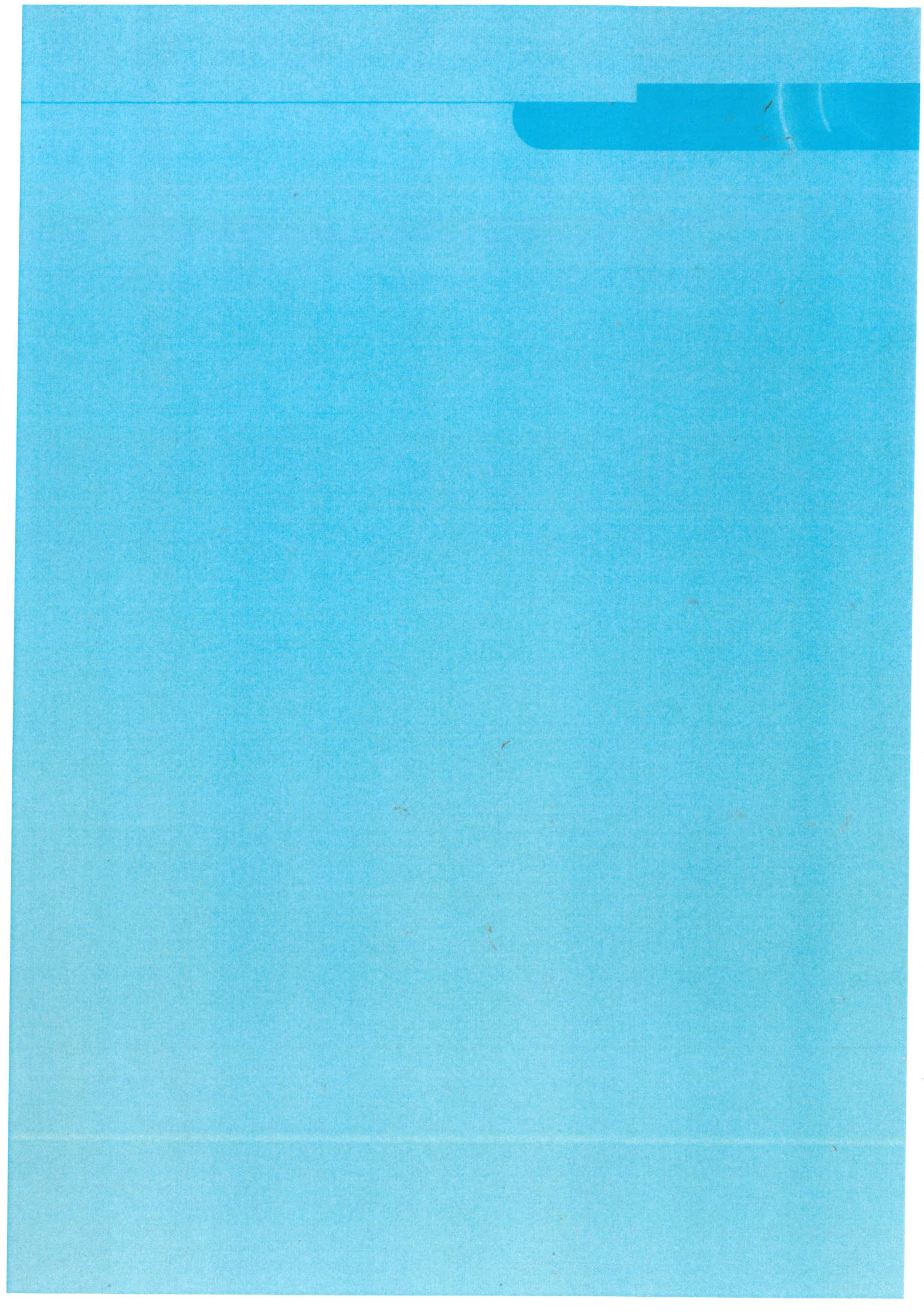


1998

Annual Report

The Challenges Continue



Contents

The Challenges Continue	2
IRC in 1998	4
Supporting Sector Innovation	6
Water Supply	6
Sanitation and Hygiene	8
Institutional Development	10
Improving Access to and Use of Sector Information	13
Advocacy	13
Documentation and Information Services	14
IRC and the Internet	15
Publications	16
Training Activities	17
Advisory Services	18
Strengthening Partnerships	19
Partners in the South	20
International Partners	21
Partners Close to Home	22
General Information	23
Finance	23
Staff	23



The Challenges Continue

In 1998 the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre resolutely continued its process of change and strengthened its linkages with its partners world-wide, to improve its support to the continuous challenge of providing better water and sanitation services to the world population, particularly the poor. Today's changing political environment requires a dynamic response. With shifting emphasis to the broader challenge of water resources management it appears that interest for the water and sanitation sector is diminishing in most ESAs, while the problems are far from being solved. With over 1.2 billion people without safe water supply and close to 3 billion lacking adequate sanitation, it is essential that sector funding is sustained and that these resources are used more efficiently and effectively.

The course of action outlined in IRC's business plan for the period 1997-2001 provided clear guidance for new developments within the organization. It prioritizes capacity building, electronic information exchange, and strengthening partnerships with organizations in the South and in the North. An important effort was made to implement the revised organizational structure. Function descriptions were established in close consultation with the staff and the Works Council and staff were formally assigned to their new positions. At the end of the year steps were being taken to recruit two individuals to fill vacant programme staff positions. The organizational adjustments and the continuing automation process also implied a shift in staff composition, reducing the number of administrative staff and increasing the number of programme staff. A new management team was formed, allowing different faces to guide IRC's activities. To meet the new challenges staff was encouraged to pursue

Water: vital for life and development



training activities. This included management training for the programme staff as well as individual training.

In 1998 a major challenge has been to come to grips with electronic information exchange. A significant step has been made in this direction with the recruitment of a new web master, who has redesigned and expanded IRC's Internet site, and a contractual arrangement with the Collaborative Council to jointly produce an electronic news service for the sector. While this electronic information has been kept simple to facilitate access for those with less advanced equipment, IRC will continue to provide hard copy information to serve the many people not having access to electronic information networks.

With great commitment from all involved, IRC has made it through another year of changes, and more challenges lie ahead in 1999. One of the most important decisions taken in 1998 was to leave the Hague after nearly 15 years and move to Delft, where offices will be shared with the International Institute for Infrastructural, Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering (IHE), one of IRC's long-term partners. Next to shared housing, IHE and IRC have agreed to share their information bases and further strengthen collaboration. This opens up the possibility to develop a comprehensive information centre spanning water resources, water supply and environmental sanitation. The complementarity of the two organizations and the presence of many students from the South at IHE will offer a great opportunity to enhance the impact of IRC's work.

