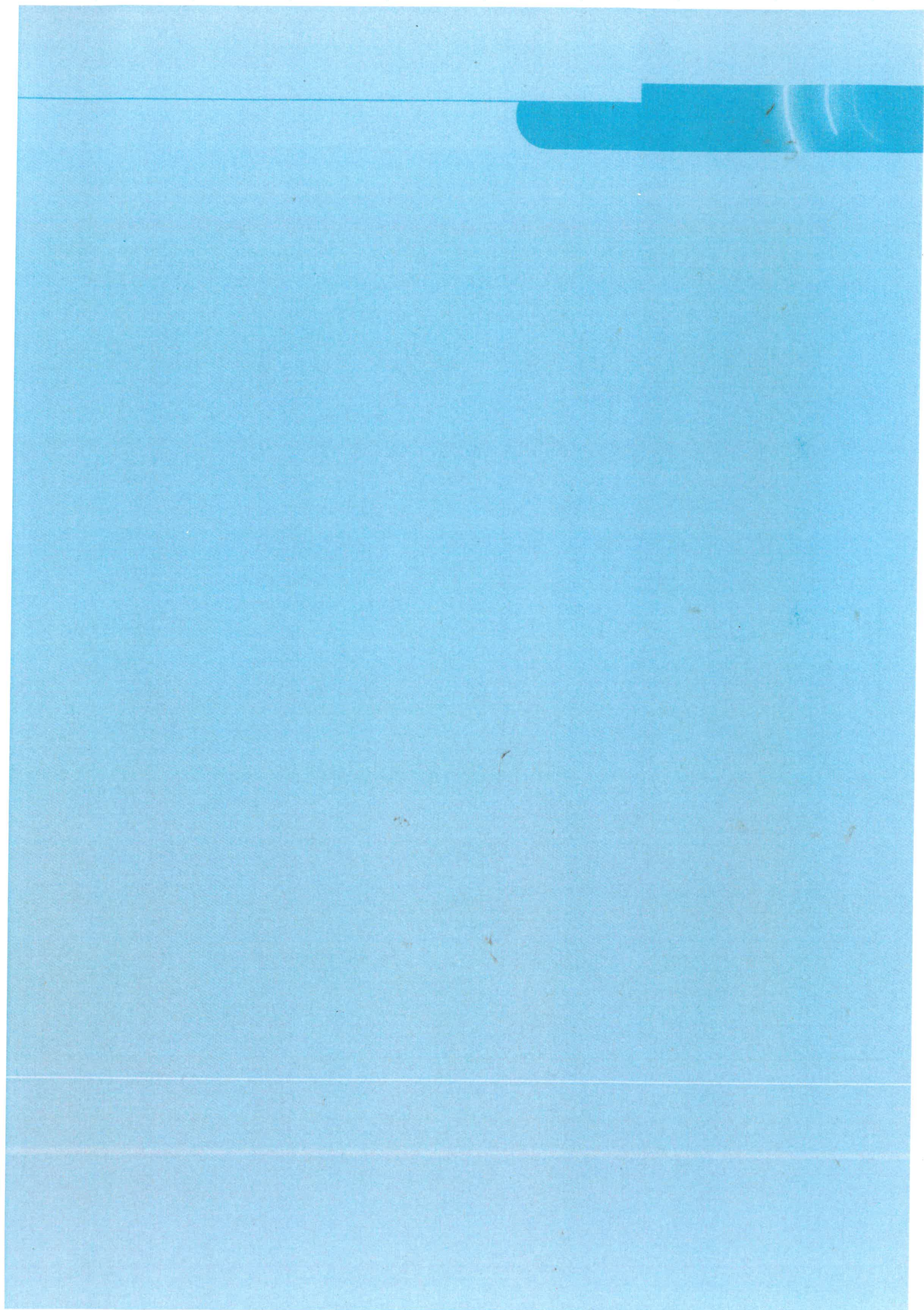


# 1999

Annual Report





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## IRC in 1999

VISION 21/Water for People, developed by the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), pictures a healthy water and sanitation world for everyone in 2025. With more than 1.2 billion people currently without safe water supply and 3 billion lacking adequate sanitation, we have a long road ahead of us. The looming water crisis and the enormous sanitation challenge require efficient water management and effective measures to reduce pollution, with emphasis being placed on integrated problem solving. It is essential to build on the lessons from the past, strengthen people's capacities and enhance the efficiency of sector institutions. Effective knowledge sharing, IRC's core business, is perhaps the most important factor to really make this happen.

