviate suffering. It is active in protecting the interests of vulnerable population groups before, during, and after periods of conflicts, crises, or natural disasters. Water and Sanitation is one of four thematic priorities of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid.

The SHA contributes to bridging the gap between humanitarian and development interventions by taking on a long-term view on their planning and operations. The SHA often works closely together with other Divisions of the SDC and sometime they jointly implement or support projects. An example of such direct cooperation in water is a project to [scale up a comprehensive model for rural water and sanitation for promoting peace in Colombia](#), which is co-financed by SDC's Global Programme Water. Other examples of work carried out recently include

a project to support the [emergency relief efforts in Mozambique in the aftermath of cyclone Idai](#), or the WASH support for [Rohingya Refugees and vulnerable local communities in Cox's Bazar](#).

The number of projects implemented by the SHA is high, they are varied and target many countries. As can be seen from the following selection of initiatives, programmes and projects, Humanitarian Aid is not only about getting safe drinking water to refugees (see [this video](#) for some personal testimonials) – it is about a comprehensive yet flexible and targeted approach to save lives and alleviate suffering in each situation, from rapid response to interventions in complex disasters and fragile contexts.

For more information, contact [Marc-André Bünzli](#) Head WASH Unit of SHA at SDC's Head Office in Berne

Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SHA) WASH Expert Group

The work of the specialists of the Water and Environmental Sanitation Expert Group includes groundwater abstraction and setting up or rehabilitating systems for the treatment, storage and distribution of water. They also deal with wastewater treatment and water quality testing. After a disaster, they conduct evaluations and take the necessary emergency measures in collaboration with the authorities of the affected country and partner organisations. An additional priority for the group is to train local staff. Members of this expert group have professional training and experience in the field of civil engineering, hydrogeology, chemistry, biology, physics and the environment.



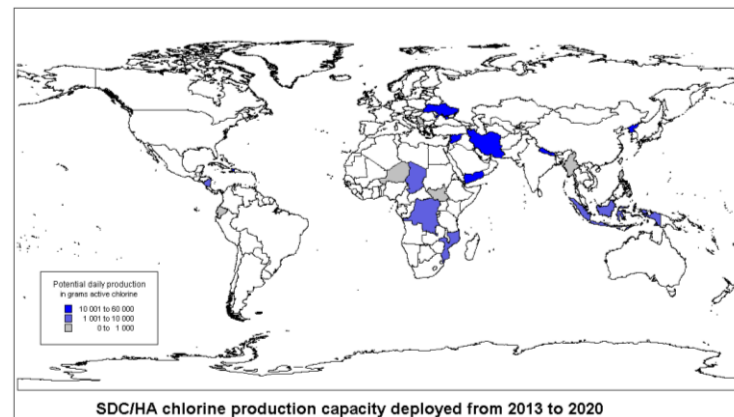
Training on faecal sludge: field laboratory in Uganda, a joint venture of SHA, [Eawag](#), and the [Austrian Red Cross](#)

Long-term perspective: Strengthening capacities for chlorine production

Water quality is a key consideration, not only in emergency settings but also in complex crises or in fragile contexts. In this regard, the local production of chlorine is a very important aspect. Depending on each specific situation a different technology and approach is required. Between 2013 and 2020, Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SHA) supported local actors to increase capacities for chlorine production.

One example is the support to Ukrainian authorities on both sides of the frontline. Setting up external supply chains of water treatment chemicals in that context proved difficult (SHA transported more than 12,000 tons of chemicals since 2015), and consequently, local production capacities were strengthened. Overall, [110 devices for the local production of chlorine solutions were delivered](#) so far, which are

now being used to treat drinking water for more than 400,000 people on a daily basis.



Map of countries where local chlorine production has been strengthened between 2013 and 2020.

