

Mid-Term Evaluation of Community-Led Accelerated WASH Project (COWASH) Phase IV

From April 2021 to December 2024, Ethiopian Financial Year 2014 To Mid-2017



Final Report 28.9.2023

Prepared by FCG MTE Team:

Steve Gossage

Sanna-Leena Rautanen

Muluneh Bimrew

Mid-Term Evaluation of Community-Led Accelerated WASH Project (COWASH) Phase IV:

From April 2021 to December 2024, Ethiopian Financial Year 2014 to mid-2017

Competent Authorities:

Ministry of Finance, Ethiopia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland

Project Implementing Agencies:

Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) (federal lead) and

Water Resources Development Bureaus of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP, SWEP and Tigray National Regional States (regional leads):

in association with Regional State water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) partner Bureaus of Finance (BoF), Health (BoH), Education (BoE) and Women Affairs (BoWA)

Technical Assistance Team: NIRAS

Final Report

28 September 2023

Prepared by FCG MTE Team:

Steve Gossage

Sanna-Leena Rautanen

Muluneh Bimrew

Pamela White (Service Coordinator)

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	ii
List of Figures.....	iv
List of Tables.....	iv
List of Evaluation Question Boxes.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Disclaimer.....	vi
Abbreviations and Acronyms	vii
PROJECT DATA SHEET.....	x
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	xi
PART 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 MTE purpose, scope, methodology and limitations	1
1.3 Project background and context	3
1.4 Outline of the COWASH IV project.....	4
1.5 Guidance on use of this report.....	8
PART 2: FINDINGS.....	9
2 RELEVANCE.....	9
2.1 Relevance of the project objectives.....	9
2.2 Quality and relevance of the project design	9
2.3 Adaptive management: Remaining relevant during implementation	14
2.4 Addressing the real needs of the ultimate beneficiaries	14
2.5 Relevance for the Governments of Ethiopia and Finland	14
2.6 Conclusions on project Relevance.....	14
3 COHERENCE AND SYNERGIES.....	15
4 EFFECTIVENESS.....	15
4.1 Outcome 1: Community Water Supply (Core OC)	16
4.1.1 Implementation process.....	16
4.1.2 Increased access to safe community water supply	16
4.1.3 Quality of water supply works, water safety plans and functionality.....	18
4.1.4 Water Safety Planning and SECRSM (including climate resilience).....	19
4.1.5 Capacity and operation of main community water supply actors and “system”	20
4.1.6 Progress towards the achievement of Core Outcome 1.....	21
4.2 Outcome 2: Household Sanitation (Core OC)	21

4.2.1	Increased access to and use of improved household latrines	22
4.2.2	Increased household handwashing facilities and practices	22
4.2.3	Effectiveness of promotion mechanisms	23
4.2.4	Access to credit: MFIs and Savings and Lending Associations (SLAs).....	23
4.2.5	Contribution to ODF	24
4.2.6	Progress towards the achievement of Core Outcome 2	25
4.3	Outcome 3: Institutional WASH (Core OC)	26
4.3.1	Increased access to and use of improved school WASH.....	26
4.3.2	Increased access to and use of improved WASH at health facilities.....	27
4.3.3	Improved functionality of institutional WASH	29
4.3.4	Progress towards the achievement of Core Outcome 3	29
4.4	(High-level) Outcome 4: Sustainability and inclusivity of outcomes	30
4.4.1	Human capacity: Cascaded training system operation and effectiveness.....	30
4.4.2	Physical capacity building	32
4.4.3	Gender equality, women’s empowerment and inclusion	32
4.4.4	Private sector support / sanitation marketing: MFIs, SLAs and MSEs	33
4.4.5	WASH integration and synergies	35
4.4.6	Community implementation and ownership	35
4.4.7	Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)	36
4.4.8	Progress towards the achievement of Outcome 5	37
4.5	Outcome 5: Implementation, documentation and dissemination	38
4.5.1	Financial management	38
4.5.2	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	40
4.5.3	Learning, studies, documentation and dissemination	41
4.5.4	Putting learning into practice: Contribution to policy and practice.....	41
4.6	Promoting human rights-based approach and MFA cross-cutting objectives.....	42
4.7	Unintended and unexpected consequences of the project.....	43
4.8	Conclusions on overall effectiveness	43
5	EFFICIENCY	43
6	LIKELY SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALABILITY	44
7	LIKELY IMPACT	47
8	ADDITIONAL EVALUATION QUESTIONS	47
8.1	Effects of inflation and use of contingency and extra funds.....	47
8.2	Rationale and proposal for a possible follow-on phase.....	50
8.3	Project end date	51
8.4	Bilateral WASH Support Benefits for Finland (EQ 9)	53

PART 3: CONCLUSIONS, LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS	54
9 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS ON PERFORMANCE	54
10 MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED	56
11 RECOMMENDATIONS	57
11.1 Recommendations to improve performance during the rest of the project	57
11.2 Recommendations for a possible phase V or exit plan.....	62
MAIN DOCUMENTS CONSULTED	64
ANNEXES	66
ANNEX 1a: Terms of Reference for the COWASH IV MTE	66
ANNEX 1b: Numbered list of “Evaluation Questions” from the MTE TORs.....	80
ANNEX 2: Project Results Framework diagram.....	82
ANNEX 3: Project Results Framework and Monitoring Plan.....	83
ANNEX 4: Performance assessment framework: rating system and main criteria	91
ANNEX 5a: COWASH IV Budget Summary in EUR and ETB (from ProDoc)	92
ANNEX 5b: GoF Regional Budget Share for COWASH IV (EUR).....	93
ANNEX 5c: GoF funds rolled over from Phase III (ETB):	93
ANNEX 5d: GoE Regional Budget Contributions for the whole of COWASH IV (ETB).....	94
ANNEX 5e: Proposal for sharing the GoF Regional Contingency budget (EUR).....	94
ANNEX 6: COWASH phases in Ethiopian (EFY) and Gregorian calendars	95
ANNEX 7: Manuals, Guidelines & Strategies developed in COWASH IV.....	96
ANNEX 8: Institutional structure of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP).....	97
ANNEX 9: Definition of Service Levels for SDG 6.1 & 6.2 Indicators.....	98
ANNEX 10: WASH Service Level data for rural areas of Ethiopia.....	99
ANNEX 11: Field work itinerary	101

List of Figures

Figure 1: Simplified “TOC” diagram for COWASH IV	6
Figure 2: COWASH IV Funding pathways diagram	8
Figure 3: Technology types used for water schemes.....	18
Figure 4: ETB / EUR from 2019 to 2023	48
Figure 5: Proposed project end date: aligning with the main seasons and financial year	53
Figure 6: WASH Service Level data for HHs, schools and health facilities in rural Ethiopia	99
Figure 7: Growth in people using safely managed drinking water in rural Ethiopia	100

List of Tables

Table 1: Main findings, conclusions and recommendations.....	i
--	---

Table 2: Geographic spread: number of Regions, Zones and Woredas supported	8
Table 3: Discussion on advantages and disadvantages of using Channel 1B.....	11
Table 4: Number of Community Water Supply Schemes CONSTRUCTED (Ind IR 1.1.1).....	17
Table 5: Number of Community Water Supply Schemes REHABILITATED (Ind IR 1.1.2)	17
Table 6: Number of people with access to a safe community water source (Ind IR 1.1.3).....	18
Table 7: institutional WASH investment support Outputs	26
Table 8: Cumulative plan and achievement to mid-project for SCHOOL WASH facilities	26
Table 9: Cumulative plan and achievement to mid-project for HEALTH facilities.....	28
Table 10: Cumulative number of people trained by COWASH IV in EFY 2014 & 15 (to Jul 23) (IR 4.1.1)	30
Table 11: Number of people trained by FTAT in support of RSUs	32
Table 12: COWASH budget summary from ProDoc in EUR	39
Table 13: Cumulative Regional expenditure against transfers and budget for GoF funds (ETB)	39
Table 14: Proposed share of Contingency funds for Regional investment.....	49

List of Evaluation Question Boxes

These evaluation question boxes highlight the main places in the text that focus on the specific “evaluation questions” and sub-questions that were raised in the ToRs (see Annex 1b).

a: Priority EQ 2: Assessment of the COWASH “Channel 1” structure:	11
b: EQ 3.1: Inclusion of human rights etc in design:.....	13
c: EQ 4: Synergies and coherence:	15
d: EQ 5.2 (a, b,c): Achievement and shortcoming in the achievement of Results:	15
e: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (i) water safety planning;	19
f: EQ 10: Open Defecation Free (ODF) contribution:	25
g: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (ii) women and disability inclusion.....	32
h: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (iv) Private sector support:	33
i: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (iv) Integrated WASH:.....	35
j: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (iii) social and behavioural change	36
k: EQ 5.1 (d): Promotion of HRBA and MFA cross-cutting issues:	42
l: EQ 6: Efficiency:.....	43
m: EQ 8: Main factors affecting Sustainability:.....	44
n: EQ 3.2: Prospects to scale up CMP as a national approach:.....	46
o: EQ 7: Likely Impact:.....	47
p: Priority EQs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3: Effects of inflation & use of contingency / extra funds:	47
q: Priority EQ 1.5: Suggestions for a possible follow-on phase:	50
r: EQ 9: Bilateral WASH support benefits for Finland:	53
s: Priority EQ 1.4: Recommendations for the remaining project period:.....	57
t: Priority EQ 1.5: Suggestions for a possible follow-on phase:.....	62

Acknowledgements

The MTE team would like to thank the many people who gave freely of their time, knowledge and experience. Their contributions are duly acknowledged and appreciated.

Thanks go firstly to community WASHCO, SLA and MSE members and the Woreda, Region, and Federal Level government officers and staff and Steering Committee members met in the field or their offices, for sharing their knowledge, insights and experience of COWASH over the years.

The MTE Team would also like to thank the MFA Water Advisor Jukka Ilomäki, who accompanied the team on the field work, for sharing his insights and experience.

Thanks go in particular to the FTAT and RSU team specialists for their insights, information and support in organising the field trips.

Finally, special thanks go to the COWASH IV CTA Neil Chadder, for his support in preparing for and supporting the field trip and Steering Committee meetings, providing most of the documents, and for his invaluable insights and information on the workings and experiences of COWASH IV.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Ethiopia, the Government of Finland, or the COWASH IV FTAT or Regional teams, or the individual people interviewed during the MTE.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Benef	Beneficiary
BoE	Bureau of Education
BoF	Bureau of Finance
BoH	Bureau of Health
BoWA	Bureau of Women Affairs
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CHC	Community Health Committee
CHW	Community Health Worker
CLTSH	Community-Led Total Sanitation and Health
CMP	Community-Managed Project
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
COWASH IV	Community-led Accelerated WASH Project, Phase IV
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
CWA	The Consolidated WASH Account part of the One WASH National Programme: with all Development Partner contributions in one account
EFY	Ethiopian Fiscal Year
EoP	End of Project
EQ	Evaluation Question
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
EUR	Euro
FTAT	Federal Technical Assistance Team
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GoF	Government of Finland
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan: of GoE
HH	Household
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
Ind	Indicator
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
mEUR	Million Euro
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance

MoH	Ministry of Health
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWE	Ministry of Water and Energy
MSE	Micro and Small Enterprise
MT	Mid-Term: meaning mid-project or around June / July 2023
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation (the team or process)
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OC	Outcome
ODF	Open Defecation Free
OWNP	One WASH National Programme: GoE's main instrument to integrate and coordinate all investments in the WASH sector and achieve the WASH sector goals of GTP.
OWNP CWA	The Consolidated WASH Account part of the One WASH National Programme: with all Development Partner contributions in one account
ProDoc	Project Document
PSD	Private-Sector Development
RCCN	Regional COWASH Communication Network
RSU	Regional Support Unit
SBC / SBCC	Social Behaviour Change / Social Behaviour Change Communication
SC	Steering Committee.
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SECRSM	Social, Environmental and Climate Risks Screening and Management
SLA	Saving and Loan Associations
SLTSH	School-Led Total Sanitation and Health
SNNP	Southern Nations & Nationalities Peoples (Regional State)
SWEP	South-west Ethiopia Peoples (Regional State)
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
TSEDU	Total Sanitation to End open Defecation and Urination
TVET	Technical and Vocational Extension and Training
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WASHCO	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committee
WMP	Woreda-Managed Project
WoW / H / E	Woreda Office of Water / Health / Education
WSP	Water Safety Plan
WWT	Woreda WASH Team

PROJECT DATA SHEET

Project Title	Community-led Accelerated WASH Project, Phase IV (COWASH IV)	
Sector	Natural Resources.	
Sub-sector	Water Supply, Sanitation and Health.	
Project Area	104 Woredas (Districts) of seven administrative regions of Ethiopia (Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP), South-west Ethiopia Peoples (SWEP) and Tigray).	
Duration	April 2021– December 2024 (Ethiopian Fiscal Year, EFY 2013 Q4 – EFY 2017 Q2)	
Project Financing	Total Grant	EUR 42,219,710
		ETB 2,279,864,311 (at 54 ETB / EUR)
	Government of Finland (GoF) Grant	EUR 18,961,341 (EUR 18.4 million plus EUR 561,341 rolled over from the Phase III regions and GoF budgets)
		ETB 1,023,912,414 (at 54 ETB / EUR)
	Government of Ethiopia (GoE) Grant	EUR 21,819,480 (at 54 ETB / EUR)
		ETB 1,178,251,897 (confirmed during Inception).
Beneficiary Communities in kind and in cash	EUR 1,438,889 (at 54 ETB / EUR)	
	ETB 77,700,000	
Competent Authorities	Ministry of Finance (MoF)	
	Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland	
Lead implementing agencies and programme oversight	Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE), Water Resources Development Bureaus of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP (Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region), SWEP (South-West Ethiopia Peoples' Region), and Tigray National Regional States in association with regional water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) partners: Bureaus of Health (BoH), Bureaus of Education (BoE), Bureaus of Finance (BoF) and Bureaus of Women Affairs (BoWA).	
	National WASH Steering Committee, Regional WASH Steering Committees, Zone WASH Teams and Woreda WASH Teams.	
Impact Statement	Improved public health and well-being, social development and climate resilience in the communities in the Project area.	
Outcome Statement	Increased and sustained coverage of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in rural areas of selected Woredas.	
Exchange rate	Amounts in different currencies have been converted to the equivalent amount at the fixed rate of 54 ETB / EUR throughout the project. (Exchange rate at the time of the MTE (early July 2023) was around 60 ETB / EUR)	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fourth phase of COWASH started in April 2021 and is scheduled to run to the end of December 2024. The project aims to have increased and sustained coverage of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in rural communities of selected Woredas, in order to contribute to improved public health and well-being, social development and climate resilience in these communities. The total budget is EUR 42,210,710 comprising a grant of almost EUR 19 million from the Government of Finland (GoF), a Government of Ethiopia (GoE) contribution of 21.8 mEUR from the participating Regional States and a community contribution of 1.4 mEUR. The project aims to work in a total of 104 Woredas across (originally) 7 Regional States (Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP, SWEP and Tigray). The project aims to benefit over one million rural people.

The project has faced a number of major external challenges that have seriously impacted implementation and achievement. These include the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 / 21; serious conflicts in Tigray, Amhara, BGRS and Oromia that have prevented access for different periods of time and damaged or destroyed WASH infrastructure in some areas; the split of SNNP Regional State; and the rapid increase in costs for WASH constructions materials, etc. following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The war in Tigray prevented any engagement until June 2023 when a MoU was signed. Implementation in the other states affected by conflict has progressed or stalled according to the ebb and flow of conflict.

The MTE assessed the project as being relevant to highly relevant and fully coherent with its context. Project objectives are highly relevant to all stakeholders, and the design appropriate and relevant to achieve these objectives. The design strongly integrates gender, women's empowerment and disability inclusion and supports human rights through inclusive access to water and sanitation. The project is inherently complicated however, with multiple implementers at different levels across 7 regional states and two sources and channels of financing in different currencies. The MTE found the design to also be overly ambitious, with the introduction of or stronger emphasis on several new innovative areas (enhanced water safety planning, market-based sanitation, access to credit, etc), the change to MFA funding through the Ministry of Finance ("Channel 1B") rather than direct to Regions, and expansion of geographic coverage. These factors combined with the serious delays in disbursement of funds in the first two years were serious internal challenges for implementation. Project management has been competent and strongly adaptive however and was able to cope with the external and internal challenges and maintain relevance during implementation.

The project has done well to mostly achieve its mid-term community water supply construction targets. The project has supported community-led construction of 1,318 community water supply schemes of various types (78% of the mid-term target) and rehabilitation of 337 water schemes (108% of target). This has benefitted a total population of 426,068 (90% of mid-term target) with basic (82%), limited (17%) or safely managed (1%) water supplies.

The project has done moderately well in woreda-managed construction of institutional (school and health) WASH infrastructure. A total of 227 schools (69% of mid-term target) were supported with safely managed water supplies or latrines with handwashing, water storage and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) blocks (responding to what they did not have, or were inadequate). This aimed to upgrade these schools to full safely managed WASH for the benefit of a total of 149,423 students. A total of 138 rural health institutions (42% of mid-project target) were similarly upgraded to fully safely managed WASH services.

While the project has done well on the number of facilities constructed, there are some issues with the quality of the works, water safety planning and organisation and management (O&M) and sanitation facilities. This will impact functionality and sustainability if not corrected.

The project lags behind in the uptake and adoption of household-constructed improved latrines, handwashing and positive hygiene behaviour change (community sanitation). The project has promoted these through training, behaviour change communication material and awareness campaigns by Community Health Extension Workers, the Woreda WASH Teams and others. More focused and

coordinated multi-actor approaches with targeted, locally relevant behaviour change communication materials that target identified behaviour change determinants still need to be developed. The pilot “sanitation marketing” effort through group enterprises (MSEs) for latrine slabs and other sanitation products, and village SLAs that should support HH latrine uptake, have not yet started sales (MSEs) or made more than a handful of loans (SLAs) for various reasons.

The project has put a major effort into capacity building through a large, cascaded TOT training programme and reached over 45,000 people (40% women) at all levels. The project’s capacity building and high-level engagement with WASH stakeholders should be able to influence practice, and possibly even policy. The project needs to clarify its objectives in this however, particularly in relation to the adoption of community approaches and other best practices, and focus more purposively on this.

The project, perhaps understandably at this stage, tended to put greater focus on training and construction of water and sanitation works, than on integration, behaviour change and other higher-level outcome areas. This needs to be addressed during the second half of the project. Considering the multiple serious constraints faced by the project and the project’s confidence that shortcomings will be addressed during the second half of the project, overall effectiveness was assessed as satisfactory.

The MTE has therefore assessed the project as being relevant to highly relevant, fully coherent, efficient and mostly effective in overall terms. If the project continues to improve and shortcomings are addressed as expected, the MTE considers that the project is likely to be mostly sustainable and achieve a satisfactory impact, provided of course that the security situation and economy remain stable.

The project has generated much learning that has been used to improve implementation and is highlighted in the report. The second half of the project is expected to capture important learning around its key (e.g. community) approaches and best practices for wider use in CWA and other WASH programmes. A small number of important lessons with general applicability emerged during the evaluation. These concern (1) the complexity of “community ownership” and the different types and stages of involvement of communities to generate ownership: (2) the need for different guidelines at different levels in a TOT training programme that cascades through several levels: (3) the gradual experience-based learning process needed to change attitudes and behaviour towards disability inclusion (the project has provided a sound basis for this but further work is needed): and (4) the need for a continuous, coordinated and focused effort that is tailored to the local situation and related behavioural determinants, to shift behaviour change to support ODF and prevent slippage.

A summary of the main findings and conclusions of the MTE is presented in Table 1 below. All the specific recommendations of the MTE are included in the third column in relation to the conclusions where they best fit. Most of these recommendations concern two recommendation areas that can be considered as overarching recommendations. The first is that **during the second half of COWASH IV, the project should shift to strengthen its focus on quality, inclusivity and sustainability of the WASH infrastructure constructed or rehabilitated, as well as achieving community sanitation and behaviour change.** Most of the recommendations in the table below focus on this through:

- Strengthening the organisational capacity of WASHCOs and linkage with Woreda WASH Team (WWT) offices and local spares and repair service providers, to improve quality of the works, water safety planning and implementation, O&M, and (to some extent) promotion of community sanitation:
- Enhancing the understanding and capacity of WWT offices to support the above, through practical user guides and on-the-job training and support, as well as cascaded training.
- Finding a way to strengthen the involvement of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Community Health Committees (CHCs) in the Woreda Managed Project (WMP) approach now used for school and health WASH infrastructure in order to strengthen ownership, quality, use and O&M. This will draw on the collective experience of project teams as well as a study on community ownership (see below).
- Finding a way to have more coordinated, coherent and effective community sanitation and ODF promotion programmes involving multiple partners. There is a need to better understand the main triggers for adoption and behavioural factors for adoption and behaviour change to improve the

behaviour change communication materials used and help strengthen the coordinated operation of community sanitation and ODF programmes.

The second main recommendation area concerns the **preparation and support for developing and moving towards a possible COWASH phase V, or developing and implementing an exit / closure plan.**

- The MTE recommends that there should be a follow-on phase V; emphasising that this should be an evolution of the project focused on integrating community-led approaches and best practices into the CWA part of OWNPN. Preparations will involve (1) studies of community ownership and private sector support for rural WASH; (2) strengthening the strategy for identifying and promoting adoption of best practice by WASH partners; (3) further enhancing learning on best practices through synthesis of team experience through on-going team reviews, the recommended studies and the endline study; and (4) a high-level engagement (including MFA) with OWNPN CWA ministries and donors to secure commitment and agree on roll out principles and strategy.
- Develop and implement an exit plan if a phase V is not possible. This would include items 1, 2 and 3 above as part of capturing learning, documentation and dissemination, as well as the completion of workplans, endline study, final reporting, handing over assets and closure of accounts.

The MTE has also made a small number of specific recommendations on dealing with inflation, working through Channel 1 B, the project end date and improving financial management, project M&E and reporting.

Table 1: Main findings, conclusions and recommendations

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
Relevance (EQ 3):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project objectives are highly relevant. • The project design was appropriate and relevant to achieve these objectives, although rather complicated, and over-ambitious with the introduction of several new innovative areas, the change to funding through Channel 1B, and expansion of geographic coverage. This made implementation difficult. The community-managed project (CMP) approaches embedded into the design were considered strongly relevant by many stakeholders met. • The project design had strong integration of gender, women’s empowerment and disability inclusions and addressed human rights in a more general way through inclusive access to water and sanitation. • Adaptive management was strong with project management responding sensibly and reasonably quickly to insecurity and loss of access in some regions at periods during implementation, the large increase in construction costs and other issues that arose. This has helped to keep the project relevant during implementation. • The increased access to community water supplies and institutional WASH are highly relevant for beneficiaries, although there is need to improve on water safety, quality and O&M. The sense of ownership generated and community contribution are testament to the relevance. The support for community sanitation was relevant but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project was considered as relevant to highly relevant in overall terms. • The project is well known and appreciated for its community-managed approaches which are widely recognized and producing better results in community ownership, O&M and sustainability. Further work is needed to fully realize these benefits, however. • The project provides a good entry point for gender equality, women’s empowerment and disability inclusion in terms of having a strategy, guidelines, training and monitoring indicators in place. 	<p>Recommendation for a possible phase V (EQ 1.5):</p> <p>The MTE recommends that the governments of Finland and Ethiopia should support a phase V of COWASH building on the strong relevance and success areas of the project. This should be an evolution rather than a continuation of the same. This would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating community-led approaches and best practice into the CWA mainstream part of OWNPN where appropriate, and as a normal part of its operations. This would be done through phased “roll out” from, and using, existing COWASH supported areas. • Practical “facilitated”¹ private sector development focusing, on the sole-trader and micro and small enterprise end of the scale, reinforced by • Enhancing and learning from full WASH adoption and sustainability in previous COWASH-supported schemes and some new ones to consolidate Regional and Woreda learning on community and MSE approaches and procedures and increase coverage. This third component relates to further developing the approaches, mechanisms and systems that can trigger and support community behaviour change, and generate stronger ownership and O&M, and then embedding these into OWNPN’s CWA. <p>A high-level engagement of the competent partners with key OWNPN CWA ministries and donors will be needed at an early stage to secure real commitment and agree on the</p>

¹ Facilitation is the attempt by development actors to catalyse change in the market system while not assuming any long-term market function themselves. Their intervention role is temporary and catalytic. See for instance the work of the BEAM Exchange (<https://beamexchange.org/>) or Donor Consortium for Enterprise Development (<https://www.enterprise-development.org/implementing-psd/>).