In 1999 IRC added representatives of knowledge centres and the private sector to its Governing Board, revised its policy and moved to a new office. The new policy framework concentrates on knowledge sharing and strengthening partnerships with organizations in the South. It portrays IRC as knowledge broker, making good use of electronic information sharing opportunities and as a facilitator of learning processes. In the new office in Delft, IRC is in the midst of an international educational environment. This brings staff in daily contact with people from the South who are following training programmes at the International Institute for Infrastructural, Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering (IHE).

IRC had a good year and continued to contribute to many new developments. This report presents some of the wealth of knowledge and information IRC and its partners have



*Sharing water resources with other sectors is gaining importance*

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accumulated. Prominent activities in 1999 included the expansion of IRC's website and the news services IRC provides together with the WSSCC. The average number of page views nearly doubled and Source Weekly e-mail service increased by 80 percent. IRC was strongly involved in electronic conferencing and is making a large part of its documentation holdings available in electronic form. Knowledge sharing through training shifted more to the South with IRC's partners taking a larger share of the work. IRC also facilitated innovation and was particularly strong in helping to mainstream gender in the sector, while at the same time improving the gender balance in its own Management Team. Management options for community water supply systems were put on centre stage and school sanitation issues gained momentum, with IRC teaming up with UNICEF in a programme reaching out to seven countries.

Financially 1999 was a positive year, partly because of the subsidy, but also because of improved cost efficiency. Many organizations in the world called upon IRC staff and purchased IRC's products and services. Despite the increase in work pressure, time was still found for staff to engage in training activities.

For 2000 new challenges lie ahead, particularly because the subsidy will be reduced. IRC will have to keep a close eye on efficiency and will work even more with partners in the South to ensure the greatest impact of its work. IRC will continue discussions with IHE, to fully exploit the possibilities the two organizations have to contribute to their mutual cause.

We are grateful for the long-term support from the ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, and of Foreign Affairs. This commitment and the dedication of the staff provide an essential basis for IRC to effectively contribute to building a better water and sanitation world.

Joop B. Hoekman  
Chairman, IRC Governing Board

## Supporting Sector Innovation

Together with its partners, IRC continued to expand and share the knowledge base on leading sector themes. This resulted in new research projects, training activities and publications. Advisory missions and information requests helped us to focus on new developments and select themes that allow us to contribute effectively to the improvement of sector performance.

### Community Water Supply

Management of water supplies remains an enormous challenge in the developing world. Management begins at the water source, but IRC's new Occasional Paper shows that theory continues to be much stronger than practice. Internationally accepted integrated water resources management (IWRM) principles, while not new, are not really applied in water supply systems. IRC, together with partners, has therefore developed a new initiative related to IWRM that sets out to identify, develop, and implement tools, strategies, and training courses necessary to enable staff at intermediate levels to play a facilitating role in this area.

#### Integrated water resource management in water and sanitation projects: lessons from 11 projects in Africa, Asia and South America

*This new Occasional Paper reports on the application of integrated water resource management (IWRM) principles in 11 water supply and sanitation projects from around the world. The review found that WSS projects generally continue to be implemented on a sectoral basis with little consideration of wider water resource management issues. The application of the Dublin principles from 1992 is still not very evident in these projects. Without attention to institutional strengthening at intermediate levels of government and in other support agencies, it will be difficult to develop stakeholder involvement at the regional or catchment level.*

*Truly sharing burdens and benefits: an essential objective*



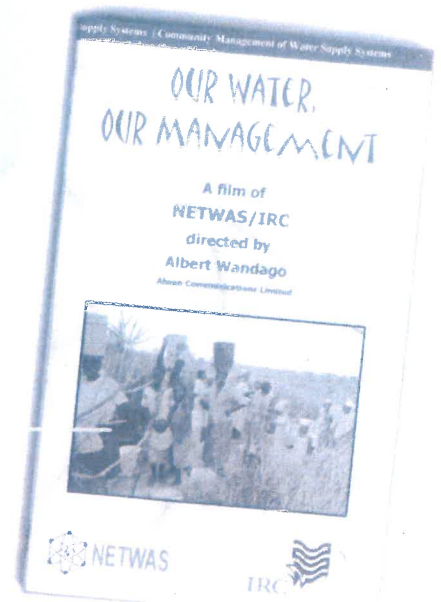
Management of community water supplies remained a leading theme in IRC's work, continuing participatory action research with support from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information is now available on different aspects such as conflict mediation and system management. Findings also address institutional issues and the role of support organizations such as NGOs and local and regional government institutions. This information will be an important ingredient in the further dissemination of the experiences. A three-week 'Training of Trainers' event was held to prepare the partners for the development and running of training courses on community management.

