



Rural Water Supply Network  
**Annual Report 2023**

# Acknowledgements

RWSN would not exist without the contributions and collaborations between the following amazing people and organisations over the course of 2023:

## RWSN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr Tommy Ka Kit Ngai, WaterAid

African Development Bank (AfDB), Diane Arjoon; One for All Alliance (IRC, Water for Good, Water for People), Dr John Butterworth; Skat Foundation, Bertha Camacho; UNICEF, Jorge Alvarez-Sala; WaterAid, Erik Harvey; The World Bank, N. Awa Diagne

## RWSN THEME LEADERS

Dr Amita Bhakta; Dr Barbara van Koppen, IWMI; David Inman Water Mission; Euphresia Luseka; Jorge Sala-Alvarez. UNICEF; Julia Boulenuar, Aguaconsult Ltd.; Mandy Goksu Water Mission; Matthias Saladin, Skat Foundation; Muthi Nhlema, Baseflow; Sandra van Soelen, Simavi; Temple Oraeki.

## RWSN SECRETARIAT

Sean Furey, Meleesa Naughton, Dr Aline Saraiva-Okello, Daniella Marko, Batima Tleulinova

## With financial and administrative support from

**Skat Foundation:** Bertha Camacho, Andrea Güpfer, Rena Salzmann, Karla Schlie.



Report written and designed by Sean Furey. Background pattern created with DALL-E 3 AI. Artwork created by Midjourney 6.0  
All photos: Skat Foundation unless otherwise credited.

## RWSN PROJECT PARTNERS

Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) through the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) Secretariat; Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) through the Valuing Water Initiative (RWSN partnering with Aquafed); Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) through the SIRWASH programme (led by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) through the REACH programme (led by the University of Oxford; United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the REAL-Water programme (led by the Aquaya Institute); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); The Global Water Center; The Stone Family Foundation; The Waterloo Foundation; The World Bank Global Water Practice; CEWAS; The World Health Organisation (WHO).

### Other organisations/acronyms:

ADB – Asian Development Bank  
AMCOW – African Ministers' Council on Water  
CHF – Swiss Francs  
EUR - Euros  
GBP – UK Pounds Sterling  
SWA – Sanitation & Water for All  
USD – United States Dollars





We are the global network of professionals dedicated to rural water supply

### Vision:

RWSN's vision is that of a world in which all people enjoy safely managed water services that are resilient and sustainable.

### Aim:

to improve the quality of rural water services and their management.

### Mission:

RWSN is a convening space for individual professionals and organisations to collaborate, develop guidelines and standards, curate knowledge, and promote lifelong learning in the rural water sector. RWSN will inspire and support more women to become active at all levels of decision-making, from remote villages to the United Nations.

### Values:

- **People** are at the heart of solving rural water supply challenges.
- **Openness and respect** allows for free exchange of experience and knowledge, and disagreement is handled in a reasoned and respectful way.
- **Improved collaboration and learning** are core to eliminating poverty and achieving the Vision.
- We should always lead by example with **professionalism**, a commitment to **high quality work, integrity** and a focus on **water user needs**.
- **Diversity** is essential, and our activities should always have a vibrant mix of voices from different nationalities, languages, backgrounds, professions, genders, abilities and ages.

# Contents

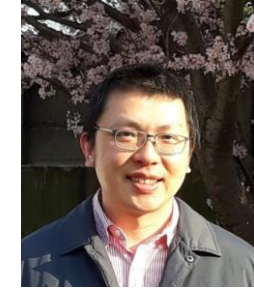
- ❖ [Word from the Chair](#)
- ❖ [Impact, Outcomes, Activities/Outputs & Inputs](#)
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- ❖ [Networking](#)
- ❖ [Projects](#)
- ❖ [Network Management](#)

# Word from the Chair

2023 marked the end of RWSN's six-year strategy and the halfway point in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) period. For rural water supply as a basic service and human right, we can reflect on the broad progress that has been made around the world towards achieving universal access. But major gaps still exist and gains made are vulnerable to the main economic, political and environmental instabilities experienced worldwide.

RWSN has continued to grow and thrive over the last six years, and the COVID-19 pandemic re-emphasised the need and value of networks for connecting people to learn from each other and to collaborate. Although that crisis has passed, many ways of working, communicating and connecting have stuck. In 2023, RWSN's webinars have continued to play a central role in how we share experiences from around the world, and our mentoring programme has continued to develop and grow. Feedback from our member survey gave encouraging feedback on how we help water professionals in their jobs and careers and this value of life-long learning has been put at the heart of our new 2024-2030 strategy.

What we achieve is only possible through the amazing collaboration and goodwill of our members, partners and funders. It has been a privilege to be the Chair of RWSN and while I am stepping down, I will still be on the RWSN Executive Committee for WaterAid. I am excited that we have new Executive Members and Theme Leaders for 2024 – a sign that RWSN is, and will continue to be, a vibrant and influential global network.



[Tommy Ka Kit Ngai | LinkedIn](#)  
RWSN Chair



# Our Impact: Voices of Change

"Participated in a discussion on 'what could be done differently' to address rural water and sanitation. Implemented some of the issues discussed and witnessed a positive change in some of the communities where we implemented WASH programs."

"As a WASH Officer and Data Analyst, RWSN has improved my monitoring skills and also my ability to analyze underground water quality from hand-dug wells and boreholes."

"Le webinar sur les bonnes pratiques en matière de pompage solaire m'a aider à rédiger une proposition de projet que nous avons soumis à Unicef et qui a été financé"

"I have been building on the idea of social accountability which I got from the webinar on social accountability. We are transforming our organization's practice to be more inclusive."

"I have used an idea from RWSN to teach rural/small town dwellers on how to manage their water schemes (Operation and maintenance) of their water schemes for sustainability."

"Cuando comparten información de avances tecnológicos en las cadenas de correo, comparto la información con mi equipo de trabajo y nos sirve para mejorar nuestras propias tecnologías."

## Strategy 2018-2023

**Strategic Outcome 1:** As a dynamic and trusted network, RWSN grows and evolves to meet the demands of its members and makes coherent contribution of knowledge exchange and learning to support the achievement of universal safe water access in rural areas worldwide.

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Improved access to knowledge for rural water supply sector professionals and organisations and sharing of knowledge between rural water supply sector professionals and organisations, to advance on strategic issues to the sector.

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Women and young people have a strong and equal voice across the network and play an influential role increasing the equality of decision-making power in regard to provision of rural water services.

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Good policies and practices are embedded through rural water supply sector professionals and organisations to enhance sector performance, thereby contributing to improvements of rural water supply at a national/sub-national level.

## Outcome Highlights 2023

- ❖ *[SO 1/2/4]* Convening a new Community of Practice, through SIRWASH, on rural WASH for Multi-Lateral Development Banks, agreeing a Call-to-Action and experience sharing through webinars on:
  - Information-based decision making in rural WASH investments and service monitoring.
  - Institutional strengthening.
  - Rural sanitation.
- ❖ *[SO 1/3]* Increasing connections between women water professionals through collaborative “Women in Water” mingle events at conference with other WASH networks.
- ❖ *[SO 2]* Sharing a [research paper on PAMSIMAS](#) led to REAL-Water including rural water supply Indonesia as a research area in the programme.
- ❖ *[SO 4]* Stop the Rot engaged with the [WASH Funders Group](#) led to the collaborative drafting of a set of checklists to help funders to ask the right questions in relation to borehole and handpump design and construction quality.
- ❖ *[SO 4]* The Stop the Rot Action Group led to a [collaborative handpump design alliance](#) between Design Outreach (US) and Neale Consulting Engineers (UK).
- ❖ *[SO 4]* [Bringing together Tiyani](#) (UK/Malawi) and the SMART Centre Group has led to new collaborations between them and with BASEflow (Malawi).

RWSN began webinars in 2012, hosted by the World Bank, to share highly recommended papers and presentations from the 6<sup>th</sup> RWSN Forum, Kampala, 2011.

From 2013 onwards, we ran an increasing number of webinars, most with French or Spanish versions and occasionally all three. These were supported financially by the SDC core contribution, project funding and sponsored webinars, paid for by member organisations.

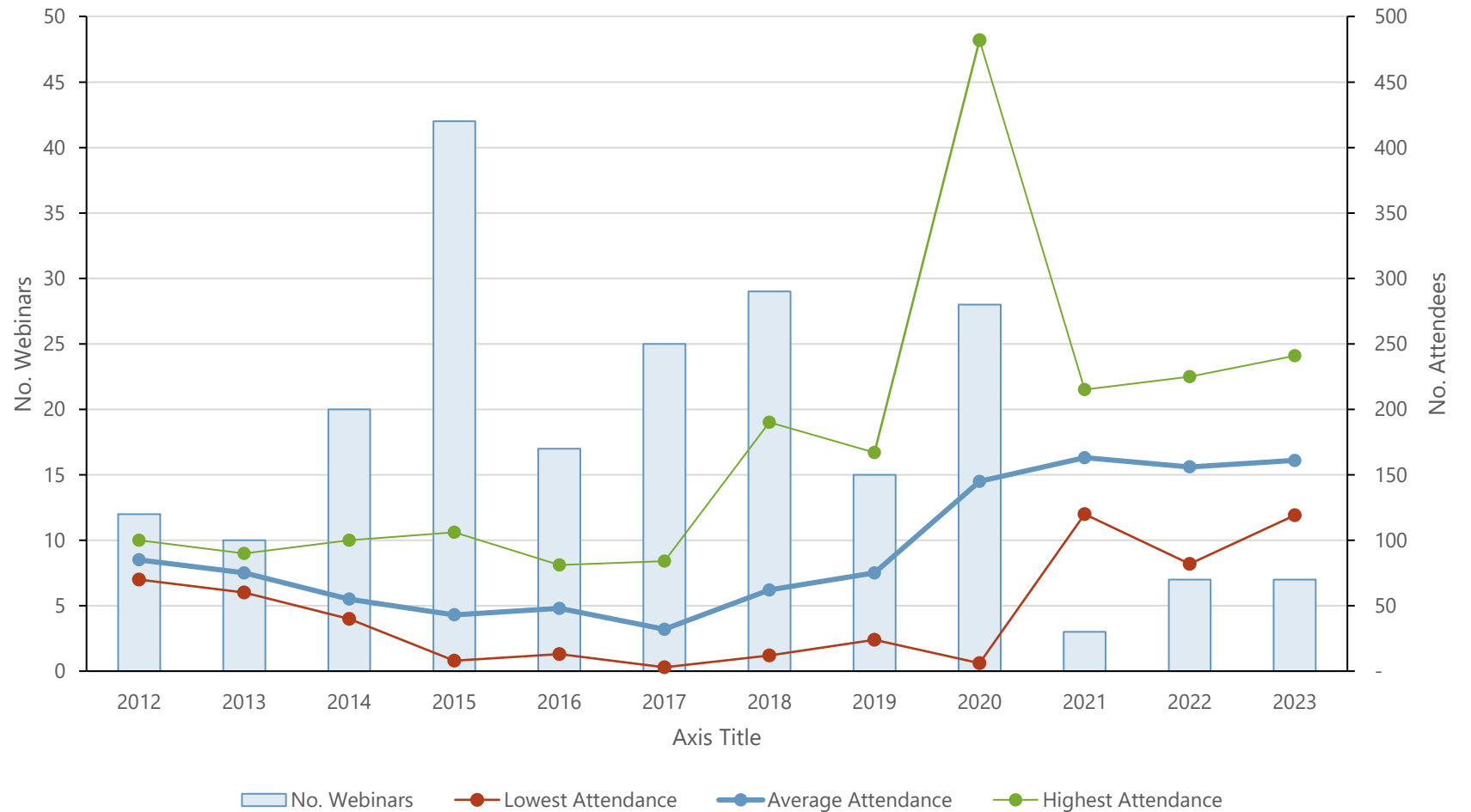
A major shift came in 2020, during the first Covid-19 lockdowns, when attendance increased dramatically.

In 2021, the sudden funding cut reduced output, but the Secretariat switched platforms to allow higher attendance and live simultaneous translation rather than separate webinars for different languages. Consequently, even though the number of webinars has reduced dramatically, attendance has remained high, and this trend continued in 2023.