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>not such a high felt priority for communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is highly relevant for and fully consistent with GoE and GoF policies and frameworks. COWASH is a part of OWNP and its community managed approach is highly valued. 		<p>principles and scale of roll out. Without this, CWA integration into CWA will not work properly. This should be initiated by MFA, led by the Competent Partners, and supported as needed by FTAT. This engagement should be supported by the findings of the study on the generation and value of community ownership for O&M and sustainability, as recommended below. This study should be carried out by the project as a priority with the report available to support the high-level engagement process as soon as possible in 2024.</p>
Coherence and synergies (EQ 4):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COWASH is a component part of the government’s flagship OWNP WASH programme and complements this with the community managed project approach. The project is compatible with and collaborates with government structures at all levels. The project also collaborates with the ministries of water, health and education in some key WASH-related policy areas. These interactions generate synergies. COWASH collaborates with other partner projects and organisations in the project areas. COWASH is also aligned with private sector development through support for a limited number of women-led sanitation MSEs, village level SLAs and MFIs for sanitation loans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COWASH was considered to be fully coherent with government WASH policies, structures and policies, and with other partner projects in the COWASH project area. 	
Major external challenges that seriously constrained implementation and achievement of Outcomes.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has faced a number of major external challenges that have seriously impacted implementation and the achievement of targets (i.e. effectiveness) in all outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic that started in March 2020 seriously disrupted access and implementation throughout 2020 and into 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of serious external challenges have impacted the project. The project has done well to adapt to and deal with these, but they need to be considered when assessing performance. The conflict in EFY 2014 (2021 / 22) was a major factor in the delay in disbursement of funding 	

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious conflict in Tigray, Amhara, BGRS and Oromia prevented access for longer or shorter periods and destroyed WASH facilities, The Tigray war ended after the ceasefire in November 2022 (and the project re-started in June 2023) but conflict in other regions continues to varying degrees. • SNNP Regional State has split into two Regions and is in the process of splitting again. • The rate of inflation increased rapidly after the invasion of Ukraine and the cost of construction materials and borehole drilling contractors almost doubled during the implementation period. This has significantly reduced the number of WASH facilities that can be constructed. 	<p>by MFA. This was compounded by the change from Channel 2 to Channel 1 B funding which was implemented with insufficient preparation and time to learn and adjust (though for good reasons).</p>	
<p>Effectiveness: Core OC 1: Access to and use of safe and climate resilient community water supplies (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has done well in supporting communities in the construct or rehabilitation of new or existing water supply schemes. • A total of 1,318 water schemes (protected springs, hand dug wells, shallow (tube) wells, and piped schemes, etc) have been constructed and a further 337 rehabilitated up to the end of June 2023. This would be 78% and 108% of the mid-project target. • The newly constructed and rehabilitated schemes together have benefitted a total of 426,068 people or 90% of the mid-project target. It is better to provide data on constructed and rehabilitated separately as well as combined (for summary). • The construction quality appears to be reasonable although some relatively small issues have been reported. • All staff and WASHCOs have been trained on water safety planning, but preparation, documentation and implementation of the WSPs has been weak. Only 17% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project performance has been satisfactory overall, particularly considering the restricted access during periods of conflict in Tigray, Amhara, BGRS and Oromia, and the escalation of costs for construction. • There is need to improve water safety panning and WSP implementation, especially water safety testing and treatment. • WASHCOs have received considerable training but focused follow up is still needed for a number of WASHCOs to build organizational capacity, linkage with spare parts, repairs, etc service providers, and WoWs, and help them establish sound systems for O&M. Organisational capacity includes and requires strengthening the roles of women in the WASHCOs. • Community commitment (e.g. financial contribution) and ownership seem to be stronger with the COWASH community 	<p>Recommendation: Strengthen WASHCO organisational capacity for improved water safety, O&M and sustainability (EQ 5.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project should make a conscious effort to strengthen WASHCO organizational capacity and linkage to local water sector service providers, with the aim of establishing a sound O&M system. On the job training follow up monitoring and support visits with targeted training if needed may be enough for most WASHCOs. • SECRSM and WSPs should be systematically carried out, documented and more closely followed up to ensure implementation, especially periodic water testing and treatment. <p>Recommendation: Carry out a solution-focussed comparative study on the generation and value of community ownership for O&M and sustainability,</p> <p>The MTE recommends that the project should carry out a practical solution-focussed comparative study of different community approaches used in CMP and WMP to better</p>

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>of water schemes had WSPs and few seem to do systematic testing and treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project database assessed functionality at 99% (i.e. working at the time of the assessment) with 82% at basic 17% limited and 1% safely managed service levels. The project does not seem to carry out regular assessments of the quality of functionality or likely sustainability. 	<p>approaches.</p>	<p>understand how community ownership is generated, and if and how this leads to better quality, O&M and sustainability. This is a priority study needed to support discussions on a possible phase V as well as OCs 1 and 3. The report should be available early in 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The different community approaches studied would be from (i) WASHCO CMPs through MFIs, and (ii) banks, (iii) institutional WASH WMPs (involving PTAs or CHCs), and (iv) WMP approaches for comparable water projects under CWA. The aim would be to find out (1) if CMP gives better results than OWNPN; (2) what generates the benefits (e.g. the level of community involvement, control of finance, etc); and (3) what is the size cutoff or other criteria beyond which community-led approaches do not work. This should be used to improve outcomes in WASHCO CMP community water supply projects and PTA / CHC institutional WASH WMP projects in COWASH; and provide guidance on how community approaches can be integrated into CWA OWNPN WASH projects.
<p>Effectiveness: Core OC 2: Household sanitation (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has carried out a number of sanitation awareness and behaviour change trainings of staff and developed and distributed SBC material and promoted HH latrines in project supported areas (i.e. areas provided with a safe water supply). The rural HHs' improved latrine coverage has not shown much progress, however. The average rural HH's improved latrine access coverage at startup increased by only 3.6 percentage points in first year of COWASH IV, EFY 2014 (2021 / 22). The EFY 2014 report further notes that within the COWASH IV community water points' beneficiary households the coverage was 26.3%, i.e. half 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall achievement in HH sanitation (OC 2) has been weak and overall performance would be considered only partly satisfactory. The project has indicated that the lack of access in some areas due to conflict, and the delays in disbursement of funds in the first two years were major factors. The MTE feels also however that the much stronger focus on construction of water schemes and institutional WASH reduced the focus on softer targets such as behaviour change. The project seems to rely mostly on the 	<p>Recommendation: Carry out a formative and solution-focussed study to understand community sanitation and behaviour change triggers and strengthen the strategy for community sanitation and behaviour change (EQ 5.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project needs to rethink its strategy on HH sanitation and find a way to mobilise the multiple actors who are supposed to support this, and focus in a smart way on behaviour change "triggers". This will require a formative study to better understand the behavioural and motivational factors and the BC triggers for household adoption of improved sanitation and hygiene. identify appropriate and acceptable

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>of the targeted 52.4%. There was no data for EFY 2015 (2022 / 23): this is prepared nationally and was not available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project counts an “improved” latrine at any of the SDG levels “basic”, “limited” and “safely managed”. The EFY 2014 (2021 / 22) report said that there were no “safely managed”, with most in the categories “basic / unimproved” or “limited / unimproved”. There was no data on access to HH handwashing facilities (the second key focus of OC 2), or anything related to behaviour change. The project reported development and distribution of posters. The project has supported a total of 9 pilot village-level Savings and Lending Associations (SLA), but progress has been slow and only 14 HHs have taken loans and started construction. 	<p>community Health Extension Workers (HEW) to carry out HH promotion of latrines and handwashing, but they have many other tasks, and a much wider group of actors should be involved (e.g. local administrators, Woredas and the WASHCOs). It is the responsibility of “many” - but “none” take responsibility. The “system” is not working properly, and the approach / strategy needs a rethink.</p>	<p>“improved” but cost-effective latrine designs for different areas, and devise appropriate strategies to mobilise actors and promote behaviour change. This should probably be tailored to local (e.g. Woreda and Region) level needs and opportunities. The Social Behaviour Change Strategy needs to be more focused at Woreda and WASHCO levels.</p>
Effectiveness: Core OC 3: Institutional WASH (EQ 5):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools: The project reported a total of 195 schools with latrines supported through construction of water supply, handwashing, water storage and / or MHM facilities according to what they did not have before. A total of 32 schools with safe water were supported through construction of latrines, MHM and / or handwashing facilities. This makes a total of 227 schools (69% of mid-term target) supported to have full WASH facilities. This benefited a total of 149,423 students, or 92% of the target. Health institutions: The project reported a total of 82 health institutions with latrines supported through construction of water supply, handwashing and water storage facilities according to what they did not have before. A total of 56 health institutions with water were 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall achievement against targets in institutional WASH support (OC 3) appears to have been moderate, and overall performance would be considered mostly to partly satisfactory, depending on the quality, durability, functionality and sustainability of the various WASH facilities put in place. The project’s implementation strategy for institutional WASH was changed from CMP in phases I to III to WMP in phase IV. A number of RSU staff thought this had impacted negatively on participation of community organisations (i.e. PTA and CMC) and ownership: while others felt that CMP was appropriate because the size of the work needed contractors and bidding and PTAs and CHCs could not manage this. 	<p>Recommendation: Further strengthen the involvement and capacity of PTAs and CHCs to improve institutional WASH quality, O&M and sustainability (EQ 5.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MTE recommends that the project strengthens its approaches to more systematically improve the involvement of PTAs and CHCs at an early stage in institutional WASH, so as to improve ownership, O&M, and ultimately functionality and sustainability. This should be done over time through the collective experience and learning of project teams and the understanding generated by the recommended study on the generation and value of community ownership. The organisational capacity of PTCs and CHCs should be strengthened as for WASHCOs, through on-the-job training, monitoring and support visits with targeted training if needed.

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>supported through construction of latrines, handwashing and water storage facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This makes a total of 138 health institutions (42% of mid-term target) supported to have full WASH facilities. Quality, Functionality & sustainability: There was no data available on functionality or sustainability (since only just constructed). The MTE observed a number of quality-related issues in the school and health latrine visited. This is consistent with a number of construction and quality issues reported by the project consultant's report on his technical field visits. These will impact on functionality and sustainability and should be addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FTAT informed the MTE that the idea of changing from CMP to WMP was raised by regions as they considered that it is difficult to apply the full CMP with institutions due to the requirements such as community contribution for construction, upfront cash contribution for O&M, the complexity of the construction (new standard designs) needing contractors. The project tried however to keep some of the elements of the CMP approach such as application by the PTA/School and health community, appraisal by Woreda staff, approval by WWT, commitment of the school for conducting O&M. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If this is successful, the key learning should be documented and taken as best practice for a possible phase V.
<p>Effectiveness: (High Level) OC 4: Full WASH services are sustainable & inclusive & used with positive hygiene behaviour change (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 4 provides a much-needed high-level outcome that integrates the three core outcomes as "full WASH services" and focuses on inclusivity, behaviour change and sustainability. This was missing from the ProDoc design and introduced by the project during Inception. The OC statement wording emphasises sustainability and inclusivity, while the Result Framework indicators and outputs focus on accessibility / inclusivity, O&M, women's empowerment, functionality and even ODF. No data was available on OC4's outcome-level indicators. Secondary data and anecdotal evidence from the field visits indicated however that there had been some slippage in ODF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project so far has tended to treat and report on OC 4 as another outcome at a similar level as the others. The MTE feels however that OC 4 provides a good opportunity for the project to build understanding and focus on integrated full WASH and behaviour change as well as inclusivity and sustainability. All are important high-level objectives of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOTE: The project should strengthen its focus on the higher-level outcomes around integrated full WASH, behaviour change and sustainability encapsulated in Outcome 4. Several of the recommendations are intended to achieve this. Project performance reports should reflect this understanding and report on progress at this level.
<p>Effectiveness: OC 4: Human and physical capacity building (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building human capacity and developing and instituting the systems and procedures needed for community WASH etc, is a huge and crucial task of the FTAT and RSUs. This aims essentially to help government and other WASH actors do their WASH work better and with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cascaded TOT training programme has been well implemented and largely provided the foundation for implementation of the programme. Overall performance is regarded 	<p>Recommendation: Strengthening field level implementation capacity and operations (EQ 5.1 and 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project should continue to prepare simple "user guides" for field-level use where practice falls below

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>a stronger focus on community-led WASH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTAT has done a good job in running the training programme. It prepared or updated a total of 22 key Manuals, Guidelines & Strategies and training materials. Manuals are generally comprehensive and appropriate for the higher-level trainees. • Training was done in all key WASH areas through a cascaded TOT system from Federal to community levels as appropriate. A total of 34,068 people (42% F) have so far been trained (50% of target) through a total of total of 1,448 courses. • The FTAT felt that training at Region level and below needed to be strengthened and supported the RSUs for this (partly for their capacity building). • The project also provided a small number of important physical assets to key offices. 	<p>as satisfactory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FTAT has started on-the-job training and support in the field and will emphasise this during the 2nd half of the project. This excellent initiative is strongly supported by the MTE. • The MTE found some “dilution” in the level of knowledge at the field level however (using WSP as a case), as would be expected with such a TOT system through multiple levels. The MTE also found that the knowledge level in some manuals was rather high compared to actual practice and use at the field level. While comprehensive and more principle-based manuals may be appropriate for the high-level trainees, the learning should be more practical and focused on what needs to be done at the lower / field levels. The MTE recommends preparation of simple field or user guides for field level use in some subject areas. 	<p>expectations and the higher level “trainer” guidelines is of little use to field level practitioners. This can be approached in stages over time during the second half of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify knowledge and practice gaps in actual operations: this can be done through on-going monitoring and field support by drawing on the collective experience of teams through e.g. the joint review meetings that the project supports. ○ Develop, test and roll out practical field-level “user guides”. ○ Adjust the main manual as needed to bring high level training closer to field operation. • The FTAT’s practical on the job training and implementation support initiative is strongly supported and should be a major focus in the second half of phase IV to build real capacity and quality of implementation in the field.
<p>Effectiveness: HL OC 4: Gender, women’s empowerment and inclusion (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender, women’s empowerment and inclusion are well integrated into the project design, and much of implementation. • Gender equality and disability inclusion are actively promoted and monitored in community groups such as WASHCOs, SLA, MSE, etc. The MSE should be “women-led” groups. • Women’s empowerment and disability inclusion manuals and training material, etc are translated into local languages and shared widely. • Gender has been integrated into most trainings and covered in different review meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall performance is considered to be satisfactory. Gender and inclusion are well integrated into design, implementation and monitoring. There is still a long way to go, however. • The involvement of women in important positions in WASHCO, MSE groups and SLAs, provides a good entry point for strengthening gender equality and women’s empowerment, but needs to be consolidated. The project has the potential to be gender transformational. • The work done on disability inclusion similarly provides a good basis and entry point for 	<p>Recommendation: Formative and solution-focussed study to better understand women’s empowerment and disability inclusion attitude change and “triggers”, and strengthen the strategies for achieving these (EQ 3.1 & 5.1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project should continue to monitor the quality of women’s empowerment and disability inclusion activities and resulting attitude and behaviour change, particularly in WASHCOs and PTAs CHC, or other community-based organisations involved in school or health WASH. The work done so far is already having an impact and provides the basis for building understanding and attitude and behaviour change.

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the community level however gender equality and women’s empowerment still lag behind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average of 3 women per WASHCO. ○ 62% (a majority) of WASHCOs had only one woman in a leadership / senior position: 15% had 2: and 20% had 0. ○ Only 4% of WASHCO chairpersons are women. • The project appears to have significantly raised the profile and understanding of disability. Disability and broader inclusion are integrated into planning, design, construction and use of all water schemes and institutional WASH facilities. A suitable connection from the water point ramp to the village had not yet been made in the facilities visited, and the disabled facilities in latrines were not up to specifications. 	<p>further building understanding and changing behaviour on disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project should carry out a formative and solution-focussed study mid-way through the second half of the project (when more pressing issues have been addressed) to better understand how gender and disability understanding and attitudes are changing in WASHCOs, PTAs and CHCs and what the “triggers” are. • The learning generated can be used to improve the project’s SBCC material and further strengthen gender and disability inclusion strategies. • Ensure that the cascaded training does cascade the essential knowledge and understanding to community, WASHCO and institutional WASH levels, and brings meaningful positive changes. Strengthen the integration of gender, women’s empowerment and disability inclusion into training, organisational capacity building and follow up support visits made for different purposes.
<p>Effectiveness: HL OC 4: Private sector support (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FTAT has participated in a number of Multi-Stakeholder Meetings related to private sector development, and collaborated with the MoH on its national market-based sanitation implementation guideline and training manual. FTAT has also produced a Business Skill Development Training Manual-and had a Guideline for Women-Led MSE Development from COWASH III. • MFI sanitation loans: The project has engaged with VisionFund MFI to explore possibilities for them to develop and then offer sanitation loans, and how COWASH could collaborative. • SLAs (Village-level Saving & Lending Association) piloting: The project has supported a total of 9 pilot SLAs (as mentioned under OC 2) with total 214 members. Startup was delayed, and progress has been slow. Only 14 HHs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall progress is assessed as partly satisfactory. The project has made a reasonable start but the SLAs and MSEs have not yet generated results (i.e. loans and sales respectively). It is acknowledged however that progress has been negatively affected by delays, lack of access, increased material costs and probably a weakened market for sanitation products (given increased cost of living). • The MTE has some concerns however about SLAs and MSEs, and wondered why the spares and service businesses / artisans were no longer being promoted. These concerns are reflected in the recommendations. 	<p>Recommendation: Strengthening the project’s approach and strategies for improving access to sanitation loans (EQ 5.2):</p> <p>The MTE Recommends that the project supports this through a two-pronged strategy during the rest of phase IV:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen collaboration with VisionFund MFI to help them develop and roll out an appropriate sanitation lending instrument. The project can support VisionFund to understand the sanitation sector and link it with potential demand areas (where the project promotes adoption). VisionFund should use their own capital for lending. • Focus on fully operationalising the existing SLAs and proving the concept, before starting new ones. Try to find and partner with an experienced SLA NGO or other agency for them to take this up in the project areas.

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>have taken loans and started construction. Training is intensive with 6 modules, and regular follow up is needed to guide operation and consolidate capacity. Progress is well short of targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women-led group sanitation MSEs (micro and small enterprises): Work was delayed and so far 6 new MSEs have been initiated and 12 continued from phase III. Total membership was 90 with more than half expected to be women. No production (of sanitation slabs, etc) and sales have yet been reported however. The poor progress compared to phase III was not fully explained, although the lack of a mould, cost of materials and some doubts about market demand were mentioned. • Spares and repairs MSEs / artisans: Project reports mention these but do not elaborate. It seems these are not being supported in phase IV. 		<p>SLAs require considerable training and follow up support. The MTE is concerned that this is not really the job of Woreda Health and Water staff and they may not have the time and transport resources needed.</p> <p>Recommendation: Learning from private sector support to feed into private sector strategy development for a possible phase V:</p> <p>The MTE recommends that the project should strengthen and learning from its private sector support during the rest of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project should focus on fully operationalising the existing women-led group sanitation MSEs and proving the concept, before starting new ones. • If a phase V with private sector support is agreed (as recommended), the project should carry out a solution-focused study towards the end of phase IV to support private sector support strategy development in phase V. The study should learn from the COWASH IV latrine slab group MSE, MFI and SLA initiatives, and examples of successful rural water supply spares and repair, water supply construction and latrine construction MSEs, as well as the market for such and the need for a policy shift to strengthen the enabling environment. • If phase V is not agreed, the learning from COWASH private sector support should be captured through a small internal study or the endline study.
<p>Effectiveness: OC 5: Project implementation, documentation and dissemination (EQ 5 and 6.1):</p>		
<p>Financial management and reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management is particularly challenging for COWASH for a number of reasons: GoF and GoE funds from different sources, in different currencies, with different flow paths, and managed and reported on by different implementing entities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is need to make project financial reporting much clearer, particularly on the overall picture of cumulative expenditure against budget. This seems to be possible for GoF funds: but so far it has not been possible to get GoE expenditure against contributions. 	<p>Recommendation: Appointment and work of a dedicated Financial Management Specialist for the project (EQ 6.1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After some delay, the MoF has assigned a member of staff to cover the dedicated Financial Management Specialist role provided for in the ProDoc. The FTAT should make sure that they are providing the services

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project financial management has been strong in spite of these considerable difficulties and the project has done well in timely budgeting and disbursement. Project financial reporting was good on GoF fund requests and transfers but did not give a clear picture on overall (cumulative) expenditure against budget for GoF funds. The MTE did not see information on actual regional GoE expenditure. 		<p>intended in the Project Document and needed by the project, and push for the engagement of a dedicated FMS or other arrangement that would provide the support needed by the project. The FMS should be asked for instance to compile the regional GoE expenditure and provide data in the format and tables needed by FTAT for reporting and analysis.</p> <p>Recommendation: Reporting use of funds rolled over from phase III:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MoF should work with the BoFs to agree on how to report the expenditure from the funds rolled over from phase III with due accountability, and provide the necessary data to the FTAT. This should be resolved at a fairly early stage so the data can be reported in the next mid-year report.
<p>M&E and progress reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has a comprehensive results framework and monitoring plan (Annex 3) and online database with data on all community water and school and health WASH facilities, as well as some other implementation and monitoring data. The project extracts data on many indicators from its database. Data on some indicators seems to be missing. Project progress / performance reports are of a reasonable standard and on time. Having separate FTAT and overall (regions) reports is slightly inconvenient for the reader but understandable. Reports need to focus more on outcomes than activities and outputs, and provide data on cumulative achievement as well as for the reporting period. This would help to give a clearer picture of overall progress towards outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project M&E system is sufficiently comprehensive and well run, although it struggles to collect and compile the considerable amount of data from all project regions in good time. The project does not keep a result framework data table with data against each indicator to provide a clear picture of progress against all indicators. 	<p>Recommendation: Improving project reporting EQ 6.1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MTE recommends that the project should continue to improve the structure and consistency of its performance reports during the rest of the phase IV. In particular, reports should provide a clearer view of progress towards higher-level outcomes and endline goals. Data tables in reports should include cumulative achievement against the cumulative target as well as for the reporting period. The financial report section should include tables with cumulative expenditure against budget. Project reports should include a results framework table annex with summary data for each indicator. This should show cumulative progress against the cumulative target or situation and towards the endline. This should include qualitative notes to explain progress or challenges or when data may be available as appropriate.
<p>Learning, studies, documentation and dissemination:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has not focused much on studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOTE: An important focus towards the latter part of the