### **Community management of water supply systems on video**

*Video films were produced by all the partner organizations of the community management research project together with local film directors. The videos aim at stimulating reflection and discussion on the role of communities in the management of their water supply systems. They are excellent tools to initiate discussions and will be used in training activities.*

*The videos address diverse issues in presenting the great variety of community management practices and the roles of water sector staff. The films bring you to communities in the high mountains of northern Pakistan, to communities in Nepal discussing the position of women and low caste groups in water supply management, to an Islamic community in Cameroon establishing improved rules and regulations for water use and distribution, to the people of Aguacatan in Guatemala telling the history of their water supply system, to confident communities in Colombia proudly presenting their management system and to Kenyan staff unfolding their ways of working with communities.*

*The video produced by NETWAS, the Kenyan project partner, was screened at a fair organized at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which brought together experiences with participatory ways of working. At this fair representatives of four project partners facilitated workshops on "scaling-up participatory approaches".*



In many countries operation and maintenance (O&M) problems provide a very good entry point for improving performance of water supply systems. Together with WHO, IRC began updating the O&M information and training package prepared in 1997 under the aegis of the WSSCC. The new package, planned for publication in 2000, builds on the experience of O&M assessments carried out in workshops in Benin, Mali and Niger in the context of the Africa 2000 Initiative. The reviews showed that cost recovery is one of the key factors of sustainable management of water supplies. IRC therefore has initiated a review of cost-related issues in water supply systems for publication in its Occasional Paper series.

### Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Although it is now generally accepted that environmental sanitation and hygiene are crucial if water supply provision is to have any positive impact, sanitation and hygiene still do not get the attention they merit. IRC's innovative work in this area is centred around approaches towards sustainable changes in hygiene behaviour, school sanitation and hygiene education, and the development of consultation processes to improve wastewater treatment and disposal in urban hamlets.

With partners from Asia and Africa and with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and GTZ (Germany), IRC developed a programme to consolidate and disseminate knowledge about sustainability of changes in hygiene behaviour. Funding is anticipated from the European Union.

School sanitation activities gained momentum in 1999. In India IRC will help UNICEF and the Government of India to establish and test the methodologies that are needed for a project aiming to reach out to 125,000 schools over a five-year period. Together with UNICEF, IRC also embarked on a project in six countries: two each in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Both



*Urban sanitation presents a major challenge*



projects focus on innovative approaches to improve hygiene behaviour and create a healthy school environment. An integrated holistic approach will be adopted involving stakeholders from different sectors. Both will build on local expertise and the approach described in *A Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene* that IRC published together with UNICEF in 1998.

IRC teams found participatory tools to be effective to gain insight in the requirements for sanitation and hygiene promotion. This was shown, for example, in an advisory mission to Uganda for DFID and training events dealing with this subject area. IRC's team now emphasises the need for sustainable institutional arrangements for sanitation and hygiene education, since all too often these services stop once a project finishes.

### Urban Water Supply and Sanitation

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Management options for water supply and sanitation systems in large communities and small towns became a new theme for IRC. The population in many of these towns is growing quickly, making good water supply and sanitation systems a necessity. As a result of the decentralisation process new management options are needed for these systems. IRC staff facilitated the development of a regulatory framework for such options in Mali. We also initiated a literature review and prepared an article that show that privatised large service providers are not the only option for town water management. A thorough analysis of local situations and involvement of stakeholders forms the basis for identifying what type of water enterprises, whether public or private, can best meet the needs of the presently underserved populations. This means sharing of information and enabling communities to participate in the decision-making process.

IRC also entered the small town problems from another angle by completing a participatory assessment of wastewater problems and potential solutions in small urban hamlets in Kathmandu Valley,

*Separate meetings of men and women support balanced decision making*



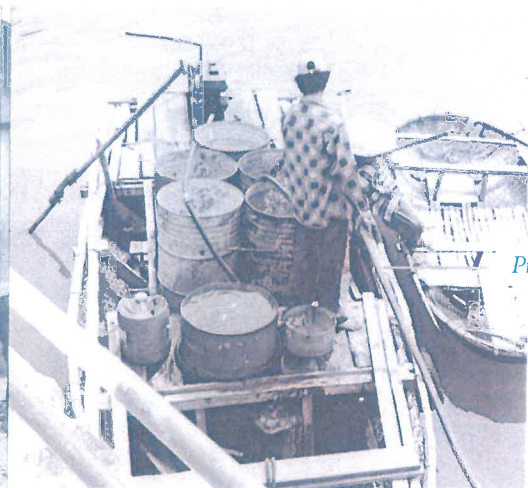
Nepal. A stakeholder's workshop concluded that possible solutions to solve the environmental problems should include the use of compost toilets, improvement of the existing storm water drainage and construction of wetlands for treating grey water. Development of effective management structures are essential, however, to make solutions sustainable.