Webinars remain one of our most effective global and accessible knowledge-sharing activities and we have a substantial online library of [recordings](#) and [slides](#).

# Output Trend: Webinars

RWSN Webinars 2012-2023





Looking back over the last 14 years, the 6<sup>th</sup> RWSN Forum Conference in Uganda in 2011 was a clear turning point in the network. It led to increased project funding and financial contributions that enabled the network to grow and thrive. The 7<sup>th</sup> RWSN Forum in Côte d'Ivoire in 2016 was also an important milestone but did not have the same impact on the trajectory of the network's inputs.

More recently, RWSN's knowledge broker role for the UPGro programme (2013-2020) ended with the conclusion of the programme, but the Secretariat was able to attract substantial new project funding in the following years and play an increased role in the REACH programme (2015-2024).

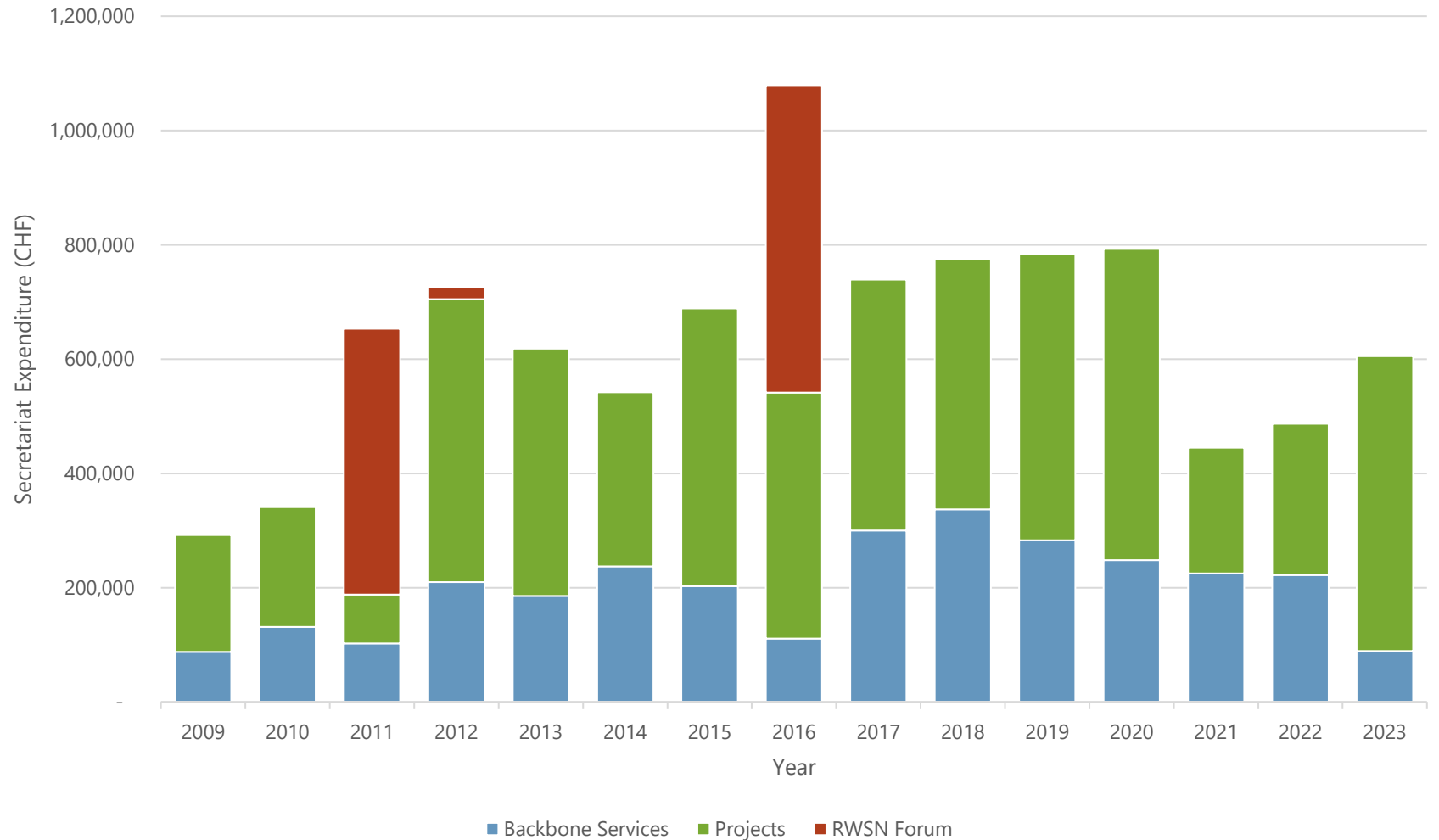
The main challenge has been to rebuild and sustain the core funding for RWSN's backbone services, which came from a direct contribution from SDC until mid-2022. In 2023, SDC funding continued but indirectly through the SIRWASH programme and a programme contribution to Skat Foundation.

Overall, RWSN's financial and in-kind inputs have remained strong thanks to the agility of the Secretariat organisation and the strong partner support.

*Note: In-kind contributions have not been consistently monetized and reported over this period.*

# Input Trend: Funding

RWSN Annual Expenditure 2009-2023



Overall, RWSN's financial position remains stable due to diverse income streams from contributions, voluntary member dues, services, project funding and in-kind support. However, the limited flexible funding for running RWSN's core services is highly constrained and dependent on Skat Foundation (SDC Programme Contribution).

This statement is intended to recognize the many contributions that make RWSN possible. It includes information extracted from the Skat Foundation 2023 audit report and internal financial reporting.

\*In-kind contributions are time inputs and expenses on RWSN-related activities. The figures are based on self-reporting by partners and are not audited.

This is not intended as a definitive financial statement due to currency fluctuations during the year.

Exchange rate from 31.12.2023: 1 CHF = USD 1.18797 = GBP 0.93317 = EURO 1.07647  
NR – Not Reported

CHF 45,724.02 remains in trust from the 7th RWSN Forum for the 8th RWSN Forum or equivalent event activity.

# Network Contributions

Partner	Income (CHF)	Monetised In-kind contribution*	Total contribution	Remarks
<b>Executive Committee</b>				
Skat Foundation	46,066		46,066	From SDC programme contribution
WaterAid	14,648		14,648	EUR 10,000 + GBP 5,000
IRC	9,290		9,290	EUR 10,000
AfDB	8,418		8,418	USD 10,000
UNICEF		9,680	9,680	Project + USD 11,500 In-kind contribution
World Bank			-	Project contribution + unreported In-kind
<b>Theme Leaders</b>				
Independent: Euphresia Luseka		13,696	13,696	USD 16,270.00 In-kind
Ask for Water GmbH		11,645	11,645	
Independent: Amita Bhakta		11,319	11,319	GBP 10,562 In-kind
Simavi	842	8,026	8,868	USD 1,000 cash + EUR 8,640 In-kind
Independent: Temple Oraeki		6,776	6,776	USD 8,050
Baseflow		6,573	6,573	USD 7,808 In-kind
Aguaconsult		2,399	2,399	USD 2,850
Water Mission	842		842	USD 1,000 cash + unreported In-kind
IWMI		5,051	5,051	USD 6,000
<b>Members</b>				
Member/Member Org Contributions (after charges)	8,906		8,906	
<b>Total Network Contributions (CHF)</b>	<b>89,010</b>	<b>75,165</b>	<b>164,175</b>	

Core services are these governance and networking activities that are needed to keep RWSN active, transparent and responding to member needs and, where possible, being an active leader and champion for rural water.

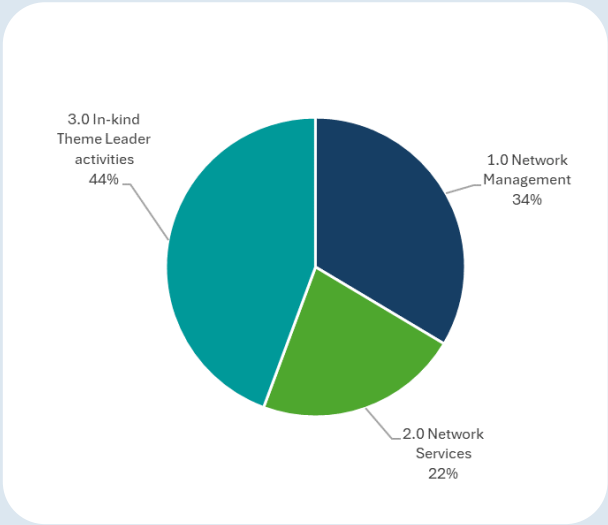
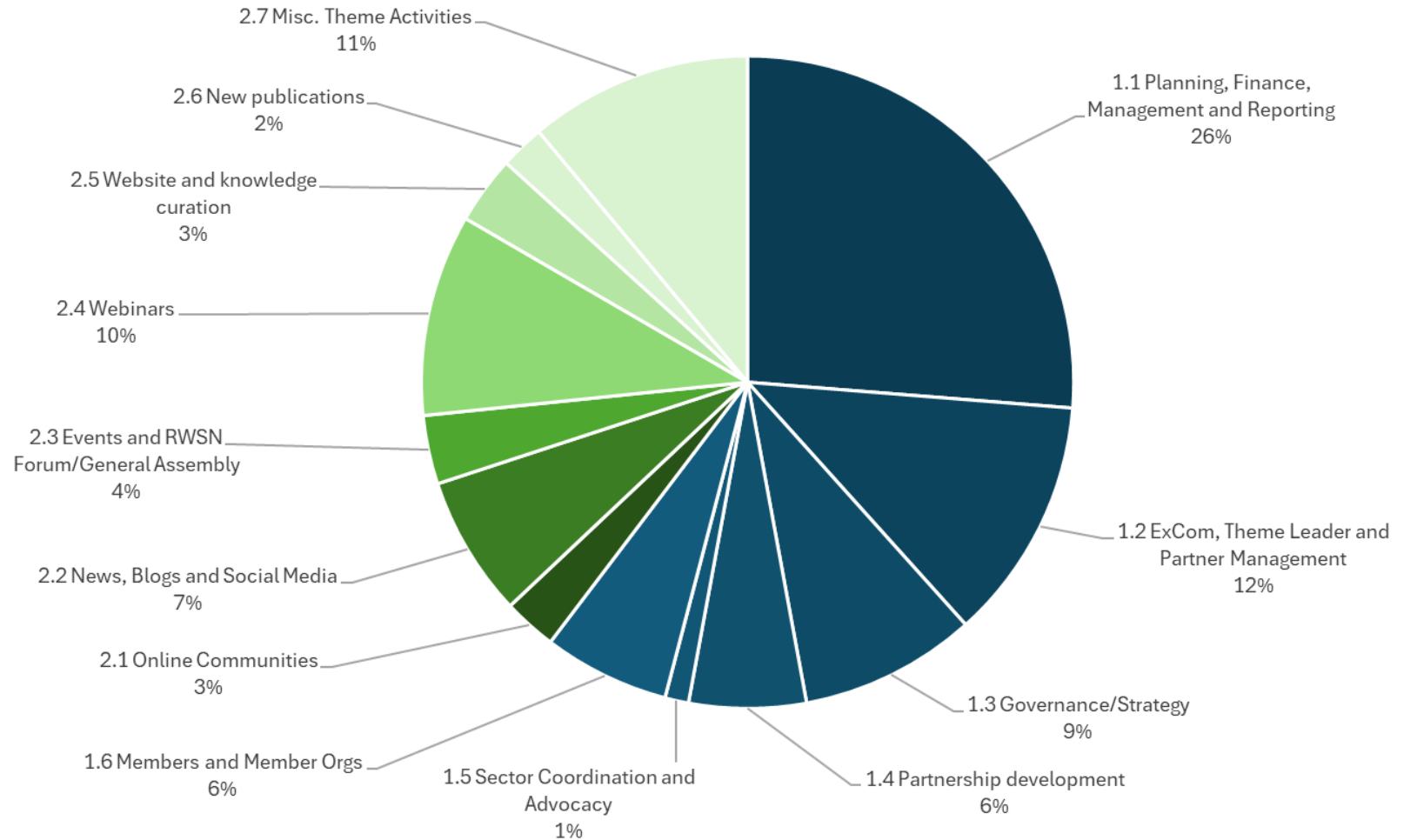
This work is only possible through the generous financial and in-kind contributions of our partners and members listed on the previous page.