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has done very well in the development, production and dissemination of manuals, guidelines training material and other documents and fully achieved its targets. Documentation is widely disseminated through the project’s website as well as trainings and meetings. 	<p>and learning during it first half, as would be expected. Focus should be increased during the second half. A number of studies have been proposed.</p>	<p>project will be to capture, document and disseminate important learning. This is covered by the recommendation for a possible phase V or project exit plan. Four specific studies have been recommended on community ownership, private sector support, community sanitation and behaviour change, and women’s empowerment and disability inclusion.</p>
<p>Effectiveness: OC 5: Lessons learnt shared and “put into action”: influencing practice, strategy or policy (EQ 5):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project OC 5 was developed during Inception to replace most of ProDoc OC 4. The “lessons learnt . . . shared, and put into action” part replaced “learning . . . shared strategically to enhance the impact of COWASH IV on WASH sector policies and practices”. The focus on this important natural outcome of the project was reduced, but its importance remains. FTAT participates in multi-sector stakeholder events and high-level meetings, collaborates with partner ministries, donors and others, shares documents widely (esp. the old website), and tries to influence policy, strategy or practice in a general way. Project assumes or even expects that all the capacity building, and working with CMPs and institutional WASH with some new approaches will influence practice, particularly related to OWNPN. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the project’s high-level collaboration and capacity building with the introduction of improved practices will undoubtedly influence practice and maybe strategy and policy in some way, The likelihood of achieving this and improving impact would be improved however if there was specific focus, with clear objectives and an outline strategy. It should be noted that the outcome does not have any output, indicators or target relating to policy or practice influence, and so performance is not the issue. The MTE feel however that the project is so well placed to influence and improve practice, strategies and possibly policy for significant long-lasting benefits, that it should strive to do this: and could do so with very little extra effort. 	<p>Recommendation: Strengthening practice and policy influence (EQ 8):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project should strengthen and gradually elaborate its strategy for identifying and promoting best practice for adoption by other One WASH and particularly CWA partners. This should focus on key areas of practice where the project has strong learning and is well placed to influence practice or possibly strategies and even policy. This is a workstream in its own right but is also a part of preparations for phase V or project closure. Most efforts would be incorporated into normal project operations such as team learning reviews, cascaded trainings, etc. The recommended studies and endline could generate important learning for this.
<p>Efficiency (EQ 6):</p>		
<p>Factors that indicate higher efficiency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very high proportion of the budget goes to investment (50%) or capacity building (35%). Leverage of community and government funding for CMP. Good use is made of resources from multiple partners for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project was assessed as efficient (i.e. satisfactory) in overall terms. 	<p>Other recommendations will support this.</p>

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>e.g. WASH, training, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong GoF budgeting and disbursement control. <p>Factors that indicate lower efficiency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weaknesses in financial reporting. • Access to up to date M&E data on many indicators and functionality / sustainability. • The number of HR and administrative issues to be dealt with including reduced motivation of RSUs takes management time away from more productive work. 		
Sustainability (EQ 8):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the community water supply facilities put in place are likely to continue due to stronger community ownership, competent and organised WASHCOs and O&M expected by EoP. • Most of the community behaviour changes including improved latrines etc put in place are considered likely to continue, although the extent of change needs to be increased. • Most WASH facilities are expected to continue although stronger community involvement and O&M still need to be put in place. • There is potential for the CMP approach and innovative and improved approaches to be taken up by OOWNP but this needs purposive policy, strategy and capacity influence. MFI sanitation loans could be offered more widely if successful. New latrine slab MFI groups and SLAs are unlikely to start without project investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project was assessed as sustainable in overall terms. • Most of the project benefits were assessed as likely to be sustainable after the EoP if the project consolidates efforts in capacity and system building during its second half. • There should be positive rather than negative net social, environmental or economic impacts and so no risk for overall long-term social, environmental or economic sustainability. • There is very good potential to scale up COWASH CMP etc approaches but this will need purposive in this direction. 	<p>Recommendation: Assessing functionality & sustainability (EQ 8):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability of WASH infrastructure is crucial for COWASH. The project should develop a simple and practical tool to assess functionality (function delivery) and likely sustainability of all COWASH WASH infrastructure on a regular basis (e.g. every one or at least two years). This needs a much simpler assessment tool with geo-referencing capability to allow analysis. Since the mid-term has now passed, this should be done towards but before the EoP. Work should start soon so that the tool can be piloted before full use. • A number of other recommendations are strongly related to sustainability (e.g. WASHCO organisational capacity) and should be followed to strengthen the basis for sustainability.
Likely Impact (EQ 7):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too soon to assess most of the five main goal indicators and no data was available. The project did not include a section on impact in its Performance Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The causal logic of the project is strong. Impact is likely to be achieved if the project consolidates organisational capacity, systems 	<p>Other recommendations will support this.</p>

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>This is understandable at the current stage of implementation.</p>	<p>and sustainability in the second half as expected.</p>	
<p>Coping with inflation and use of contingency and other extra funds (EQ 1):</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has suffered from very large cost increases (up to 100% over 1 to 2 years), particularly for WASH construction materials and drilling services etc needing foreign exchange. • The project has sensibly already shifted to simpler technologies and using realistic budgets. • Reducing targets is on balance not recommended. • Some funds may be available to cover cost increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost escalation has seriously impacted the project, directly through the increased cost for WASH infrastructure, but also indirectly through the higher cost of living impacting household spending power (e.g. for latrines). • The project shift to simpler technologies and realistic budgets is appropriate. • Additional funds are needed to cover the extra costs as per the recommendations. 	<p>Recommendation: Dealing with inflation (EQ 1):</p> <p>The project’s shift to using simpler technologies and realistic budgets that take account of likely cost increases are entirely appropriate and should be continued. The additional funding that may be available could be used to cover cost increases as below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUR 920,000 regional budget contingency: Share to regions in line with an agreed formula using clear weighted criteria based on the need of each region for, (a) front-end loading to cover extra costs for newer regions and those with less coverage and experience (to consolidate learning and build wide understanding, and capacity), (b) the need to improve WASH in communities, (c) ability of the Region to properly manage and use funding, and (d) the priority attached to community WASH and level of engagement by the Region (not only financial contribution). The project is best placed to develop the criteria and assign weightings, but the MTE has prepared a template to support this. • Exchange rate gain: small but significant. Share to regions using the same share percentages as above. • EUR 700,000 set aside in the Federal part of the COWASH IV budget: Use to cover FTAT costs during the extension. • Additional EUR 1,700,000 may be available. Use most to repair war damage to critical rural WASH infrastructure. • It is recommended that the contingency funds and exchange rate gain are made available for all WASH infrastructure in the agreed workplans. This includes

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
		<p>community water supplies and institutional WASH that are supposed to be covered by the GoE contribution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MTE does not recommend reducing targets at this stage because: (1) discussion across the seven regions and then with MFA for approval would be time-consuming and not the best use of resources: (2) achievement does not seem to be too far from most Result Framework targets: (3) the final targets will ultimately depend on the budget available and will be approved as part of the planning process: (4) the performance assessment thresholds (e.g. highly satisfactory, etc) should be lowered (by the Competent Authorities) for the final evaluation in line with what it should have been possible to achieve. This could also take account of other serious external challenges such as insecurity.
Working with the Channel 1B structure: (EQ 2):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The COWASH IV design changed GoF funding flow from Channel 2 to Channel 1B: i.e. through the MoF and under MoF regulations, instead of directly to the Regions with some flexibility. This had some advantages and some disadvantages. The fund flow earlier was problematic for the MFA Finland, as this required government agreements directly with the many regions. It was considered more appropriate to have inter-government agreement at the same level. This was a significant change and a shock for the Regions, but there was little time or preparation for its introduction. This had two main negative effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of familiarity with procedures, extra layer and need to comply with MoF regulations contributed to significant delays in disbursement. The need to follow MoF regulations also constrained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A change of this magnitude should have been introduced with sufficient time and preparation for the Regions to understand, accept and then adjust their procedures. The excellent FTAT initiative to shorten the planning, budgeting and disbursement procedure is appreciated by all and is fully supported. The MTE finds it fair that RSU salaries are uniform (with the same increments) across all regions, and the ruling will not change. RSU staff are expected to work with high dedication and many stakeholders across several Woredas, often covering large distances. This incurs significant communications costs but there is no allowance. 	<p>Recommendation: Addressing RSU motivation (EQ 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering that RSU staff are contracted and do not enjoy the level of job security that goes with “permanent & pensionable” government employment, and are often required to work beyond the call of duty, the project should consider paying them a small percentage-of-salary stipend, if this is at all possible from FTAT funds and there is sufficient budget. This is not permitted through Channel 1B. To keep it manageable, this should be paid as a single annual payment in arrears. FTAT should work to strengthen RSU motivation further through enhancing professional development: The FTAT initiative for joint review and team building meetings is strongly supported by the MTE and should be continued. Other opportunities (e.g. for training) may arise and should be supported.

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
<p>Region flexibility and required the application of uniform salary scales. The reduction in salary for many RSU staff and the extra bureaucracy e.g. for reporting, led to the demotivation of RSU teams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoF is strongly in favour but the views of regional Bureaus were views were mixed. Most RSUs were strongly against while the FTAT felt that the change had not been adequately prepared for but that it is not possible to change back to Channel 2. • The excellent FTAT initiative this year to start a month earlier and use 11 month reports and provisional Core Plan and Budgets has largely resolved the late disbursement issue. Funds were received by August 2023. • The RSU motivation issue remains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSU staff are employed by the BoWs but are contracted rather than “permanent and pensionable”. It would not be unusual to receive a higher remuneration in such situations. 	
Recommendations for phase out and closure if there is no follow-on phase:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is due to end on 31 December 2024 but does not yet know if there will be a follow-on phase or it will need to close. It does not yet have a Closure Plan. 		<p>Recommendation: Development and implementation of an exit plan if a follow-on phase V is not agreed (EQ 1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is no follow-on phase V for COWASH, then a properly thought through exit plan should be developed at an early stage and implemented during the rest of phase IV. This will include capturing, documenting and disseminating key project learning to influence practice in line with several recommendations above, completion of workplans, endline study, final reporting, asset audit and hand-over, and closure of accounts.
Recommendations on the project End Date:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current project end date is 31 December 2024. This is halfway through the Ethiopian financial year. • The project estimates that there are sufficient funds to continue implementation to the end of EFY 2017 (June 		<p>Recommendation: Phase IV end date (EQ 1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project should be extended for 9 months to 30 Sept 2025: This would take implementation to the end of EFY 2017 (7 July 2025) and align with the rainy, agricultural

Main Findings	Conclusions	MTE Recommendations
2025). This would give just over 4 years of implementation.		and constructions seasons, and provide a further 3 months to wrap up. Sufficient funds are available for this 9 month extension. This would also allow sufficient time to prepare for a follow-on phase as recommended.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the Community-Led Accelerated WASH (COWASH) Project Phase IV: This started in April 2021 and is scheduled to end in December 2024 (Ethiopian Financial Year (EFY) 2014 to mid- EFY 2017)². The first phase of COWASH started in 2011 (EFY 2004). The project goal is to contribute to improved public health and well-being through increased and inclusive access to improved community and institutional (school and health facilities) water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and behaviour change in selected rural communities.

COWASH phase IV had a total budget at startup of 40.975 mEUR with 18.4 mEUR from the Government of Finland (GoF), 20.475 mEUR from the Government of Ethiopia (GoE), and an estimated 2.1 mEUR as the community contribution (in cash or in kind). The Competent Authorities are the MFA of Finland and Ministry of Finance (MoF) of Ethiopia. The project Implementing Agencies are: the Ministry of Water (MoWE) (federal lead) and Water Resources Development Bureaus of the seven participating Regional States (regional leads), in association with Regional Bureaus of Finance (BoF), Health (BoH), Education (BoE) and Women Affairs (BoWA). Niras provides the Federal TA Team (FTAT).

The MTE was carried out by a team of three consultants provided by the Finnish Consulting Group (FCG) through its FADER Framework Contract with the MFA Finland. The MTE comprised two international and one national consultant, with one woman and two men. The MTE started in early June and ran to the end of September 2023, when the final report was submitted. Field work was carried out in Ethiopia from 1 to 15 July 2023. The MTE Team was accompanied by the MFA Water Advisor for its field work.

1.2 MTE purpose, scope, methodology and limitations

Purpose, scope and main evaluation questions of the MTE

The purpose of the MTE was to assess the progress of COWASH IV towards achieving its various objectives and targets, identify widely useful lessons learned, and make recommendations for the remaining project period. The MTE TORs are provided in full in Annex 1.

The MTE covers COWASH phase IV from its start in April 2021 to the time of the MTE. Phases I to III would be considered as background but not included directly as of part of the MTE. The MTE should cover the whole geographical area of the project, and consult a wide range of stakeholders at all levels, including those from a selection of the Regional States supported by the project. The MTE would cover the interventions supported through the bilateral GoF contribution of 18.4 mEUR, GoE contribution of 20.475 (mEUR (2020) and community contribution estimated at 2.1 mEUR (2020); but would not cover the 4 mEUR contributed by GoF to the OWNP CWA II basket account.

The MTE TORs identified two priority and some additional evaluations questions as well as the standard OECD evaluation questions on relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. The priority questions relate to addressing inflation, using the contingency and additional funding, focus for the remaining project period and a possible continuation of COWASH, the COWASH financing structure (Channel 1), the additional benefits for Finland to work bilaterally, and the contribution to open defecation free areas expansion. The complete list of evaluation and priority questions is provided in Annex 1b.

² COWASH planning, budgeting and reporting follow the Ethiopian Financial Year (EFY) which follows the Ethiopian calendar. The equivalence between the Ethiopian and Gregorian calendars is shown in Annex 6. This also shows the timing of the four phases on COWASH.

Approach and methodology

The MTE used a mixed methods approach with iterative triangulation across stakeholders, regions and reports to build an understanding of reality as well as theory and help to generate sound recommendations for improvement through a participatory, open, opportunistic and agile process. The primary focus was on the priority and evaluation questions from the TORs. This was implemented through main stages of work.

Preparation and desk review: This involved initial meetings, collection and review of documentation and preparation of the field work schedule and an Inception Report (required in the MTE TORs). The project provided documents and the MTE team downloaded selected additional documents from the COWASH website and other sources. The desk review used a theory of change approach to start to build understanding of how the programme should work to achieve its desired changes and outcomes including institutional change (capacity, systems, policy, etc), behavioural change (organisational, adoption of best practices, etc), and construction of the WASH facilities. Several guidelines and training materials developed by the project were reviewed to understand how the learning and processes should be used. The MTE team was able to build a reasonable but incomplete understanding of the theory of change (how things should work), and progress towards the instructional, behavioural and physical changes being targeted.

Field work: Field work was essential to fill in gaps, validate and extend the understanding developed by the desk review stage. The MTE was able to visit four Regions (Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara, Sidama and SNNP) and participate in two Regional State Steering Committee Meetings (Benishangul-Gumuz and Amhara). This was a very good opportunity to meet with key senior government stakeholders as well as complete RSU teams, the CTA and others from the FTAT, and key personnel from the embassy. The MTE met with the key government stakeholders during meeting breaks and lunches and sometimes informally in the evenings; and had multiple discussions with the FTAT and MFA personnel on the trips. All this gave invaluable insights on the motivations and concerns of different stakeholders, and the differences between these across individuals and regions.

The MTE team had meetings with the RSU teams and made whole day field trips to Woredas in each of the four regions visited. These field trips were arranged by the RSUs who accompanied the MTE team but did not participate in all community meetings. The sites were purposively selected by the RSUs according to the requirements of the MTE. Sites had to be reasonably close to allow the MTE to visit a reasonable number in the time available. The MTE had two days in Addis to meet with senior key government stakeholders (MoF, MoW, MoE, World Bank and FCDO) and other FTAT staff who had not been interviewed previously.

Given the short time for field work and challenges to meet some key stakeholders, the MTE was opportunistic and agile in its meetings with key stakeholders and site visits to cover all question areas and see as many of the different types of intervention as possible. This was used to triangulate findings and build understanding. The team was able to test ideas and possible recommendations with a range of stakeholders to validate and refine these. The differences within and between regions made this process challenging. The schedule for the field work can be found in Annex 11.

Analysis, synthesis and report preparation: The field work clarified many areas from the desk review and enabled a good understanding of how the project should and actually worked, and what progress had been made. The MTE was provided with further data from the regions as well as the source data from the COWASH on-line database. This enabled further analysis and then synthesis of all learning to assess performance, answer the priority and evaluation questions from the TORs, identify the most important major lessons learned, and develop sound and practical recommendations. The MTE prepared a draft report which was reviewed by the Competent Authorities. The MTE incorporated the comments of the Competent Authorities and made other necessary adjustments to finalise the report.

Dissemination of findings: As suggested by the FTAT and agreed with MFA during the preparation stage, the findings were summarised in a presentation made directly to the Competent Authorities and senior key stakeholders to support decision making during the joint consultative meeting in Helsinki in late August. The final report will be presented to and disseminated as required by the Competent Authorities. The main

findings, learning and recommendations captured in the final report should be a useful reference for the project Federal and Regional teams as well as other stakeholders involved in implementation of the project.

Main limitations of the MTE

The main limitation was the short time available for evaluation of such a complicated project, combined with the large amount of documentation to review, gaps in information and data and challenges to meet with some of the key senior stakeholders. As mentioned below, the complicatedness of the project relates mostly to the implementation, institutional and financing structures of the project and wide geographical coverage. This significantly limited the understanding that could be gained from the documentation review. The field work interviews were able to compensate for this, but the time needed for this and the short time available for field work meant that interviews and field visits were quite rushed, and it was often not possible to go as deep as would have been desirable. In addition, there was little time to digest the information as work proceeded, and make follow ups. The often-conflicting ideas and accounts within and between regions were challenging to reconcile and this added to the time needed to process information.

Being able to join and observe for two Regional Steering Committee meetings provided the most realistic chance of meeting with the senior key stakeholders, but the time for interviews was very limited. The time available for meetings in Addis Ababa was limited. The MTE was unable to meet some key institutions and stakeholders including most importantly, the National WaSH Coordination Office (NWCO) in the MoWE.

It was unfortunate that the MTE was carried out before all the data from EFY 2015 (to 7 July 2023) was uploaded to the project online database. This made it a little difficult to be sure how up to date the data received was. The MTE requested and received data on the main indicators from the M&E section and this was provided, although in a quite complicated table format that had to be processed. The MTE did not receive a table with results for each indicator in the results measurement framework table as requested.

Financial reporting is done by the Bureaus of Finance, consolidated by the Ministry of Finance and presented to the project as a pdf report. This meant that it was difficult to fully analyse and get costings for specific outputs or other areas of interest.

1.3 Project background and context

Ethiopia has a population of around 120 million. Its terrain and natural resources are highly diverse with wide variation in altitude, climate, soils, natural vegetation, settlement patterns, farming systems and water availability.

Ethiopia has benefitted from strong economic growth of around 10% per year over the past 15 years, one of the highest rates in the world. Among other factors, growth was led by capital accumulation, in particular through public infrastructure investments. This consistently high economic growth resulted in positive trends in poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas. The share of the population living below the national poverty line decreased from 30% in 2011 to 24% in 2016.

An estimated 80% of the population lives in rural areas with high dependence on mixed or pastoral farming of varying and often low productivity. Climate change and natural disasters (drought and flood) tend to make such livelihoods more precarious. Poverty tends to be higher in the rural populations although this varies across the country.

There has been steady improvement in access to water, sanitation in hygiene although much remains to be done. WHO / UNICEF compiled WASH service level data for households in rural areas of Ethiopia shows that around 74% have access to some kind of improved water source, although only around 5% of these would be regarded as “safely managed”³. This is shown graphically in Figure 6 in Annex 10. The water

³ Service levels for water supply are categorised from good to poor as (1) safely managed, (2) basic, (3) limited, (4) unimproved, (5) surface water / no service. Similar categories are used for sanitation and hygiene.

supply access situation is worse in schools and health facilities with around 50% having “limited” access or better. The situation is significantly worse for sanitation and hygiene and there are differences between the situation in households, schools and health facilities (see Figure 6).

Finland has supported the WASH sector in Ethiopia for several decades. The Rural Water Supply and Environment Programme in Amhara (RWSEP) started in September 1994 and ran through four phases to the end of 2011. This pioneered the community approach to WASH which was developed further and expanded to more Regional States by COWASH. COWASH phase 1 ran from 2011 to 2014, phase II from 2014 to 2016 and phase III from 2016 to 2020. Phase IV continues to December 2024.

Ethiopia initiated the One WASH National Programme (OWNP) in July 2013 as a unified sector-wide approach that brings together the work of the ministries for Water, Health, Education, and Women’s Affairs. OWP is the GoE’s flagship program designed to accelerate and improve WASH access to all people as per the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) and SDG standards and service levels in a more integrated and coordinated manner.

OWNP has five components covering: (i) Rural WaSH, (ii) Urban WaSH, (iii) Institutional WaSH, (iv) Climate Resilient WaSH and (v) Enabling Environment, Program Management and Capacity Building. OWP Phase II started in 2019 and will run to 2025. COWASH is the lead implementer for Community Managed Projects (CMPs), and in Phase IV, implements WMPs for institutional WASH.

OWNP receives funding from multiple sources including the GoE budget, development partners and other investors, NGOs, and participating communities. This funding is channelled through three main financing modalities which are called “Channels”:

- Channel 1: This is the mainstream GoE system and has two sub-Channels:
 - Channel 1A: Known as the “Consolidated WASH Account” (CWA), this is a basket fund into which donors contribute without earmarking. The CWA is on budget and managed by MoF. Donors do not earmark the use of their funding in CWA. CWA II started with OWP phase II in 2019.
 - Channel 1B: This is the mainstream GoE financing channel. Funds are on budget and managed by the MoF. Funding is “earmarked” through the budget (so not a basket fund).
- Channel 2: Fund transfer by Development Partners, NGOs or other organizations directly to government implementing partners in the water, health and education sectors.
- Channel 3: Direct implementation by DPs, NGOs or other organizations as per project agreements with the respective WASH sector offices.

COWASH MFA funding in Phases I to III mostly used Channel 2, and MFA funds were sent directly to the Regional States. COWASH MFA funds in Phase IV use Channel 1B, with funds sent to the MoF and then sent on to regions with earmarking. Finland also contributed 4 mEUR to the CWA (so no earmarking) during the period of Phase IV (2020–2023). This is not covered by the MTE.

COWASH IV has been negatively affected by the conflict in Tigray Region which was ongoing from 2020 to November 2022. This made it impossible to start the WASH activities there. The MoU allowing startup was signed in June 2023. The Tigray conflict spilled over to Amhara Region towards the end of 2021, and limited the number of Woredas that could be accessed. Conflict in Oromia had a similar effect on access to Woredas. The level of insecurity was such that COWASH international staff were instructed to leave Ethiopia, and the mobilisation of international consultants was postponed. Significant infrastructure was destroyed in Tigray, Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz Regions, leading to pressure to reallocate funds for rebuilding and emergency relief. The COVID-19 pandemic hampered implementation from April 2020 to the early part of 2022.

1.4 Outline of the COWASH IV project

COWASH IV is in essence a relatively straightforward project that aims to contribute to improved public health and well-being through construction or rehabilitation of sustainable community water supply, latrines (sanitation) and handwashing (hygiene) facilities and adoption of positive hygiene behaviour in

project areas. A key principle is to work through community-led or managed WASH projects and emphasise community ownership, operation and maintenance wherever feasible. A further guiding principle is to support the integrated (“full”) WASH service package approach with water supply, sanitation and hygiene working together to improve health and well-being. A simplified “Theory of Change” (TOC) diagram showing the main components of the project and how these should work together to achieve the desired changes or outcome and higher objectives is presented in Figure 1. It is helpful to refer to this in the following description.