Much can be learned from public facilities and community-managed systems for these intermediate towns but also from the informal sector that often operates at neighbourhood level in large cities. Private entrepreneurs and informal operators are sometimes even more important than the formal service providers, particularly for the low-income areas. This was found by IRC staff and their African partners in a research programme initiated by the World Bank Water Supply and Sanitation Program, on small-scale independent providers (SSIPs) of water and sanitation services in ten cities in sub-Saharan Africa.

#### Selected key results of the SSIP programme

- In the cities studied SSIPs cover the water supply needs of the majority of people living in low-income areas. SSIPs are a major employer in these areas.
- They offer a service that is more flexible and responsive to local needs.
- They tend to mobilise capital on the informal market, recover 100% of their operating costs, and reinvest profits locally to improve services and operate other businesses.
- SSIPs could perform better if local authorities recognised them as valuable partners in providing services in low-income areas.

IRC, together with the WSSCC and WEDC is involved in the information sharing and awareness-raising component of the UNCHS (Habitat) initiative on Managing Water for African Cities. This project aims at improved water management and



*Private entrepreneurs play an important role in providing water*

reducing unaccounted-for-water in major cities. IRC inputs focus on improving access to quality information and strengthening the working ties between regional resource centres and their potential clientele at city level, by adopting among others a set of e-mail and web-based tools.

### **Institutional Development**

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IRC's project activities in this area aim to contribute to closing the gap between policy and private practice by helping sector institutions in selected countries to review sector problems with stakeholders and jointly develop sector improvement programmes.

### **Participatory Learning and Action**

*IRC and the World Bank Water and Sanitation Program (WB-WSP) developed a new Methodology for Participatory Assessment (MPA). It contains 28 key indicators and uses gender- and poverty-sensitive participatory tools at community, agency and policy levels. The approach was first tested in India by IRC together with the WB-WSP and the SEU Foundation in Kerala. Thereafter it was applied to assess WSS services in 88 communities in 15 countries. WB-WSP organized the process in Asia and Southern Africa. IRC organized the process together with Cinara in Latin America and with PAID in West Africa. In West Africa the Danida- and CIDA-supported projects in Ghana and the Helvetas- and KfW-supported projects in Cameroon took part.*

*The results confirm the potential of the MPA to combine sustainability assessments with gender and poverty analysis. It revealed that demand responsive-, gender- and poverty-sensitive approaches and good governance, especially at the local levels, positively influence sustainability. The WB-WSP and IRC will jointly publish the methodology and training of interested parties will begin in the second half of 2000.*

IRC has developed new, action-oriented strategies and methods for monitoring. The focus is on the use of monitoring information at the lowest relevant levels to improve projects and programmes over the short term. The approach is problem-focused and participatory and is being introduced in projects and programmes through participatory training. Short training courses were offered in conjunction with regional partners in Sri Lanka (COSI), Kenya (NETWAS) and South Africa (National Community Water and Sanitation Training Institute - NCWSTI), and the course was also offered for the first time in Brazil. A Technical Paper on the approach, *Action Monitoring for Effectiveness*, will be published with support from the Government of Denmark.

*IRC, on request of the Vision Unit in Paris, became one of their main partners to ensure gender and equity concerns in the World Water Vision for the 21st Century. A process was adopted that enabled women, as well as men, to express their views and participate in regional and sub-sectoral consultations. IRC provided information for the World Water Vision website and helped to identify women and men from community and institutional levels to attend consultations held in Quito, Nairobi, Trinidad and Bangkok. They became Gender Ambassadors, responsible for presenting gender issues and for synthesising the outcomes of the discussions to feed into the overall Vision. IRC will coordinate the Gender Day at the World Water Forum, at which it will present the results of this process.*

## Improving Access to and Use of Sector Information

Better use of quality information and building capacity of stakeholders and staff is essential to make the sector more efficient and effective. Documentation and information services, publications, and training and advisory services are specific mechanisms that IRC uses to provide sector staff and sector organizations with access to the latest sector information.