The turn of events in 1998 has reconfirmed the interest of the ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, and Foreign Affairs in the work of IRC, and the Governing Board and staff are grateful for their long-term commitment. This commitment, together with the dedication of the staff, provides an essential basis for the future success of the organization.

Joop B. Hoekman
Chairman, IRC Governing Board

IRC in 1998

The problems facing the water and sanitation sector today are perhaps even more severe than they were last year.

Whereas there are a number of commendable improvements, progress seems slow and attention appears to be shifting to other challenges including water resources management, education and primary health care. Water problems, however, are far from being solved, and as Ismail Serageldin, Chairman of the World Water Commission and Vice President of the World Bank states, "...there is a need to get the message out that local water problems quickly become regional and international concerns." An important question thus becomes how to cater for the major efforts that are still needed to keep ahead of the pace of the impending water crisis, demands on resources, urbanization, and mounting sanitation problems. The poor are most affected, because in the past a large proportion of sector funds were channeled to the better-off living in the urban areas. With the current trend towards privatization, private enterprises will focus on the same group, so as to ensure a good return on investments. As a result the poor in rural and peri-urban areas will remain unserved, presenting a clear challenge for governments: how to best redirect funds to basic social services for the urban and rural poor, while at the same time changing their role from provider to facilitator. In doing so, special emphasis will have to be placed on sanitation, which is lagging far behind.

There is a big challenge in supporting the decentralization process that is ongoing in many countries and in ensuring that sector interventions become more effective and efficient. This calls for capacity building and information sharing, two key areas of IRC's

programme. Our emphasis is very much on creating a learning environment where partners in the South can establish their own strategies and approaches that match their unique situation and which puts them in the driver's seat. It is very encouraging to see that several of our partners are becoming active not only in their own country, but also in their region. They hereby support the decentralization process and make South-South collaboration a reality.

In view of the importance of information sharing IRC stepped up its efforts in electronic information exchange. The Water Newsletter was given a new impulse by bundling efforts with the Collaborative Council and publishing it under the name of SOURCE Bulletin, both in hard copy and electronic format. A weekly news service on Internet and e-mail called SOURCE Water and Sanitation Weekly is also provided. IRC's web page provides an important vehicle for sector information dissemination and draws an increasing number of interested visitors.

Research and development work kept a focus on community-based activities and resource centre development.

New ground was broken in sector programme development through support work in Mexico and in urban areas in Africa, primarily focusing on the role of small-scale service providers in urban water supply and sanitation.

This account of IRC's work gives an indication of how the centre has tried to make a difference in 1998. The report contains a selection of activities that represents the types of programmes and projects in which IRC has been involved. It reflects the centre's major policy objectives as set out in its business plan and presents some of the wealth of knowledge and information IRC and its partners have accumulated over the years.



Partners in development

Supporting Sector Innovation

IRC's knowledge development and innovation activities are divided into three areas: water supply, sanitation and hygiene, and institutional development. The project teams in the different areas share ideas, and together with partners develop new project proposals for research, publications or training. These proposed research and development activities will generate new insights in key areas in the sector.

Water Supply

Community management was a leading theme in IRC's work in 1998. At the heart of this work are the experiences of the local research teams in the participatory action research project 'The Role of Communities in the Management of Improved Rural Water Supplies in Developing Countries'. These teams have made important contributions to the adoption of a participatory approach to the management of water supply and sanitation. The project findings show that it is crucial to enhance the management capacity of the communities and help them to take full care of their systems. But this takes time, care and long-term commitment. The agencies involved need a different attitude and way of thinking that will enable them to focus on management rather than on technical aspects. Community management cannot be addressed in isolation from the institutional context. It requires that different agencies supporting the same communities communicate, share and integrate their efforts to ensure that efficient use is made of both their and the community's inputs.

Community Management: a belief in participation and democracy

Community management is not merely a concept to increase the effectiveness of water supply systems; it is also firmly based on a belief in participation and democracy. A support agency will find it problematic to promote or facilitate community management if its own internal procedures are undemocratic - if they do not allow staff participation or do not provide opportunities to learn. Knowing how institutional or political contexts can hinder or stimulate community management is important, as well as involving institutions, politicians and policy makers in the debate on community management.

With funding from the Netherlands Development Assistance (NEDA), this project has been extended so that the results of the first four years can be disseminated world-wide through publications and videos prepared together with the teams from the partner organizations in six countries. A set of five documents has been drafted under the title Community Water Managers for Tomorrow: Partnerships for water management in rural communities and will be further developed in 1999. By disseminating the experiences of this participatory action research programme, IRC aims to contribute to the operationalization of community management.

Financial management aspects of small-scale water supply systems was another topic of research. More and more of these systems have to be self-financing and the communities running these lack capacity for the financial management of these operations. Research results are sufficiently promising to aim at publishing them in the coming year.

A full revision of an operation and maintenance training package for community-managed water supplies earlier prepared under the auspices of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council was begun in 1998. This revision was prompted by the necessity to incorporate the field experience of IRC staff and our partners in the South and to reflect the ongoing decentralization process that is changing the environment for the service providers. Financial support for this activity was shared between WHO and IRC.

Small-scale providers

Initial findings from a study of small-scale independent service providers shows that small-scale entrepreneurs play a very important role and provide services to a considerable part of the urban population, particularly the poor. In some African cities they may provide water to 50-60 percent of the population and sanitation to 80-90 percent. It appears furthermore that often their service costs are comparable to those of public systems.

A review of promising practices in water resources management clearly showed that the gap between policy and practice is still very large. The laudable principles established in the 1992 Dublin meeting have only gradually taken hold at the project level, again underscoring the need to include a learning component in projects.

With the publication of the IRC Technical Paper *Multi-Stage Filtration: an innovative water treatment technology*, IRC and

Sanitation: an enormous challenge



CINARA consolidated the results of a long research history that has resulted in a very reliable water treatment technology that can be left in the hands of local communities. This technology has great potential, as it is not dependent on imported equipment and does not require chemicals. A proposal is now under review to support technology transfer between Latin America and Africa through the establishment of structured learning projects to introduce the MSF technology in Africa.