Direct Action: providing expertise in complex settings

Direct Actions are projects where SHA directly supports local actors. Examples of Direct Actions include:

- In the People's Republic of North Korea, where SHA [built water systems](#), introduced a new methodology to protect groundwater sources and innovative ways of addressing sanitation concerns.
- In Lebanon, since 2016, SHA [provides support to the Bekaa Water Establishment](#) to automate the Operation and Management of water and sanitation services for a population of 500,000 locals and 400,000 refugees.
- In Bangladesh, a [WASH Technical Resource Unit](#) created in 2019 provided training and state-of-the-art know-how in sanitation to support the Department of Public Health Engineering in charge of local population and a million Rohingya refugees.
- In Mozambique, building on the 2019 Rapid Response, [thousands of wells are being](#)

[rehabilitated by local partners](#) with a technical backstopping by SHA experts.



Water pumps funded by SA save lives and contribute to better health © SDC

For more information, contact [Marc-André Bünzli](#), Head WASH Unit of SHA at SDC's Head office in Berne

Spotlight on Water Pollution

New Water Pollution Programme launched

The Global Programme Water (GPW) recently launched a new water pollution programme focusing on improving the health and environment of populations exposed to water pollution. It adopts a multi-stakeholder approach, combining the knowledge and power of the public and private sectors, citizens, and academia. The programme also supports polluti-

ing industries along the supply chains of global brands to understand and address pollution-related risks. The current projects linked to the new water pollution programme are introduced below.

For more information, contact [Andreas Steiner](#) of the Global Programme Water (GPW)

World Water Quality Alliance (WWQA)

Duration: 11.2019 – 10.2023

SDC Budget: USD 1.8 million.

Implementing Partner: UN Environment

The World Water Quality Alliance (WWQA) was [launched in September 2019](#) as a voluntary and flexible global multi-stakeholder network that advocates for the central role of freshwater quality in achieving prosperity and sustainability. It explores and communicates water quality risks across scales and contexts, and identifies ways to maintain and restore ecosystems for better human health and



well-being. So far, more than 80 organisations worldwide have joined the WWQA and contributed to its products and services.

For more information, contact [Andreas Steiner](#) of the Global Programme Water (GPW)

Small-Medium-Large (SML): Water Stewardship in the Greater Mekong Region

Duration: 11.2019 – 10.2023

SDC Budget: USD 1.8 million

Implementing Partners: WWF Myanmar, Vietnam & Greater Mekong

The project aims to reduce pollution and improve water and energy management of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Greater Mekong Region that are active in the production of clothing (Vietnam) and food & beverages (Myanmar).

It will help SMEs who share common water resources to address shared water risks through more informed production and investment decisions. It will also support their resource management strategies to gain operational efficiency and minimize external resource dependency.

This will involve bringing the business community closer to public sector decision-makers at both the regional and national levels to allow sound water

management and links between water and other emerging challenges to be governed through a transboundary perspective.



Vietnam is among the world's top five exporters of apparel and textiles, leaving a significant environmental footprint on local ecosystems and people (© WWF Vietnam)

For more information, contact [Andreas Steiner](#) of the Global Programme Water (GPW)

Tackling apparel sector pollution through engaging SMEs in water stewardship

Duration: 01.2020 – 12.2022

SDC Budget: £1.6 million (out of £3.3 million)

Implementing Partners: Consortium Alliance for Water Stewardship / Water Witness International / Aid by Trade Foundation / CDP / Solidaridad Ethiopia

This project will equip the Ethiopian clothing industry with the skills to assess and tackle the water-related challenges they face, and contribute to solutions, via application of the 'AWS Standard'. It will work along the whole value chain (from cotton growers to textile producers and garment manufacturers) to generate replicable actions and evidence on the benefits of water stewardship. This will be used to mobilise support for better policies, regulation and investments across the Ethiopian clothing sector.

Furthermore, the project will coordinate with relevant national and global stakeholders to maximise impact. In particular, working with Multi-National Corporations so that they provide leadership and support to suppliers in their supply chains to tackle water-related challenges faced by SMEs.