IRC's WWD website and archive had over 5000 visitors in 1999. (<http://www.irc.nl/products/advocacy/wwd/>)

### Advocacy

Raising awareness about sector issues is important to help obtain the commitment of decision makers to improve water and sanitation programming. IRC staff has prepared articles to share new thinking on various sector issues, provided support to media, and gave presentations at international gatherings. Increasingly IRC services are being requested for advocacy support. We contributed to the development of the VISION 21/Water for People document and to the preparation process of the Vision for Water, Life and the Environment in the 21st century.

As in past years, IRC supported the World Water Day celebration (22 March) by disseminating an electronic information package, which is also accessible on the website. The 1999 theme was *Everyone lives downstream*.

### Electronic conferences in 1999

The demand responsive approach in rural water and sanitation, May 17-July 2

Strategic approaches to urban sanitation provision, October 11-November 10

The World Bank/One World and partners Water and Sanitation Think Tank has initiated a pilot project focusing on promoting new insights and advocating ideas on key themes in rural water and sanitation. IRC together with Cinara, GARNET, WEDC and WaterAid participated in this project, contributing to the Think Tank website and electronic conferences held by One World Europe and partners. In some countries (Ghana, India, Bangladesh) discussion notes and outcomes have been shared



*User involvement helps ensure sustainability*

locally by fax and in consultative meetings to reach out to those not having Internet access. Participants felt that they came in contact with a wide range of sector professionals and gained access to a lot of experience and knowledge in a way not possible otherwise.

## Documentation and Information Services

For the Documentation Unit 1999 was a year of moves and changes. We started to explore possibilities to integrate the IRC Documentation Unit and the IHE library into a comprehensive information centre for the sector. Using the opportunity of the move, IRC began scanning 2000 unpublished documents for the new electronic library and for future availability on CD-ROM. Some 500 new titles were added to the library catalogue, IRCDOC, which will shortly be available on the Internet. Staff responded to over 1000 requests for information from visitors and external users and supported different IRC projects in the search for new information.

A new set-up was designed for the List of Basic Publications (LBP), a tool to establish a basic sector library and to provide a good overview of quality sector literature. The publications included are categorised according to the major water, sanitation and hygiene issues. The LBP will soon be accessible through Internet, which will facilitate continuous updating, thereby enhancing the value of the list.

The WSSCC continued its support to the Source Water and Sanitation News Service that it launched with IRC as a joint endeavour in 1998. Both *Source Weekly* and *Source Bulletin* provide news on the website, but also by e-mail. Hard copies of *Source Bulletin* are provided to readers in the South. A 1999 user survey gave many encouraging reactions that stimulate us to further improve and expand the service. For 2000, discussions are

- "Thank you very much for the extraordinary quality of your coverage of the world for us."
- "Source offers an unrivalled source of information for researchers and practitioners alike. I find it hard to suggest how to improve the service."
- "I can honestly say it is the best structured list server that I have run across, and as a researcher I have run across a great number."
- "WaterAid in the UK find Source one of the best sources of information available on the sector."
- "Both Source Bulletin and Source Weekly are invaluable and very well respected in the sector. If we did not have it, we would have to invent it." (<http://www.wsscc.org/source/>)



underway with IRC partners to jointly produce a French version of the Source News Service.

*Source Weekly's* e-mail circulation increased by 82% in 1999 to nearly 1300 addresses. *Source Bulletin* reaches over 5000 subscribers in hard copy in 126 countries, and over 900 e-mail subscribers.

### Electronic Information

#### Source Weekly Regional Distribution

Region	%
Africa south of Sahara	16.8
North Africa/Middle East	2.3
East Asia & Pacific	11.7
South Asia	4.5
Latin America and Caribbean	6.8
Central and Eastern Europe	4.1
Western Europe	32.2
North America	21.6
	100

#### Reader Reactions to Source Weekly

Overall Quality	%
Very good	39
Good	54
Neutral	7
	100

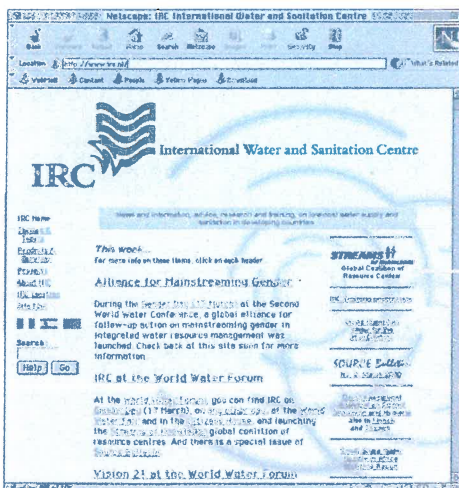
The Internet is becoming an increasingly popular means of information exchange. The IRC website (<http://www.irc.nl/>) has expanded and is attracting more and more visitors, this year from over 140 countries. The average number of page views per week nearly doubled in the course of the year from 900 to 1700. Even though Internet access in the South is far less than in the North, it is growing rapidly. We estimate that page views coming from the South went up from 10% in 1998 to 15% in 1999. The pages are optimised for low bandwidth, so even with slow Internet access the website can be viewed well.