2023 was a normal year within the highly constrained budget. The participatory development of the 2024-2030 Strategy was the main irregular intensive activity.

Roughly two-thirds of the budget is spent on network management and the remainder on network services – when including the in-kind contributions from Theme Leaders, the management proportion reduces to a third of the overall:

# Core Services Expenditure

Total Budget/Expenditure (2023) through Skat Foundation: CHF 89,010 (≈USD 105,740)



This statement is intended to recognize the many contributions that make RWSN possible. It includes information extracted from the Skat Foundation 2023 audit report and internal financial reporting. In-kind contributions are based on self-reporting by partners and are not audited. This is not intended as a definitive financial statement due to currency fluctuations during the year.

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NR – Not Reported

CHF 45,724.02 remains in trust from the 7th RWSN Forum for the 8th RWSN Forum or equivalent event activity.

# Financial Summary

RWSN Project	Income (CHF)	Expenditure (CHF)	Remarks
REACH (University of Oxford/FCDO) Phase 3/ Phase 4	165,432	123,558	Multi-year project
SIRWASH (IDB/SDC)	139,427	163,355	Multi-year project
REAL-Water (Aquaya/USAID)	87,842	87,842	Multi-year project
Stop the Rot (Waterloo Fdtn)	50,625	60,039	Multi-year project
Valuing Water Initiative (AquaFed)	30,536	30,536	
SuSanA Forum (GIZ)	16,122	10,777	Multi-year project
Capacity Strengthening (UNICEF)	15,419	15,419	Multi-year project
RWSN Mentoring (Global Water Center)	13,689	8,664	Multi-year activity fund
Stop the Rot (World Bank)	10,943	7,694	Multi-year project
Piped Water System Review (Stone Foundation)	5,119	5,580	
Rural Water Accelerator (CEWAS)	0	1,858	€2,000 invoiced in January 2024
Small System Guidelines (WHO)	0	908	Activities postponed to 2024
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>535,153</b>	<b>516,229</b>	
<b>Core Services/Contributions</b> (from page 8)	<b>89,010</b>	<b>89,010</b>	
<b>In-kind Contributions</b> (from page 8)	<b>75,165</b>	<b>75,165</b>	Income & Expenditure by partners on RWSN-related activities
<b>RWSN TOTAL</b>	<b>699,329</b>	<b>680,405</b>	



# Networking

Activities focused on member interests and needs organised by Theme Leaders and the Secretariat



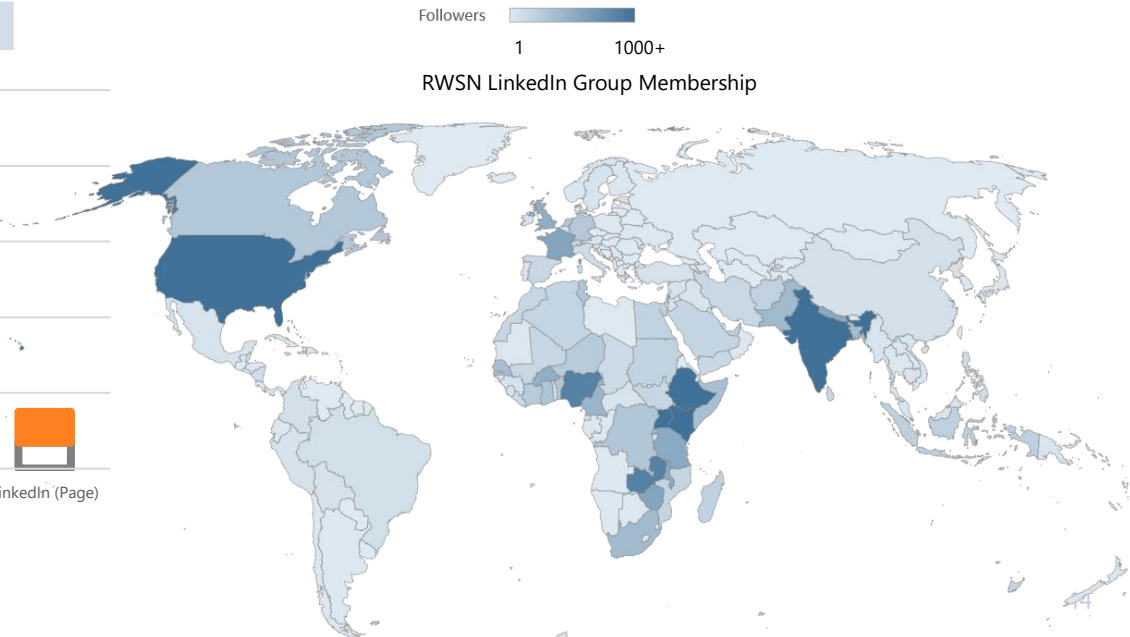
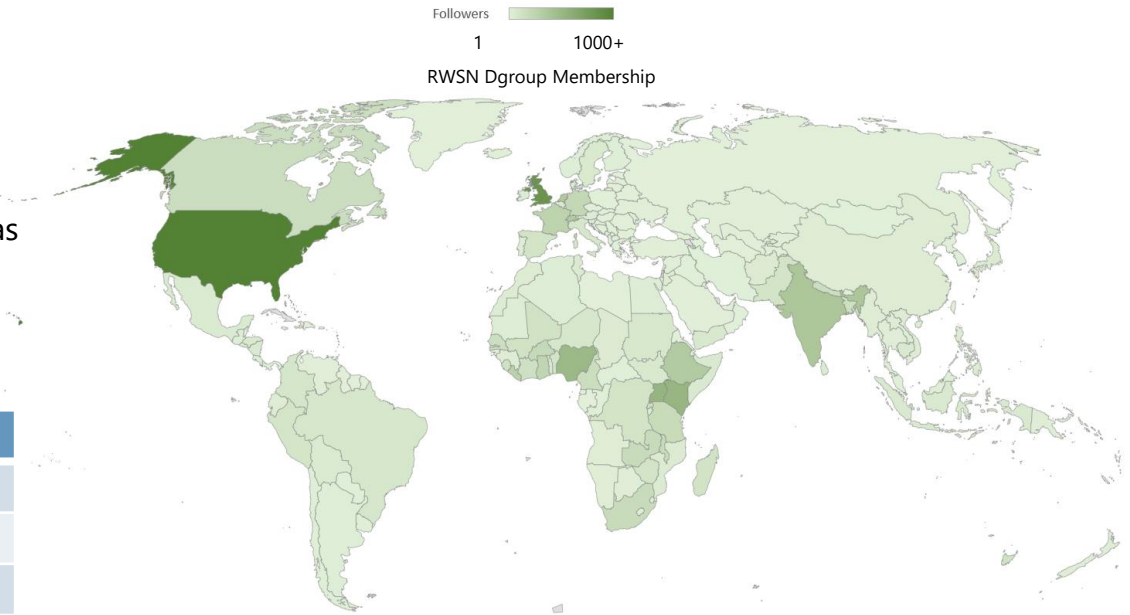
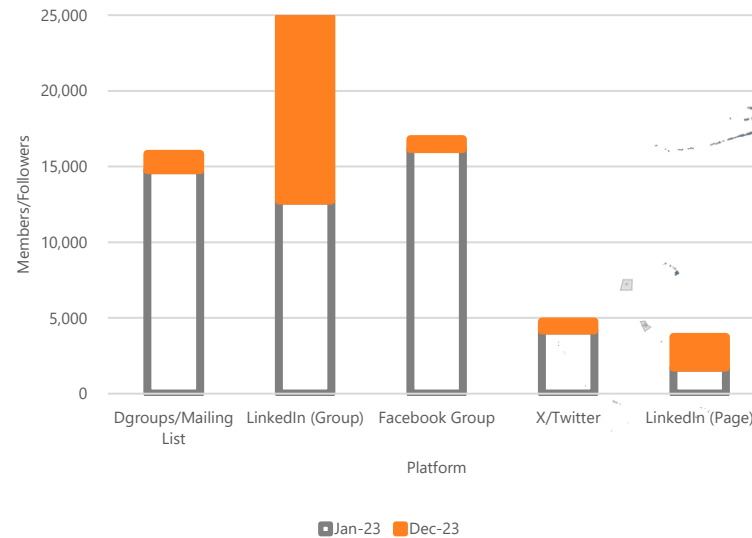
**Latin America & Caribbean (LAC)**

It has been a strategic priority to increase membership in LAC, and with the support of the SIRWASH programme the RWSN Spanish-language online community for grew from 72 to 248 members, with a further 80 from Brazil joining the RWSN Portuguese community. Overall, RWSN now has over 700 individual members in the LAC region, with the top countries being Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Nicaragua, Mexico, Bolivia and Haiti. Knowledge sharing on sanitation was led by Aguatuya, in Bolivia, with cross-sharing with Africa and Asia on the [SuSanA Forum](#).

# Network Growth

Membership grew steadily over the year with a net gain of 1,081 individuals. Activity on the RWSN Dgroups communities stagnated but was compensated by more activity on the RWSN LinkedIn Group, which doubled in size with members in 168 countries and territories. Top Countries, as of January 2024:

Rank	Dgroups	LinkedIn
1	USA (1,258)	India (5,732)
2	UK (834)	Kenya (2,245)
3	Uganda (536)	Uganda (1,385)
4	Kenya (528)	Ethiopia (1,252)
5	Nigeria (493)	USA (1,248)

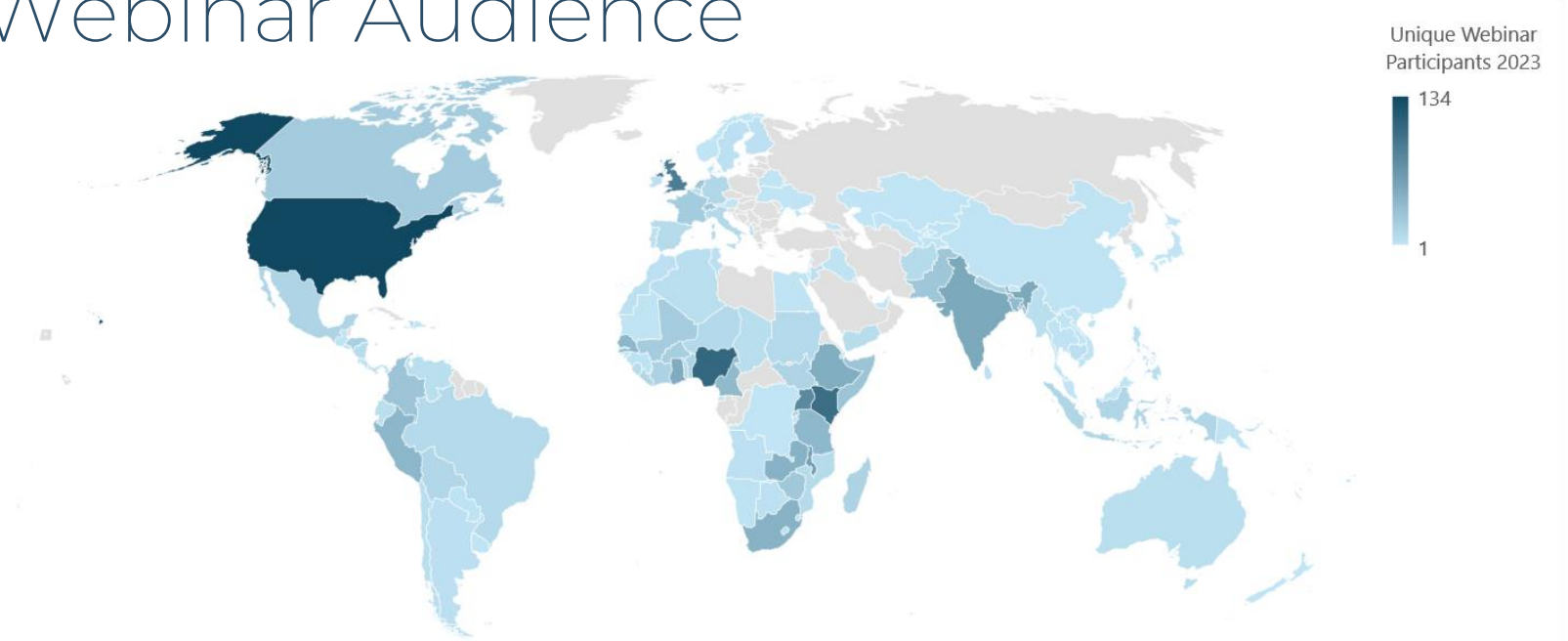


RWSN webinars have been a staple of the WASH sector since 2012. We have always accommodated multiple languages, but we have transitioned from running separate webinars for each language to offering simultaneous translation, generally between English, French and Spanish but other languages as well, on request.