Sanitation and Hygiene

IRC sees environmental sanitation as: "the management of disposal, treatment and reuse of human excreta, solid waste and wastewater supported by good hygiene behaviour, in order to ensure environmental conditions in human settlements which promote the well-being and health of the population". In 1998 IRC included its own experience in sanitation on its Internet site and helped to establish the site for the Global Environmental Sanitation Initiative (GESI) for the Collaborative Council.

Together with UNICEF a *Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene* was published. Building on experience from a number of UNICEF country programmes and IRC's experience in different countries, the publication advocates integrated approaches towards a safe school environment for all children with linkages to community actions and relevant education for a healthy and sustainable development. A follow-up programme to develop the manual further through field activities in different countries is currently under review. This includes developing innovative sanitation improvement activities in schools and interactive teaching methods using local materials. Support missions to help develop school sanitation initiatives were carried out to different countries including Bangladesh, Colombia and India.

Promising Future for Facilities in Primary Schools in India

In India UNICEF and the government have selected school sanitation and hygiene as one of the key actions for the coming five-year period. The government has allocated a substantial amount for water supply and sanitation facilities in primary schools. A programme for capacity building of sector staff and teachers to support the introduction and use of new facilities and enhance sustained hygiene behaviour is currently under review. The planned programme will be a joint activity of UNICEF-India and IRC.

Creating better sanitary conditions in schools together with children and teachers

School Sanitation Guides Developed in Bangladesh

Primary and secondary school management committees (SMCs) and teachers in Bangladesh are well aware of the poor sanitation situation at their schools and are eager to improve the situation. Some schools have only one latrine for 500 pupils, for example, and girls do not like to use the same latrines as boys, so sometimes choose to stay at home.

IRC, together with ITN Bangladesh, has developed three guides to assist these teams in realizing the necessary improvements. The first includes a self-guiding participatory process to assess the present situation, determine necessary improvements and choose the appropriate technology. The second guide helps the teams and the local masons in the construction of the selected sanitation technology, and the third guide helps the SMC with operation and maintenance. Co-financing for the planned programme will come from the government and the World Bank.

IRC's training course on hygiene education has been updated together with partners, to better reflect the need to focus on behaviour change and integration of hygiene education in the project cycle. In future further research on the sustainability of changes in hygiene behaviour is envisaged.

To facilitate the application of on-site sanitation options in urban areas support was given to the review of the emptying of pit latrines. An article was written on the field testing of a new pit-emptying device, the Vacutug, in a UNCHS (Habitat)-supported project in Kenya. This case study was presented at an international meeting on "Resolving conflicts between drinking water demands and pressures from societies' wastes" in Germany.

On request of the Water Utility Partnership (WUP) in Africa and with financial support from UNDP-World Bank, IRC was involved in designing the framework for research on strengthening capacity of water utilities to provide water and sanitation services, and environmental and hygiene education in low-income urban areas. The research is based on the experience

Effective technology sharing is essential for sustainable water treatment

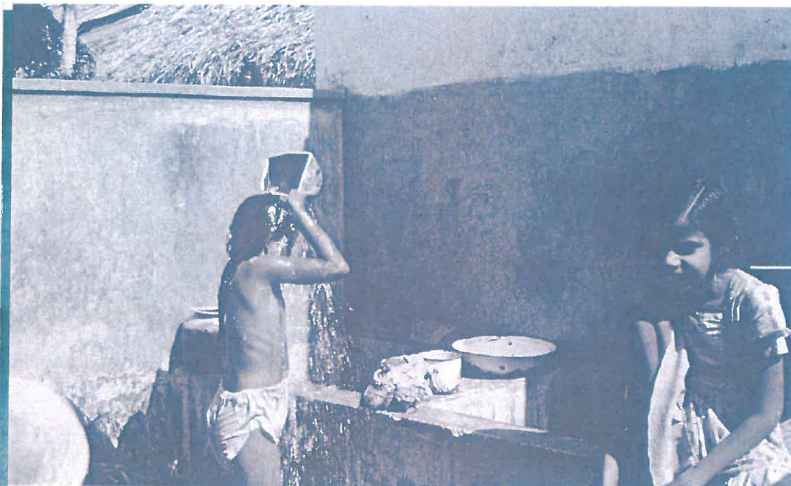


that utilities (either private, parastatal or government departments) have the mandate to provide water to all urban residents, but do not have the technical, managerial or social capacity to effectively serve low-income communities. The pilot phase of the research was carried out in Côte d'Ivoire and Zambia with the aim to establish the format for the research to be carried out in ten countries, with funding from the European Union. The utilities are fully involved in carrying out the research with the assistance of a local consultant, thus strengthening the capacity in the utility from the start through on-the-job learning.

Solving wastewater disposal and treatment problems for small settlements was the theme of an IRC-supported workshop in Nepal which was made possible by a financial contribution from the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment. The workshop was organized together with NEWAH and ENPHO (Environment and Public Health Organization) in Nepal. Participants included sector staff and leaders from four small urban communities in Katmandu Valley, as well as staff from two Dutch water boards, Waterschap Friesland and Hoogheemraadschap Uitwaterende Sluizen in Noord Holland. This was IRC's first opportunity to bring in the experience of Dutch water boards. Workshop participants clearly established the problems and potential solutions. Follow-up research is needed to find the best options in terms of technical, environmental, economic and management feasibility, taking into account that little water is available and reuse of waste seems crucial to ensure financial sustainability.

Institutional Development

IRC's project activities in this area aim to contribute to closing the gap between policy and practice by helping sector institutions in selected countries to review sector problems with stakeholders and jointly develop sector improvement programmes. The demand-responsive, holistic approach which is used emphasizes



Working with children to encourage change

technology and methodology sharing and informed decision making. It encourages policy makers to take a fresh look at the sector and facilitates agency staff and formal and informal institutions at community level to experiment with new methodologies and technologies and to adapt them to their own situation. It draws on the learning concept developed with CINARA in Colombia and the experience obtained in the research project on community management. It also includes crosscutting themes such as monitoring and evaluation, and gender issues.

IRC is collaborating with the UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program in highly innovative global research, which examines participation, gender, demand responsiveness and equity. The assessments are being carried out in some 14 water and sanitation programmes in five world regions. Participatory tools are used at community and institutional level to assess with what gender participation they sustain their service, with what results and with what effects for the men and women involved. Preliminary indications seem to confirm that sustained functioning and use of systems is indeed enhanced through a gender- and poverty-sensitive approach to project planning and implementation. Detailed findings will be published in 1999.