Seed cotton harvesting by small scale farmer in Dansha District, Ethiopia © Mekdes Yibel, Solidaridad

For more information, contact [Andreas Steiner](#) of the Global Programme Water (GPW)

Responsible Antibiotics Manufacturing Platform (RAMP)

Duration: 05.2020 – 12.2020 (Inception phase)

SDC Budget: CHF 200,000 (out of CHF 400,000)

Implementing Partners: Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Shawview Consulting

RAMP is a multi-stakeholder collaboration platform with the vision that by 2030, the release of antibiotics to the environment from manufacturing is minimized, along with broader sustainability gains. The aim is to incentivise pioneers in this sector to provide access to antibiotics that have been manufactured in a manner that does not promote antimicrobial resistance or harm the environment.



Untreated industrial wastewater pollutes the Naala River downstream of the Patancheru Industrial Area, Hyderabad, India. © Nicolai Schaaf, SIWI

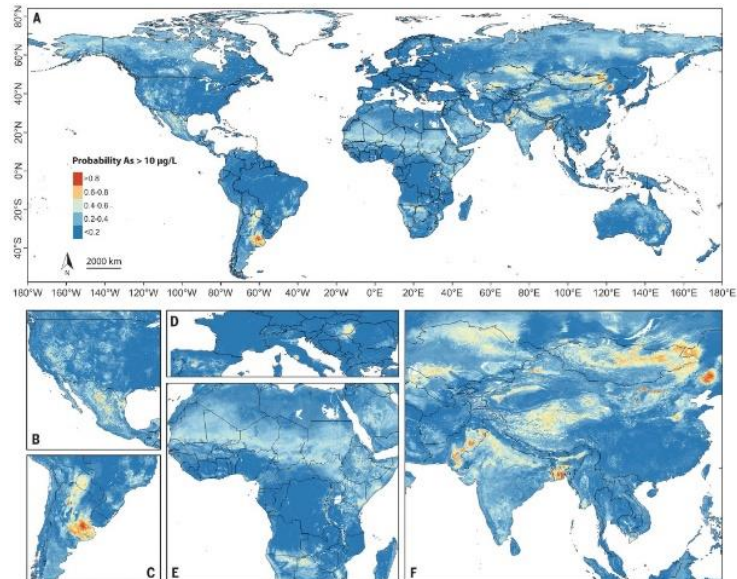
For more information, contact [Andreas Steiner](#) of the Global Programme Water (GPW)

Recent Resources

Note from the Editor: Please consider that this is just a small selection of recently published resources related to global projects and programmes of SDC. For a more comprehensive overview of resources, please refer to the [resources page on the ShareWeb](#).

Risk modelling of arsenic in Groundwater

A database and a map of global risk modelling of arsenic in groundwater, developed by EAWAG's [Groundwater Assessment Platform \(GAP\)](#) has now been finalised. The release was published in [ScienceNews](#) and has been taken up by other media as well.

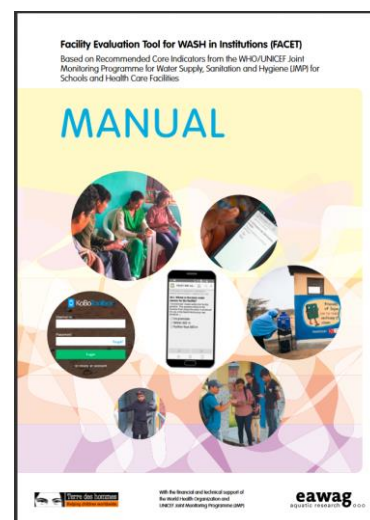


Map of the global risks of groundwater contamination (© Eawag)

For more information, please contact [Stephanie Piers de Raveschoot](#) at Global Programme Water.