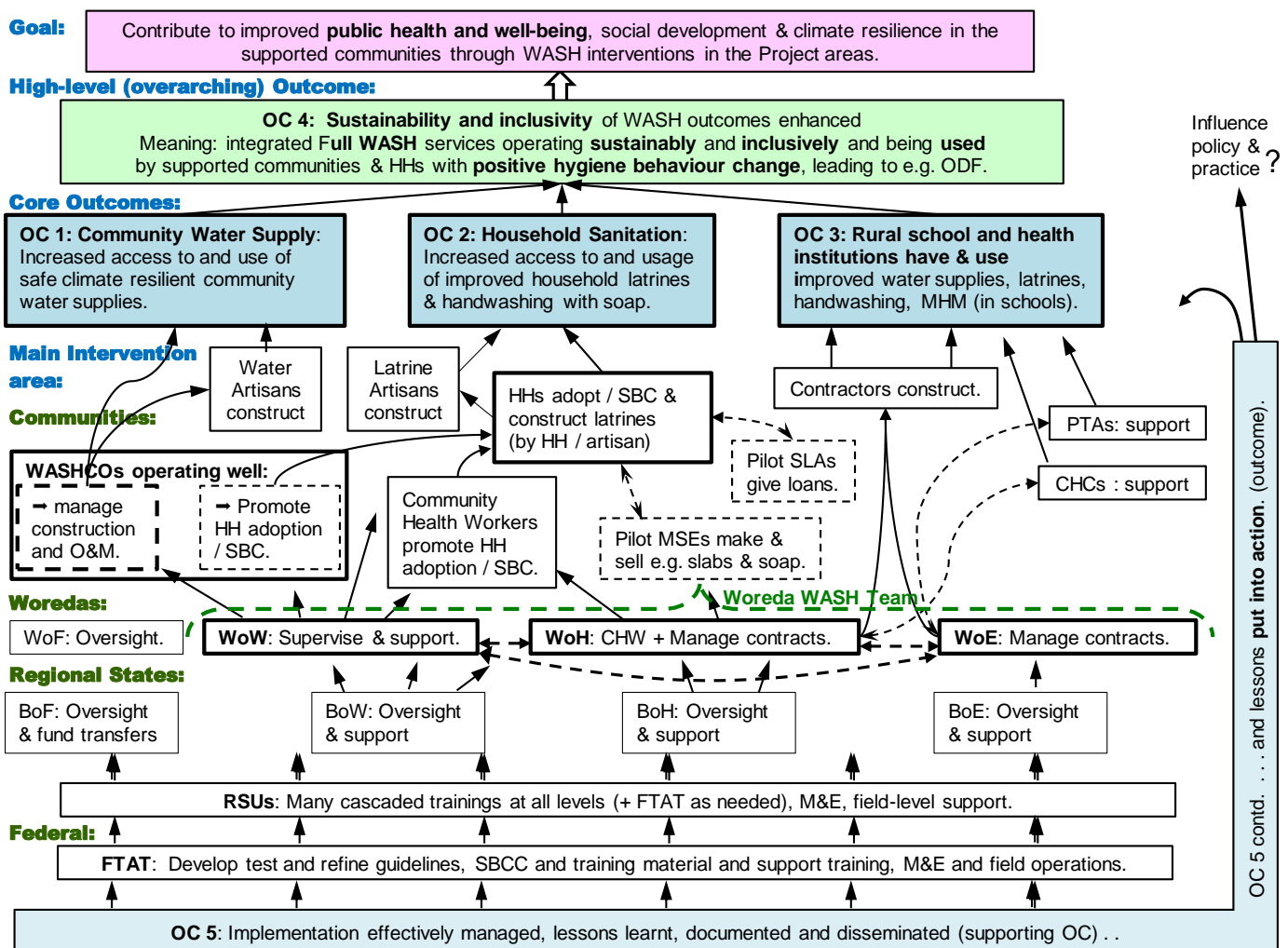
COWASH is a part of the OWNP and provides its community managed projects component. COWASH IV is developing or strengthening some new innovative areas being mainly Water Safety Plan (WSP) s, gender and disability inclusion, social behaviour change, micro or small enterprises (MSE) for latrine slab production and soap (as “sanitation marketing” pilots), and community savings and lending associations (being piloted). The project has three core outcomes for the water supply, sanitation and institutional WASH intervention areas.

- **(Core) Outcome 1: Community Water Supply:** *“Increased & sustained access to safe climate resilient community water supply in rural areas of Project Woredas”*. This provides investment finance with a community contribution for construction or rehabilitation of a range of different types of water supply using community managed projects. Water supply types include spring protection, hand-dug well and shallow (borehole) wells. This generally follows a Community Managed Projects (CMP) approach with funds put into a community WASH Committee (WASHCO)-controlled MFI account or Woreda Office of Finance and WASHCO-controlled bank account. Water Safety Planning, inclusivity and sustainability are very important.
- **(Core) Outcome 2: Household Sanitation:** *“Increased access to and usage of improved household latrines & increased practice of handwashing with soap in COWASH IV water supply beneficiary households of Project Woredas”*. The project supports this in communities that have benefited from water supply improvement through promotion using “Social Behaviour Change” (SBC) communication materials and methods together with the (BoH) Community Health Workers, as well as its pilot efforts in latrine slab and soap MSEs in a few communities. Communities are expected to construct their own latrines and handwashing facilities.
- **(Core) Outcome 3: Institutional WASH:** *“Improved institutional WASH by narrowing the gap in improved institutional latrine, climate resilient and safe water supply, and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)”*. The project provides investment finance for rural schools or health centres to construct or rehabilitate their water supplies, storage and handwashing facilities (if they have improved latrines) or safely managed latrines, water storage and handwashing facilities (if they have water) or both (for some cases). Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) blocks are also provided for schools. These projects are managed through the Woreda Education or Health offices but involve communities through the Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or Community Health Committees (CHCs) as far as possible. Information and promotion of hygiene and sanitation are also provided.

An overarching higher-level outcome covers integration, inclusion and sustainability across all three of the above: This is Outcome 4: *“Sustainability and inclusivity of achieved WASH outcomes enhanced”*. The activities for this outcome focus on human and physical capacity building, women empowerment and disability inclusion and private sector support. Additional cross cutting objectives are human rights, gender and inclusivity, women’s empowerment, climate resilience and the environment.

A fifth supporting “outcome” covers implementation management, documentation and dissemination, which are more activity / output focused; and putting the learning into “action” which could be a significant outcome. Outcome 5 is stated as *“COWASH IV implementation effectively managed, lessons learnt, documented, communicated and shared and put into action”*.

Figure 1: Simplified “TOC” diagram for COWASH IV



Source: Prepared by the MTE based on its understanding of the project.

Note 1: See “Abbreviations and Acronyms” on page vii for the meaning of those used in the diagram.

Note 2: The main actors and objectives are highlighted through bold text and box outlines and through darker colours.

While the above presents a fairly straightforward view of the essence of the project, the project is made complicated however by the intersection or overlaying of this with “layers” relating to (1) the many implementing partners and stakeholders involved at multiple levels of governance from community to federal levels, and (2) the different fund flow pathways and modalities for use and control of GoF and GoE funds, and (3) the wide geographical coverage (7 Regions) and variation in the social, economic and security context.

The implementing agencies and partners and key stakeholders of COWASH

COWASH works within the OWP umbrella as a component that uses community-led or managed projects for the implementation of WASH interventions. As such it works within the OWP institutional framework. This involves the Ministries of Water, Health, Education and Finance, and their equivalent offices at Region, Zone and Woreda levels. These work on their own and have different steering committees, technical teams and management units or teams at each administrative level for coordination and implementation. An overview of these structures and the way they are organised is presented in Annex 8.

While the Ministry of finance and MFA of Finland are the Competent Authorities for COWASH IV, the lead

Implementing Agency is the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) and its Bureaus of Water (BoW) at Regional level. Partner Implementing Agencies are the Ministries of Health and Education at the federal level, and the Regional State water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) partner Bureaus of Finance (BoF), Health (BoH), Education (BoE) and Women Affairs (BoWA).

COWASH works within the OOWNP framework but focuses mostly on national, Regional, Woreda and Kebele / community levels. Oversight and coordination are provided by the National and Regional WASH Steering Committees, together with the Zonal and Woreda WASH Teams.

Implementation is focused mostly at the Woreda and community levels. As shown in Figure 1, the Woreda Offices of Water, Health and Education all have key roles in implementation, with coordination through the Woreda WASH Team (WWT). The Woreda Labour and Skills office provides support MSE establishment, capacity building and support. At the community level, the WASH Committees (WASHCOs) take the lead in implementing water supply projects under Outcome 1, together with oversight and support from the WoW. Individual households (HHs) are at the heart of construction and adoption of positive hygiene behaviours under Outcome 2, together with awareness and support (mainly) from Community Health Workers (under WoH) and WASHCOs. The WoH and WoE engage contractors and manage the construction of the WASH for Health facilities or schools, together with the local Community Health Committees (CHCs) and school Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs).

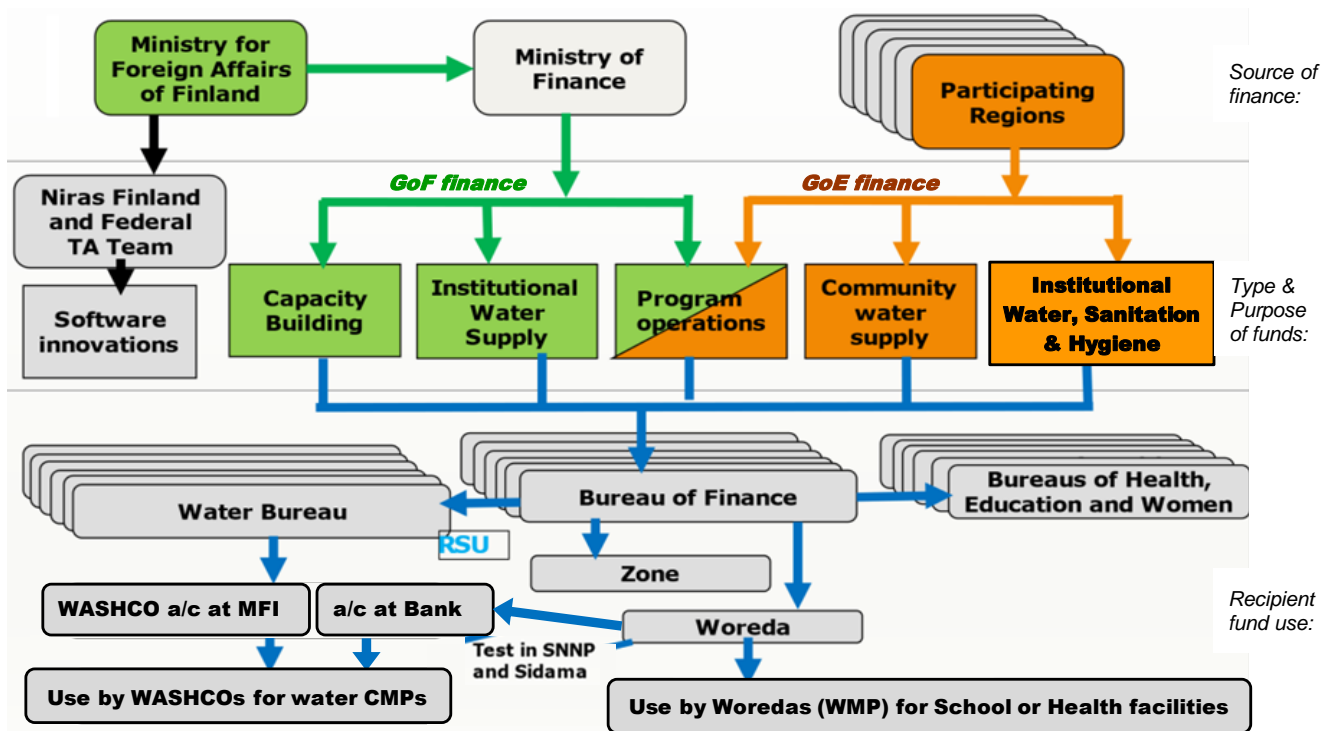
On top of these government and community structures, technical assistance (TA) is provided by the Federal Technical Assistance Team (FTAT) at national level, and Regional Support Units (RSUs) in each of the supported Regional States. The FTAT provides intellectual leadership and overall project management support, as well as training and capacity development and technical backstopping, M&E and reporting. The RSUs provide similar functions at regional level but with greater emphasis on field level technical guidance, backstopping, M&E and reporting. The FTAT and RSUs have a number of experts covering the various disciplines required. The FTAT is housed in the MoWE but financed directly from the MFA Finland budget. The FTAT is provided by provided by Niras. The RSU teams are employed for the project by the Bureaus of Water (using project funds) and housed in and responsible to the BoWs in each Regional State.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are the community HHs and members who benefit from increased access to improved WASH facilities,

Funding pathways and modalities: use and control of GoF and GoE funds

Understanding how the project works and some of the issues that have arisen in implementation requires an understanding of the different sources of funding and how funds flow to and are used by the implementing agencies and actors. The original (ProDoc) budget was 18.4 mEUR from GoF, 20.475 mEUR from the (GoE) Regional States, and 2.1 mEUR from communities (as cash or in-kind). Figure 1 provides an outline of how the GoE funds are distributed between components as well as the various implementing agencies at different levels. Figure 1 also shows how funds reach the WASHCOs for water supply projects.

Figure 2: COWASH IV Funding pathways diagram



Source: Adapted from COWASH IV Project Document (p45) and MTE TORs (p5).

Geographic coverage:

Table 2 shows the number of Woredas that have been supported through phases I to IV. This shows that phase IV is supporting a total of 104 Woredas (with 37 carry overs) while only 76 were supported during the first three phases. This was ambitious.

Table 2: Geographic spread: number of Regions, Zones and Woredas supported

Region	Number of Zones	Number of Woredas				Total ALL Cowash: P. 1 to 4
		Phases 1 to 3	Phase IV			
			Carried forward	NEW	Total Phase IV	
Amhara	8	40	16	24	40	64
Benishangul-Gumuz	3	9	4	0	4	9
Oromia	11	12	12	18	30	28
Sidama	1	n/a	2 (SNNP)	3	5	5
SNNP	5	8	0	11	11	19
SWEP	1	0	0	2	2	2
Tigray	5	7	3	9	12	16
Total	34	76	37	67	104	143

Source: FTAT Nine Months Performance Report for EFT 2015.

1.5 Guidance on use of this report

The “complicatedness” of the project makes it difficult to fully explain the project in this section. Further details are provided in the more detailed explanations of successes, challenges and issues in the sections

that follow. The above outline description of the project provides an important framework for understanding where these descriptions and findings fit in relation to the project as a whole. The above outline and particularly Figure 1 and Figure 2 will be referred to as needed during this report.

The complete “Results Chain” to output level is presented in Annex 2. The Results Measurement Framework with indicators for each outcome and output is presented in Annex 3.

The structure of headings and subheadings and the contents list at the beginning of the report provide a map and overall reference framework to enable the reader to find their way around the report. A list of all the priority and evaluation questions is provided in Annex 1b, and a list with the page numbers of where they are discussed provided for easy cross reference after the contents list.

The recommendations section provides a synopsis of the essence of each of the recommendations as a fairly short list, with reference to the main sections of the report where relevant details of recommendations are discussed.

PART 2: FINDINGS

2 RELEVANCE

2.1 Relevance of the project objectives

COWASH IV objectives are highly relevant for the GoE, GoF and target populations. The COWASH goal of improving public health and well-being through sustainable and inclusive water supply sanitation and hygiene with behaviour change is entirely consistent with the GoE and its OWNPs and SDG objectives. The project objectives are consistent with Finland’s WASH goals under its sustainable use of natural resources water-related outcome for improved and equitable access to basic and sustainable drinking water adequate sanitation services and improved hygiene practices. Inclusive access to water, sanitation and hygiene are highly relevant for the poor rural populations supported by the project, although improved WASH may not always be their highest immediate priority. This probably relates more to livelihoods, food security and income in many areas.

2.2 Quality and relevance of the project design

This section assesses the quality and relevance or appropriateness of the project design to achieve the project’s objectives. Project “design” means the design at startup as specified in the Project Document (ProDoc) and adjusted during the Inception Period, with the approval of the Competent Authorities.

The ProDoc was well written, clear and had all the required ingredients without being too long. The project design was subjected to a thorough appraisal that was well written, detailed and clear, and made specific recommendation for adjustment of the design.

The ProDoc was prepared before the Phase III survey had been carried out and therefore sensibly recommended that the Phase IV baseline survey should be expanded to fulfil this function and used to make appropriate adjustments to the project design and results framework during the inception period. The Results framework with some outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets adjusted was included in the Inception Report which was approved by the Federal Steering Committee.

The project’s logical (outcomes etc) structure:

The project split the original OC 4 into two, to make five outcomes. The original ProDoc OC 4 was “*Project achievements documented via learning activities and shared strategically to enhance the impact of COWASH IV on WASH sector policies and practices*”. This indicates a clear intention to influence and impact policy and practice which was somewhat diluted by the new OC 5: “*COWASH IV implementation effectively managed, lessons learnt, documented, communicated and shared and put into action*”: This seems to

provide a useful heading for reporting but has little focus on policy and practice. Project reports mention high-level engagement in policy and practice but there does not seem to be any specific strategy or plans to do so. The new OC 4 (“Sustainability and inclusivity of achieved WASH outcomes enhanced”) is a sensible addition although but could have been more clearly articulated as an overarching higher-level outcome and expanded to elaborate how the three core outcomes that focus separately on water supply, sanitation and hygiene facilities should combine (synergise) to provide integrated “full service” WASH with sustainability, inclusivity and behaviour change. This seems to have been the plan as indicated by the indicators in the Results Framework, but it was not clear from the project documentation. This is clearly shown in the simplified TOC diagram in Figure 1.

The project did not have such a diagrammatic TOC or present this more integrated understanding to the MTE. A number of RSU staff met seemed to focus almost entirely on the construction of the community and institutional WASH facilities and much less on integrated / full WASH package with behaviour change. It is **recommended** that the project should actively build this more integrated and TOC-based understanding among the FTAT and RSU teams so that they can more purposively work towards more integrated full WASH and behaviour change. The project should think more about its policy and practice influence goals and work towards these.

Technologies used:

The COWASH Phase IV design built on the learning of previous phases and the approaches and technologies used then remain mostly relevant. Water supply technologies remain relevant although their quality and use (e.g. water safety) could be improved. These include various water source protection methods, hand-dug wells, shallow wells (boreholes) and piped water systems. The institutional water supplies and latrines constructed generally use standard plans and generally appeared to be appropriate. Some latrines that needed water for proper use did not have water so perhaps an alternative technology is needed. The latrine at one health facility visited was sited outside the health facility which reduced its relevance. It appeared to the MTE that more thought could be given to the design of the MHM blocks based on actual use, and the number of facilities in relation to the numbers of pupils.

HH latrines are constructed by individual HHs themselves. The designs and quality of construction varied and what constituted improved was not clear. It seemed to the MTE that a more appropriate approach would be to consider simple latrines made to a good standard with low-cost local materials as improved. The goal is ODF, so use is essential. These various issues are discussed further in the sections that follow.

Change to Woreda-Managed Projects (WMPs) for Institutional WASH:

The community approach was and remains a cornerstone of COWASH and almost all stakeholders interviewed, and the documentation reviewed indicated that this is the best approach by some margin.

The change from community managed projects (CMP) through Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) for school WASH, and Community Health Committees (CHCs) for Health facility WASH as followed in phases I to III, to Woreda-Managed Projects (WMP) in phase IV, was not clearly justified in the design. This was criticised by a majority of staff due to the weaker community involvement and risks for the level of supervision, quality of construction, functionality and sustainability. The community-led approach was almost universally acknowledged as producing better results. A small number of staff supported the shift to WMPs on the grounds that the larger size of the WASH facilities needed engagement of contractors that required tendering, which was considered too challenging for most PTAs or CHCs. Both views seem be valid and there is probably a size limit beyond or other criteria where WMP are preferred. There was insufficient time or opportunity to discuss this in detail with regional Education or Health officials, but the views expressed were mixed. The applicability of the community managed project approach for WASH is a crucial issue for the rest of Phase IV and whatever comes afterwards. This needs much better information, and a study is recommended to guide efforts in the rest of this phase and any possible follow-on phase. This is taken up and discussed further in section 11.1 and the recommendations.

Change in financing structure: from Channel 2 to Channel 1B:

a: Priority EQ 2: Assessment of the COWASH “Channel 1” structure:

- The current phase is under the Ethiopian guidelines of Channel one, which has not been the case before. The current modality was suggested during the planning of the COWASH 4 phase. What are the benefits and challenges of the new approach?

As mentioned in section 1.3, GoF funding for the Regions is sent directly from MFA of Finland to the MoF using the OWP financing “Channel 1B”, for onward transmission to the regional BoFs for use by the project as indicated in Figure 2. This differed from the use of Channel 2 in COWASH phases I to III, whereby MFA transferred funds directly to the regional BoFs. This change was needed to comply with the GoF – GoE government to government agreement. The previous arrangement with separate MoUs between MFA and each of the participation Regional States was found to be inconsistent with the government-to-government agreement and could not realistically be continued (particularly as the number of regions increased).

The change to Channel 1B represented a significant change in regulatory framework as well as procedures and planning and reporting requirements which the Regions had to learn and deal with through their systems and procedures. This needed time, but the change was introduced suddenly with the start of phase IV and without the necessary introductory explanations and other preparatory work needed. This caused significant confusion, anger and disruption.

The MTE had the chance to meet with the MoF and (briefly) two regional BoF heads. The MoF was clearly of the view that funds should go through the ministry and would probably have preferred Channel 1A (basket funding). The views from the regions on the other hand were mixed with most not being in favour of the change and blamed it for a number of problems. The main advantages and disadvantages of using Channel 1 B are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Discussion on advantages and disadvantages of using Channel 1B

Factor	Advantages or Disadvantages and discussion
The Channel 1B system is aligned with GoE financial management.	This is regarded by the MoF and MFA as the appropriate way to manage development support. This should give greater fiscal control and accountability. The MoF oversight allows for auditing and recovery of any misused funds.
Disbursement through channel 1B must follow MoF regulations and procedures. These included, at least initially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund requests should be accompanied by an acceptable report. • There should be a single combined fund request. • Government planning and budgeting normally starts after completion of the financial year. 	While this is an advantage for accountability and consistency, it tended to make compliance more challenging and contributed initially to delays in disbursement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Regions initially found the requirement for reports to accompany their fund request a little challenging but can now comply. • The requirement for a single combined fund request meant that faster regions were delayed by slower ones. The requirement has since been relaxed and Regions now understand what is needed and can comply. • Starting the process after completion of the year i.e., too late for a timely release of funds.
The MoF would apply central government pay scales for uniformity across regions. This would be regarded as an advantage by MoF and probably the BoFs (but not checked).	This is the MoF standard and an advantage for consistency and transparency. This was regarded as a major disadvantage however by the RSUs. The RSU teams are employed or seconded by and report to the BoWs. Under Channel 2, regions were able to pay salary top-ups for RSU staff and, for historical reasons, some regions ended up paying higher salaries than others. Reverting to government salary scales generally meant a reduction in salary which was understandably very unpopular. This translated to a loss of motivation for some staff which seems to have impacted their commitment to training,

Factor	Advantages or Disadvantages and discussion
	backstopping, monitoring and other work in the field. This work is crucial for the proper operation and effectiveness of the project.
The financial reporting and fund request would come pre-compiled and only from MoF.	This should give greater uniformity and so be simpler and easier for the project and MFA. This may limit the ability of the project to analyse financial data (e.g. to get output or unit costs), but this has not been reported as a problem. In practice, the FTAT also receives financial information directly from the regions.
The regional shares of the GoF grant are determined to a large extent by the government block grant formula which is well accepted.	This represented a reduction for some regions and increase for others, and gives less flexibility to the project for a more strategic approach.
Audits are carried out by the Auditor General which is more standardised. MFA can have a no-objection of the TORs.	An advantage in following the standard procedure, but the Auditor General could have raised questions on funding through, for example, MFIs to communities, but this has not happened.
Embassy of Finland does not need to be co-chair of the Regional WASH Steering Committee but be an ordinary permanent member.	An advantage for the Regions (more autonomy) and the Embassy of Finland (strengthens regional ownership).