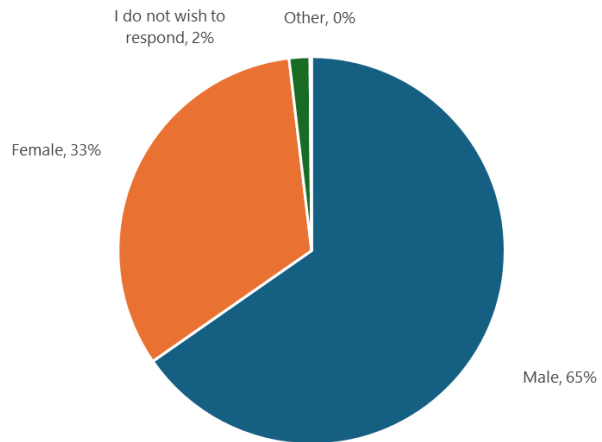
In 2023, across seven webinars:

- ❖ **1,996** different people registered (3,053 total registrations)
- ❖ **750** people attended at least one from **131 countries and territories**.

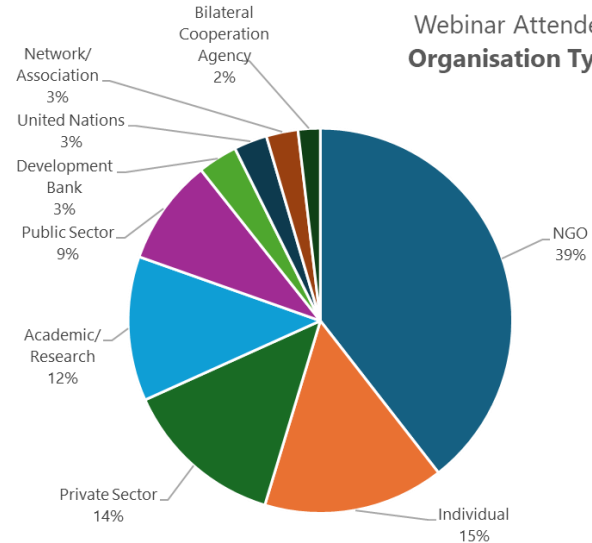
# Webinar Audience



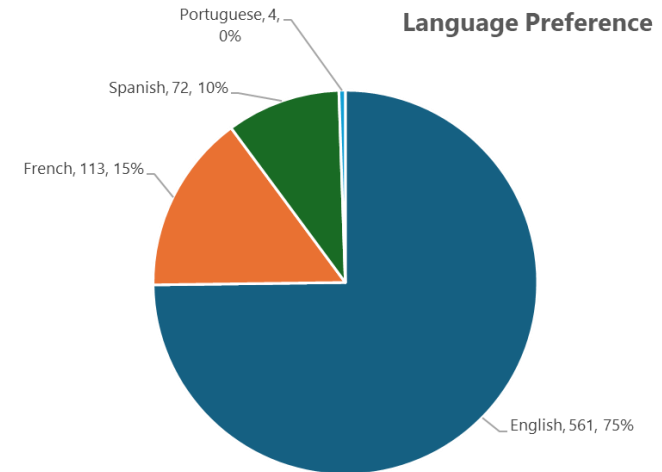
Webinar Attendees  
**Gender**



Webinar Attendees  
**Organisation Type**



Webinar Attendees  
**Language Preference**



RWSN webinars continued to be popular, with 1,226 participants.

Of the 84 Speakers, Chairs and Discussants:

- ❖ **57%** were from the Global South
- ❖ **49%** were women
- ❖ **11%** were Young Professionals

Click on a thumbnail to view the recording.

In addition to these webinars, we hosted two learning and networking events for RWSN Member Organisations:

- ❖ 7 March 2023, Session 1. Attended: 21 (11 male, 10 female)
- ❖ 9 March 2023, Session 2. Attended: 21 (5 male, 16 female)

# Webinars in 2023

**WEBINAR SERIES**

**Opportunities and Challenges of Government-led SDG 6.1 monitoring in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States**

30 MAY, 2023  
14:30 - 16:00 CEST

In partnership with: skat foundation, UNICEF, SANITATION AND WATER FOR ALL, BASEflow, iWATER, REACH

145 participants (97 male / 46 female / 2 did not wish to answer)

**WEBINAR SERIES**

**Customary water tenure 1 (EN/FR)**

27 JUNE  
14:30 - 16:00 CEST

\*\*\*English with simultaneous French Interpretation\*\*\*

A session organized by: RWSN, skat foundation, IWMI, and others.

136 participants (92 male / 39 female / 5 did not wish to answer)

**SIRWASH Webinar series**

**Webinar 1: Regional and national monitoring of rural WASH - experiences of data-to-decisions**

October 4, 2023, 16:00 - 17:30 CEST

Logos: IDB, ADB, and others.

258 participants (149 male / 106 female / 3 did not wish to answer)

**STOP THE ROT**

**Handpump Upgrade... to Be, or Not to Be?**

6 JUNE, 2023  
14:30 - 16:00 CEST

Registrations: QR code, Zoom link

\*\*\*English with simultaneous French Interpretation\*\*\*

200 participants (139 male / 56 female / 5 did not wish to answer)

Aqua for All & Rural Water Supply Network's Learning & Networking event for Member Organisations & Partners

**Mobilising investments for water and sanitation enterprises through carbon credits**

Logos: Aqua for All, RWSN, skat foundation

Special Member Organisation only event

**SIRWASH Webinar series**

**Webinar 2: Formalising and strengthening institutions for supporting rural WASH services**

November 7, 2023, 10:00 - 11:30 CET

Logos: IDB, ADB, and others.

153 participants (91 male / 59 female / 3 did not wish to answer)

**WEBINAR SERIES**

**Water for food, for drinking and for rural development - discussing examples at scale**

20 JUNE  
16:00 - 17:00 CEST

\*\*\*English with simultaneous Spanish Interpretation\*\*\*

A session organized by: RWSN, skat foundation, and others.

198 participants (136 male / 58 female / 4 did not wish to answer)

**RWSN Webinar early series presentation files**

**SIRWASH Series presentation files**

**SIRWASH Webinar series**

**Webinar 3: Rural sanitation - why is it left behind?**

November 15, 2023  
15:00 - 16:30 CET

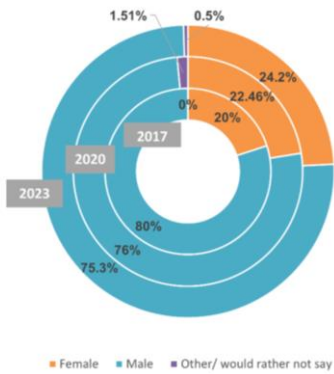
Logos: IDB, ADB, and others.

136 participants (82 male / 54 female / 0 did not wish to answer)



In 2023, the RWSN mentoring programme had:

- ❖ **250 participants from 66 countries.**
- ❖ **86% from the Global South**, 92% of participants identified as non-White.
- ❖ **82%** of mentees were satisfied with their mentors, and **90%** of mentors were satisfied with their mentees.



The proportion of women in RWSN is steadily increasing, but the profession remains male-dominated. To help create a more balanced workforce, at all levels of seniority, we actively support the careers of young women and men through our annual mentoring programme. We also partner with others to create networking and mutual support opportunities for women professionals.

# Mentoring & Networking for Women

A Mentoring journey, by Fadzai T. Munodawafa and Kerstin Danert



For International Women's Day, we would like to highlight two participants from the RWSN Mentoring programme for young professionals and women, Fadzai T. Munodawafa - Bhurabura (from Zimbabwe) and Dr Kerstin Danert (from Switzerland). You can find out more about their experience of mentoring through RWSN below. RWSN plans on launching a new edition of the mentoring programme soon, and encourages women of all ages in the water sector to sign up. To find out more, [sign up to become a RWSN member today.](#)

Mon parcours dans le programme de mentorat du RWSN



Ceci est un blog d'une mentorée de RWSN, Awa DIAGNE, et d'un mentor de RWSN, Yves Etienne RAKOTOARISON.

My experience with the RWSN Mentoring Programme



This is a guest blog by RWSN mentee Beatrice Kyomuhendo (Uganda) and RWSN mentor Eng. Cornelius Mpesi (Malawi) who took part in the 2023 RWSN Mentoring Programme.

Nurturing Professional Growth in the WASH Sector



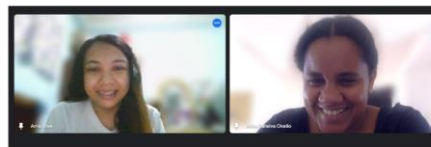
by Lisa Mitchell, Senior Director of Learning Services, Global Water Center, re-blogged from the Global Water Center

My Mentee Journey in the RWSN Mentoring Programme



This is a guest blog by RWSN mentee RAKOTOARIMANANA ZY Harifidy and RWSN mentor Sean Furey who took part in the 2023 RWSN Mentoring Programme.

My experience with the RWSN Mentoring Programme



This is a guest blog by RWSN mentee Arra Clarize Jose and RWSN mentor Aline Saraiva Okello, Ph.D.



22 August 2023 | 18:00 CEST  
**Stronger Together! Women's Mingle**  
 Venue: The View, Scandic Continental, Stockholm



Are you a water woman looking for an opportunity to connect with other women? Join us and meet outstanding women from around the world!

We warmly invite you to connect with women in all their diversity over snacks and drinks to network, share experiences, and support each other. With the aim to create a more inclusive and professional network, our goal is to help you advance your career, so join us and exchange ideas. And bring your own experiences. We are looking forward to an evening of connection.



sustainable sanitation alliance

During the year, the Secretariat took advantage of any events attended to find out more about our members and encourage them to share their professional stories and career advice.

These #CareerChats have become a popular weekly series in the second half of the year.

# Career Chats



Dr Callist Tindimugaya - Ministry of Water and Environment (Uganda)



Alejandro Martos, Director - FECASALC/AECID (Spain)



Prof. Katrina Charles, Professor of Environmental Health Risks, University of Oxford (UK)



Neil Dhot, Executive Director of Aquafed (UK/France)



Taryn Meyers, Director of Global WASH Services, CAWST (Canada)



Megan Angulo, Evidence Action (Kenya/USA)



James Oriega Otieno, World Bank (Kenya)



Sofia Murad, WHO (Sweden)



Colin Herron, Global Water Partnership (Sweden)



Simon Zbinden, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Switzerland)



Dr. Mohammed Abed Hossain - Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Bangladesh)



Charles Odira Maxwell - University of Nairobi (Kenya)



Ayesha Chugh, CAWST (Canada)



Dr Ana Gren, World Bank/ SIDA (US/Sweden)



Dr. Jennifer Molwantwa, Water Research Commission (South Africa)



Berna Namwanje - Viva con Agua (Uganda)



Dr. Jess MacArthur, Save the Children/UTS (Australia/ Switzerland)



Dr. George Wainaina, Scientific Knowledge Broker, Eawag (Switzerland)



Dr. Veena Srinivasan, Founder and Executive Director, WELL Labs (India)



José Castro, CEO & Founder, Segura (Guatemala)



Lara Lambert, Senior Director of Program Design, Water Mission (South Africa)

RWSN was active in Stockholm this year: Secretariat Director, Sean Furey attended the UN-Water Meeting, hosted by SIDA, and presented at the SuSanA Annual meeting before running across the city to present in the REAL-Water session, organised by RWSN, on innovation.