Facility Evaluation Tool for WASH in Institutions

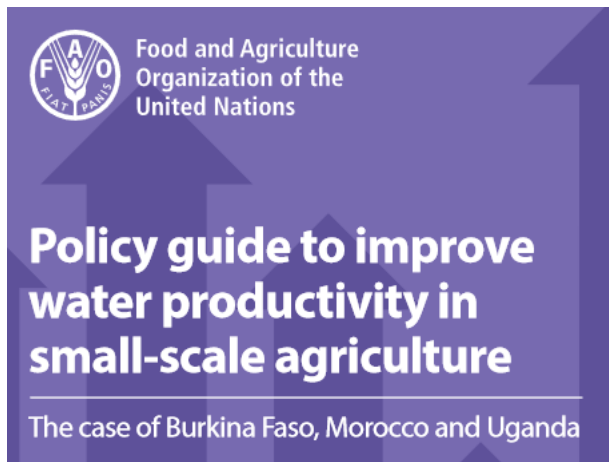
The Facility Evaluation Tool for WASH in Institutions (FACET), jointly developed by Terre des hommes, Eawag and CartONG with support from the UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, is based on globally recognised indicators and suitable across the continuum of humanitarian and development interventions. It offers a complete package for an entire monitoring project cycle.



Title page of the FACET manual

For more information, please visit this page [here](#) or contact [Stephanie Piers de Raveschoot](#) at Global Programme Water.

Agricultural Water Efficiency and Productivity in Africa: Conclusions and guides



Title page of one of the policy guides

FAO led a five-year project on water use efficiency in Morocco, Uganda and Burkina Faso. The final documents with conclusions of this 5-year project benefitting from a GPW contribution are available here:

Project factsheet:

[Strengthening Agricultural Water Efficiency and Productivity](#)

Key results and products:

[Policy guide to improve water productivity in small-scale agriculture](#)

[Field guide to improve crop water productivity in small-scale agriculture](#)

[Field guide to improve water use efficiency in small-scale agriculture](#)

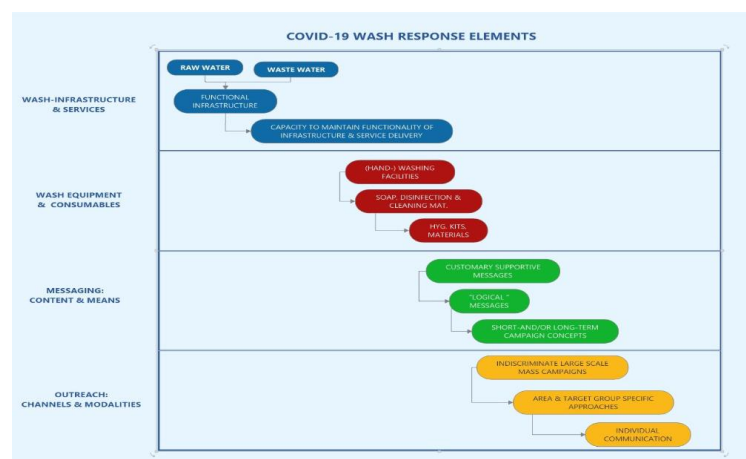
[Policy guide to improve water use efficiency in small-scale agriculture](#)

For more information, please visit this page [here](#) and contact [Stephanie Piers de Raveschoot](#) at the Global Programme Water.

SDC Working Aid COVID-19 response for the WASH sector

The Expert Group on WASH (Swiss Humanitarian Aid, SHA) and the Global Programme Water (Global Cooperation) compiled the following Working Aid that includes scoping guidance tables. The Working Aid helps to ask the right questions related to various aspects of WASH:

- WASH hardware and infrastructure
- WASH equipment, consumables and commodities
- WASH messaging: means and content, and
- WASH message outreach: channels and modalities.