Although Regions were aware of the change beforehand, and the FTAT had prepared a financial management manual and trained regional finance experts, some regions struggled initially with the more demanding requirements. It seems that some RSU teams had not fully appreciated the implications of the change in regulatory framework, and it needed more time to accept and adapt to this quite significant institutional change about which they had concerns or fear. This contributed to delays in the planning, budgeting and approval processes and then the disbursement of funds for EFY 2014 (2021/22) and EFY 2015. Disbursement in EFY 2014 was further delayed by MFA due to concerns around the northern war.

Starting in EFY 2016 (2023/24) however, the FTAT has developed and introduced a faster procedure in collaboration with the Competent Partners and COWASH partner ministries. This was based on:

- Starting in May with a central kick-off meeting.
- 11-month progress reports and provisional core plans that were reviewed by mid-June, and
- approved by Regional SCs by early July.
- Fund transfer requests for Q1 and Q2 in July.
- Full year progress reports and adjusted (if needed) core plans will come later and may adjust final year allocations for Q3 and Q4.

This has worked well in 2023 and funds were released as early as August, i.e., six months earlier than previously and only a month after the start of the year. This is a major achievement and largely resolved the delays to disbursement from Channel 1B.

The effects on RSU salaries of the uniform application of government pay scales across all regions has still not been fully resolved and continues to affect the motivation of at least some RSU staff. The MTE thinking and recommendations on this are as follows:

- It is fair that RSU salaries are uniform across regions. This is not going to change anyway with Channel 1B.
- The RSUs are provide crucial support through the training, backstopping, monitoring and other work in the field. This is instrumental in building the capacity of Woreda teams to ensure the quality of works, the development of the new innovative areas, behaviour change, functionality and sustainability. All these depend to a significant extent on having motivated RSU teams.
- RSU staff are expected to work with high dedication and many stakeholders across several Woredas,

often covering large distances. This incurs significant communications and other costs but there is no allowance.

- Considering that RSU staff are contracted and do not enjoy the level of job security that goes with “permanent & pensionable” government employment, and are often required to work beyond the call of duty, the project should consider paying them a small percentage-of-salary stipend, if this is at all possible from FTAT funds and there is sufficient budget. This is not permitted through Channel 1B. To keep it manageable, this should be paid as a single annual payment in arrears.
- FTAT should work to strengthen RSU motivation further through enhancing professional development: The FTAT initiative for joint review and team building meetings is strongly supported by the MTE and should be continued. Other opportunities (e.g. for training) may arise and should be supported.

Implementation structures:

The project is implemented primarily by the FTAT, RSU teams in each region, and government WASH and departmental structures in the Ministries / Bureaus for Water, Health and Education. The functional WASH, SLA, MSE and behaviour change work on the ground is carried out mostly by the government Woreda teams (as can be seen in Figure 1). The FTAT and RSU teams’ roles in this is to develop approaches, technologies, manuals and training materials and build knowledge, skills and capacities through a cascaded series of trainings and technical backstopping, coaching and monitoring / supervision in the field. This structure is appropriate and relevant for implementation.

Inclusion of human rights gender, non-discrimination and climate into design:

b: EQ 3.1: Inclusion of human rights etc in design:

- *To what extent the promotion of human rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and climate resilience are integrated in programme design and implementation?*

The ProDoc makes a point of integrating human rights, gender, non-discrimination and climate resilience into project design. The design has a focus on achieving WASH SDGs and providing access to water and sanitation for all people, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, religion, disability. The design focuses strongly on women leadership, gender equality, disability and inclusiveness more generally. This includes women’s membership and leadership in WASHCOs, latrine and water supply access for people with disabilities. Climate resilience is integrated into water supply infrastructure through Social, Environmental and Climate Risk Screening and Management (SECRSM) and Water Safety Planning (WSP). The way this is done is discussed in the sections below.

Geographic (Woredas) and thematic (new innovations) expansion in phase IV:

The COWASH IV design included a substantial increase in geographical area coverage from 76 Woredas during the ten years of phases I to III, to 104, with 67 (64%) of the 104 Woredas for Phase IV being completely new (Table 2). Starting from scratch in new Woredas requires a huge up-front investment in capacity building, even when the Region is already experienced.

At the same time, COWASH IV introduced or significantly strengthened a number of new “innovation solutions” for testing in Phase IV and integrating into WASH. These included integration of environment and climate screening with enhanced Water Safety Planning (WSP ++++), “full WASH package”, enhanced O&M, Sanitation marketing with MSEs, Savings and Lending Association (SLAs), disability Inclusion, social behaviour change (SBC). The large increase in new Woredas and new innovation areas introduced in phase IV together generated a huge increase in workload as well as a mindset change (for the innovations).

Conclusions on the design:

In overall terms, the ProDoc design was built on the learning and successes of previous phases, well

written, sufficiently comprehensive and relevant; but was too ambitious, with many new innovations, increased area coverage, a major change in the MFA financing channel and the (not completely predictable) impact on the motivation of the RSUs. These factors together, combined with the significant challenges from the context (see below), have made the project very challenging to implement at the level desired. It can be seen with hindsight that the design was far too ambitious.

2.3 Adaptive management: Remaining relevant during implementation

The project has done reasonably well in addressing the issues from its design as above, and addressing the multiple serious external challenges it encountered during implementation (section 1.3). The over-ambitious nature of the project, combined with Channel 1-related issues and serious external challenges made the project has difficult to implement and have taken significant management energy and time. Project management has been competent and strongly adaptive however, and was able to cope with the challenges in a sensible and effective way and maintain relevance during implementation. The way the project has addressed its design issues and challenges is discussed in the various sections that follow.

2.4 Addressing the real needs of the ultimate beneficiaries

The project has already brought significant tangible benefits for ultimate beneficiaries (rural HHs in supported areas), mainly through new and improved community water supplies and school or health facility water supplies, latrines and MHM blocks. It seems that some less tangible benefits, such as community and women's empowerment and disability inclusion, were appreciated and useful. The issues and challenges described above (and particularly inflation) have meant that the project has fallen short on some targets. It seems that some areas are probably less relevant such as latrines (low adoption of improved latrines) and savings and lending association groups (seems difficult but early days). It is not yet clear how far the ultimate beneficiaries have understood the importance of full WASH and actually changed their behaviour, which would be a real test of high-level relevance for them.

Clean water is always a high priority. The MTE found people waiting to get water from one almost completed structure. While sanitation and hygiene are important priorities for project beneficiaries, it is generally accepted that access to food and income can take a higher priority.

The MTE concluded that the project has brought significant real benefits to the ultimate beneficiaries, and this has been sufficient for them to continue their interest and commitment to supporting project initiatives. The community contributions for water supply have been impressive, particularly in some areas.

2.5 Relevance for the Governments of Ethiopia and Finland

As mentioned above, the objectives were found to be highly relevant for the Government of Ethiopia and its flagship One WASH National Programme (OWNP), as well as Finland's WASH goals. The design was found to be mostly appropriate to achieve these objectives and the project has appropriately addressed most issues that have arisen. The project is addressing the real needs of its targeted ultimate beneficiaries. The project is therefore considered to be relevant to highly relevant for the Governments of Ethiopia and Finland. This is evidenced by their continued interest in and support of the project. MTE discussions with the ministries and bureaus for Finance, Water, Health and Education were all positive. The MTE found however that the level of commitment for adoption of community managed projects as a modality under government in the OWNP was somewhat mixed across individuals. This is important for any possible follow-on to COWASH as discussed in section 8.2. The continuation of strong support from the GoF is not completely assured however, given the recent change within the government there.

2.6 Conclusions on project Relevance

Taking all the above into account, the MTE found that the project overall would be considered as relevant: meaning its level of relevance is satisfactory.

3 COHERENCE AND SYNERGIES

c: EQ 4: Synergies and coherence:

- 4.1: How is the synergy and coherence of COWASH to other modalities of OOWNP (e.g. CWA) towards achieving the GoE WASH sector goals?
- 4.2: What are the major items / elements / documents that COWASH has brought to the sector?

Coherence: The COWASH IV project is considered to be fully compatible with other WASH interventions at all levels and was therefore found to be coherent (satisfactory) if not highly coherent. COWASH IV is aligned with the GoE’s flagship OOWNP WASH programme and provides the CMP part of OOWNP (see section 1.3). COWASH works very closely with the Ministries and Bureaus of Finance, Water, Health, Education, and Women’s Affairs, and is implemented on the ground by their Woreda offices through the Woreda WASH Teams. The FTAT participates in and directly some federal-level OOWNP activities and is housed in and works closely with the MoWE. The RSUs coordinate with the regional and Woreda-level OOWNP and support some activities. The manuals and training provided by COWASH help to build the capacities of a significant number of OOWNP personnel in all these ministries and at all levels. COWASH coordinates with other donors and other WASH initiatives (e.g. NGO projects) in the sector and project area.

“**Synergies**” are interactions (often cooperation or collaboration) between two or more organisations or other actor “entities” giving rise to a combined effect that is greater than the sum of their separate effects (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts). External synergies (with those outside the project) relate strongly to but go beyond coherence. Internal synergies are interaction between actors or other entities (e.g. outputs, outcomes) within the project. These are an important part of the way the project works and the outcomes and impact it may generate and are discussed in the outcome and impact sections below.

The main external synergies are with the CWA, potentially at all levels. COWASH and the idea of community-led WASH seem to be very well known within the ministries and bureaus for water, health and education as well as other CWA actors. The many systems, procedures manuals and training material produced by the project could be taken up by CWA and other OOWNP actors to improve their systems and procedures. This probably happens to some extent, but the MTE did not come across any specific instances. The training and capacity building however seem to have a more direct positive effect within the water health and education offices, particularly at Woreda level and probably regional level, where field-level implementation and therefore use of the learning, takes place. The MTE got a sense of this in the interviews with Woreda teams. Almost all stakeholders asked recognised that CMP produced better results, particularly in terms of O&M and sustainability, although the level of interest for using such approaches in CWA appeared to be mixed. The strengthening of strategies for this is taken up in section 4.5.4.

There is potential to generate synergies from interactions with the private sector. The training and use of artisans for water supply or latrines expands their capacities and incomes but could be more formalised to build the market and facilitate others to join in and build their businesses. There is clearly potential, since the MTE met one COWASH chair who had repaired the pump on a nearby hand-dug well as well as his own, but he did not charge. The same is true of the MSE (e.g. slab and soap) businesses, although these seem to be in their very early stages. The project could strengthen its focus on this as discussed in section 4.4.4.

4 EFFECTIVENESS

d: EQ 5.2 (a, b,c): Achievement and shortcoming in the achievement of Results:

- 5.2 What are the achievements and possible shortcomings of the implementation towards the project results?
 - 5.2a: To what extent objectives of the training and knowledge cascading process are being achieved, and the appropriateness of cascading process to be at Woreda level?
 - 5.2b: What are the bottlenecks of the actors to fulfil their role?

- 5.2c: *The degree to which the required knowledge, skills and messaging is reaching the community level?*

This section reviews and assesses the progress towards achievement of the project Results Framework Outcomes which provide the main section structure. Within these, each sub-section follows a logical (TOC-based) Outcome structure, which may use project Outputs where appropriate. Progress is supported with data for Result Framework indicators as appropriate and available. Not all indicators are included. The complete project Results Framework with outcomes, outputs and indicators is provided in Annex 3. This does not include data against each indicator since the project did not provide data in this format to the MTE. Data was instead provided as report tables, data tables extracted from the project's main (online) database, and the data for each "facility" extracted from the database. This did not have data for all indicators in the Results Framework. This did not yet have all the 2015 data and so was incomplete for the EFY 2015. This MTE report provides indicator data as appropriate in the text below. To make this clear and allow cross-referencing, the indicator reference IDs (e.g. "IR 1.2.3") are provided (see Annex 3).

Although there was often little data or information, at the request of the project, the MTE subjectively assessed overall performance at four levels as outlined in Annex 4.

4.1 Outcome 1: Community Water Supply (Core OC)

→ **Outcome 1: "Increased & sustained access of safe climate resilient community water supply in rural areas of Project Woredas".**

As mentioned in section 1.4, this is one of the three core outcomes for putting in place the water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure that should generate the higher-level benefits and goal.

4.1.1 Implementation process

The construction of community water supply schemes involved three main actor entities: the Woreda office of Water (WoW), the WASHCO, and the water supply artisans employed to carry out the work. The systems and capacities of these are put in place or strengthened through the training provided through the FTAT / RSU manual development and cascaded ToT training system.

Water supply scheme projects follow the project cycle approach from promotion, community application, design, appraisal, approval, construction, O&M and monitoring. The investment finance needed is provided through the Regions to WASHCO accounts at a nearby MFI or bank (through Woreda office of Finance in SNNP and Sidama) (see Figure 2).

Implementation is led by the WASHCO under the supervision and oversight of the WoW. Fund expenditure is initiated and made by the WASHCO, but under the oversight (with some control) by the WoW. Construction is carried out mostly by skilled artisans employed and supervised by the WASHCO, with technical supervision from the WoW technicians. Contractors (e.g. for drilling shallow wells) are sometimes needed and are then engaged by the WoW. The above is guided by detailed guidelines, procedures and regulations.

The above indicates that the projects are community led, but jointly implemented by the COWASH and WoW, with joint responsibilities. The eventual ownership of the water supply asset would then be notionally the community, but with a kind of guardianship responsibility remaining with the WoW (government). This makes it a kind of shared ownership.

4.1.2 Increased access to safe community water supply

→ **Output 1.1: "Rural population in project Woredas provided with new climate resilient safe water supply or with upgraded service level as per the design to comply with SDG service level".**

During the first two years of COWASH IV (EFY 2014 and 2015: to 7 July 2023), the project has managed to construct a total of 1,318 water supply schemes, and to rehabilitate a total of 337. Table 4 shows the

number constructed by region, compared to mid-term and End of Project (EoP) targets, while Table 5 shows the same for the water schemes rehabilitated. This shows strong progress with achievement of 78% of the mid 2023 target for construction and 108% of the target for rehabilitation. This shows also that construction is likely to be behind in progress towards achievement of the EoP targets for constructed (44%) and rehabilitated schemes (30%), considering that around 58% of the project time has been used. This still represents good and satisfactory progress considering the serious challenges due to insecurity (lack of access) and delays in disbursement (section 1.3).

Table 4: Number of Community Water Supply Schemes CONSTRUCTED (Ind IR 1.1.1)

#	Region	Cum. no. of Water Schemes Constructed (EFY 2014 / 15)	% of total constructed	Cum. target (EFY 14/15)	% of target (EFY 14/15) constructed	Cum. target to EoP	% of EoP target constructed
1	Amhara	393	30%	385	102%	800	49%
2	Beneshangul Gumuz	7	1%	17	41%	76	9%
3	Oromia	629	48%	806	78%	1,023	61%
4	Sidama	103	8%	136	76%	543	19%
5	SNNP	178	14%	314	57%	546	33%
6	SWEP	8	1%	38	21%	0	
7	Tigray	0	0%	0			
	Total:	1,318	100%	1,696	78%	2,988	44%

Source: Updated achievement and targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to July 2023) from FTAT (received 16 Sept 2023).

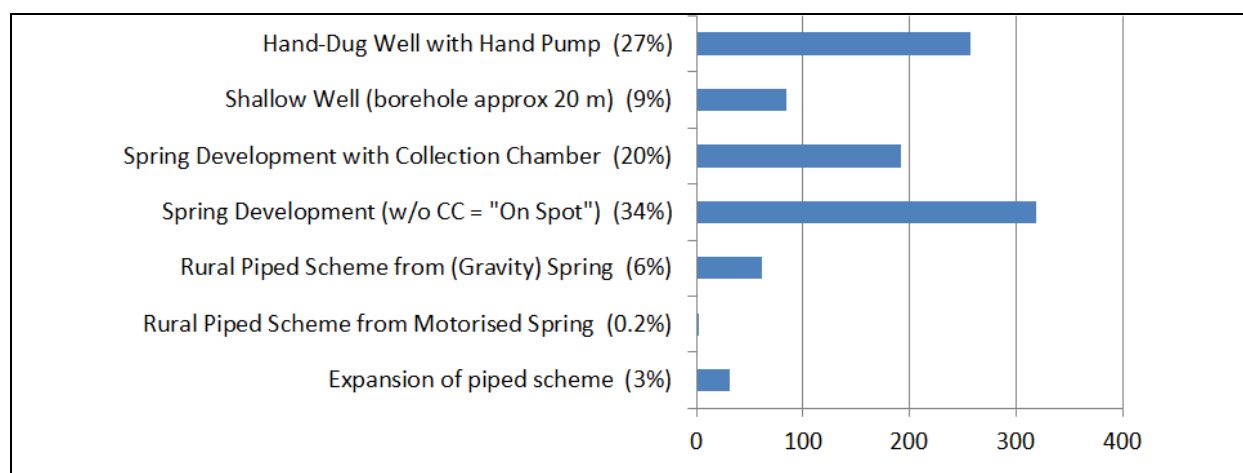
Table 5: Number of Community Water Supply Schemes REHABILITATED (Ind IR 1.1.2)

#	Region	Cum. no. of Water Schemes Rehabilitated (EFY 2014 / 15)	% of total rehabilitated	Cum. target (EFY 14/15)	% of target (EFY 14/15) rehabilitated	Cum. target to EoP	% of EoP target rehabilitated
1	Amhara	164	49%	87	189%	320	51%
2	Beneshangul Gumuz	38	11%	34	112%	252	15%
3	Oromia	71	21%	122	58%	330	22%
4	Sidama	55	16%	56	98%	118	47%
5	SNNP	9	3%	11	82%	86	10%
6	SWEP	0	0%	1		0	
7	Tigray	0	0%	0			
	Total:	337	100%	311	108%	1,106	30%

Source: Updated achievement and targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to July 2023) from FTAT (received 16 Sept 2023).

The cost of rehabilitation will generally be lower than that of construction, and these should be considered separately. The MTE did not have access to costing data. Construction or rehabilitation costs also depend on the type of technology used. Figure 3 shows the types of technology used and number of schemes using these. Spring development was the most common (34%), followed by hand dug wells (27%) and then spring development with a collection chamber (20%). The project shifted from using deep boreholes to “shallow wells” (with around 20 m deep boreholes) to make the funding go further given the high inflation of costs for drilling (and since it was thought these would be deep enough).

Figure 3: Technology types used for water schemes



Source: FTAT M&E (11 July 2023).

Table 6 shows that a total of 426,068 people benefited from access to a safe community water source from these new or rehabilitated water schemes. This would be 90% of the MTE target and nearly half of the EoP target, indicating that the project was on more or less track to achieve this target.

Table 6 also shows the number who had “basic” (82%), “limited” (17%) or “safely managed” (1.0%) water supply service levels, as per the definitions provided in Annex 9. These are all regarded by the project as improved and safe water sources.

Table 6: Number of people with access to a safe community water source (Ind IR 1.1.3)

#	Region	Cum. Target (EFY 14/15)	Basic service level	Limited service level	Safely Managed service level	Total # of Benefs with improved Access	% of 14/15 Target Achieved	% of Benefs per Region	Cum. Target to EoP	% of EoP Target Achieved
1	Amhara	121,288	123,538	7,948	0	131,486	108%	31%	246,640	53%
2	Beneshangul Gumuz	12,800	1,913	0	0	1,913	15%	0.4%	66,450	3%
3	Oromia	181,460	111,241	34,734	781	146,756	81%	34%	266,033	55%
4	Sidama	53,201	68,125	3,508	10	71,643	135%	17%	132,200	54%
5	SNNP	89,542	43,402	24,717	3,487	71,606	80%	17%	247,750	29%
6	SWEP	16,100	1,234	1,421	9	2,664	17%	0.6%		
7	Tigray	0	0	0	0	0		0%		
Total:		474,391	349,453	72,328	4,287	426,068	90%	100%	959,073	44%
			82%	17.0%	1.0%	100%				

Number of beneficiaries at different service levels from start to early July 2023 (EFY 2014 & 2015).

Source: Updated achievement and targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to 7 Jul 2023) from FTAT (received 16 Sept 2023).

4.1.3 Quality of water supply works, water safety plans and functionality

Water safety depends on the quality of the works, usage practices and proper O&M. This includes having a sound Water Safety Plan (WSP) in place.

Quality of the works: The construction of the works visited appeared to be generally satisfactory although the quality of finishing was not the highest, the stand around one hand-dug well was not completed, access to water at one spring development was under water, and access for people with disabilities was poor in most cases. The consultant’s report on a technical visit to 10 selected Woredas in March 2023 found similar issues, as well as problems with taps, pipelines and valve boxes in piped water systems (not visited by the MTE). It is clear that there is need for greater attention to detail, to be addressed through better supervision and capacity building.

Water Safety Plans (WSPs): The main database indicates that 77% of the water points had SECRSM, only 17% had WSPs (IR 1.1.4), and only 12% were doing regular testing of the water quality (IR 1.1.4), a key component of the WSP. SECRSM exercises are carried out mainly by Woreda technical people, while communities are at the forefront in WSPs. Since WSPs are one of the key innovation areas supported by the project, the MTE tried to explore the status of implementation. At the sites visited, WASHCO members mentioned planting in the catchment (not seen) and showed the MTE a stormwater diversion ditch at one hand dug well. Neither of the two Woredas visited was able to show the MTE a written WSP. It seems that WSPs are not being systematically carried out and documented.

Functionality is generally defined as the percentage of water points functioning at the time of the visit (e.g. UNICEF, 2017). The main project database (with 901 water schemes) showed the functionality of constructed water supply schemes as 99.6%, with three abandoned during construction and one abandoned after use.

➔ **Output 1.2: “Improved Functionality of Rural Community Water Supply through Different Interventions* in the Project Woredas”.**

This output actually has three indicators that concern factors that relate to WASHCO capacity and operations: i.e., WASHCOs being legalised, having tariff collection, and aware of private sector spare parts suppliers and repair service providers (as opposed to the Woreda Water offices that can sometimes provide these services for free). These factors are part of WASHCO capacity and are discussed below.

4.1.4 Water Safety Planning and SECRSM (including climate resilience)

e: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (i) water safety planning;

The Water Safety Plan concept has a long history and a range of practical applications. Still today many sector specialists associate it with the WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality (2004) when it was recommended that water suppliers develop and implement Water Safety Plans (WSPs) to systematically assess and manage risks. The COWASH IV ProDoc defines WSP+++ (three +) as “extended WSP to address climate change adaptation disaster risk reduction, O&M, water fee collection and inclusion.” This stems from the Climate Resilient Water Safety Plan (CR WSP) strategic framework and guidelines developed by GoE in collaboration with development partners. Following this initiative, COWASH III piloted CR WSP in the Project regions by giving training at different levels.