[Read about RWSN at World Water Week.](#)

RWSN secretariat and several theme leaders participated in the **All Systems Connect Symposium** in The Hague, Netherlands. The sessions we co-convened included:

- Broadening the definition of "resilience": approaches to WASH and climate systems strengthening
- Decolonising the WASH narrative to localise systems change, Part 1: disrupting the single story
- Decolonising the WASH narrative to localise systems change, Part 2: changing the narrative.
- Young people, jobs and lifelong learning for WASH professionals,
- Private operators of rural water supplies: drivers, experiences and supporting systems
- Small but not forgotten: sneak preview of WHO's new guidelines for small drinking-water supplies
- Ideas market for your WASH systems backpack
- Women's Lunch Mingle, in partnership with the Community of Women in Water.

## Events



REAL-Water Session: ["Driving rural water innovation concept to scale up"](#)  
Team photo: A. Saraiva Okello, RWSN



RWSN/REAL-Water/REACH session on climate resilient WASH, moderated by Dr Aline Okello, at All Systems Connect; photo: [Robert Tjalondo](#)



Women's Mingle at World Water Week. Photo: Ellen Greggio



Launch of [Africa Voice on Water \(AVOW\)](#), photo: AMCOW, featuring articles from RWSN

We introduced concise monthly email updates in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, and reduced our long-running quarterly newsletters to two longer digests to help members keep up with recent publications, tools and resources for rural water supply.

By the end of 2023, the RWSN Monthly Updates and periodic news digests were:

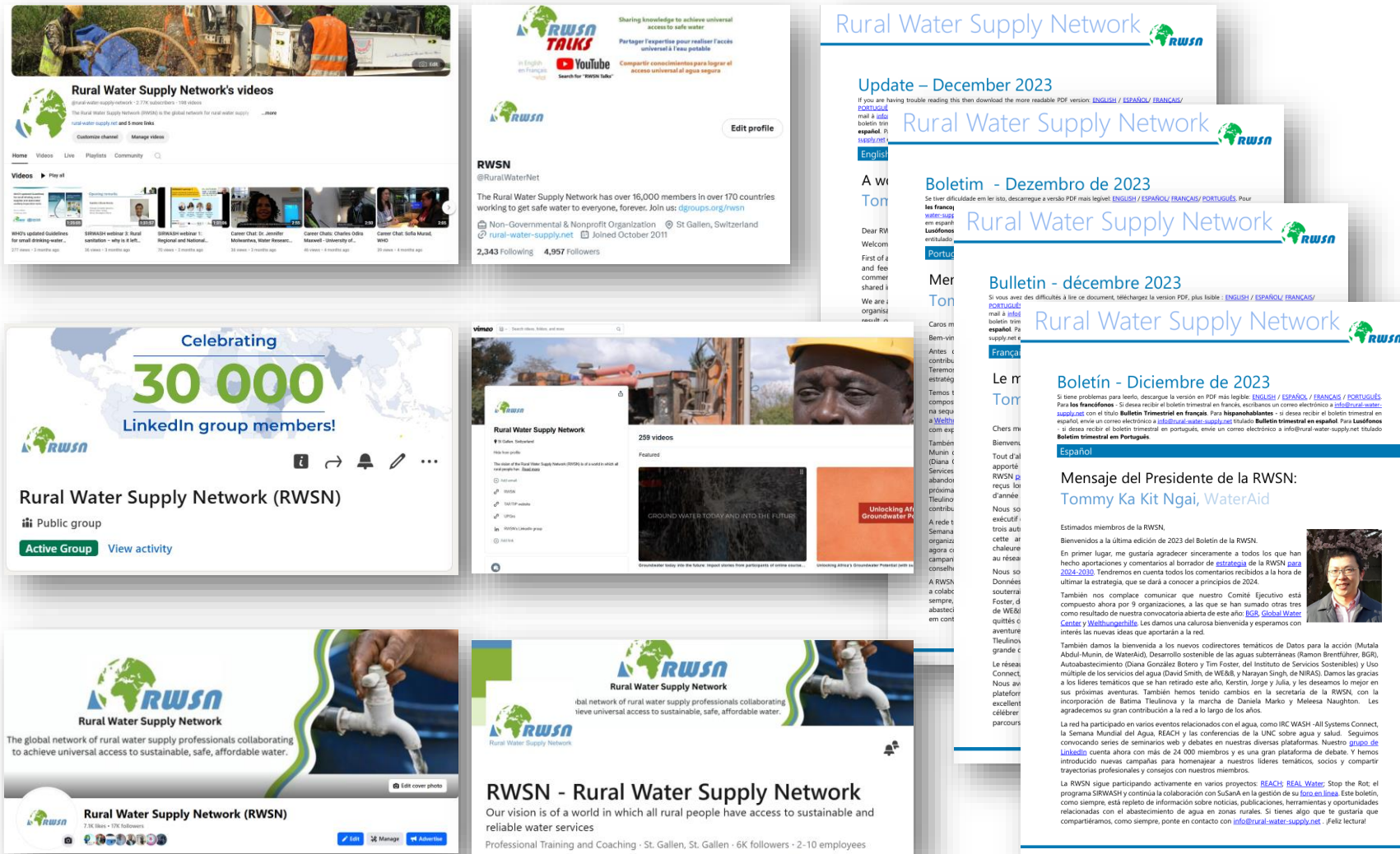
- ❖ reaching **13,274 people** with
- ❖ **open-rates of 27-44%**
- ❖ 226 people unsubscribed during the year, with a net gain of subscribers of 336.

RWSN also has an active and growing social media presence that allows us to reach a wide and diverse audience around the world:

In 2023, RWSN provided CEWAS with expert input to their **East Africa Rural Water Accelerator**, which mentored and supported a cohort of established rural and safe water enterprises to help them develop their businesses further and faster.

The RWSN Director gave an overview of trends across the sector and then had mentoring calls with several of the enterprise owners to help them think through the challenges and opportunities they faced.

# Knowledge Sharing and News



The RWSN website remains an important and trusted source of information on rural water supply.

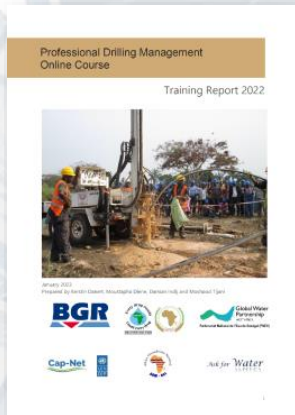
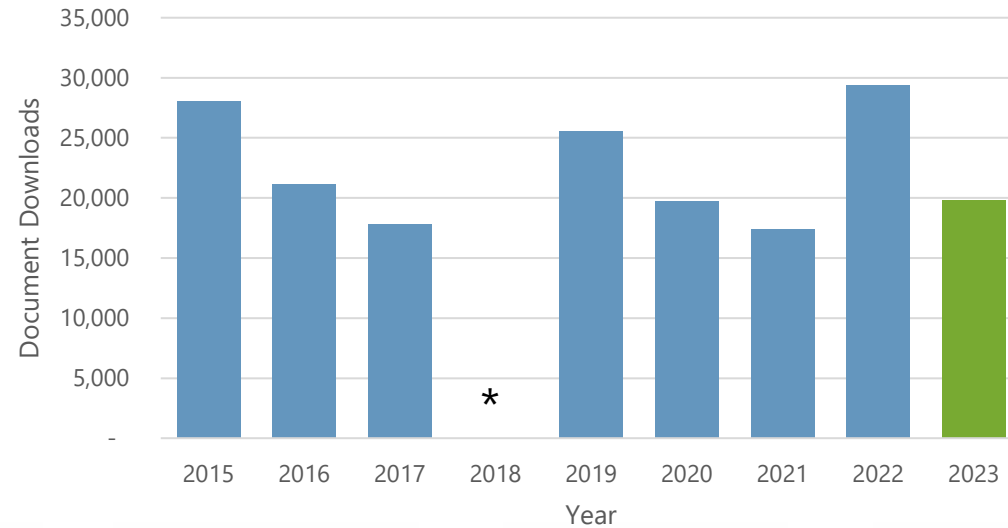
The top downloads of 2023 include older titles as well as new ones. In general, the most popular resources relate to groundwater and pumps.

From RWSN's online library of 1,084 documents (as of 31 December 2023), 756 were downloaded at least once during the year.

There were a total of 19,784 document downloads during the year, which was typical for the last decade, but significantly lower than 2022.

\*data problems because change to Google search engine changed and directed users to the document directly, bypassing the counter.

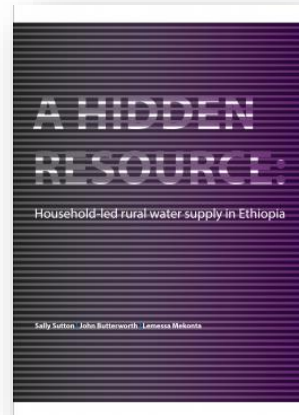
# Document Downloads



Professional Drilling Management Online Course 2022 (2023)  
**1192 downloads**



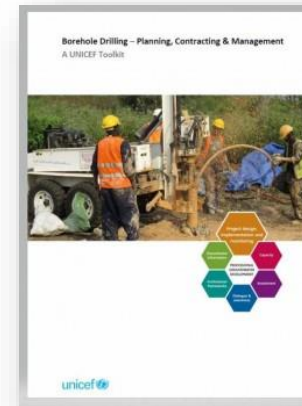
Groundwater Resources Management Online Course 2022 (2023)  
**1072 downloads**



A Hidden Resource: Household-led rural water supply in Ethiopia (2012)  
**722 downloads**



RWSN Webinar early series, May- Jun 2023  
**560 downloads**



Borehole Drilling – Planning, Contracting & Management: A UNICEF Toolkit (2018)  
**461 downloads**



Borehole Drilling – Planning, Contracting & Management: A UNICEF Toolkit (2018)  
**457 downloads**

The RWSN Blog is a place for members, Theme Leaders and project collaborators to share their experiences and ideas. When we encounter an interesting research paper we reach out to the authors to write a short blog to reach a wider audience. The blog and paper on PAMSIMAS led directly to [REAL-Water extending its research to Indonesia](#).

- Data for 2023:
- 42 posts
  - 20,799 views
  - 14,570 visitors

- Top Visitor Countries:
1. USA
  2. India
  3. United Kingdom
  4. Nigeria
  5. Kenya

In January, Skat Foundation was fortunate to host the UN Special Rapporteur at a special event at the University of St. Gallen, in the lead-up to the UN Water Conference in New York.

**UN Special Rapporteur – What’s next: the legacy of the UN Water Conference**



# Member Blogs & Discussion

**Lessons Learned from the Analysis of Community-Based Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Program (PAMSIMAS) in Indonesia**



**A window into the future of India's rural stepwells: perspectives from Gujarat**



**Strengthening accountability for water**



**Addressing rapid handpump corrosion: the story of the Ghana Modified India Mark II**



**Online learning on groundwater – strengthening capacity in African member states and beyond**

**Professional Drilling Management & Groundwater Resources Management**

Thanks to funding from the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) in Germany, 2022 saw *Ask for Water GmbH*, together with the *Africa Groundwater Network*, *Cap-Net UNDP* and several other partners (see below) develop and run two online courses on groundwater. The courses strengthened the capacity of staff of governments, NGOs, the private sector and academia in African member states and beyond.

**Obituary: Dr. Otto Langenegger – Kloss (22 April 1938 – 19 February 2023)**

I am sorry to inform you of the passing of Dr. Otto Langenegger, who peacefully left us on 19 February, 2023 surrounded by his family, aged 84.

Dr. Langenegger was the pioneer of rapid handpump corrosion. His seminal publications in 1989 and 1996 set the foundation for all that followed in trying to understand and address this phenomenon.

The presence of a handpump does not mean that people have access to reliable and sustainable water services. Here's how we tried to show it in eight councils in the Mvila Division, South Region of Cameroon.



**Measuring water point functionality is trickier than you'd think. Here's how we tried to make it more reliable in Uganda.**

If you measure something, how do you know that someone else would get the same result? This is a fundamental question in many fields including medicine and psychology, but it is rarely considered in rural water supply.