With a financial contribution from the EU, a project is underway which looks at public participation in environmental health services in urban and peri-urban settlements in sub-Saharan Africa. This comprises water supply, sanitation, solid waste, surface water drainage and the promotion of behavioral change for improved hygiene. The approach matches the capacity of research centres in Africa with the needs and demands of local authorities in urban areas. This concerted action produced effective research methods and techniques to collect and analyze indicators that correlate people's state of physical health, the conditions in their living environment that are risks to their

health and the operational status of existing environmental health services in the community. In addition it made support to Local Authorities possible in the planning and monitoring of environmental health services in consultation with local residents.

New insights into monitoring are being generated in the training course Monitoring for Effectiveness, which IRC is implementing with partners in different parts of the world. The course begins by leading participants to compare what they currently monitor with what is needed for an effective programme. Monitoring courses, workshops and other support have been given in Ghana, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda, as well as in the Netherlands. The emphasis has strongly shifted towards enhancing effectiveness, making feedback on monitoring findings as swift and precise as possible. In this way monitoring has really contributed to better project and institutional performance. Findings are so encouraging that the development of a publication is envisaged for which support is being sought.

Frequent comment from monitoring course participants
"We have never really monitored the important things in our programme"

Effective Evaluation

Community evaluations with women and men users as to where water points are (and should be) located can save money and extend coverage. In one project in India, water points had been constructed and many were already operating. Participatory mapping and evaluation with the community resulted in new sites being selected and a few hundred existing water points being closed down. Real coverage increased by up to 45 percent. With this per capita costs were reduced by as much as 40 percent.

Monitoring in Ghana

A project in Ghana applied monitoring for effectiveness approaches to its own programme. One result was the reorganization of jobs so that senior staff could visit the field more often for follow-up monitoring and supervision. This brought the project closer to the people.



Involving users in monitoring helps to improve quality

Improving Access to and Use of Sector Information

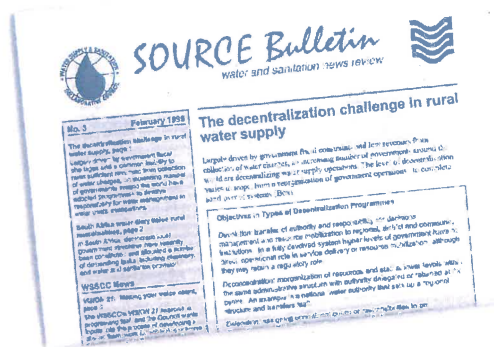
Sector organizations need better information on new developments and innovative approaches to ensure that they can do more with fewer funds. They must also enhance the capacity of their staff and the stakeholders they work with. IRC supports these organizations through documentation and information services, publications, training and advisory services.

Advocacy

IRC put significant effort into stimulating awareness (advocacy) about sector issues to obtain the commitment of decision makers to improve water and sanitation programming. An important part of IRC's strategy is to support sector colleagues in celebrating the annual World Day for Water on 22 March. IRC provided a package of public information for this day and helped distribute a package prepared by UNICEF and the UN Division of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DIESA) on the 1998 theme Groundwater - the invisible resource. A special World Day for Water page was put up on the new IRC web site: <http://www.irc.nl/products/advocacy/wwd/index.html>.

IRC input was provided to the communication strategy development of the World Water Vision project of the World Water Council, as well as the Second World Water Forum, where the Vision will be presented in 2000, in the Netherlands. Next to its SOURCE Bulletin for English readers, IRC continues to produce the French newsletter *Faits Nouveaux* for the French audience. IRC staff enhanced their efforts to disseminate their experiences and the experiences of their partners by producing some 25 articles, papers and presentations on topics such as resource centre development, multi-stage filtration, hygiene, community management and partnerships.

Information sharing: a key factor for innovation



A selection of IRC articles and papers

- *Action monitoring for effectiveness; Making monitoring simple and useful*, article by Kathleen Shordt, David Saunders and Patrick Nginya (NETWAS), in: *Water and Sanitation News*, Vol. 5 no 1 January - April 1998
- *Criteria for Successful Sanitation Programmes in Low Income Countries*, in *Health Policy and Planning*, by B.B. Samanta and C.A. van Wijk; in *Health Policy and Planning*; 13(1): 78-86
- *Gender and Sanitation*, by Eveline Bolt, paper presented at the Regional WHO Conference, 17 November 1998, Katmandu, Nepal
- *Gender in education and training for water supply and sanitation*, by Maria-Lúcia Borba, paper presented at the Conference Capacity building for Women in Water Supply and Sanitation, May 1998, Mexico
- *Multi-stage Filtration: a life-saving technology*, by Gerardo Galvis and Jan Teun Visscher, paper presented at Pre-symposium training course during the First International Symposium: Technology, Operations and Economics of Providing Safe Drinking Water in Small Systems, NSF International, PAHO and WHO, May 10-13, 1998, Washington, DC, USA
- *De Filtración lenta a Filtración en Múltiples Etapas- Una perspectiva internacional*, by Gerardo Galvis and Jan Teun Visscher, paper presented in Regional Water Conference in Mexico, September 1998
- *'Towards Water and Sanitation as Sustainable Basic Social Services for All'*, by François Brikké, Jan Teun Visscher and Willem Ankersmit, background paper presented at the Harare Expert Group Meeting on Strategic Approaches to Freshwater Management, 28-31 January 1998, Zimbabwe

Documentation and Information Services

The Documentation Unit's extensive collection of publications and grey literature has been updated by adding some 1200 new titles to the library catalogue, IRCDOC. Staff responded to over 300 requests for information from visitors and external users and supported different IRC projects in the search for new information. While difficult access to IRC's premises in Scheveningen caused the number of visitors to the library to drop over the past three years, the number of e-mail requests grew substantially compared to previous years. In view of the move to Delft a discussion was initiated to combine the IRC Documentation Unit and the IHE library into a comprehensive knowledge centre for the sector. Initially the two will still operate in parallel, until the additional funding required to merge and enhance the outreach has been safeguarded.

An interesting new development was the advisory support IRC's documentation and information staff gave to partners in the field. Assistance was provided to set up the documentation and dissemination activities of the Sector Resource Centre (SRC) of the Socio-Economic Unit Foundation (SEUF) in Kerala, India. Outputs included analysis of internal and external information sources, hands-on training in cataloguing techniques, task descriptions and skill requirements of SRC staff, preparation of a user needs survey, the creation of a periodicals database and the preparation of documentation and dissemination guidelines and tools.