COWASH IV extends the concept beyond water quality and covers service reliability and inclusion, including climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, ending up with four +. The COWASH IV Annual Performance Report refers to this as WSP⁴⁺ and “catchment-based WSP”, and notes that this has not been started yet but “the micro catchment-based WSP concept developed in EFY 2007 has continued in the fourth phase.” The indicators list has only one indicator for WSP although obviously the call for safe water (i.e., water quality tested) underlies the new indicators aligned with SDG service levels.

In practice, several persons interviewed during the field visit did not make difference in between “catchment-based” WSP and “micro catchment-based” WSP. The concept was generally associated with water quality and to certain extent climate resilience. Very few were able to describe what all four + stand for. The practical observations made by the MTE team were, considering that most of the water points visited were not fully completed:

- Chlorination of the shallow tube well observed by the smell of water, no chlorine test kit was available. The persons interviewed described that the well is ready to use when there is no more smell.
- Contours prepared around the well to prevent surface flows entering the well area (one case).
- Access ramps to the well within the well compound; in all shallow well cases that were completed at the time of MTE team’s visit.
- Spring protection by the water intake, the spring source water points being typically not accessible due to the location of the spring itself.

Water quality testing is mandatory before commissioning new water supply schemes. Testing may be occasional and less important if there are no major risks identified. Testing of small rural water supply schemes should be regularly carried out to observe any increased risk of pollution problems, especially at critical points which should be identified in WSP+++. Sanitary inspections are among the essential elements of an effective drinking water quality surveillance and control.

The Inception Report introduced a pre-stage for the Water Safety Planning in CMP implementation: the Social, Environmental, Climate Risks Screening and Management (SECRSM) process which is carried out during the field appraisal stage of the CMP process. The SECRSM Guideline from Phase III was revised, and training was planned. Very few persons interviewed associated this as pre-stage for the WSP but rather saw it as part of the technical design and appraisal process.

The ProDoc sets an ambitious 100% target for the CMP-applicable schemes having WSP+++ and water safety monitored by water quality testing and/or visual inspections. The Annual Performance Report EFY 2014 including the inception phase reported that the average rural community safe water supply access coverage at the end of 2014 EFY was 59.5%. The Annual Performance Report EFY 2015 reports that with regards to WSP4+, “on-the-job training and technical support was given for seven Woredas in three of the project regions” and reported 210 participants in the WSP4+ training for region and woreda experts (total 210 participants of which 22 women and five men with disability), and another with SECRSM related topic: “Zone and Woreda experts on CMP approach, climate risk screening and reporting”, total 14 participants of which one female and 3 persons with disability of which one woman with disability.

4.1.5 Capacity and operation of main community water supply actors and “system”

This concerns mainly the WASHCOs, WoWs and artisans, and (probably more in the future) the private sector spare parts suppliers and repair service providers.

Although training and human and physical capacity building are a major focus of outcome 4 and the work of the FTAT and RSUs, and the capacity of WASHCOs, WoWs and artisans is a major objective of this, the project does not report specifically on the organisation-level capacity, operations and resilience of these entities and how they work together to make the broader community-led water supply “system” work (as outlined diagrammatically in the left hand part of Figure 1. These entities and the system as a whole need to function to construct, operate, maintain, update and expand the water supply facilities. Given the long-term nature of these functions, the entities and system need to be sustainable.

The project has much data and reports in some detail however on the construction of water supply schemes (as above). This shows that the WASHCOs, WoWs and artisans have achieved a certain level of operational competence. The project has a focus on and plans to assess O&M.

The project has indicators and some additional data on operations and performance of at least the WASHCOs. It is appropriate at this point to pull together the various bits of data from the project, and what the MTE has seen from its field work. The main project M&E database for 901 WASHCOs (missing data for 503 WASHCOs from EFY 2015) shows that:

- Average 6.6 members per WASHCO (for the 901 WASHCO reported). Most of the 901 WASHCOs had 7 members (663) and some 5 (227).
- Average of 3 women per WASHCO.
- 62% (a majority) (of the 901 WASHCOs reported) had only one woman in a leadership / senior position: 15% had 2: and 20% had 0.
- Only 4% of WASHCO chairpersons were women.
- Only 17% (of the 864 WASHCOs reported) had (and hopefully implemented) a WSP.
- Only 12% (of the 901 WASHCOs reported) had tested water quality.
- 94% (of the 882 WASHCOs reported) had been fenced.
- 39% (of the 557 WASHCOs reported) had a water point guard.

- 26% (of the 269 WASHCOs with guards reported) had a female guard.
- 43% of (of the 765 WASHCOs reported) had a pump attendant / caretaker.
- 46% (of the 856 WASHCOs reported) had started collecting tariff payments (IR 1.2.2:). The 2014 Annual Report had reported that 52% (363 out of 698).
- The 2014 Annual Report indicated that 48% (337 of 708) of WASHCOs had been legalised⁴ (IR 1.2.1).
- The 2014 Annual Report indicated that 47% (171 of 368) WASHCOs had been linked with private sector spare parts shops and repair services.
- WASHCOs have been able to mobilise and organise communities and raise a community contribution to the construction of water supply facilities of around 17% of the cost. The average cost was around EUR 3,000.

The general impression gained by the MTE from the more formal interviews with two WASHCOs and discussions with members from two other WASHCOs was that these WASHCOs operated reasonably well but their understanding and confidence could be stronger, and men generally took the lead. One WASHCO in a semi-urban setting seemed to be significantly stronger. This seems consistent with the above data.

The MTE was not able to get a good understanding of the capacity of the Woreda teams. The water point construction artisans met seem sufficiently competent masons. No water technician artisans were met, although one WASHCO chairman said he had repaired their well's hand pump and that of a neighbouring WASHCO (for no fee).

Given the importance of WASHCOs, WoWs, artisans and the private sector water service providers in themselves, and as entities linked into a community-led water supply "system", the MTE has included a recommendation that that the project should take a more holistic approach and strengthen its focus on building organisational capacity and linkages to make the whole system work better.

4.1.6 Progress towards the achievement of Core Outcome 1

The project has made good progress and mostly achieved its mid-term targets for the construction and rehabilitation of the planned water supply schemes and providing access to safe water supplies for the targeted beneficiary households. Further work is needed to improve quality and strengthen the organisation-level capacities of WASHCOs, WoWs and water supply artisans, and strengthen the linkages between them. Linkages with the private sector water service providers (spare parts and repair services) should be strengthened. The aim is to ensure proper O&M and sustainability.

4.2 Outcome 2: Household Sanitation (Core OC)

→ **Outcome 2: "Increased access to and usage of improved household latrines & increased practice of handwashing with soap in COWASH IV water supply beneficiary households of Project Woredas".**

The Final ProDoc (October 2020) envisions Outcome 2 as "*increased access to and usage of improved household latrines (to 80%) and increased practice of handwashing with soap at critical moments (by 20 % units) in selected Woredas*". The Inception Report narrows the scope from "*selected Woredas*" to "*water supply beneficiary households of Project Woredas*". The ProDoc further envisions two parallel tracks: (i) intensive sanitation marketing pilot activities, which will initially be implemented in one to two Woredas in each region and subsequent scaling-up to other Project Woredas; and (ii) capacity building support for broader sector efforts and the comprehensive ODF Campaign 2024 in particular to increase usage of

⁴ "Legalised" means the WASHCO, represents its community on issues relating to water supply and are recognised by their Kebele and Woreda in line with the pertinent Regional WASHCO / Water User Laws. Each of the project supported Regional States has their own Laws for regulating WASHCOs.

latrines and handwashing with soap by all household members. The Inception Report replaces these with access to number of latrines as per the SDG service levels, counting in several types of latrines: safely managed, basic, and limited.

The MTE assumed that the Inception Report was approved, and this chapter uses the indicators as presented in that (Annex 4) and as reported in the project progress reports.

4.2.1 Increased access to and use of improved household latrines

The targets set for the increased access to and use of improved household latrines appear overly ambitious given what was observed during the MTE field visits and what is reported by the project itself in its annual reports. The project informed the MTE however that ODF is declared when all community members have constructed any type of latrine (improved or unimproved), and all institutions have latrines / toilets; and that more than 95% of COWASH IV household beneficiaries have some kind of latrines (safely managed, basic, limited or unimproved). **ODF is a crucial goal since the benefits of improved WASH are significantly compromised as long as anyone practices open defecation. The EoP target of 58% of Kebeles being ODF therefore seems a little low.**

→ Output 2.1: “Increased number of accessible and improved household latrines as per SDG service level”

This output draws attention in counting the latrines rather than actually verifying their use by all and the related sanitation and hygiene behaviours. “As per SDG service level” allows counting against several definitions on latrines, and since the definitions are not clear at the community level, any latrine is counted. The Annual Performance Report EFY 2014 (2021 / 22) reported that none of the regions reported “safely managed” latrines, and that “in the previous phases of COWASH, the achievement in sanitation and hygiene, especially the household level, had not been encouraging”. The rural HHs’ improved latrine coverage has not shown much progress. The average rural HHs’ improved latrine access coverage in the base year (2013 EFY) has increased by only 3.6 percentage points compared with the progress in first year of COWASH IV (EFY 2014: 2021/22). The performance report further notes that within the COWASH IV community water points’ beneficiary households the coverage is now 26.3%, half of the targeted 52.4%.

During the field visits several persons noted slippage in the previously ODF declared locations and acknowledged that there is an issue with sustainability and a need to “re-declare ODF”. This re-declaration should not be based on counting toilets only. MTE team recommends increasing the independence and rigor of ODF verification and while doing it, return the focus to behaviour at household level among the different types of household members, including small children, elderly and disabled persons, and with attention to issues such as MHM and handwashing with soap. This should be done by someone else than those already involved with the sanitation promotion as this is an opportunity to learn how the promotion has been done in practice so far. Most of this work has been at the hands of the health extension workers who promote sanitation and hygiene as part of the multitude of other health topics that belong to their responsibilities.

4.2.2 Increased household handwashing facilities and practices

→ Output 2.2: Increased number of household level handwashing facilities and handwashing practices with soap & water

The ProDoc set the target for increased practice of handwashing with soap at critical moments by 20 % units in selected Woredas. The Inception Report combines the handwashing with several output indicators (outputs 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4., 3.7, and within the ‘full package’ concept, also in 3.5 and 3.6). Handwashing with soap and water do not stand out as a targeted objective in its own right and the project remains more focused on construction and counting of physical facilities. The Social Behavioural Change Strategy introduces the SDG handwashing service levels. WSP⁴⁺ Working Manual for COWASH IV mentions

handwashing only as part of the situation assessment questionnaires, features in the WSP⁴⁺ concept as part of the risk assessment.

This output actually combines four different things: 1) handwashing facilities as physical functional structures; 2) water is available for washing; 3) soap is available and 4) these are used by all. It is unclear whether the indicator counts the physical handwashing facilities and the adoption of practices, or just the former. This indicator draws attention to counting numbers rather than the latter part of the indicator: actual practice.

The COWASH IV Annual Performance Report EFY 2014 (2021/22) reports that “adequate data have not been collected from the Woredas. This is partly due to the low performance and lack of awareness on household level handwashing issues.” The same was observed during the MTE field visits - there was rarely water available for handwashing at the household toilets observed. The COWASH Social Behavioural Change Strategy states that “the COWASH will use rural HH water supply construction/rehabilitation as an entry point to create demand for and use of improved latrine and handwashing practices.” There should be more than that to motivate self-realization for change.

Access to water is a critical barrier to handwashing, as water is carried long distances (beneficiaries of water points are counted “regardless of distance” and categorized as “within 1 km radius” and “within 1.5 km radius”). Therefore, water saving practices and equipment, such as tippy taps, would make a difference: it is possible to wash hands with very little water, and diminish the labour of those carrying it.

4.2.3 Effectiveness of promotion mechanisms

Social Behaviour Change Communications (SBCC) is the strategic use of communication approaches to promote changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs and behaviours. SBCC should be evidence-based to define barriers and motivators to change. As acknowledged in the COWASH IV Annual Performance Review, “one of the core activities in the development of the sanitation sector is the promotion of social and behaviour change (SBC).” To support this, the Social Behavioural Change Strategy (July 2021) and the Social and Behavioural Change Training Manual for Frontline Health Workers (August 2021) were prepared. This did not include any formative behavioural research in the project Woredas but was based on literature review. The SBC related activities have been largely at the federal level.

The ProDoc draws attention to the behaviour change with Output 2.1 “*Coordinated and effective sanitation and hygiene demand creation and behaviour change activities in marketing pilot*”. The Inception Report drops the behaviour change from the indicators, replacing the above indicator with Output 4.4: “*Private sector support for WASH implementation enhanced*”. This indicator shifts the attention to private sector actors and sanitation marketing, and again the actual behavioural aspects are missed. The Annual Performance Report EFY 2014 (2021/22) narrows the private sector scope into Micro-and Small-Enterprises (MSEs) established for the very purpose: total 6 new and 12 earlier MSEs, all women-led. The report further notes that “*However, due to the known reasons of delay in budget transfer and inflation of industrial materials, these MSEs have not yet started full implementation*”. Similar observations were made during the field visit.

4.2.4 Access to credit: MFIs and Savings and Lending Associations (SLAs)

➔ **Output 2.3: “Increased access to credit services for household sanitation and hygiene products”.**

The project initiated a programme in 2014 to improve access to credit for households benefitting from WASH facilities to finance and construct their own latrines and handwashing facilities for sanitation. Finance had been identified as a major constraint for resource poor households. The project identified two strategies: (1) working with MFIs to develop and provide appropriate sanitation loan products, and (2) helping communities to establish their own Savings and Lending Associations. This initiative should focus on communities that had benefitted from a water supply scheme.

MFI sanitation loans: The project engaged with a number of MFIs to explore possibilities. Discussions

progressed with VisionFund MFI in 2015 and the project has identified 19 Woredas in 4 Regions to start piloting the initiative. This is a work in progress and no loans have yet been given. The MTE considers that partnering with MFIs (using their loan capital) is a sound strategy and strongly supports the FTAT to continue to pursue this if VisionFund MFI continues its interest.

SLA piloting: in 2014, the project held federal level discussions, developed guidelines and training material and carried out cascaded TOT training for pilot work in SNNP Region. Work on pilot SLAs started in two Woredas in SNNPR in 2015. The Region supported 9 communities that had benefitted from a water supply scheme to establish their SLAs for community members who were interested. A total of 9 SLAs were established with an average of 24 members (total 214), a majority of whom should be female. By the end of EFY 2015 (7 July 2023), a total of ETB 99,413 had been saved. In Amhara up to end of EFY 2015 a total of 16 Saving groups had been established with a total membership of 775 (12% female, a surprisingly small figure). They mobilized total savings of ETB 51,940. In Sidama region, a total of 14 SLAs have been established. Each group has on average 30 to 40 members, and each saved up to ETB 4500 to 5,000.

Training is quite intensive with a total of 6 modules. The SLA members meet at least every month (some meet every one or two weeks) and can buy up to 5 “shares” of ETB 25 (total ETB 125) at each meeting. Regular follow up support visits are provided by the Woreda Health and Water office specialists as well as the HEWs.

The aim was to enable members to get loans to buy slabs. These cost around ETB 1,000 for plastic “slabs”, or ETB 2,000 for concrete slabs. This would require 8 or 16 months of saving ETB 125 per month respectively. The EFY 2015 Q3 Performance Report indicates that 41 members from SNNP SLAs have purchased and started to install latrine slabs. No further details were available, and it seems this is ongoing.

The MTE visited one newly established SLA in Sidama (the SLAs in SNNPR were too far to reach in the time available). This was established only in May 2023. It had a total of 40 members with 15 women. The committee has 7 members with 3 being women. The chairperson is male. The SLA meets every 2 weeks but plan to do saving once per month. So far, they have had one saving meeting and saved ETB 15,000. The project has provided a series of trainings and training material, a cash box and member passbooks. Although the meeting was late in the day, the impression gained was that many members had only a weak understanding of the SLA principles and how it should work. The level of commitment did not seem as high as it should have been. The MTE was told this was probably the worst performing SLA.

While progress has been slow, this is not unexpected given the challenges of the task and constraints the project has had to deal with. It seems that there has been low achievement of mid-term targets although complete data was not available. It seems likely however that only a relatively small fraction of the target of 26,155 households have taken loans (IR 2.3.1) and data on repayment was not provided. The targets are probably unrealistic.

Given the challenging nature of the SLA concept, the complicatedness of the procedures, the length of training needed, the commitment required to run an SLA properly, and the ability of the appropriate government office to provide support and regulatory functions, the MTE has some concerns about the general viability and sustainability of SLAs. There was insufficient information and data to properly justify this however or pinpoint the nature of these concerns.

The MTE would recommend therefore that the project proceeds with caution and focuses on the currently established SLAs until they have proved themselves and achieved stable viability, before expanding to new SLAs. This is supposed to be a pilot programme. The project should also try to find and partner with an experienced SLA NGO or other agency for them to take this up in other areas (especially with their own or shared funding). SLA support does not seem to fall naturally within the remit of the main WASH implementing agencies (water, education and health).

4.2.5 Contribution to ODF

f: EQ 10: Open Defecation Free (ODF) contribution:

- How COWASH contributes to the objectives of open defecation free area?

Ethiopia is committed to meet SDG 6.2 for sanitation. National ODF Campaign 2024, Campaign Framework Document (2019/20 – 2023/24), dated November 2019, was prepared by the then Ministry of Water Irrigation and Energy (MOWIE) and Ministry of Health. Referred to as "Total Sanitation to End open Defecation and Urination (TSEDU)", the overall campaign objective is to eliminate open defecation by creating sustainable behavioural change and provision of at least basic sanitation, and declare all Woredas and Ethiopia ODF by the end of 2024.

Ethiopia reduced open defecation from around 80% to 20% between 2000 and 2020. As noted by Negesse et.al. (2021), "much of this progress involved installation of unimproved household toilets. As a result, diarrheal diseases are still the second leading cause of under-five illness and death in Ethiopia after pneumonia".⁵ The practice of counting unimproved latrines into sanitation achievements continues. WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, people using safely managed sanitation services (% of population) in Ethiopia in 2020 was only 7%, and in rural areas only 4%⁶.

Unimproved latrines lead into open defecation slippage. This was confirmed by several people interviewed during the MTE field visits as well as several WASH sector actors in Ethiopia report the same.

The COWASH IV ProDoc envisioned that OC 2 will increase improved household sanitation and hygiene along two parallel tracks, one of these being capacity building support for broader sector efforts and the comprehensive ODF Campaign 2024 in particular to increase usage of latrines and handwashing with soap by all household members. COWASH IV Annual Performance Report EFY 2014 notes that "According to secondary WASH data collected from the project Woredas, the rural households improved latrine access coverage has not shown much improvement to date. The average rural households improved latrine access coverage in the base year (EFY 2013) has increased by only 3.6 percentage points. The coverage has increased from 42.8% to 46.4%".

COWASH contributes to ODF objectives (EQ 10) through its regional interactions aimed at COWASH targeted areas and among its water supply beneficiaries, given that the beneficiary targets for the water supply are very high, we can assume that the target is the same for ODF beneficiaries. The manuals, guidelines and behaviour change communication materials further contribute to the national ODF programme, their impact being potentially more than the COWASH water supply beneficiaries only.

In the present situation it may be worth having a more regional focus, and to work out the strategy and its doable actions at the local level together with the local governments and locally active sector actors. A **recommendation** for sanitation at this point is to identify those regions and woredas where field movement and therefore, field presence and monitoring is possible, and to revisit the Campaign Framework Document (2019/20 – 2023/24) from the local context point of view, seeking doable, verifiable and result and impact-oriented actions. Spreading resources and effort over the entire working area while not being able to have the necessary field presence for action may result in a situation where the progress and impact remain low.

4.2.6 Progress towards the achievement of Core Outcome 2

Although there was little or no data, there appears to have been very little uptake of improved HH latrines and handwashing in the targeted areas (where water supply has or is being provided). It would be expected however that such progress would lag a little behind the provision of water and stronger focus of

⁵ Negesse, et al. 2021. Trends and determinants of diarrhoea among under-five children in Ethiopia: cross-sectional study: multivariate decomposition and multilevel analysis based on Bayesian approach evidenced by EDHS 2000–2016 data. BMC Public Health (2021) 21:193, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-10191-3>

⁶ washdata.org

awareness raising and promotion. Some areas have received water and so uptake would be expected. Progress is therefore considered to be significantly behind schedule and only partly satisfactory.

4.3 Outcome 3: Institutional WASH (Core OC)

As per the Project Document, Outcome 3 was “Improved hygiene at schools and health centres by narrowing the gap in institutional water supply and sanitation and making better use of existing sanitation facilities in rural areas in selected Woredas”. This was modified in the Inception Report to:

→ **Outcome 3: “Improved institutional WASH by narrowing the gap in improved institutional latrine, climate resilient and safe water supply, and menstrual hygiene management (MHM)”.**

While the consideration related to the use of existing sanitation facilities was dropped, the climate resilience and MHM aspects were added. Narrowing the gap in both cases calls for the figure for total number of schools and health facilities in the Project Woredas.

Outcome 3 has six outputs with different combinations of schools with latrines or water but not the other, or nothing, and the same for health facilities. This is summarised in Table 7. Only those where there had been work and therefore data, are covered below.

Table 7: institutional WASH investment support Outputs

#	Opt	Institution	What they have	Get support for
1	3.1	Rural Schools	Improved <u>latrines</u>	Climate resilient and inclusive safely managed <u>water</u> services and <u>MHM</u> with <u>handwashing</u> with <u>water storage</u> .
2	3.3	Rural Health facilities	Improved <u>latrines</u>	Innovative, climate resilient and inclusive safely managed <u>water</u> services with <u>handwashing</u> and <u>water storage</u>
3	3.2	Rural Schools	Safe <u>water</u> supply	Safely managed <u>latrines</u> with <u>handwashing</u> with <u>water storage</u> and <u>MHM</u> .
4	3.4	Rural Health facilities	(Safe) <u>water</u> supply	Safely managed <u>latrines</u> with <u>handwashing</u> facility with <u>water storage</u> .
5	3.5	Rural Schools	Nothing.	<u>Full WASH</u> service package
6	3.6	Rural Health facilities	Nothing.	<u>Full WASH</u> service package

Source: Prepared by the MTE from the Results Framework.

4.3.1 Increased access to and use of improved school WASH

The data on school WASH construction from project startup to the end of EFY 2015 Q3 (7 April 2023) is summarised in Table 8.

Table 8: Cumulative plan and achievement to mid-project for SCHOOL WASH facilities

Cumulative COWASH IV (for EFY 2014 and 2015: i.e. to 7 July 2023)		Project Region						Total
		Amhara	BG	Oromia	SNNP	Sidama	SWEP	
IR 3.1.1: No. of Schools (with improved latrine facilities) having Access to Climate Resilient and Inclusive Safely Managed Water Supply with Handwashing Facility with Water Storage and MHM from COWASH IV	Plan (to Jun 23)	103	3	66	70	16	4	262
	Achieved	81	0	61	42	11	0	195
	% of plan achieved	79%	0%	92%	60%	69%	0%	74%
	Pop. Benefited	29,719	0	37,219	34,901	8,943	0	110,782
IR 3.2.1 No. of Schools (With	Plan (to Jun	7	1	26	28	9	3	74

Cumulative COWASH IV (for EFY 2014 and 2015: i.e. to 7 July 2023)		Project Region						Total
		Amhara	BG	Oromia	SNNP	Sidama	SWEP	
Safe Water Supply) having Access to Safely Managed Latrine with MHM and Handwashing Facility with Water Storage as per the Design from COWASH IV	23)							
	Achieved	0	0	11	18	3	0	32
	% of plan achieved	0%	0%	42%	64%	33%	0%	43%
	Pop. Benefited	0	0	14,512	18,028	6,101	0	38,641
Total number of schools	Plan	110	4	92	98	25	7	329
	Achieved	81	0	72	60	14	0	227
	% achieved	74%	0%	78%	61%	56%	0%	69%
Totals # beneficiaries		29,719	0	51,731	52,929	15,044	0	149,423

Source: Updated achievement and targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to 7 July 2023) from FTAT (received 16 Sept 2023).