With over 700 pages, the IRC website is one of the largest in the field of water and sanitation. The site gives thematic information, and information about IRC's products, services, and projects.

Most of it is in English, but there are also French, Spanish and Portuguese sections. Some highlights:

- Full text publications, documents, and papers
- Publications catalogue with online order form
- Training information and online registration forms

Partner organizations are also increasing their use of the Internet and use electronic mail for conferences. Internet-based information on the promotion of community management and an internal electronic discussion list have been set up, for example, by the partners in the community management project.



In 1999, IRC continued to maintain the WSSCC's website, including the Global Environmental Sanitation Initiative (GESI), Source Water and Sanitation News, and the InterWATER Guide to Water and Sanitation Information. The GESI website was updated regularly with news items from *Source Weekly* and other sources. UNICEF provided summaries with key information on case studies from environmental sanitation and hygiene programmes in 20 countries.

*The number of entries in the interWATER Guide to Organizations was doubled to over 500. We expect a further increase as institutions in the South obtain Internet access.*  
(<http://www.wsscc.org/interwater/organizations.html>)

## Publications

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IRC produced two new publications on leading sector themes this year. *Integrated Water Resources Management in Water and Sanitation Projects* was published in the Occasional Paper series and a special issue of *PLA Notes* on community water management was published through IIED.

### **Community Water Management: Special issue of PLA Notes**

*On request of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in London, IRC staff acted as guest editors for IIED's special issue of PLA Notes (Participatory Learning and Action), (June 1999, no. 35) on community water management. The issue contains 12 articles mostly from IRC's partners about experiences from this participatory action research project in 22 communities in 6 countries.*

Two IRC Technical Papers were published by Cinara and IRC in Spanish: *Transferencia de Tecnología en el Sector de Agua y Saneamiento en Colombia: Una experiencia de aprendizaje*, and *Filtración en Múltiples Etapas: Tecnología innovativa para el tratamiento de agua*. Printing was supported by UNESCO, which makes it possible to distribute copies for handling and mailing costs only. This support also enabled the production of two short Spanish video films on the Cinara/IRC projects, dealing with multi-stage filtration and joint learning projects.

With SDC in Mozambique, two IRC Occasional Papers were translated into Portuguese: *Gender in Community Water Supply, Sanitation and Water Resources Protection*, and *The Use of Structured Observations in the Study of Health Behaviour*.

### IRC publications online

IRC made its first publication available in electronic form on the IRC website this year (<http://www.irc.nl/themes/sanitation/ssh/index/html>). A Manual on School Sanitation and Hygiene received an immediate positive reaction from the readers. It appears in English, Spanish and French for free reading and downloading, and had been downloaded over 200 times in its first nine months on the site. IRC Publications on the Internet will continue to be available as hard copies. More material becomes visible when clicking on <http://www.irc.nl/sitemap.html>.

### Training Activities

Training is an important mechanism for transferring the experience gained by IRC and its partners. IRC's training programme is comprised of standard short training courses and briefing programmes, and tailor-made courses upon request.

Because collaboration with its partners has been strengthened, IRC is in a position to offer a greater variety of courses abroad. IRC will continue to support its partners in training methodology, subject content, training materials and publications, and in assuring the quality of the courses. The 1999 courses included Hygiene Education and Promotion, Monitoring for Effectiveness, Gender in Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes, Management for Sustainability and Operation and Maintenance.

A new 'training of trainers' course was held at IRC for the team from the community management research project. Tailor-made



Sharing knowledge and information enlightens others



briefing programmes were provided on subjects including gender, sanitation, water management, environmental WSS issues and rural WSS.

In Africa, Latin America and Asia a total of 12 courses were given with partner organizations, drawing over 180 participants. Some 170 additional participants took part in training programmes implemented directly by IRC partners using IRC's materials and methodologies. The NCWSTI in South Africa became a new partner in training, and courses were given in Brazil in the Portuguese language for the first time.