Support was provided to the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD) in Harare, Zimbabwe regarding its library service, information products and services, library software, the Internet, manpower issues, publications, and information dissemination strategies. The support was provided within the framework of the IHE- supported Collaborative Programme for Capacity Building in the Water Sector of Zimbabwe and the Southern Africa Region.

IRC staff also played a key role in facilitating a two-week Information Focal Point Training Workshop for the Manage Dissemination Project mentioned earlier. Staff from three of the project partner institutions (CINARA, NETWAS, and WASEP) attended the workshop in the Hague, joined by staff from the Mvula Trust from South Africa. This workshop launched a three-year period during which the three project partners will receive further support to develop information focal points on community management in their institutions. The materials prepared for the workshop will be further developed to help other organizations to establish documentation and information services in the future.

Visits* to the IRC Internet site, fourth quarter 1998

Africa	586
Latin America and the Caribbean	271
Asia and the Pacific	562
Central and Eastern Europe, CIS	109
Europe	7542
USA and Canada	2384
Australia, New Zealand	407
International (.org, .com, etc.)	6321
unidentifiable approx.	8000

* one visit to the IRC site can comprise visits to several site pages.

IRC and the Internet

Electronic information is becoming increasingly important for IRC and its partners. A new staff member joined IRC to redesign and expand the Internet site. (Visit IRC's Internet site at <http://www.irc.nl>)

The IRC site is registered with all major search engines (Alta Vista, Excite, etc.). About 45 percent of the visitors reach the site via these search engines. The other visitors find our site via an estimated 150 other web sites which have a link to the IRC site. The interest in the IRC site is growing rapidly, with up to 2,500 page views per week. The visitors come from over 80 different countries. Comparatively little access in the South, however, makes hard copy information and good information outlets a necessity. IRC not only maintains its own site, but also the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council site (<http://www.wsscc.org>) and the GESI site (<http://www.wsscc.org/gesi>).

Staff of the Documentation Unit has greatly contributed to making information more readily accessible through the newly developed news services on the Internet and e-mail: SOURCE Water and Sanitation Weekly and SOURCE Bulletin (<http://www.wsscc.org/source>). The bi-monthly SOURCE Bulletin replaced the Water Newsletter in October and is also available in hard copy for persons not having access to e-mail or Internet. The number of electronic subscribers grew from 37 early in 1998 to close to 1000 towards the end of the year. Costs

"...I got the first issue of the SOURCE Bulletin of October 1998. I really appreciate the nature of the bulletin for I found it to be very educational and informative. Thank you very much for such a wonderful service. Reading the bulletin and the previous newsletters has helped me so immensely to be focused in my profession. I benefited a lot from the information sharing, particularly on waste management."
Thomas Mashadudze,
Environmental Health Technician,
Gweru City, Zimbabwe

of the news service are shared between the Collaborative Council and IRC. The Council also provided for support for the update of the INTERWATER Guide to Organizations, which provides a gateway to information on sector organizations. This Guide can be found at <http://www.wsscc.org/interwater>. In 1999 this will be further expanded and efforts will be made to incorporate even more Internet links relevant to the sector.

The possibilities of making IRCDOC, IRC's electronic library, available on the Internet as part of the IRC web page is under review. The decision will depend among others on the possibilities that are being created for the IRC Documentation Unit and the IHE library to combine activities.

Publications

New publications in 1998

Multi-Stage Filtration: an innovative water treatment technology (TP 34-E)

Gerardo Galvis, Jorge Latorre and Jan Teun Visscher

Gender in Water Resources Management, Water Supply and Sanitation: Roles and Realities Revisited (TP 33-E)

Christine van Wijk-Sijbesma
Operation and Maintenance of Sanitation Systems in Urban Low-Income Areas in India and Thailand: report on a joint research programme, 1989-1993 (PR 6-E) IRC

Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene
Joint UNICEF/IRC publication

Translations into Portuguese by SDC, Mozambique

Artificial Groundwater Recharge for Water Supply of Medium-Sized Communities in Developing Countries

E.H. Hofkes and J.T. Visscher
Making the Links: guidelines for hygiene education in community water supply and sanitation, with particular emphasis on public standpost water supplies

Marieke T. Boot

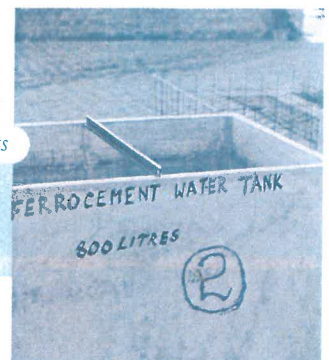
Slow Sand Filtration: Manual for Caretakers

J.T. Visscher and S. Veenstra

In 1999 IRC produced two new technical papers and one Project and Programme Paper. The translation of IRC publications into Portuguese through an agreement with SDC in Mozambique continued with three new titles becoming available, and translation of the *Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene* into Spanish and French was initiated for completion early in 1999. IRC's first step in electronic publishing was taken at the end of the year by selecting two publications for the web site. Early in 1999 *Linking Technology Choice with Operation and Maintenance for Low-Cost Water Supply and Sanitation*, and *Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene* will be available on the site. The intention is to make all Occasional Papers and key project papers available free of charge on the Internet in future.

A thorough review of the IRC publication development and dissemination strategy took place this year, and the current publication holdings were screened. As a result of the changes that are taking place in the sector several older titles have been removed from the publication list, leaving some 80 relevant titles in English, many of which are also available in French, Spanish and Portuguese. The list and abstracts of all these titles have been included on the IRC web site, making them accessible to a wider audience.

Efficient water use also reduces water storage costs



Training Activities

Training is an important outlet for the experience which IRC and its partners have gained over the years. IRC's programme includes short training courses and briefing programmes as well as training of staff of IRC's partners in key issues related to ongoing project collaboration. Three intensive courses were organized in IRC in 1998: Hygiene Education and Promotion: Planning and management for behavioral change, Monitoring for Effectiveness, and the new course Gender in Water Supply and Sanitation. In total 37 persons attended the courses in the Netherlands and another 60 attended tailor-made briefing programmes covering a range of topics including water resources management, rural and low-income urban water supply and sanitation, and school sanitation and hygiene education. Briefing programmes are attended both by staff preparing for missions and fieldwork in the South and staff from agencies in the South expanding their insights and information base in key areas of development. In 1998 some of these briefing programmes were implemented together with staff from the IHE. With the forthcoming move to the IHE premises in Delft stronger involvement of IHE staff is anticipated, and the scope of briefing topics is expected to increase.