➔ **Output 3.1: “Rural schools (with improved latrines) provided with innovative, climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water services and MHM with handwashing with water storage from COWASH IV”.**

The project has progressed well in construction of climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water supply with handwashing facilities, water storage and MHM for schools that did not have these but had improved latrines. Table 8 shows that total cumulative achievement until the end of EFY 2015 was 195 schools, being 74% of the cumulative mid-project target. This benefited 110,782 students of which 49% were girls. Out of all girls, 0.79% and out of all boys 0.84%, had disability.

➔ **Output 3.2: “Rural schools (with safe water supply) provided with safely managed latrines with handwashing with water storage and MHM as per the design from COWASH IV”.**

The project did less well in construction safely managed latrines with handwashing, water storage and MHM for schools that did not have these but had a safe water supply. Table 8 shows that a total of 32 schools were supported, being only 43% of the mid-term target. This benefited 38,641 students. This means that a total of 227 schools were provided with improved WASH infrastructure to bring them to full WASH services. This benefitted a total of 149,423 students. Considering the many challenges faced, progress towards achievement of the school WASH targets has been reasonably good.

➔ **Output 3.5: Schools provided with Full WASH service package* with the support of COWASH IV**

This indicator relates to the schools (where all WASH facilities were inadequate) provided with “full WASH services package as per the design”. There were no schools in this category since priority was given to those that already had improved water supplies or sanitation (but not the other).

The MTE team was able to visit only one school where work was still in progress. The MHM facility had the foundations only so it was not possible to observe how it would end up working in practice. The team observed latrines that were not completed yet, hence, had no water or handwashing facilities, the location having three “generations” of latrines. The MTE team received mixed comments on what will be done with these. It appears that there is no practice to empty pits, or to manage the latrines in such a way that they would remain safe and hygienic to use. While the FTAT has prepared the School WASH O&M manual in collaboration with the MoE and distributed these to the teams, it was not clear to what extent the O&M of the new toilet facilities had been set up.

4.3.2 Increased access to and use of improved WASH at health facilities

➔ **Output 3.3: Rural health institutions (with improved latrines) provided with innovative, climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water services with handwashing and water storage from**

COWASH IV

- **Output 3.4: Rural health institutions (with water supply) provided with safely managed latrines with handwashing facility with water storage as per the design from COWASH IV**
- **Output 3.6: Health Facilities provided with Full WASH service package* with the support of COWASH IV**

The original health facility specific Outputs 3.3 and 3.4 were replaced in the Inception Report with outputs 3.3, 3.4, 3.6 and partly with 3.7. This made the difference in between cases where there was an “improved water supply” but no latrine, and cases where there were “improved latrines” but no water supply, and the cases where the full package was to be implemented. The funding for the health facility latrines is entirely from GoE while GoF contributes to water supply. In COWASH IV the planning and implementation was shifted to Woreda, reducing the role of the Community Health Committee (CHC) and the health facility itself. This disconnect may explain the situation with the only health facility case that the MTE visited: the actual health facility was not there, neither the water supply nor the handwashing facilities. There was no indication that the construction of the health facility would start any time soon. It is doubtful whether this latrine will remain functional until the health facility and its water supply is completed.

According to the COWASH IV 2015 EFY Nine Months Progress Report, “secondary WASH data collected from 90 COWASH IV project Woredas of five project regions (Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, Sidama, and BG), there were 2,430 rural health institutions in the 90 project Woredas in EFY 2013”, and “the health institution improved water supply access coverage has increased to 23.4% in EFY 2014 (2021/22) from 21.4% in EFY 2013 due to all WASH actors, including COWASH IV, in the Woredas”. As is evident from Table 9 below, the health facilities progress has been very slow. The EFY 2015 annual performance report notes that “The achievement is much lower than the plan due to the fact that the price of construction materials is escalating and delay of investment funds transfer to the Woredas, and, in some cases, the construction of latrines, unlike water supply schemes, are taking some more time to complete as per design”.

The overall / Regional EFY 2015 nine months and Annual EFY 2015 FTAT Performance Reports available to the MTE did not provide such data or comment on any innovative, climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water services with handwashing and water storage cases. The achievement against targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to 7 July 2023) is shown in Table 9 . This shows relatively modest achievement against the Result Framework targets to mid-project. A total of 82 health institutions (43% of mid-term target) with improved latrines were provided with improved water supply with handwashing and water storage. A total of 56 health institutions (38% of target) with safe water supply were provided with improved latrines with handwashing and water storage. This means a total of 138 health institutions were provided with improved WASH infrastructure to bring them to full WASH services. The MTE was unable to check the validity of this data. The construction quality and siting of the health institution latrine visited was poor but this seems to have been an outlier case. The Summary Report of Technical Field Visits to Ten Selected Woredas (March 2023) indicated a number of other quality issues however with both school and health facility latrines.

Table 9: Cumulative plan and achievement to mid-project for HEALTH facilities

Cumulative COWASH IV (for EFY 2014 and 2015: i.e. to 7 July 2023)		Project Region						Total
		Amhara	BG	Oromia	SNNP	Sidama	SWEP	
IR 3.3.1 No. of Health Institutions (with Improved Latrines) having Access to Climate Resilient, and Inclusive Safely Managed Water Supply with Handwashing Facility & Water Storage from COWASH IV.	Plan (to Jun 23)	56	3	45	73	12	3	192
	Achieved	19	0	19	42	2	0	82
	% of plan achieved	34%	0%	42%	58%	17%	0%	43%
IR 3.4.1 No. of Health	Plan (to	8	3	75	42	14	4	146

Cumulative COWASH IV (for EFY 2014 and 2015: i.e. to 7 July 2023)		Project Region						Total
		Amhara	BG	Oromia	SNNP	Sidama	SWEP	
Institutions (with Safe Water Supply) having Access to Safely Managed Latrine with Handwashing Facility with Water Storage as per the design from COWASH IV.	Jun 23)							
	Achieved	0	3	47	0	6	0	56
	% of plan achieved	0%	100%	63%	0%	43%	0%	38%
Total # of health institutions	Plan	64	6	120	115	26	7	331
	Achieved	19	3	66	42	8	0	138
	%	30%	50%	55%	37%	31%	0%	42%

Source: Updated achievement and targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to 7 July) from FTAT (received 16 Sept 2023).

4.3.3 Improved functionality of institutional WASH

Output 3.7 is a new indicator introduced in the Inception Report, taking the functionality-related aspects as presented in the ProDoc under the outputs 3.3 and 3.4. It is early to present figures for these given that the overall progress with both cases has been low and there is less experience with the actual operation and maintenance of the facilities, or rather, their use.

It appears as if the construction of school and health facility WASH infrastructure following the WMP approach rather than the CMP approach where community-rooted PTAs or CHCs take the lead might be undermining the functionality aspect if the sense of ownership is not created during planning and implementation. In the most recent annual performance report “functionality” in mentioned only once and in the context of rehabilitation of community water supplies.

➔ **Output 3.7: “Improved functionality and management of rural institutional WASH (water supply, latrine, handwashing, and MHM) through different various interventions (treatment, monitoring, WSP, availability of spare part supply, private sector, WASH clubs, PTAs & Health Committees) in Project Woredas”.**

The Annual Performance Report EFY 2014 (2021/22) notes that “Unlike the previous phases, COWASH IV has deepened and linked the school sanitation and hygiene implementation by including some sustainability issues like functionality of the facilities and raising awareness level of the school community in sustaining the facilities.” In practice this is about cascading training and working with the Ministry of Education at the Federal level. The FTAT has prepared the School WASH Operation, Maintenance and Management Training Manual with the support of national short-term consultants and held one ToT for 22 persons on the use of the manual.

The following two indicators call for several other criteria to be filled – the expression “at least” indicating that all these should be fulfilled:

- **IR 3.7.1:** “No. of schools fulfilling the criteria for WASH functionality (at least established WASH clubs, conducted inspections, WASH & MHM management training provided, regularly cleaning their latrines) through COWASH IV support”.
- **IR 3.7.2:** “No. of health facilities fulfilling the criteria for WASH functionality (AT LEAST conducted inspections, WASH management training provided, regularly cleaning their latrines, construct placenta pits & incinerator) through COWASH IV support”.

There was no data available for either of these. The only health facility toilet that the MTE team was introduced to was not fully completed, the actual health facility still missing from the site.

4.3.4 Progress towards the achievement of Core Outcome 3

There has been modest to moderate achievement of targets in the construction of institutional WASH infrastructure. It appears that significant quality issues remain which will impact functionality and sustainability. Given the multiple challenges that project implementation has faced and the very high-cost escalation for construction materials, the MTE considers that overall performance has been moderately satisfactory. Corrective actions are needed to resolve the many quality issues and shortcomings that remain.

4.4 (High-level) Outcome 4: Sustainability and inclusivity of outcomes

→ Outcome 4: “Sustainability and inclusivity of achieved WASH outcomes enhanced”.

This is one of the two new project outcomes that was introduced during Inception to replace the ProDoc Outcome 4. The Outcome statement emphasises sustainability and inclusivity, but in the logic of the project (Figure 1 and Section 1.4), should focus on actor and system-level capacity and operation (including women’s empowerment), inclusive integration of the three core (WASH) outcomes and overall behaviour change to achieve high-level outcomes like ODF. This therefore builds the basis and likelihood for sustainability (after the end of the project). The Outcome actually has four Outputs for (1) human and (2) physical capacity of WASH stakeholders, (3) women empowerment and disability inclusion, and (4) private sector support. It was found more convenient to discuss actor and system capacity and operation and WSPs for water supply under the outcome for water, and so this is referred to but not repeated here. Likely sustainability is covered in section 6.

4.4.1 Human capacity: Cascaded training system operation and effectiveness

→ Output 4.1: “Human Capacity of COWASH IV stakeholders for WASH implementation enhanced”.

The project has made a major effort and achieved good progress in training for human capacity building. This is a major part of the GoF funding that is implemented by the FTAT and RSU through a cascaded ToT training system. The aim is to build the capacities of all main stakeholders at all levels, so that they can implement the project as intended. Table 10 shows the cumulative number of people trained in EFY 2014 and 15 (to 7 July 2023) by gender and disability. This gives the total number of stakeholders trained as 45,443 which would be 76% of the mid-project target (IR 4.1.1). A total of 1.2% of those trained were women with disability and 1.9% men with disability. The targets vary considerably across the regions.

Table 10: Cumulative number of people trained by COWASH IV in EFY 2014 & 15 (to Jul 23) (IR 4.1.1)

#	Training Provider	Plan / Target: Jun 23	Female with disability	Female with no disability	Male with disability	Male with no disability	Total Trained	% of Target
1	FTAT	759	2	119	21	406	548	72%
2	Amhara	5,980	24	2,767	54	5,895	8,740	146%
3	Benishangul Gumuz	1,824	15	547	21	718	1,301	71%
4	Oromia	32,123	338	9,895	327	11,968	22,528	70%
5	Sidama	3,936	24	1,024	32	2,395	3,475	88%
6	SNNP	14,694	126	3,097	225	5,153	8,601	59%
7	SWEP	820	7	48	179	16	250	30%
8	Tigray	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Totals	60,136	536	17,497	859	26,551	45,443	76%
	% of total trained:		1.2%	39%	1.9%	58%	100%	

Source: Updated achievement and targets for EFY 2014 and 2015 (to 7 July 2023) from FTAT (received 16 Sept 2023).

Note: This data is strictly speaking, for “person-trainings” and almost certainly includes double counting. Some people have probably participated in more than one training.

Data for each training received from the project M&E indicated that COWASH IV had so far carried out a total of 1448 training course. This would make around 23 people at each training. Unfortunately, this data did not have the length of each training or separately tagged data on the subject area or type of trainee, so

analysis was not possible. The MTE understood from reports and discussion that the duration of most trainings was around two to four days.

Training courses and material are often developed from or together with the various manuals and training material produced by the FTAT in collaboration with subject experts and other partner ministries. This covers all types of subject area as needed to implement the project. This includes project procedures (including CMP, WMP, financial control, M&E), technical subjects (e.g. hand dug wells, spring development, improved latrines, etc), as well as community approaches, behaviour change and other areas. The training is cascaded from the FTAT and partner specialists to the RSU and other specialist at the regions, who then train stakeholders in Zones, Woredas, , Kebeles and communities.

During implementation, it became clear to the project that the training in at least some areas, was not being well cascaded from regional to Woreda and other levels. The FTAT therefore joined in and supported the RSU trainings of stakeholders from these levels. This was considered as important and useful for consolidating the learning of the RSUs. A total of 580 people (“person-trainings”) were supported as shown in

Table 11. These are included in the data in Table 10.

During its field interviews with RSUs, WASHCOs, communities and other stakeholders, the MTE tried to assess how well the messages from project guidelines and manuals were reaching down the cascade to the end user level. Taking WSP⁴⁺ as a key focus of the project, the MTE found that the level of knowledge was not as good as was expected for such a priority strategy. While one RSU team met had a reasonably good understanding of WSP⁴⁺, the understanding in the other three RSUs was rather general. As expected, there was a drop off from region to Woreda to WASHCO.

The FTAT had concerns about knowledge and skills in RSU and Woreda teams and has started to support staff in the field with on-the-job training / support of their work in the field. The MTE fully supports this good initiative.

Table 11: Number of people trained by FTAT in support of RSUs

Training target and topic	Planned No.	Actual No.	No. with disability			No. without disability			Total		
			Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Woreda, Zone and Regional sector office experts on COWASH IV online database training	182	172	5	0	5	145	22	167	150	22	172
WSP4+ training for region and woreda experts	390	210	5	0	5	183	22	205	188	22	210
ToT training to Zone and Woreda WASH team and experts on CMP management	41	48	4	1	5	38	5	43	42	6	48
ToT training on WASHCO CMP management for Woreda technical experts	17	15	0	0	0	14	1	15	14	1	15
Zone and Woreda experts on CMP appraisal, climate risk screening and reporting	20	14	2	1	3	11	0	11	13	1	14
Zone and Woreda financial staff on COWASH IV Financial Management Manual	13	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	10	0	10
Zone and Woreda CR-WSP team	32	29	1	0	1	23	5	28	24	5	29
RCCN members in basic communication, PR, knowledge management , photography and videography	62	39	2	0	2	25	12	37	27	12	39
New regions WASH partners on women leadership in WASHCO management	35	31	1	0	1	19	11	30	20	11	31
Region, zone and woreda health staff on CLTSH and ODF Declaration Protocol & SBC	13	12	0	0	0	11	1	12	11	1	12
Total	805	568	20	2	22	479	79	546	499	81	580

Source: FTAT EFY 2015 Performance Report.

Note: This data is strictly speaking, for “person-trainings”, with some participating in more than one training.

Many of the manuals and guidelines are quite complex and aimed at a high level. It seemed to the MTE that the level of the manual was often much higher than is actually going on in the field (e.g. SECRSM, WSP). The MTE was informed that the FTAT has recently developed simple and short field manual for both WSP⁴⁺ and SECRSM and translated these into Amharic and Afan Oromo. It is suggested that the FTAT uses its on-the-job training support and monitoring to better understand the actual level of implementation in the field, and develop further practical, short and simple “user guides” in other areas for use in the field.

4.4.2 Physical capacity building

→ Output 4.2: “Physical Capacity of COWASH IV Stakeholders for WASH implementation enhanced”.

The project supported the RSU and selected regional zone and Woreda offices with physical assets to build their operational capacity. The items provided included vehicles, motorbikes, desktop and laptop computers, printers, LCD projectors, photocopiers, scanners, filing cabinets, furniture, binding machines, GPSs, cameras, and water quality test kits.

4.4.3 Gender equality, women’s empowerment and inclusion

g: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (ii) women and disability inclusion

→ Output 4.3: “Women empowerment and disability inclusion in WASH management enhanced”.

The ProDoc and the Inception Report set the scene for gender equality and disability inclusion. Key challenges and opportunities for gender equality are identified and addressed as part of the expected results including distribution and control of resources, gender roles, norms and values, participation and decision-making power, and discrimination.

The FTAT has systematically worked to mainstream gender into all activities and indicators. These principles are well reflected in the planning and implementation of water supply schemes. Yet, in practice there is room for improvement on how these strategies and guidelines are turned into action. According to the project’s database, 46.2% of WASHCO members are women, 5.2% are chaired by a woman, 34.2% of

WASHCO leadership positions are women and that 3.0% have woman in all three key leadership positions. MTE team met several women who were WASHCO members, including those in the leading roles. The MTE team met a case where there were two chairpersons, one woman and one man. Total 3.0% of WASHCO members have some kind of disability, 1.4% of men and 1.6% of women. It was not possible to assess whether the WASHCOs were representative of its beneficiaries' social/ethnic groups.

The FTAT EFY 2015 Annual Performance Report introduces the women empowerment and disability inclusion-focused documents most of which have been translated to the local language and shared with the regional partners. In this regard, various trainings and review meetings have been held. COWASH IV has contributed to the development of national level MHM awareness raising materials which have been finalized by the MoH and UNICEF in collaboration with WASH sector development partners. It is encouraging that the FTAT has followed up on how these materials have been distributed and used, even if the findings have not always been encouraging. The scene is now well set but the training and principles are yet to fully cascade to the WASHCO and community level.

The project has carried out training events such as *“WASHCOs on CMP management, disability inclusion, HTPs, household latrine construction loan & women leadership in water point management”* and *“water supply beneficiary women community members on Women Empowerment, sanitation, disability inclusion, COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, HTPs/GBV, and Safe Water Management at home (at their water points)”* MTE suggests having more focused events and not trying cover all possible gender and disability inclusion aspects in one event, and perhaps adapting the training to respond to locally emerging critical needs. This is very much about adult learning and building on existing knowledge and experience, yet, with people, both women and men, who may not be fully literate.

There is an opportunity to address gender-based violence (GBV) and particularly Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in those regions and Woredas where it is relevant. GBV is mentioned in some of the training headings but with a multitude of other topics – for instance, training on *“water supply beneficiary women community members on Women Empowerment, sanitation, disability inclusion, COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, HTPs/GBV, and Safe Water Management at home (at their water points)”*. MHM features high in the agenda and is well elaborated in the annual performance reports. During the MTE field visit, women members of a WASHCO shared how they have themselves initiated action against FGM in their community, collecting address to the local government to take action in this regard. The local COWASH stakeholders reported that since FGM is not mentioned in the ProDoc or the guidelines, they have not included such as awareness materials into their menu of options. The National Gender Mainstreaming Manual for Health by the Ministry of Health of Ethiopia (March 2021) does bring FGM up as an example of gender-based discrimination.

4.4.4 Private sector support / sanitation marketing: MFIs, SLAs and MSEs

h: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (iv) Private sector support:

- (iv) integrated water supply and sanitation including the development of business skills development, support to micro-small enterprises and the promotion and organization of saving and loan associations.

➔ **Output 4.4: *“Private sector support for WASH implementation enhanced”*.**

Private sector support / sanitation marketing is part of the innovation areas in COWASH IV. The strategy did not seem to have any guiding document however and was not clearly expressed in progress reports. Discussions indicated however that this revolved around three strands.

- Federal level engagement in the development of approaches, tools and strategies for market-based sanitation.
- Improving access to finance through MFIs and SLAs.
- Women-led groups (MSEs) for commercial production of latrine slabs and liquid soap for sale to households in the villages where latrines had been promoted (demand creation).

The **FTAT** has participated in different Federal-level Multi-stakeholders Platform meetings and has contributed to the discussions, actions and development of tools to assess the performance of market-based sanitation in Ethiopia. The project supported the MoH in the development of its National Market-Based Sanitation Implementation Guideline (MoH, 2020). The project reported that the MSE development strategy for phase III had been updated and business skill training manual prepared but these were not provided to the MTE or found on its website. The MTE did not find any COWASH IV strategy document or guideline for private sector, sanitation marketing or MSE development.

Improving access to finance through MFIs and SLAs was a main focus of this output but was covered under section 4.2.4 where it has its own output under Outcome 2. The MFI approach seems to be appropriate and promising if the VisionFund MFI interest translates into developing and offering sanitation loans. There are concerns with the SLAs.

The **women-led sanitation group MSEs** for latrine slabs, liquid soap and possibly other products later, seems to have been the second main focus of this Output. Understanding progress was challenging however because of very unclear reporting and no indicator data from M&E. The reporting used generalised words (private sector, or MSE) that made it hard to understand exactly what was being talked about and what had been done and achieved. It turned out that progress had been weak.

The project 2014 EFY annual report indicated that six new women-led group MSEs had been established and 12 previously existing MSEs (from COWASH III) had been strengthened, in Oromia (7), Amhara (6), BSG (2), Sidama (2) and SNNP (1). The total membership was 90, with an average of 5 per group. None of these had produced any slabs or other sanitation products in EFY 2014 (2021/22) due to delays in funding and inflation of material costs. The project reported in its 2015 FTAT report that it had supported 11 MSEs (4 new and 7 pre-existing) and mentioned the constraints but did not say anything about production or income.

The MSE team was able to visit one newly established but not yet functioning women-led group MSE in SNNP that called itself a “water and sanitation marketing and construction enterprise”. This had been established in December 2022 and had 5 female and 3 male members. The group had been trained by the TVET in the Woreda and provided with (free) corrugated iron sheets for construction of a fabrication shed (value ETB 260,000), as well as start-up materials (e.g. sand, cement, iron reinforcing bars) and tools for fabrication of the latrine slabs. The slab mould had not been provided and so they had not been able to start production and had therefore made no sales.

Other COWASH IV reports refer to MSEs for WASH spare parts, sanitation products and sanitation marketing, the lack of clarity from generalised wording again tending to hide what is actually happening, or not happening. It seems quite likely therefore that in its MSE development work, COWASH IV has only supported women-led group MSEs for latrine slab production and sale in this rather strange highly subsidised income-generation project-driven approach, and very little production and sales have been achieved. In terms of the output’s result framework indicators, 12 (or 43%) of the target of 28 MSEs have been strengthened or established (IR 4.4.1). There was no data on the artisans trained and engaged (employed) by the project (IR 4.4.2), or spare part sales shops (IR 4.4.3). It should be said here that the idea of strengthening artisans and water technicians as small businesses has great potential but seems to have slipped through the cracks. This slow progress is somewhat surprising since COWASH III did well in its women-led sanitation group MSEs. The FTAT informed the MTE that this was due to the delays in funding as well as lack of access due to insecurity mentioned previously.

It is widely understood that the private sector remains a major and largely untapped resource for WASH sector development in Ethiopia. This is attracting much attention from the World Bank and other donors for the OWNP. It seems likely that the main approaches will include developing an enabling environment for WASH business, facilitated WASH business development, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for larger scale projects. There may be a place for women-led group MSEs if the profits are high and these can be financed through a commercial (e.g. MFI) loan. Judging by COWASH IV experiences so far however, this seems unlikely. The MTE strongly supports the need to engage the private sector and feels that the right kind of private sector development should be a key component of a possible next phase for COWASH.