**From Gaps to Growth: Capacity development in WASH sector**





The only structured e-discussion in 2023 was organised by the Leave No-one Behind Theme on the neglected topic of the WASH needs of perimenopausal women. The main messages to emerge were:

- There is a greater understanding of the 'menopause' than there is of the perimenopause within the WASH sector. WASH sector professionals who have experienced perimenopause raised several symptoms for the WASH sector to pay attention to.
- WASH for women generally remains an area which is relatively less discussed in the sector. Urine incontinence has a significant impact on the lives of Women.
- Strategies: there is a need for a contextualised and flexible strategy, as the WASH needs of perimenopausal women are also very diverse. +

Learning from Gujarat's past relationship with rural water through its stepwells



Service Delivery Management Models, Good Political and Water Governance for Strong Rural Water Systems (1/3)



Hydrogeology of southern Madagascar: new mapping tool

Hydrogéologie du Sud de Madagascar: nouvel outil cartographique



The journey towards reducing the effects of rapid corrosion in Kalumbila District, Zambia



When stainless steel is not stainless steel



What can the rural water sector learn from francophone West Africa?

Que peut apprendre le secteur de l'eau rurale de l'expérience de l'Afrique de l'Ouest francophone ?



History of the Rapid Hand pump Corrosion Problems in Zambia and Potential Next Steps



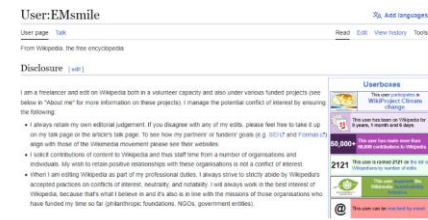
The role of galvanized pipes in the corrosion and failure of hand pumps



Pouring hope or pouring doubt – Navigating the aftermath of disasters in coastal Bangladesh



Making the Sum of All (WASH) Knowledge Freely Accessible: An interview with Elisabeth Von Muench









# Projects

RWSN provides knowledge-brokering and network management services to clients and programmes that align with the RWSN Strategy, implemented by Skat Foundation and partners.



RWSN collaborated with [AquaFed](#) to do a survey on young water professionals and employers, as part of a Dutch (DGIS) funded programme called "[Valuing Water Initiative](#)".

The results of the survey reveal a sector that is mostly failing its young staff and potential recruits. There are simply too many barriers put in young people's way even before they are recruited. WSS employers value young people's skills, but they often do not develop and nurture them in any kind of meaningful or structured way.

However, there are also excellent examples of good practice. There are relatively simple actions by managers that can make a huge difference in recruiting and retaining young people to make water and sanitation services more sustainable.

The report was published and presented in a [Sanitation & Water for All](#) Webinar in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#) and [Portuguese](#).



**Enabling the utility workforce of the future**

**Capacitando a los trabajadores de los servicios públicos del futuro**

**Capacitando os funcionários do serviço público do futuro**

07 September 2023

Client: AquaFed, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS), Netherlands

# Career Pathways Guidance

### KEY FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

**1. WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION SERVICES ARE AT RISK BECAUSE PROVIDERS ARE FAILING TO ATTRACT AND LEVERAGE THE POTENTIAL OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

There should be more work opportunities for young people in the WSS sector:

- AROUND 1/3** of service providers have never advertised entry-level positions (0-2 years of experience).
- 40%** of service providers do not have any specific programmes, strategies or initiatives for recruiting young people (students, graduates or young professionals).
- 40%** of service providers employ fewer than 20% of staff under the age of 35.

**MESSAGES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE TO EMPLOYERS:**

**YOU ARE LOSING BRIGHT YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BECAUSE YOU PUT TOO MANY BARRIERS IN PLACE.**

Create more opportunities for young professionals to enter the sector. There are so few job postings/opportunities available.

**MOTIVATION AND MINDSET SHOULD BE VALUED AS MUCH AS TECHNICAL SKILLS/YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WHEN HIRING YOUNG PEOPLE.**

Instead of asking for more experience, give us the experience in the first place.

**SOLUTIONS:**

- WSS service providers could use the following strategies to attract and retain more young people:
  - On-the-job training programme for students in collaboration with universities and/or training institutes (Batavia Waterworks).
  - Professional internships programmes.
  - Apprenticeship/professional training (SenEau & OFOR example).

Quotes are based on the youth survey.

### KEY FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

**2. WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROVIDERS NEED TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMPLOYMENT**

Employers need to be more transparent and flexible.

- FEWER REQUIREMENTS** in terms of years of experience required for the job. This was identified as the biggest barrier by young people looking for work in the sector.
- MORE FLEXIBILITY** in terms of working conditions (especially visa requirements) and location (consider remote or hybrid working arrangements).

**AROUND 50%** of the job opportunities young people obtained are not formally advertised.

**SOLUTIONS:**

- Advertise jobs more transparently through job platforms (e.g. [Job's Water Jobs](#)) and recruit via job fairs like the 'terra.do' website.
- Donors fund graduate programmes which are flexible on nationality requirements and enable WSS providers to build capacity in the countries in which they operate (e.g. [YEP Programme](#)).
- WSS organisations provide networking and mentoring opportunities for young people. Examples include [Agenda for Change](#) and [EQUUS](#) mentoring programmes in the water sector. [SANDROS](#) and [LWA](#) as well as [ADAP](#) support young people to attend networking opportunities and sector events.

**MESSAGES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE TO EMPLOYERS:**

**CAN WSS EMPLOYERS INCREASE EFFORTS TO CONNECT WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS THROUGH JOB FAIRS AND OTHER PLATFORMS?**

We need you to advertise specific projects & opportunities to engage young professionals.

**WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO ADVERTISE CLEAR, COMPREHENSIVE JOB POSTINGS - INCLUDING SALARY INFORMATION, TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF TRAVEL, REMOTE WORK EXPECTATIONS, ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES, WORKING HOURS - MORE LIKELY TO SELF-ELIMINATE BASED ON REQUIREMENT SETTING, SO CONSIDER HOW EXPECTATIONS ARE PHRASED.**

Quotes are based on the youth survey.

### KEY FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

**3. THE WSS SECTOR IS NOT PROVIDING ENOUGH TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Young people occupy a variety of roles in service providers' organisations; their innovative ways of working, digital skills, and technical capacity are highly valued by WSS employers. However:

- AROUND 1/3** of service providers surveyed said they were not satisfied with the training and capacity of young people in their organisations.
- While young people are open to learning and place a very high value on professional development, training opportunities may be lacking or be 'reserved' for top management.

**SOLUTIONS:**

- Training organisations or initiatives need to ensure their curriculum is up-to-date and relevant for the needs of WSS service providers by keeping close ties with employers.
- Practitioners and donors can provide more formal professional development opportunities for young people in WSS, such as training and scholarships.
- Service providers can offer more formal and informal professional development opportunities for young people in their organisations such as job shadowing, mentoring and on-the-job training.

**MESSAGES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE TO EMPLOYERS:**

**IF YOU HAVE TIME AND SPACE TO MENTOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION, THEY CAN BRING A LOT TO RETURN!**

Please consider offering growth opportunities beyond competitive entry-level or professional development programmes and mentorship.

**WE REALLY VALUE EMPLOYERS THAT PROVIDE UNDERPINNING AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES TO SUPPORT YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' DEVELOPMENT.**

Quotes are based on the youth survey.

### KEY FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

**4. WSS SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE NOT ATTRACTING THE BEST YOUNG TALENT, AND MUST DO MUCH MORE TO APPEAL TO YOUNG PEOPLE**

**2 OUT OF 3** young people are looking for work, which may be higher than in other sectors [1].

Young people value good compensation and professional development opportunities the most.

Our survey shows that young people predominantly value, by order of importance:

- good pay
- professional development opportunities
- good working conditions
- meaning and purpose before job security, work atmosphere and work-life balance.

This differs from the typical surveys of 'millennials' and 'Gen Z', which often exclude young people from the Global South and where compensation is not as prominent [2].

**AROUND 50%** of the young people surveyed who are self-employed are not self-employed by choice, but due to lack of suitable work opportunities.

**SOLUTIONS:**

- Employers need to understand the priorities and motivations of young people so that they can improve the way they recruit and retain them, and pay particular attention to compensation and professional development.
- WSS sector practitioners and donors should provide professional development and funding opportunities to support young people in the sector who are self-employed, whether by choice or by circumstances.

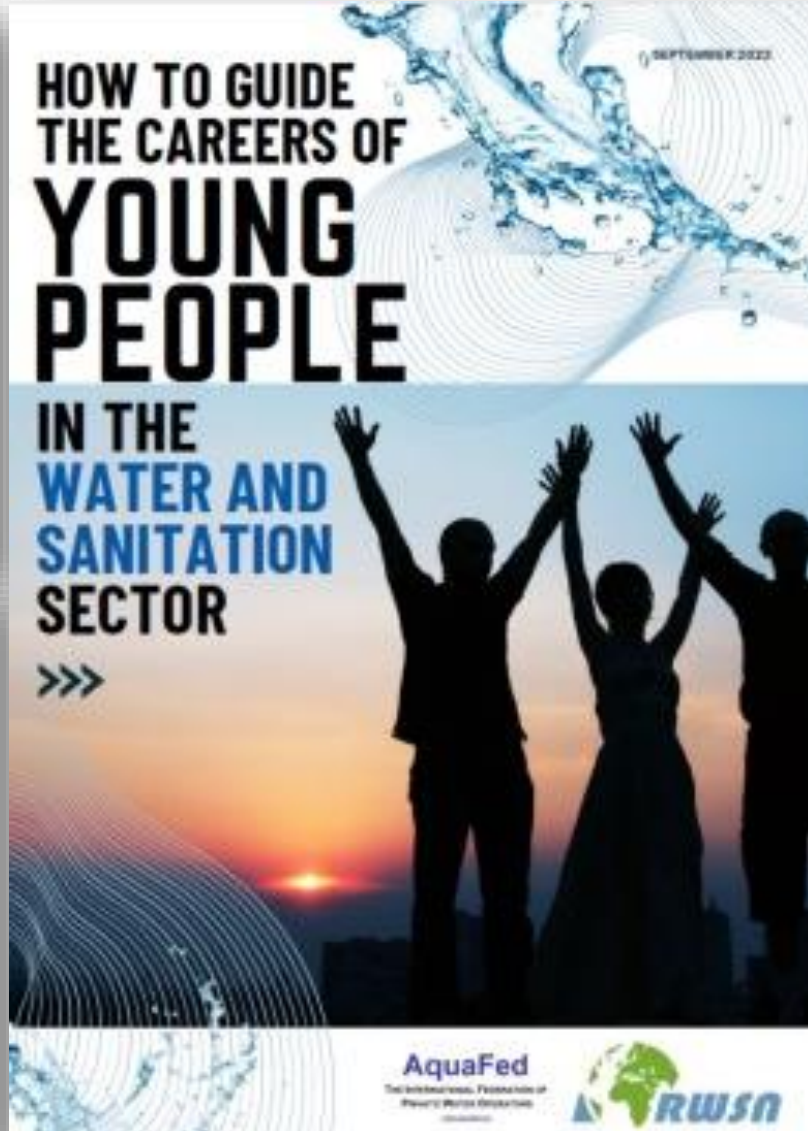
**MESSAGES FROM SELF-EMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE:**

**I'M SELF EMPLOYED BECAUSE I CAN'T SECURE A FULL-TIME JOB. I WOULD OPT FOR FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT IF PRESENTED WITH IT.**

The funding for water and sanitation in my country has dropped. I have not been able to secure a role in 2 years.

I am self-employed for not having better opportunities as an employee. Previous jobs always had excessive working hours and were below the professional salary and had an inferior position despite carrying out responsibilities of the profession.

Quotes are based on the youth survey.