Training activities in the South have increased with IRC partners playing a stronger role in their countries and regions. In Africa, Latin America and Asia, seven courses were conducted with partner organizations, with over 100 participants. The first Monitoring for Effectiveness course was organized in Kenya by IRC's partner NETWAS International, and attracted 25 participants. With partners taking the lead in several courses the transfer of the training skills can be considered successful. IRC's involvement in some joint courses such as the Management for Sustainability course has been significantly reduced. In these courses the future role of IRC will be to continuously update the course content to ensure that new insights are being included and to occasionally support the trainers to upgrade their knowledge. The quality and improvement of IRC courses and briefing programmes can be partly attributed to the constructive comments received from participants, who often contribute valuable new ideas for content and structure.

IRC staff also carried out several short courses and in-company training in different organizations including UNESCO, The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Development Agency, particularly on mainstreaming gender in development programmes. These programmes brought together over 20 staff members from each organization who were trained to assure that a gender policy within their organization was established and implemented within the projects they financed all over the world.

Some constructive comments from training participants

Creating a learning environment is very important as indicated by Simon Hartley: *"What I found of great value was being able to reflect with the experienced IRC staff on what the South African sanitation programme is trying to achieve."*

"...the office atmosphere is nice and friendly and the library service is good. Sessions on hygiene education, gender and participatory monitoring techniques were very informative..."
"For people such as us who are new to the sector it may be more effective to give an introduction on specific topics at the beginning of a session, or the use of a case study to provide a frame of reference for further questions."

Eva Stephansson, Katarina Perrolf and Annika Otterstedt, SIDA



In Hanoi, Vietnam, IRC conducted a course on management of operation and maintenance in rural water supply and sanitation on request of WHO and CERWAS, which drew some 35 participants. On request of CEFOC/IPD-AOS in Burkina Faso, the course Maintenance Management for Rural Water Suppliers was conducted for the fourth consecutive year. The course drew 18 participants from 8 countries.

Several IRC staff members are involved in providing support to MSc students participating in the Master's Programme at IHE. IRC's involvement in this course primarily concerns community water supply and sanitation. Master students carry out their research in their own country, thus making course results of greater importance for sector development and innovation.

Advisory Services

Advisory Missions in 1998

<i>Appraisal and formulation missions</i>	3
<i>Evaluation missions</i>	7
<i>Support missions</i>	21
<i>Institutional development</i>	3
<i>Policy development</i>	3
<i>Hygiene education</i>	2
<i>Information Management</i>	2
<i>Monitoring</i>	1
<i>Water/Sanitation Technology</i>	5
<i>Sanitation</i>	1
<i>Human Resources Development</i>	1
<i>Community Participation</i>	2
<i>Participatory Methodologies</i>	1
<i>Advocacy missions (gender)</i>	2

IRC's approach to evaluation and advisory missions is to organize them primarily as a learning opportunity. IRC staff facilitate a process in which agency staff explore their programme situation and find ways to improve it. This approach promotes a sharing of knowledge and experience among the participants involved in the process and provides an excellent opportunity for IRC staff to enhance their insight in key sector issues. Advisory services include project formulations, appraisals, evaluations, monitoring, technical support, workshops and seminars.

Missions are selected from the requests that are received from ESAs and national governments, based on the degree to which they match the development issues that IRC and its partners are pursuing. Where feasible staff from partner organizations are involved. Over 30 missions, comprising nearly 20 percent of IRC's total staff time, were carried out in Africa, Asia and Latin America in 1998. Themes included policy development, decentralization, community management, participatory approaches, gender, hygiene and sanitation, cost recovery, operation and maintenance, and institutional capacity building and human resources development.



Joint problem analysis provides the basis for problem solving

Strengthening Partnerships

Developing and maintaining partnerships in both the South and the North is an

efficient and effective way to share knowledge and experience, and as such lays the groundwork for sustainable, long-term sector development. Professional sector support services at national level are a key factor in the success of sector development. In many countries some of these services are available but are widely scattered and thus unable to contribute sufficiently to maintaining an adequate and up-to-date sector memory that is easily accessible for sector staff. A network of sector resource centres which act as knowledge brokers and facilitators of innovation can play a key role in easing access to this sector memory.

Resource Centres

Resource centres focus on the collection and dissemination of relevant national and international knowledge and experiences for the purpose of strengthening capacities in the sector. Commonly, they establish a network of organizations in the country in which they work. Under their guidance this network of organizations and individuals may provide various kinds of support services, e.g. documentation and referral services, training programmes, advice from sector specialists, research on and collection of local field practices and experiences, and organizational support.

Building Partnerships

An important project that will help to build partnerships is being carried out with financial support from NEDA. The project examines case studies of resource centre development processes to gain insight in options to enhance support for information sharing and capacity building in the sector. Experiences cover Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as Europe. A meeting was held with key project partners at IRC in November to further structure the project and identify specific outputs that need to be pursued. These include:

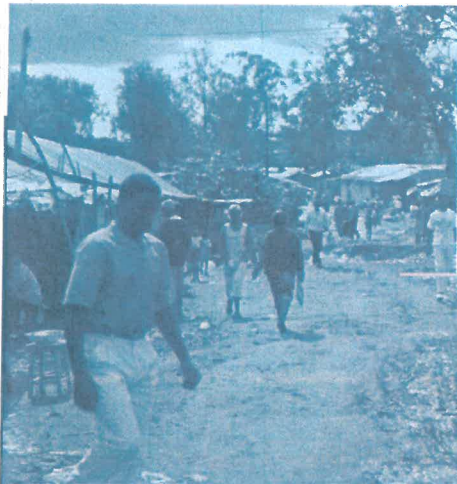
- Clarification of the resource centre concept based on some 10 to 14 case studies.
- Development of a set of management and resource centre development tools
- Establishment of a network of resource centres for the water and sanitation sector
- Supporting the creation of a favorable policy environment to enhance the financial viability of the individual centres and the network
- Strengthening of at least 8 but if possible more than 10 resource centres.

The organizations actively involved in preparing case studies, doing literature reviews and identifying other sector support organization that could possibly be involved are: CINARA (Colombia), ITN Philippines, NETWAS International (Kenya), WEE (Tampere University of Technology, Finland), SKAT (Switzerland), PsEau (France), IPD-AOS (Burkina Faso), SEUF (India), CFPAS (Mozambique), IWSI (Zimbabwe) and IRC itself. It is expected that more institutes will be associated with the project during 1999.