*Action Monitoring for Effectiveness (aMe) was given in Brazil as part of the National Capacity Building Programme for Water Resources Management, coordinated by the National Secretariat for Water Resources, in partnership with IICA - the Interamerican Institute for Agriculture Cooperation.*

### Advisory Services

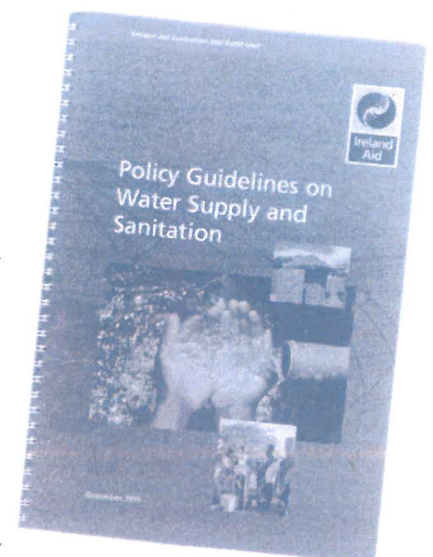
In the context of capacity building and sustainability of water supply and sanitation services, IRC approaches its evaluation and advisory missions from a learning perspective. Allowing partners to explore the programme or project situation and seek improvements and solutions for problems promotes the sharing of knowledge and experience and provides IRC with insight into key sector issues. IRC expertise is requested for a variety of advisory services, including project formulations, appraisals, evaluations, monitoring, technical support, workshops and seminars.

*The National Capacity Building Programme prioritised gender as an important topic for training, paving the way for IRC's gender course, which was carried out in March in Brasilia as part of a programme of the Secretariat of Water Resources Management.*

*IRC was requested by Ireland Aid to assist them in developing a policy for water and sanitation that provides clear and practical guidance to staff on future funding and policy in this area. The policy is based on past experiences and is developed in a participatory manner, involving stakeholders and partners in all priority countries in sub-Saharan Africa.*

*The countries selected for visits were Lesotho, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, based on the innovative characteristics of their WSS projects. Workshops on issues to be covered in the policy guidelines were held in each country as well as a final workshop with representatives from all other priority countries, to discuss the objectives and principles of the sector policy as well as the draft guidelines.*

Missions are selected from requests 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 in the South are involved. A total of 24 missions, comprising nearly 20% of IRC's total professional staff time, were carried out in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Themes included institutional development, policy development, hygiene promotion, sanitation, participatory methodologies, water supply and sanitation technology, information services, gender, monitoring, advocacy and community participation.



## Partners around the World

To ensure that sector professionals can get access to the required

knowledge and experience and to optimise the use of financial resources, working in partnership with other institutions is essential. IRC has therefore continued its quest to strengthening partnerships particularly with institutions in the South, a process that is strongly facilitated by the huge opportunities provided by the Internet.

### Partners in the South

#### Training partners in 1999

##### Asia

Dian Diesa, Indonesia  
NWSDB and COSI, Sri Lanka  
CERWASS, Vietnam

##### Africa

CEFOC and IPD/AOS, Burkina Faso  
NETWAS, Kenya  
NCWSTI, South Africa

##### Latin America

IICA, Brazil  
Universidad Católica de Guayaquil,  
Ecuador

Long-standing collaboration continued between IRC and its foremost partners Cinara in Colombia and NETWAS International in Kenya. As successful resource centres for their regions, they continue to expand their services, offering training programmes and documentation and information services, and supporting research. They are close IRC partners in different projects and long-term arrangements for collaboration are being formalised. Cinara organized a national meeting to bring together potential resource centres in Colombia and is also involved in developing a research station for wastewater treatment. The management for sustainability course is one of the main courses at NETWAS and is becoming quite popular in the region.

IRC is conducting an increasing number of research activities with its partners. The participatory action research project on community management is a prime example, and has been instrumental in both building and reinforcing South-South partnerships.

The orientation of IRC towards building a strong network of partners is very much supported by the STREAM project. This project, which began in 1998 with support from DGIS, focuses on resource centre development processes and experiences. The international workshop "Towards an enhanced role of resource



*Participatory catchment management ensures sustainable water resources*

centres in capacity building” in June was the turning point where research made way for studies and action with a view to strengthening resource centres and their networks at regional levels. The project is gradually moving towards becoming a global coalition.

The resource centres provided considerable inputs in the VISION 21 process, with STREAM meetings in Nairobi and Bangkok being organized back to back with regional VISION 21 consultations. Information sharing and capacity building are among the more important actions that have been identified to make the Vision become reality. STREAM members will participate in the World Water Forum and Fair, advocating the role of resource centres in the sector.