**HOW TO GUIDE THE CAREERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR**

07 SEPTEMBER 2023

**AquaFed**  
The International Federation of Water Service Associations

**RWSN**

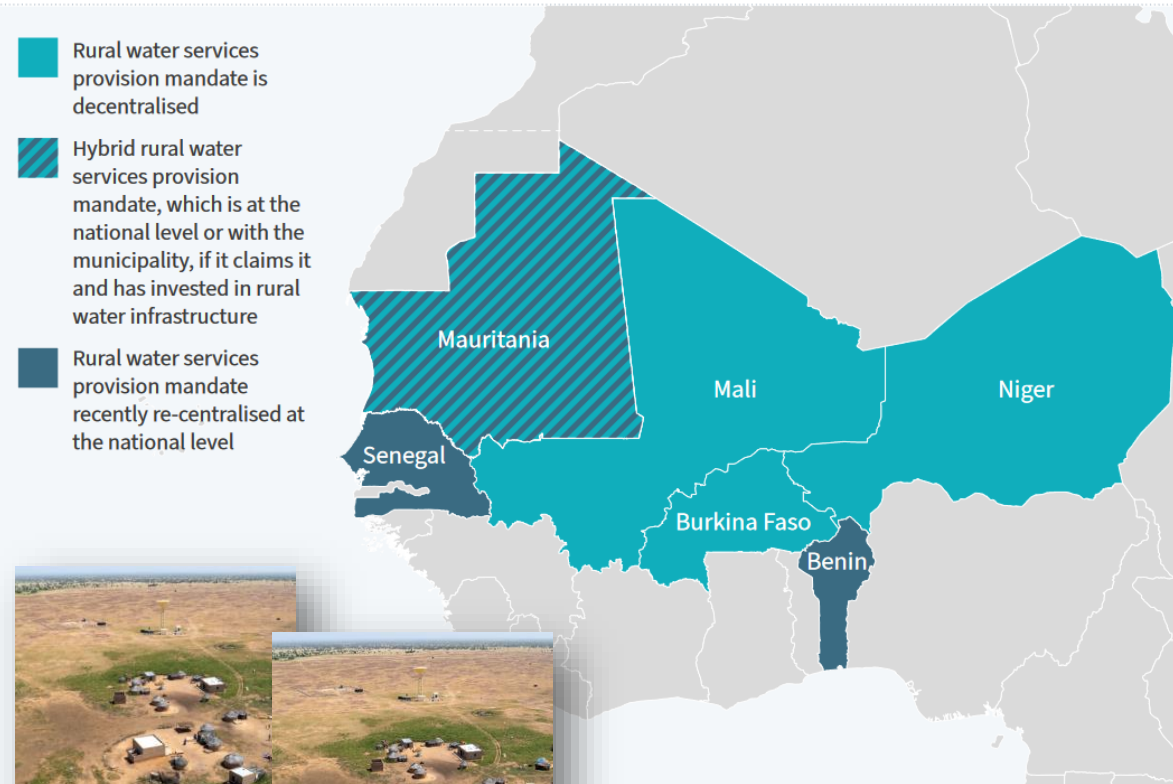
As the REACH programme reached its climax in 2023 with the closing conference held at the University of Oxford in September, RWSN's work continued apace in the execution of the [Exit Strategy](#) to maximise awareness and uptake of the world-class research findings. One way was the integration of evidence and references into relevant [Wikipedia pages on water security](#), to reach a wide audience.

In addition to promoting REACH outputs through many channels, platforms and events, we also contributed to research. Using our extensive network, Meleesa Naughton undertook a series of interviews and literature analysis to provide a concise and thorough analysis of rural water supply provision in Francophone West Africa.

As a member of the REACH programme, RWSN was present at the closing conference, held in Oxford (20-22 September) we managed/facilitated:

- a session of the internal meetings on "REACH Exit Strategy: Planning activities and delivering impact"; in the session, participants took stock of the impact pathways and engagement activities of the Programme. Challenges and best practices were discussed, as well as the implementation of REACH's Exit strategy.
- a session in the public event on innovative service delivery models to address rural water service delivery models to address rural water risks along with Dr Johanna Koehler, with case studies from Kenya, Bangladesh and West Africa

# REACH: improving water security for the poor



Performance and prospects of rural drinking water services in francophone West Africa



Performances et perspectives des services d'eau potable en milieu rural en Afrique de l'Ouest francophone



[What can the rural water sector learn from francophone West Africa? By Meleesa Naughton \(11 October 2023\)](#)



Professor Rob Hope gave a keynote speech on "Global Climate Risks, Local Water Action" at Skat Foundation's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the University of St. Gallen (HSG).



Sean Furey, Director, Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN) at the Fair Water Exhibition Preview, Museum of Natural History, University of Oxford ([photo: REACH](#))

RWSN leads the global engagement for the REAL-Water research programme (2021-2025). The main responsibilities in 2023 were:

- sharing outputs through the network and working with the rest of the consortium to raise the profile of the research areas, encourage interest and feedback, and place the work within the broader landscape of rural water supply.
- Organising sessions at the All Systems Connect and World Water Week Conferences.

Client: The Aquaya Institute, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

# Rural Evidence & Learning for Water (REAL-Water)

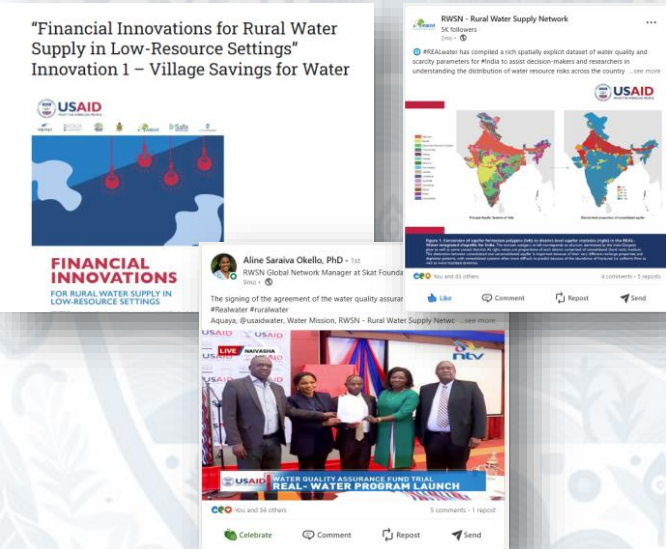
## All Systems Connect – The Hague, May 2023

REAL-Water convened the session “Broadening the definition of ‘Resilience:’ approaches to WASH and climate systems strengthening.” RWSN’s Network Manager moderated the session, and the opening panel included Rachel Peletz (Aquaya), and Katrina Charles (Oxford University/REAL-Water Advisory Board). The session included poster group presentations from Water Mission, Safe Water Network, Deltares, SNV, WaterAid, and Practical Action. RWSN’s Director served as the rapporteur and provided closing remarks. The session had 52 participants.

## Stockholm World Water Week, August 2023

REAL-Water Session: [Driving Rural Water Innovation: From Concept to Scale-up](#): We structured this 90-minute session around two panel discussions and a short presentation: Panel 1: Harnessing Innovative Approaches to Benefit Rural Water Provision, Presentation: The Birth of Handpumps and Transformation of Rural Water Services, and Panel II: Spirit of Present Innovation.

USAID’s Global Water Coordinator, Ms. Nancy Eslick, opened the session. Panel participants and speakers included representatives from Aquaya, RWSN, Evidence Action, Water Mission, Millennium Water Alliance, water.org, The Nature Conservancy, UDUMA, iDE Global, Imagine H2O, and USAID India.



Presenters at All Systems Connect session on resilience



Presenters at All Systems Connect session on resilience (Photo: Aquaya)

**REAL WATER —**  
RURAL EVIDENCE AND LEARNING FOR WATER



The aim of the second phase of Stop the Rot (October 2022 to September 2024) is to ensure that key global agencies and national organizations are taking action to consistently provide high-quality handpump technologies and spare parts that are durable. Additionally, it aims to widely publicize these efforts. The outcomes are:

- 1. Awareness and understanding:** awareness and understanding of handpump corrosion, poor-quality components and related supply chain issues, alongside options for improving the situation is raised internationally.
- 2. In-country action:** stakeholder actions by national and international organisations to improve policies, guidance and practices to tackle rapid handpump corrosion and adapt supply chains to improve component quality are documented and shared.
- 3. Studies and research:** academic and research institutions in the global north and south who take up this topic within their MSc, PhD and/or research programmes exchange with each other, and a wider audience.

Funders: The Waterloo Foundation, The World Bank

# Stop the Rot

**Zambia:** Following the presentations on Stop the Rot at ZAWAFE in June 2023, WaterAid and the NGO WASH coalition have continued to advocate for change and lobby the government (Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation) and NAWASCO to stop the installation of GI pipes and rods in Zambia. Furthermore, ECHO, a local NGO, has switched materials completely, and has even pushed back against donors that want them to use these materials.

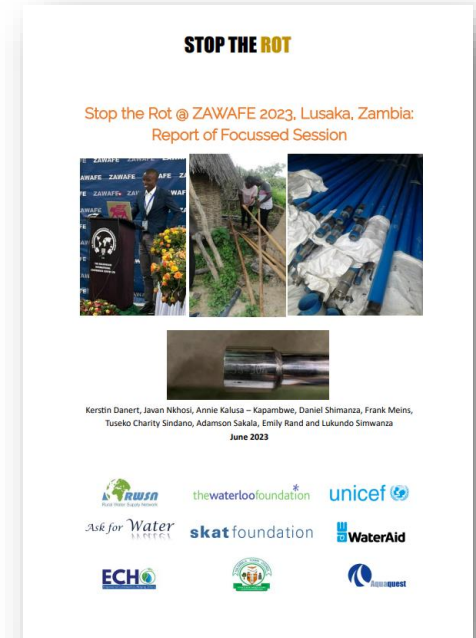
A short study in **Uganda** in October/November 2023 documented the country's experience and lessons learnt in preventing rapid corrosion. The methodology comprised interviews with 55 stakeholders from government, suppliers, NGOs, drillers and handpump mechanics as well as a review of select documentation and analysis of quantitative data collected in 16 districts by the NGO Water for People. As well as discussing with stakeholders based in Kampala, the study involved visits to Mityana, Kibaale, Kyegegwa, Mubende, Kamwenge and Masindi Districts.

The **Stop the Rot Action Group** continued to be the foundation of the initiative, facilitating the exchange of experiences and ideas among its 50 active members. The group grew by about a dozen new members over the and met in June and November.

In recognition of the growing resources available for Stop the Rot, a dedicated webpage and dedicated library filter have been added to the RWSN Website.

**The World Bank** commissioned the development of a short guidance note, which was developed in 2023 and published in 2024.

Title	Led by	Date	Links	Statistics
<b>Webinar – Stop the rot - Handpump Upgrade...to Be, or Not to Be?</b>	Design Outreach	6 June 2023	<a href="#">Recording YouTube</a> <a href="#">Recording Vimeo</a> <a href="#">Slides</a>	451 people registered. 189 attended live. 45 questions posed.



The main objective was to strengthen the presence and increase the profile of rural WASH in the regional and global agendas through collaboration with existing sector networks and hubs, mainly RWSN and SuSanA, to develop knowledge tools such as webinars and forums discussing key aspects and challenges of rural WASH services and promoting south-south knowledge exchange within LAC and with other regions globally.

RWSN convened representatives from three regional development banks and the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to co-create a "[Call to Action for Rural WASH](#)" with three priority areas:

- National (rural) WASH monitoring systems
- Strengthening institutions
- Accelerating progress in rural sanitation.

This formed the basis of a well-attended webinar series.

# Sustainable and Innovative Rural Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (SIRWASH)



Invitamos a los profesionales de WASH en Latinoamérica y el Caribe a participar en nuestra red para fortalecer el sector de agua y saneamiento rural de la región

**Unete A NUESTRA RED**

RWSN sustainable sanitation alliance SuSanA Latinoamérica



SIRWASH breakfast meeting, photo: A. Saraiva Okello, RWSN



Meeting Satoshi Ishii, Director, Water and Urban Development Sector Office, Asian Development Bank, photo: ADB

Webinar title	Date	Lead bank	Registrants	Attendees
<b>Regional and national monitoring of rural WASH – experiences of data-to-decisions</b>	04/10/2023	IDB	610	241
<b>Formalising and strengthening institutions for supporting rural WASH services</b>	07/11/2023	ADB	444	138
<b>Rural sanitation – why is it left behind?</b>	15/11/2023	AfDB	380	119
<b>Total</b>			1,434	498

**Note: The recordings and presentations of all three webinars are available [here](#).**

RWSN continued the collaboration with the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) to facilitate online exchange on the SuSanA Forum, which continues to be a vibrant online community.