Screen shot of the scoping guidance table

For more information, please visit [this page](#) and contact [Daniel Maselli](#) at Global Programme Water

Evaluations of SDC’s Corporate Water Stewardship Programme in Latin America

An [external evaluation](#) of the Global Programme El Agua nos Une - SuizAgua (2016-2020) covering the five countries Colombia, Peru, Chile, Brazil and Mexico has been finalized. The evaluation is based on the OECD guidelines, and looked at the following four lines of action: i) Corporate Water Stewardship in five countries, ii) Community of Practice on water management in Latin America, iii) strengthening instruments of Public Policy in Colombia, iv) investment on eco-systemic services in Colombia: “miPáramo”.

Apart from the overall evaluation, also the evaluations at the level of each country are available ([Mexico](#), [Colombia](#), [Peru](#), [Chile](#), and [Brazil](#)).

CRITERIA	CORPORATE WATER STEWARDSHIP	COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE	PUBLIC POLICY INSTRUMENTS	miPáramo	PROJECTS' TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE
Pertinence	⊕ 4,88	⊕⊕ 5	⊕⊕⊕ 5	⊕ 4,71	⊕ 4,96
Impact	⊕ 4,31	⊕ 4	⊕⊕⊕ 5	⊕ 4,71	⊕ 4,5
Efficiency	⊕ 4,58	⊕ 4	⊕ 4	⊕⊕⊕ 5	⊕ 4,52
Effectiveness	⊕ 4,36	⊕ 4	⊕ 4,5	⊕ 4,57	⊕ 4,31
Sustainability	⊕ 4	⊕ 4	⊕ 4	⊕ 4,71	⊕ 4,18
					

Screen shot: Summary table of the results of the evaluation

For more information, please check this [factsheet](#) or contact [Diana Rojas](#) (SDC Colombia) or [Lea Valaulta](#) (Global Programme Water)

Spotlight on Youth

Projects and Programmes

RWSN’s Mentoring Programme

As part of the long-term collaboration between SDC and the Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN), the network launched a Young Professional Engagement Strategy in mid-2018, which has four pillars:

1. Community Building: an online community has been built from scratch to nearly 600 members in 91 countries who are actively supporting each other and sharing ideas and opportunities. If you are under 35, you can join here: https://dgroups.org/rwsn/rwsn_yrwp
2. Mentoring: A stand-out success has been the RWSN’s [mentoring programme](#). In 2019, there were over 400 participants and a similar number are participating this year. SDC’s financial support has been complemented with sponsorship by World Vision International. While not open at the moment, for future rounds women in mid-career (30+) and senior positions who would be interested in mentoring early-career (or mid-career) women will be highly welcome. Please contact the RWSN Sec-



Benson Kandeh, winner of the 2019 Young Professionals competition of the RWSN, with RWSN Young Professional Kenneth Alfaro Alvarado at SIWI 2019 in Stockholm

retariat if interested. To get an idea of what it is about watch the recording [of this webinar](#) or [this video](#).

3. Young Professionals representation and voice: last year, 11 of the 15 RWSN webinars had at least one young professional as a speaker, and a similar proportion is targeted in 2020. The RWSN is always looking for engaged, young speakers for topics on rural water and rural WASH. The RWSN Director, Sean Furey, has made his contribution to judging this year's [Ton Schouten Award for WASH Storytelling](#). Ton was the Chair of RWSN when he unexpectedly passed away in 2016.
4. Young Professionals events: Last year the RWSN ran an open Young Professional competition and the winner, Benson Kandeh from Sierra Leone, was supported to attend the 2019 World Water Week in Stockholm. You can follow him on twitter @KandehBenson to see how he is developing and marketing low-cost rural water and hygiene solutions to tackle COVID-19, among others.

If you would like to know more about any of these issues, and other young professional partnerships and activities that the RWSN is involved with, please contact [Meleesa Naughton](#) of the RWSN secretariat.