#### Some of IRC's Research Partners

PAID, Cameroon  
NETWAS, Kenya  
CINARA, Colombia  
Agua del Pueblo, Guatemala  
Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH),  
Nepal  
Aga Khan Planning and Building  
Services, Pakistan  
Mvula Trust, South Africa  
SEU-F, India

#### International Partners

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The relationship with the WSSCC remained strong and very visible. The Council is a unique platform for the sector in that it brings together NGOs, donor agencies, professional institutes and others. IRC worked closely together with the Council in the Vision process, putting special emphasis on introducing gender and equity concerns. IRC also participates actively in the Council's working groups, task forces and networks, which provide it with an opportunity to strengthen its ties with the various organizations involved. For the WSSCC a paper was established on the 20/20 Initiative to enhance support for basic social services.

IRC is also active with the other international partners represented on its Governing Board, with whom additional joint initiatives were developed. With UNICEF collaboration on school sanitation promotion continued with a new global project in six countries and a project in India. Furthermore IRC staff participated in a review of 30 years of UNICEF's water and sanitation interventions in India and in an assessment to strengthen the WES team in India. An idea developed in that context concerns the establishment of themes for UNICEF staff and key partners to guide the development and testing of new strategies and approaches in different areas such as school sanitation, maintenance system development and hygiene promotion.

Operation and maintenance has been the foremost area of collaboration with WHO for the past several years. An O&M training package was upgraded and WHO requested IRC to give O&M workshops in three African countries in the context of the Africa 2000 Initiative. Discussions were initiated to increase our collaboration in other areas, particularly in hygiene promotion. With the UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program a research programme on gender and sustainability continued, as did a research and capacity building programme on small-scale independent water supply providers in low-income urban areas in sub-Saharan Africa.

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#### Partners Close to Home

IRC staff contribute to IHE's post-graduate training programme for sanitary engineering, and occasional workshops, as well as providing guidance to MSc and PhD students. Likewise, IHE contributes to IRC's urban programme and IHE and IRC staff together provide support to SEU-F in India.

IRC has given support to the Netherlands Water Partnership in the development of their public relations materials and their website (<http://www.nwp.nl>). Furthermore, advice was given on setting up a mechanism for sharing information about Dutch water organizations (Water Information Network), which includes databases with NWP members and events.

Through its Documentation Unit, training programmes and guest lectures, IRC has always played a role in information exchange for Netherlands-based institutions. The Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) in The Hague frequently sends staff to IRC's briefing programmes. Support through training assistance, lectures and guidance for students is regularly provided to the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam, the Institute for Housing Studies (IHS) in Rotterdam, the Institute for Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague and Médecins sans Frontières in Belgium.



*Handpumps remain a reliable water source for many people*

# General Information

## Finance

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IRC is an independent, non-profit organization supported by and linked with the Government of the Netherlands, 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 IRC with a core budget of approximately US\$ 1.2 million\* annually, which is supplemented with income from services and programmes requested by national governments, multilateral and bilateral donors, UN agencies, international development banks and NGOs. The supplementary income amounted to some US\$ 1.1 million in 1999. Aside from its own income, another US\$ 700,000 was passed through IRC to partner organizations in the South. Furthermore, IRC was able to involve several of its partners in advisory missions.

## Staff

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The activities described in this report have been carried out by IRC's staff of 35 and its partners. Disciplines represented among staff are information science, information and communication technology, engineering, sociology, anthropology, economics, and journalism. Nearly 30% hail from outside the Netherlands.

The main role of IRC staff in carrying out the organization's activities is that of facilitator, guiding partners in coming to grips with sector problems, and jointly identifying and testing solutions. IRC also draws on staff from partner institutions in both the North and the South that have complementary skills. In 1999 IRC began hiring research associates to carry out short-term assignments. Research associates are young graduates who assist project officers in order to be exposed to and gain experience in IRC's work.

\* US\$ 1.00 = NLG 2.21 in 1999

Human resources development received more attention in 1999, with management skills training for Management Team members, and computer skills training for administrative staff.

The Works Council, established in 1997, represents staff interests in matters pertaining to the IRC policy in general and to personnel matters in particular. During 1999, the Works Council advised the Director on policies pertaining to personnel management such as human resources development, working hours and recruitment procedures. During the move to Delft, the Works Council ensured that the interests of the staff were taken into consideration in the selection, layout and seating arrangements of the new premises.

The Works Council was also involved in the formulation of a staff questionnaire to assess the new working environment and working relations after the reorganization. In all, cooperation with the Director and Board has been very constructive.



*Village mapping contributes to dialog about community water problems*

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