In 2023, funding from the SIRWASH programme allowed a new regional moderator, Elka Villaruel, from Aguatuya, to increase participation by Latin Americans, and Spanish speakers generally.

The Forum continues to play a critical role in the sanitation sector for sharing ideas, information and updates. Challenges remain in securing long-term funding for active moderation and development of the platform. One dilemma is that while the number of member posts has been in decline over the last few years, the number of visitors has remained steady. This suggests that users are finding the answers they need without needing to post new questions and so it remains a valuable knowledge resource.

# SuSanA Forum





# Network Management

RWSN is not a legal entity, it is a true partnership and a global team effort



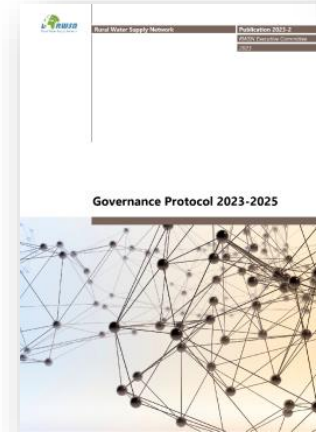
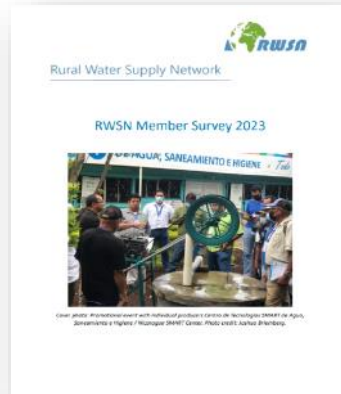
# Governance & Strategy Review

The Executive Committee achieved a significant milestone in reviewing and endorsing the RWSN Governance Protocol, valid for 2023-2025. This document gives clear rules on how the network is run and details the roles and responsibilities. This clarity helps sustain our culture of high-trust collaboration.

- [RWSN \(2023\) RWSN Governance Protocol 2023-2025](#)

With the 2018-2023 Strategy coming to an end, a major focus of the year was developing a new strategy for the network. This was informed by thorough consultation with members, partners, Theme Leaders and the Executive Committee. This has produced a coherent new narrative for how the network can effect change and make a lasting contribution to the lives and livelihoods of people – both rural and urban around the world. The Strategy will be finalised and published in 2024 once the Results Framework is developed and approved.

- [RWSN Member Survey 2023](#)



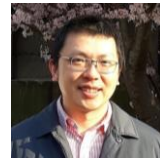
With the completion of the Governance review, an open call was launched to recruit new members for the Executive Committee. After reviewing many great applications, we were pleased to welcome **BGR**, **Global Water Center** and **Welthungerhilfe**.

A further change was that IRC was replaced by the **One for All Alliance** (IRC, Water for Good and Water For People). **Dr John Butterworth** stood down at the end of the year, and we are grateful for his support and wise counsel and welcome **David DeArmey** from Water for Good.

**Erik Harvey**, the longest-serving Executive Committee member announced that he would be stepping down in 2024. We thank him for his strategic insights and tireless support for the network. **Tommy Ka Kit Ngai** will take over his role as WaterAid representative when a new Chair is appointed, in 2024.

We welcomed, **Diane Arjoon** to the committee as the representative of the African Water Facility at the African Development Bank.

# Executive Committee



[Tommy Ka Kit Ngai](#) | [LinkedIn](#)  
RWSN Chair



[Diane Arjoon](#)\*

[Ramon Brentführer \(BGR\)](#)\*

[Lisa Mitchell](#)\* [Benjamin Filskov](#)\*

[Dr John Butterworth](#)\*\* [David DeArmey](#)\*

[Bertha Camacho](#)

[Jorge Alvarez-Sala](#)

[N. Awa Diagne](#)

[Erik Harvey](#)\*\*

[Irene Gai](#)\* [Stephan Simon](#)\*



\*new for 2024 \*\*stepped down end of 2023

RWSN Theme Leaders are the experts who drive the network forward by volunteering their time, experience and contacts to make the network work.

At the end of 2023, we also gave heartfelt thanks and farewells to **Dr Kerstin Danert** (Ask for Water GmbH), RWSN's longest-serving Theme Leader and former Director of the RWSN Secretariat. Since 2006, she has been a tireless campaigner-researcher for professionalising borehole drilling and eliminating handpump corrosion. She will continue to play an active role through the Stop the Rot project.

**Julia Boulenouar** (Aquaconsult Ltd) also stepped down from co-lead of Sustainable Services as she took up a more senior role in the company. RWSN has benefited from her deep expertise in rural water supply service delivery, and we are delighted that in 2024 her successor will be her colleague **Analia Sakar**, who is a researcher in the USAID REAL-Water programme.

**Jorge Alvarez-Sala** also stepped down from the Sustainable Services Theme but remains on the Executive Committee for UNICEF and continues to support RWSN's efforts on professionalisation and climate resilience.

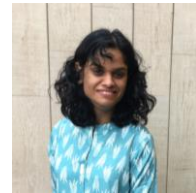
At the end of the year, we also welcomed a talented cadre of new Theme Leaders for Data for Action, Multiple Use of water Services (MUS) and Self-supply.

# Theme Leaders

## Leave No-one Behind



[Euphresia Luseka](#)



[Dr Amita Bhakta](#)



[Sandra van Soelen \(Simavi\)](#)



[Temple Oraeki](#)

## Data for Action



[Muthi Nhlema \(BASEflow\)](#)



[Mutala Abdul-Mumin \(WaterAid\)\\*](#)

## Multiple Use of water Services (MUS)



[Dr Barbara van Koppen \(IWMI\)](#)



[Narayan Singh Khawas \(SUSWA/ NIRAS\)\\*](#)



[Dr David Smith \(WE&B\)\\*](#)

## Self-supply



[Dr Tim Foster \(ISF-UTS\)\\*](#)



[Diana Gonzalez Botero \(ISF-UTS\)\\*](#)



[Matthias Saladin \(Skat Foundation\)](#)

## Sustainable Groundwater Development



[Dr Kerstin Danert \(Ask for Water GmbH\)\\*\\*](#)



[Mandy Goksu \(Water Mission\)](#)



[Ramon Brentführer \(BGR\)\\*](#)

## Sustainable Services



[Julia Boulenouar \(Aquaconsult Ltd.\)\\*\\*](#)



[Jorge Alvarez-Sala \(UNICEF\)\\*\\*](#)



[Analia Sakar \(Aquaconsult Ltd.\)\\*](#)

\*new for 2024 \*\*stepped down end of 2023

The RWSN Secretariat continued to deliver high-quality services and support for the network and the projects.

Skat Foundation continues to provide the combination of stability and agility needed to manage a complex network in a challenging funding environment.

Two key principles were developed further in 2023:

1. having a global virtual team that brings together diverse skills and perspectives and enables RWSN to work smoothly across languages and time zones.
2. providing opportunities for young professionals, particularly women.

At the end of 2023, we gave a fond farewell to **Meleesa Naughton**, who joined RWSN from the World Bank in 2016. She played a central role in the 7<sup>th</sup> RWSN Forum in 2016, in establishing our highly successful mentoring programme and so much more.

We also said goodbye to Skat Foundation trainee, **Daniela Marko**, who did a super job with RWSN communications, but we welcomed **Batima Tleulinova** and **Susanna Germanier** who bring a lot of energy and expertise to the network and the projects.

We are grateful to the whole team for their hard work over the year.

# Secretariat

## Core Staff



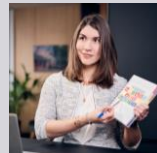
[Sean Furey](#)  
Director  
St. Gallen, Switzerland



[Meleesa Naughton](#) \*\*  
Deputy Director  
Brighton, UK



[Dr Aline Saraiva-Okello](#)  
Global Network Manager  
Diani, Kenya



[Daniela Marko](#)\*\*  
Communications Trainee  
St. Gallen, Switzerland



[Batima Tleulinova](#)\*  
Communications & Engagement  
Almaty, Kazakhstan

## Associated Experts



[Dr Kerstin Danert](#)  
Stop the Rot lead  
St. Gallen, Switzerland



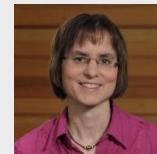
[Paresh Chhajed-Picha](#)  
SuSanA Moderator (Asia)  
Mumbai, India



[Chaiwe Sanderse Muskauko](#)  
SuSanA Moderator (Africa)  
Lusaka, Zambia



[Elka Villaroe](#)\*  
SuSanA Moderator (LAC)  
Cochabamba, Bolivia



[Dr Elisabeth von Münch](#)  
Wikipedia Editing  
Ulm, Germany

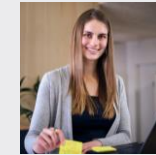
## Support



[Matthias Saladin](#)  
Intl. Programme Coordinator  
St. Gallen, Switzerland



[Rena Salzmänn](#)  
Junior Programme &  
Communications Officer  
St. Gallen, Switzerland



[Andrea Güpfert](#)  
Head of Finance and  
Administration  
St. Gallen, Switzerland



[Susanna Germanier](#)\*  
Trainee  
Colombia/Switzerland

# Looking back: the RWSN journey so far

**1981-1990:** UN International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. Intensive development of handpumps

**1992:** Handpump Technology Network created at Kagamega Handpump Workshop, Kenya. Dr Peter Wurzel (UNICEF), first Chair.

**1997:** HTN Workshop Malawi. 150 participants. Steering Committee expanded.

**2000:** HTN Forum India. 200 participants, focus shift to Africa.

**2001:** Rope Pump Workshop, Nicaragua. 66 delegates, 22 countries. **2002:** New vision developed with broader remit for rural cost effective technologies.

**2013:** RWSN becomes knowledge broker to the UPGro programme

**2012:** First RWSN webinars, hosted by WSP/World Bank

**2005:** RWSN Forum Accra, Ghana (290 delegates, 37 countries), with the theme: "Scaling up Local Entrepreneurship in Rural Water Supply".

**2004:** The network is officially renamed RWSN (Rural Water Supply Network).

**2003:** HTN Forum in Durban, South Africa (250 delegates, 37 countries). The new, broader thematic vision and identity for the network is shared with the membership.

**2015:** RWSN becomes a knowledge broker for the REACH programme.

**2016:** 7th RWSN Forum held in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire (450 delegates)

**2017:** membership reaches 10,000.

**2019:** First RWSN Mentoring Scheme, with 400 participants; new partnership with SuSanA with online community management.

**2020:** RWSN becomes a UN Water partner (sponsored by UNICEF and WHO)

**2023:** Expanded Executive Committee and Theme Leaders.

**2022:** RWSN joins SIRWASH programme.

**2021:** RWSN joins REAL-Water programme. "Stop the Rot" campaign gains momentum.

# Looking ahead

The new RWSN Strategy brings an exciting new articulation of our vision, mission and how to bring people together to create change around three pillars:



1

Networking,  
Connecting &  
Convening

2

Knowledge Brokering  
& Information Hub

3

Training, Guidelines  
& Standards

Delivered by an integrated approach to networking across scales, geographies and thematic areas in ways that put rural water professionals and water users at the heart of everything we do:

**Develop and maintain guidelines** that can help systematically unlock the value of **local and indigenous expertise** where context sensitivity is high.

**Examples:** understanding of local ecosystems, traditional practices, cultural and social norms and values, needs and priorities of water users.

1

**Bottom-Up**

**Connect and convene** local, national and international experts to **learn, collaborate and influence** decision-makers and communities.

**Examples:** documenting and sharing experiences through online and face-to-face events, research and publications.

2

**Middle-Out**

**Standardise, benchmark and apply national/international expertise** to accelerate progress and sustainability.

**Examples:** WHO water quality standards; RWSN handpump standards; performance-based contracting.

3

**Top-Down**