Partners in the South

Collaboration continued with two long-standing IRC partners in the South: CINARA in Colombia (since 1985) and NETWAS International in Kenya (since 1989). Both have evolved into successful sector resource centres, and offer support services such as training programmes and documentation services, with outreach in their respective regions. Through joint research projects, innovative short courses, joint publications and information exchange, IRC continues to strengthen its ties with CINARA and NETWAS International, including its spin-off, NETWAS Uganda. Draft agreements are being developed with CINARA and NETWAS International to formally establish the relationship and clarify the mutual support that is envisaged. These agreements will also be the basis for future agreements with other network partners.

Training courses have proven to be a solid basis for cooperation with other centres in the South. With CREPA in Burkina Faso, joint training courses led to a framework for collaboration for establishment of a documentation and information centre, in which ETSHER and EIER are also involved. With PAID/Cameroon and IPD/AOS (Burkina Faso), where joint training courses have been given since 1991, community management research has been added as an area of collaboration. In Asia courses were conducted in collaboration with Sarvodaya Rural Technical Services in Sri Lanka. In Kerala, India discussions are underway regarding incorporation of a sector resource centre function into the structure of the Socio-Economic Units Foundation.



A community focus is needed to close the gap between policy and practice

Partnerships have also led to fruitful research activities, as has been the case with the participatory action research on community management done with the Aga Khan Health Service in Pakistan, Agua del Pueblo in Guatemala, CINARA in Colombia, PAID in Cameroon, Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), and NETWAS International in Kenya. Activities with NEWAH are expanding, initially through the organization of a workshop on environmental sanitation in small settlements in Katmandu Valley. IRC's partnership with NEWAH has helped them to broaden their activities and to set up a research and training section in their organization. This implies that they are gradually changing their mandate from being an implementing organization to a facilitating organization, which actively supports information sharing and sector innovation, thus making them an even more attractive partner for IRC.

In spite of reduced donor funding for PAID as a whole, cooperation with its centre for West Africa and the Sahel (IPD-AOS) in Burkina Faso increased. A multi-sectoral action research project on community-based water resource management was developed With IPD-AOS on request of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and they are also involved in a study concerning the establishment of an information and documentation centre or network in cooperation with EIER, ETSHER and CREPA. This study is supported by both UNICEF and IRC.

Others with whom new partnerships are being forged are IWSD in Zimbabwe, and NCWSTI in South Africa, both ITN Africa centres.

International Partners

A long-standing relationship with the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council has been strengthened this year through several activities. The Council provides an important platform in the sector, which brings together NGOs, donor agencies, professional institutes and others. IRC actively participates in the working groups, networks and task forces of the Council. These activities provide IRC with an opportunity to strengthen its ties with the various organizations involved, and contribute to its research and development work. IRC supports the Secretariat with the Council's and the GESI home page, and together with them provides the SOURCE news service on the Internet. Furthermore information support for the regional chapters of the Council is being discussed.

With its other partners, represented on IRC's Governing Board, several joint initiatives were developed. With UNICEF headquarters long-term collaboration was agreed on, particularly concerning school sanitation promotion. A *Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene* was completed and a six-country project proposal is under review. IRC staff is also involved in the review of the UNICEF water and sanitation programme, with a first review of 30 years of UNICEF involvement underway in India.

Despite the management changes in WHO collaboration continued, particularly on operation and maintenance activities at country level. With the new WHO structure now in place discussions are envisaged to enhance collaboration. With the UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program, new activities were initiated including a programme on gender and a review of the involvement of small-scale providers in service delivery in low-income urban areas.

An agreement was signed with IICA that provides for further strengthening the linkages and mutually supporting each other's work. A first opportunity is being established for input in Brazil, where IRC will conduct the first Portuguese-language gender course in Latin America.

Partners Close to Home

For Netherlands-based institutions, IRC has always played a role in information exchange through its Documentation Unit, its training programmes and guest lectures. The Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) in the Hague is an important source of participants in IRC's briefing programmes. Other contacts are the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam, the Institute for Housing Studies (IHS) in Rotterdam, and the Institute for Social Studies (ISS) in the Hague, all of which receive training inputs, lectures and guidance for students.

The International Institute for Infrastructural, Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering (IHE) in Delft has been a close partner for several years. In 1998 IRC staff provided a significant input in IHE's post-graduate training programme for sanitary engineering, and in training courses established with CINARA and the University of Cali in Colombia. Assistance was provided to MSc and PhD students, and IHE staff provided inputs in IRC's urban programme. Staff of both institutes were jointly involved in activities in India and Bangladesh. With the move to Delft, bundling the complementary skills of each institute will allow an even more effective response to the needs of the water and sanitation sector.

General Information

Finance

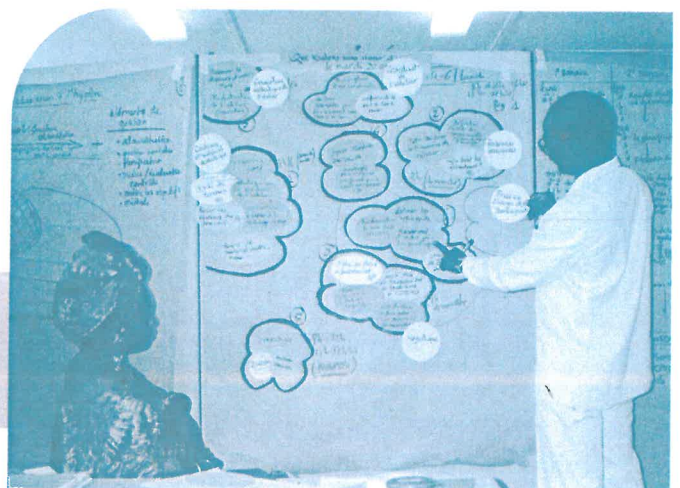
IRC is an independent, non-profit organization supported by and linked with the

Netherlands Government, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council. The Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provide a core budget approximating US\$ 1.2 million*, which is supplemented with fees for services and programmes requested by national governments, multilateral and bilateral donors, UN agencies, international development banks and NGOs. The supplementary income increased by 10 percent to some US\$ 1.2 million in 1998, with several new clients making use of IRC, including the Inter-American Development Bank, the Directorate of Water of Uganda and Irish Aid. This growth in IRC's income was in part used to compensate for cost increases and in part to strengthen its financial base to ensure a healthy future for the organization. Another US\$ 700,000 was passed through IRC to partner organizations in the South. Furthermore IRC was able to contract several of its partners for their involvement in evaluation and advisory missions.