Opportunities

Swiss Water Partnership Youth

[SWP Youth](#) is a Swiss initiative for and by young people and works towards leveraging water for development. Under the umbrella of the Swiss Water Partnership's [Youth Strategy](#) in collaboration with SDC, it provides several opportunities for young and senior water people:

- 1) **Join an active community:** We are inviting young water professionals, students and future water leaders below 31 years to shape the global youth water movement. Start by [joining SWP Youth here](#).
- 2) **Become a mentor:** As part of the [Matura Mentoring Initiative](#) you can offer your expertise and a water-related topic to students at Swiss high schools for their graduation work. You can sign up [here](#).
- 3) **Apply with your youth water project:** Young people between 15 – 31 years are invited to submit their innovative project ideas related to water for development. They can apply [here](#) by 15 July 2020 and get a seed grant of up to 1,000 CHF.
- 4) **Engage with current youth-led initiatives:** For example, the *Water Youth Festival* aims at raising awareness among young people through water street art, movie screenings and creative activities; and the *Networkshops* aim at offering an exchange space for senior and young water professionals.

- 5) **Learn about youth research innovations:** For the outstanding research on "First Evidence of Microplastics in the Waters of the Upper Engadine in Switzerland", Anna Sidonia Marugg has been granted the Swiss Junior Water Prize 2020. Some of the microplastics in alpine water systems, are alarmingly close to the water springs. See her project and excellent elevator pitch [here](#).



SWP Youth invites proposals for

Youth Water Projects

seed grants for innovative ideas on water for development



Opportunity with SWP Youth

For more information you can visit the [website](#) or contact the [SWP Youth Management Committee](#) and [Sandra Fürst](#) at Swiss Water Partnership.

Who's Who

Interview with Nadine Fragnière (Global Programme Water)

Can you tell us a few words about yourself and your background?

I come from the canton of Wallis in Switzerland and grew up in Veysonnaz, a small ski station in the heart of Europe's water tower, the Alps. From an early age, I was aware of the highly politicized conflicting interests linked to water resources (environmental vs. economical, for instance). I have a BA in Political Science (Geneva) and an MA in Water Science, Policy and Management (Oxford).

In August 2019, you were at the Stockholm World Water Week (SWWW), where you informed the RésEAU members about sessions, discussions, and insights. How would you describe this experience from a personal point of view?

It was the first time I attended such an event. It was a real marathon beginning in the morning attending conferences, going to side events such as operational meetings and roundtables with partners, and finally ending the day with receptions or social events – not to forget the RésEAU chronicles that I usually prepared in my bed in the early morning. Despite the lack of proper sleep, it was an extremely enriching experience. My brain was constantly active, processing so many different impressions that I gathered during conferences or private discussion with people I met.

Professionally, what was the most exciting, and what was the most surprising for you at the SWWW?

Despite the various topics presented in conferences, I was surprised to observe a quite clear distinction between technical, scientific and social topics. I had the impression, that when presentations were more linked with social and political topics, the evidence was somehow lacking while when presentations focused on science, then the societal implications were quasi-absent from the discussion.

Can you tell us about one specific insight you gathered?

Apart from the position statements of people, attitudes and personal opinions played an important



Impression from Stockholm World Water Week 2019, where the team spirit is key (Nadine at the bottom right)

role in the debate. I have never thought that the role and personality of individuals within institutions would play such a crucial role and I will definitely not underestimate it in the future. Alongside thematic knowledge, people skills are crucial in this work to really listen to people and to create constructive partnerships by keeping away negative prejudices linked to previous experiences.

For other people early in their professional career, what do you recommend for future SWWWs?

Definitely apply to be a young reporter with the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)! Even more than being created for organizations and donors, this week is celebrating youth and young professionals. It is a great opportunity to find study programmes, internship opportunities and connect with organisations involved in the water sector. Outside the knowledge that you will acquire, it is the human experience - within your team and with the numerous people you will meet there - that is at the heart of this event.

Remark from the editor: This interview was carried out in November 2019.