Staff

The activities described in this annual report have been carried out jointly between IRC's partners and its own staff of 35. Some of the disciplines represented at IRC are engineering, anthropology, economy, law, sociology, journalism and psychology. More than half of the staff are women, and over 25 percent hail from outside the Netherlands. The role of staff is primarily that of facilitator, guiding processes in which partners work together to come to grips with sector problems, and jointly identify and test solutions. IRC also draws on staff from partner

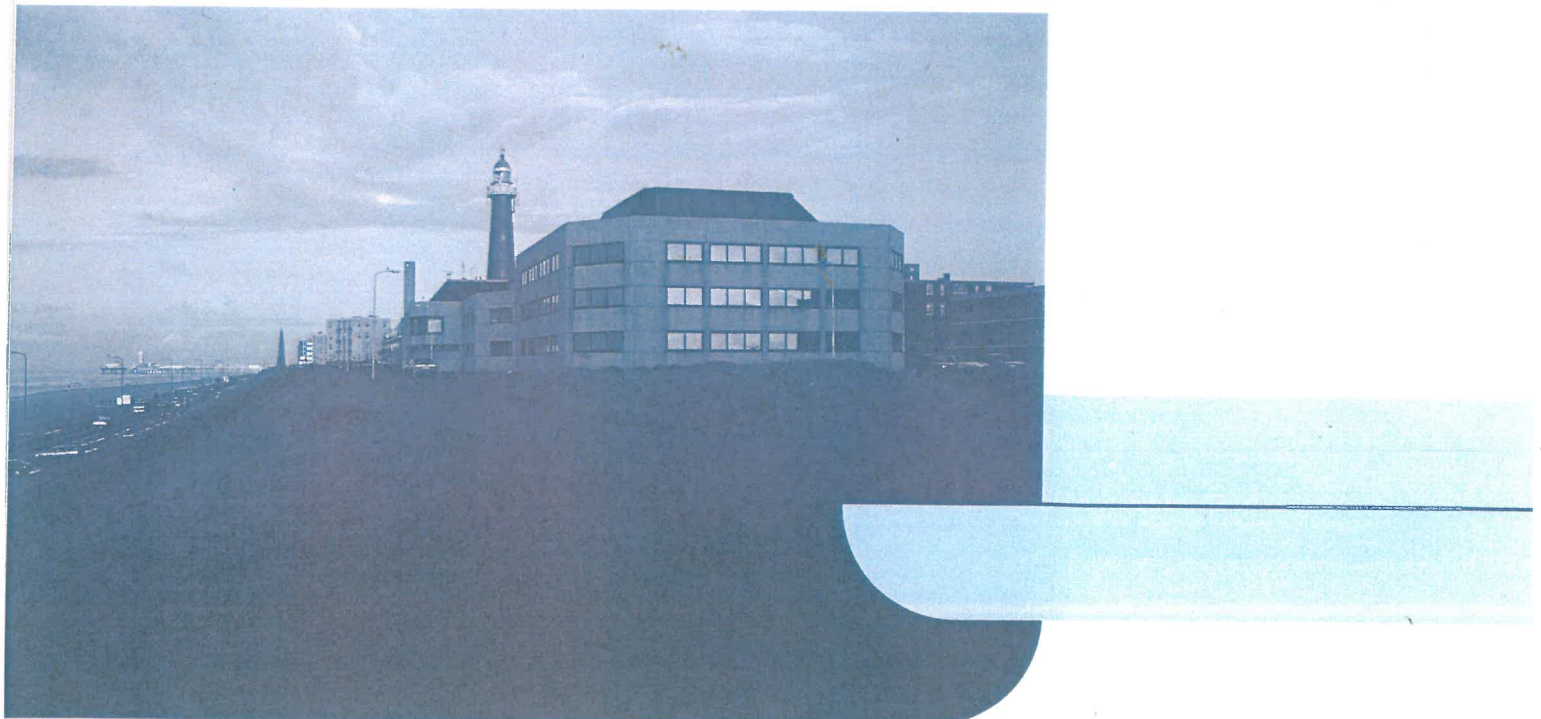
Sharing ideas and information helps to make the world a better place



institutions in the North and the South that have complementary skills to optimize the results of its activities. IRC has developed a new policy on contracting research associates on short-term contracts. This will be implemented in 1999.

Staff was encouraged to pursue independent training efforts, resulting in one staff member entering in a one-year MBA training and another entering in a longer-term PhD study. Early in the year a management training institute trained IRC's programme staff in project management. This is an important development that will enhance the staff capacity and will enable IRC to put its projects and research activities on a better footing, while maintaining its practical angle.

IRC will continue to invest in its staff and partners, these being its key asset for the future. We have strengthened our organizational structure and with that we have a solid basis to enhance our team spirit. Our new offices in Delft have been designed in such a way that the feeling of togetherness is enhanced, supporting the teamwork which is needed to keep making a difference in 1999.



IRC Governing Board

Chairman

Mr. J.B. Hoekman
Former Ambassador

Secretary

Mr. G.W. Ardon
Head, Water Supply and Waste Water Department
Directorate-General for Environmental Protection
Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment

Treasurer

Prof. W.J. Kakebeeke
Assistant Director-General for International Environmental Protection
Directorate-General for Environmental Protection
Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment

Members

Mr. J.A. Boer
Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation
Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dr. R. Lenton
Director, Sustainable Energy and Environment Division
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr. G. Ghosh
Chief, Water and Environmental Sanitation Sector
Program Division
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Mr. B. Grover
Manager, UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program

Mr. R. Wirasinha
Executive Secretary
Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

Photographs

Eveline Bolt

Nigel Browne

Madeleen Wegelin-Schuringa

Christine van Wijk-Sijbesma

IRC Staff*

UNICEF

**Staff names were not available for some photos taken from the IRC archive*

Design

De Rotterdamsche Communicatie Compagnie

Printing

Pallas Offset, BV

IRC

International Water and Sanitation Centre

P.O. BOX 2869

2601 CW DELFT

THE NETHERLANDS

telephone: +31 (0)15 219 29 39

telefax: +31 (0)15 219 09 55

e-mail: general@irc.nl

website: <http://www.irc.nl/>