The MTE feels however that while the current rather project-driven approach may be successful and useful for many communities, it requires significant startup funding and capacity building which limits the likelihood of uptake without this. The MTE feels therefore that the project should focus on operationalising the current MSE and prove the concept should before starting new ones. The project should then capture the learning from this to improve its strategy. Towards the end of phase IV, the project can build on the learning from its private sector support, and explore possibilities a more “facilitative” approach that helps entrepreneurs (with public goods) for shared investment to set up or improve their businesses.

4.4.5 WASH integration and synergies

i: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (iv) Integrated WASH:

- (iv) integrated water supply and sanitation including the development of business skills development, support to micro-small enterprises and the promotion and organization of saving and loan associations.

The project puts a very strong emphasis on the integration of safe water supplies, improved latrines (sanitation) and hand washing (hygiene) in its community as well as institutional WASH support. This is known as the “full WASH service package”.

In community WASH, the project focuses on sanitation promotion and adoption in communities (e.g. villages / Kebeles) that have benefited from safe water supplies from the project. The WASHCOs, local Kebele administration and Community Health Workers (CHWs) are supposed to promote this. This is part of the agreement made when supporting the water supply scheme. The project provides training and awareness and behaviour change materials. This is undoubtedly happening but reported in a general way by the project with no specific data. The MTE visited some latrines in the villages when visiting a water supply scheme and was shown some slightly improved types as well as ordinary non-improved latrines. The MTE gained the impression that this was rather low key. Project reports do not highlight this kind of integration and how it helps behaviour change.

The project supports SLAs and sanitation MSE groups in the same villages to reinforce adoption and behaviour change, but this only covers a very small number of communities. There have been very few loans made by SLAs and little production by the MSEs which are all very new, so the impact so far has been minimal.

The institutional WASH component supports rural schools and health facilities with water or latrines and handwashing, water storage and MHM blocks, according to what is missing or inadequate: and thereby directly supports “full WASH” for these institutions. It was not clear from the reports and data if all these schools or health facilities were in the same areas as the community WASH villages, but some may be outside. This should reinforce full WASH and behaviour change in these villages where this is the case. There was no information on this, however.

4.4.6 Community implementation and ownership

COWASH was recognised by almost all met as having better results (than e.g. CWA) in terms of ownership and sustainability, and this was attributed to having “community managed projects” with funding under the control of the community (i.e. WASHCOs). COWASH IV actually has experience from four modalities, and it is important to learn from this. Two modalities are for water supply schemes and two for institutional WASH under WMP (COWASH IV) and CMP (COWASH III).

- Water supply schemes with funds sent to WASHCO controlled accounts at MFIs⁷. This is regarded as the “gold standard” CMP approach developed in previous COWASH phases. Although funds are held in a WASHCO account with WASHCO signatories, they still needed authorisation from the WoW.

⁷ This was governed by the “Generic CMP Investment Fund Management Guideline for Community Water Schemes using Microfinance Institutions (MFIs)” document.

- Water supply schemes with funds sent to Woreda office of Finance-(WoF)-controlled accounts at banks⁸. This is the approach being tested in SNNP and Sidama Regions. Although funds are held in a WoF bank account, they are put under a sub-ledger that should be under the control of and be used by the WASHCO. The Sidama WASHCO interviewed said however that only knew and controlled their own community contribution, so things may not be working exactly as in the guideline. This WASHCO was well organised and strong however, and this kind of account did not seem to have reduced its sense of ownership.
- Institutional WASH schemes in COWASH IV using the Woreda Managed Projects (WMP) approach. It seemed to the MTE that a majority of RSU specialists found this approach did not work so well and did not generate such strong ownership. Many agreed however that institutional WASH projects tend to be larger and require tendering for contractors and this could not be managed by PTAs or CHCs.
- Institutional WASH schemes in COWASH III using the CMP approach with funds held at MFI accounts under the Parent Teacher Association (for a school) or Community Health Committee CHC) representing the community.

The MTE is of the view that it is not necessarily the fund flow or final account holder that is the driver of ownership, but the involvement in and responsibility for decision making, and more specifically, who participates in and makes decisions about what. It is this that generates the ownership. If the account is under the WASHCO (as signatories) then this ensures their involvement in key decision making. It certainly does not matter if the account is in an MFI or bank.

There is actually a spectrum of levels of involvement in decision making from knowledge of and participation in the process to actually making the decision. It is the participation in this decision making in some way that generates community ownership, which in turn motivates sound management of operation and maintenance that is a strong factor in sustainability. The other end of the spectrum is classic top-down construction by the government and “hand over” to communities after construction. This is generally accepted as being less effective at generating ownership, but is needed for more complex or larger schemes.

It is important therefore to learn from the three current modalities for support as above, as well as the previous experiences with institutional WASH through CMP.

- Does CMP actually give better results than CWA in (e.g. ownership O&M, sustainability), and if so, what are the reasons?
- If community ownership is the key, what generated community ownership: e.g. what levels and types of community involvement and decision making generate strong ownership, and how does this lead to improved O&M and sustainability? What are the mechanisms? What is the role of account ownership and management of the finance?
- The level or size (cutoff) of project beyond which communities cannot manage and WMP is needed,
- How can we use this understanding to improve OWN results?

The MTE recommends therefore that a practical solution-focused study comparing the different COWASH and CWA approaches be carried out to explore these questions and develop practical guidance on how to implement under CWA. The goal would be to guide enhancement of CWA implementation modalities with community involvement / management approaches.

4.4.7 Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

j: EQ 5.1 (c): Progress in Innovative features: (iii) social and behavioural change

⁸ This was governed by “Community Managed Programme Implementation Manual for Community Water Supplies using Woreda Office of Finance (WoFED) as Fund Channelling to WASHCOs” document.

COWASH IV (2021) Social Behaviour Change Strategy sets the scene that covers a range of WASH-related behaviours: sanitation, hygiene, WSP+++ , school WASH, disability inclusion and gender, among others. MTE team considers that at the strategy level this works out in terms of drawing attention to the cross-sectoral nature of behavioural and social change, and in terms of introducing a broad range of stakeholders, behaviours and available tools. Yet, when seeking for an efficient SBC approach for a given challenge and related behaviours in a specific location, it is important to be focused: what are the related behaviours, how these are connected to each other, what are the triggers and barriers to change, what motivates the change?

The scientific literature on behaviour change suggests that knowledge alone will not lead into sustainable changes. Triggering is one of the widely practiced approaches to self-realization that is not based on increasing knowledge or use of pressure. EFY 2015 states “One of the core activities in the development of the sanitation sector is the promotion of SBC which is being carried out in line with the SBC Strategy.” The SBC strategy mentions Community-Led Total Sanitation and Hygiene (CLTSH) and School-Led Total Sanitation and Health (SLTSH) very briefly under key interventions-table in the chapter 5.1 Sanitation: “Strengthen CLTSH/SLTSH activities (Triggering, post triggering, ODF certification, Post ODF)”. There appears to be little or no evidence that behaviour change triggering is taking place.

During EFY 2015, the FTAT finalized the printing of 12,060 SBC related posters (...). In addition, the FTAT has developed and shared with the RSUs the final versions of nine audio and six video messages in Amharic, Afaan Oromo and Sidama languages. The audio and video messages are expected to be aired on the regional media. SBC messages have been uploaded onto the project’s social media and the regions were doing the same using their own platforms.

The bulk of sanitation promotion currently appears to be done by the health extension workers. To achieve the ODF target, they rely on the methods and messages that are known to them, and they are confident with. ODF and toilet ‘promotion’ is mostly done via door-to-door visits – or interactions at the Woreda office – and frequently centres on “education” and “teaching them”. It is not clear what kind of menu of options is practically utilized during these household visits, and how often specific do-able actions, methods, messages, tools, and guidance for what to do are actually utilized.

Since sanitation and hygiene SBC is targeted to WASHCOs and their community (i.e. water supply beneficiaries), and since behavioural determinants can be very locality-specific (i.e. cultural and social norms, values, environmental constraints, other drivers and barriers to change), it is **recommended** to explore formative research type of questions with the WASHCOs themselves during the monitoring and supervision visits as part of the overall capacity building efforts. The SBC already identifies WASHCOs and water user associations as key stakeholders. It would be the WASHCO to set clearly defined targets for themselves, to innovate triggers and cues that make sense locally, and to monitor and strengthen the achievements as behaviour change is an on-going process, not a one-off-activity or event.

4.4.8 Progress towards the achievement of Outcome 5

The project has a total of ten outcome level indicators, of which four concern accessibility to community and institutional water and sanitation facilities and one on functionality that are contributed to “by all actors”. No data or information was available on these Outcome indicators.

The logic of having indicators “for all actors” is assumed to be that the capacity building efforts and exposure to COWASH approaches for Woreda and regional staff influences their behaviour to adopt new approaches in all their work. There was no assessment or information on this. If this is a realistic goal, the project should work more purposively towards achieving it, and assess progress at the end of the project.

Other indicators were on water supply functionality, WSP implementation and MSEs which were covered under their respective outcomes.

As mentioned above, there has been moderately good progress in construction of community water schemes and moderate to modest progress in construction of institutional WASH facilities. The project has therefore contributed significantly towards the achievement of this outcome. There appears to have been

a very low uptake in improved HH latrine construction and the Women-led MSEs and village SLAs have yet to function. It is concluded therefore that progress in this outcome has been only partly satisfactory.

4.5 Outcome 5: Implementation, documentation and dissemination

→ **Outcome 5: “COWASH IV implementation effectively managed, lessons learnt, documented, communicated and shared and put into action”.**

This replaced the original ProDoc Outcome 4: “Project achievements documented via learning activities and shared strategically to enhance the impact of COWASH IV on WASH sector policies and practices”.

4.5.1 Financial management

→ **Output 5.4: “Project budget effectively managed”.**

The MTE reviewed the latest FTAT and overall project Performance Reports as well as the latest quarterly ‘Interim Unaudited Financial Report’ (IFR) from the MoF. While the EFY 2014 (2021/22) performance report provided a good summary of regional budget allocations and utilisation for GoF funds, the MTE was too early to get the equivalent overall Performance Report for EFY 2015 (2022/23). The financial data was provided separately by the FTAT (Table 13) after the MTE field work.

It is completely understandable that COWASH finance data is complicated and challenging to get and report. COWASH has GoF and GoE funding from different sources (7 Regions and MFA), in different currencies, with different flow paths, and is managed and reported on by different implementing entities. Project Performance Expenditure data reporting also comes from the 7 Regions and is supposed to be compiled by the MoF (although it seems the FTAT also gets some reports directly from the Regions). The MTE was directed to the MoF quarterly reports (in pdf) which gave useful aggregated tables but only covered MFA funding. Project Performance Reports did not have information on GoE expenditure against contributions but were better on GoF funds. The MTE did not have time to look at this in more detail.

The GoE Region contributions have been substantial and may be above or below their planned contribution (Annex 5d). They were not reported in the project’s annual Performance Reports however and there was no data on expenditure from these GoE contributions.

The MoF Interim (unaudited) Financial Reports received by the MTE had useful cumulative expenditure against disbursements to the Regions for GoF funds, but did not have information on GoE expenditure against contributions.

While the EFY 2014 (2021/22) Performance Report had sensible tables for Regional GOF transfers and expenditure, and for the budget and expenditure for FTAT, this did not give a clear picture of the whole project’s GoF budget and expenditure situation. The proliferation of table in the 9 months EFY 2015 reports was not easy to follow. The FTAT has been improving its reporting over time and may come up with a better way to report overall expenditure against transfers or budgets in its overall EFY 2-15 (2022/23) Performance Report. This is strongly supported.

The original overall project budget included a total of ETB 30312,429 rolled over from phase III, with 25,531,863 of this remaining in the Regions (Annex 5c). The ETB 9,636,467 rolled-over funds in Tigray Region have already been used for a combination of COVID-19 mitigation, the salary back-payments to the RSU and other physical investment as agreed between Tigray Region and the Embassy of Finland. This leaves ETB 15,895,396 of rolled over funds available in the regions and ETB 4,780,566 marked as “Finland”. The MoF is managing and reporting only the new phase IV GoF funds transferred to the MoF from MFA and does not manage or report on expenditure from the fund rolled over from phase III (when these were transferred directly to the Regions). The MoF and BoFs should agree on how to report this with due accountability and provide the necessary data to the FTAT.

The complete COWASH budget in EUR from the ProDoc is summarised in Table 12. COWASH converts this to an equivalent amount in ETB and vice versa using a fixed exchange rate of 54 ETB / EUR as in use at the time of the Inception Report was prepared⁹. This greatly simplifies conversions, but there will be a modest exchange rate gain (around EUR 600,000), which will be determined and allocated by MoF towards the end of the project. This should be sooner rather than later.

Table 12: COWASH budget summary from ProDoc in EUR

Budget Line	Gov of Finland (EUR)	Regional States (GoE) (EUR)	Community Contribution at 15% (EUR)	ALL Contributions (EUR)	% of Grand Total
Regional Level Budget:				0	0%
Community WASH		14,000,000	2,100,000	16,100,000	39%
Institutional WASH	2,000,000	2,000,000		4,000,000	10%
Innovation funds for construction		500,000		500,000	1%
Total physical investments	2,000,000	16,500,000	2,100,000	20,600,000	50%
Capacity building	10,134,000			10,134,000	25%
Operational budget	800,000	3,000,000		3,800,000	9%
Regional budget (allocated)	12,934,000	19,500,000	2,100,000	34,534,000	84%
Contingencies for Regions	920,000	975,000		1,895,000	5%
Total Regional budget	13,854,000	20,475,000	2,100,000	36,429,000	89%
Federal Level and FTAT Budget:				0	0%
Federal level budget	350,000			350,000	1%
FTAT (TA, Federal capacity, research)	4,196,000			4,196,000	10%
COWASH IV budget: Grand Total:	18,400,000	20,475,000	2,100,000	40,975,000	100%
% of All Contributions:	45%	50%	5%	100%	

Source: Project Document, October 2020.

Table 13 gives the cumulative expenditure for GoF funds, against funds transferred from MoF and the project budget from startup to the end of EFY 2015. This shows considerable difference in budget and expenditure between the Regions, varying from 3% for SWEP to 33% for Oromia. There is a small balance in each Region due to the very late arrival of their funds in EFY 2015. The budget split was made during inception and agreed by the Federal Steering Committee. Table 13 also shows that a total of 45% of the total regional budget had been transferred to the Regions by MoF. Around ETB 27.5 million needs to be added to this for the regional vehicle purchases to bring regional budget use to around 49% by about halfway through the project.

Table 13: Cumulative Regional expenditure against transfers and budget for GoF funds (ETB)

(From start up to the end of EFY 2015 – 7 July 2023)

Region	Budget (ETB)	Budget as % of Total Budget	Cumulative Transfers from MoF for 2014 & 2015 (ETB)	Cumulative Expenditure by Region in 2014 & 2015 (ETB)	Expend as % of Total Expend	Expend as % of Transfer	Transfers as % of Budget	Balance Remaining in the Region (ETB)
Amhara	150,513,822	22%	69,920,614	54,353,156	19%	78%	46%	15,567,458
BGRS	48,791,916	7%	25,058,143	24,508,143	9%	98%	51%	550,000
Oromia	228,227,760	33%	127,632,771	116,902,749	41%	92%	56%	10,730,022
Sidama	62,698,212	9%	30,161,011	30,094,112	11%	100%	48%	66,899
SNNP	107,890,542	15%	52,513,060	52,513,060	18%	100%	49%	0
SWEP	19,609,506	3%	7,222,421	5,957,252	2%	82%	37%	1,265,169
Tigray	80,704,242	12%	0		0%		0%	0
Totals	698,436,000	100%	312,508,020	284,328,472	100%	91%	45%	28,179,548

Source: Email from FTAT / CTA, 23 Aug 2023.

Note: The project uses 54 ETB / EUR to calculate ALL equivalent amounts in EUR or ETB.

⁹ Note that the ProDoc used 37 ETB / EUR so its ETB figures should not be used.

The FTAT provided the MTE with its forward planning in regard to budget usage. Although the total planned core budget for regions is higher in EFY 2016 (around 258 million ETB) than previous years, with the unallocated contingency, balance rolled over from Phase III (Annex 5c) and unspent disbursed funds, the FTAT is confident that there is enough funding left for a further two years (i.e. EFY 2016 and 2017).

Considering the complexity of project finances (with different sources and currencies), significant challenges to get information, late disbursement of funds to regions and all the other challenges the project has faced, it appears that the project's budget management has been strong. This is indeed a crucial task of the FTAT. It is the financial reporting where some improvement would be good.

The reason for the split in separate use of GoF and GoE funds for different types of WASH infrastructure and other things (Figure 2) was not clear to the MTE. This makes the project more complicated and could lead to problems for some infrastructure if say the GoE or GoF contribution is low. There does not seem to be any advantage to this, and such an arrangement may be dropped in any future phase.

The MoF was supposed to engage a Financial Management Specialist but has delayed doing this. When the MTE asked the MoF about this, the response was that they had assigned a suitable person who was in place. It is not clear if this person is full time for the project. The FTAT should therefore check that they have the appropriate TORs and are providing the services needed by the project. This could include compiling the Regional GoE expenditure data. If this does not work satisfactorily, then the FTAT should push for a full-time Financial Specialist to be employed as provided for in the ProDoc.

The project suffered from serious delays in disbursement of funds in the first two years due to various factors. As mentioned in Table 3 in section 2.2, the project has modified the timing and procedures for the reporting, planning and fund request preparation and approval process and the fund were disbursed six months earlier this year. This is an excellent initiative.

4.5.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

→ Output 5.2: “*Project implementation monitored and performances reviewed*”

Monitoring and evaluation: The project M&E system is sufficiently comprehensive and well run, although it struggles to collect and compile the considerable amount of data from all project regions in good time and provide a clear picture of progress against all result framework indicators. The project has competent M&E Specialists in its FTAT and RSU teams.

The project prepared a comprehensive results framework and monitoring plan with indicators for each outcome and output and a reference sheet with specifications for all indicators. The project has an online database with comprehensive data on community water supply and school and health WASH facilities, as well as other implementation and monitoring data. This was developed in Phase IV by merging the previous Web-based WASH Facility Database and the Planning, Monitoring, and Reporting database.

Data is collected from the field and compiled by Woreda staff using the appropriate template. This is collected by the RSU M&E specialist and entered into the computer form, which is uploaded to the FTAT online database. This works well although it is not always easy for RSUs to upload their data and the database is incomplete until this is done. The database is used to prepare data for tables for the project progress reports.

The project keeps its data in the online database. Data on many indicators needs to be extracted from this. Data on some indicators is not available from the database and seems to be missing. Project reports present data on the main indicators, but many are not reported. The project does not keep a result framework data table with data against each indicator. This would be useful to capture overall progress against targets in a single place.

Inconsistency in the data on the number of WASH facilities constructed and people benefitting, and the nature of the sites selected for the MTE field visits indicated the need to validate such data. The independent endline study should do this through its own sample from complete lists of institutional and community WASH infrastructure.

→ **Output 5.3: “Project implementation progress and achievements documented and disseminated”.**

Progress and performance reporting: Although there were some issues with structure and clarity in previous reports, project reporting is now of a reasonable standard and on time. The project prepares overall Performance Reports that compile data from the regions, and a separate FTAT Performance Report. The project prepared an Inception Report for the period from startup to the end of December 2021, as well as Annual Performance Reports for EFY 2014 and 2015 (2021/22 and 2022/23).

The MTE found however that reports did not give a clear enough picture of how far the project had progressed toward its end-of-project higher objectives and targets. There was relatively stronger focus on activities and construction outputs (which is needed), but less on the higher-level outcomes. Considering and reporting Outcome 4 as a high-level outcome that integrates the three core outcomes and is where community effects such as adoption and behaviour change happened (as in the TOC in Figure 1) would help. Achievement data tables should include cumulative achievement (since project start), against the cumulative EoP targets; as well as progress for the reporting period against targets, in order to understand achievement in relation to the end goal. Financial (expenditure against budget) reporting was covered above.

4.5.3 Learning, studies, documentation and dissemination

→ **Output 5.1: “Implementation guidelines and manuals prepared and implemented”**

Manuals and guidelines: The project has done well in its production of manuals and guidelines (these words are used interchangeably here). A large number of manuals have been prepared or updated from previous phases of COWASH and seem to cover all or almost all the subject areas needed for implementation. The project lists a total of 22 major manuals, guidelines and strategies developed or updated during COWASH IV. The list is provided in Annex 7.

The MTE found manuals to be comprehensive and well prepared. Some may have been little too theoretical and over complicated, and a recommendation was made previously for development of field level user guides where appropriate. Manuals are translated into the local language if needed. There did not seem to be any areas where manuals or the equivalent were missing.

Special purpose studies and use of the project database: The project does not seem to have focused much so far on studies or evaluative learning. This is completely understandable since all the focus was on preparation of the manuals, guidelines and training material, running the cascaded training programmes and construction of WASH infrastructure. In the second half of the project however, it will be important to capture its learning to feed into wider practice and possibly policy. The database provides a rich source of data for small in-house studies that can add quantitative aspects to qualitative issues arising from the field.

Dissemination: The project is very well known in the WASH sector across Ethiopia and in the regions and communities where it works. Manuals, reports, brochures and other materials are distributed to those who need them and freely available on the project’s website. Two websites currently exist, the CMP website established under the previous phases of COWASH (<https://www.cmpethiopia.org/>), and a new more modern style COWASH website (<https://cowash.org/>). These provide access to a large number of documents from all phases as well as information about the project and latest news.

4.5.4 Putting learning into practice: Contribution to policy and practice

The original Outcome 4 included “. . . to enhance the impact of COWASH IV on WASH sector policies and practices”, whereas the new Outcome 5 mentions only has “. . . lessons learnt, documented, communicated and shared and put into action”. This seems to downgrade the focus on influencing policy and / or practice, which could be a very important outcome and focus of the programme.

Although the FTAT participates in a number of multi-stakeholder forums and meeting that relate in different ways to practice or policy, the MTE found however that the project did not have specific

objectives or a strategy for this and there was very little reporting of purposive actions (only participating in meetings). The MTE is of the view that the project has so far had a very limited focus on this.

While this may have been appropriate for the first half of COWASH IV when it was crucial to get all the technical and implementation strategies done and in place on the ground to get implementation moving (and the project design was very ambitious), the MTE feels it should take a higher priority in the second half. The primary focus would be on finding a way to more purposively promote integration of community-led approaches into OWNPs. This recommendation is linked to a number of linked recommendations around closing COWASH IV and moving to a follow-on project or phase and is discussed in the sections below.

4.6 Promoting human rights-based approach and MFA cross-cutting objectives

k: EQ 5.1 (d): Promotion of HRBA and MFA cross-cutting issues:

- *EQ 5.1d: How has the approach promoted human rights-based approach and MFA cross-cutting objectives?*

Promoting a human rights-based approach is one of MFA's cross-cutting objectives. The ProDoc provides an overview of gender and human rights in WASH sector, takes these into account in the COWASH stakeholder analysis, and presents Human Rights, Gender, and Non-Discrimination Assessment in its Annex 2 and the duty bearers and rights holders in Annex 4. The COWASH IV Inception Report notes that "Gender and human rights analyses are revisited (based on the initial analysis in the PD) and their integration in project logic, approach, activities and M&E is ensured; priority areas and crosscutting objectives have been taken into account in resourcing." And that "this is all taken care in the process of preparation of M&E framework and monitoring plan." After this, rights issues are more silent, being approached through normative and cross-cutting criteria rather than talking about rights with the very word. The only context where the word "right" appears in the progress report is in the context of engaging girls or gender clubs in schools "... advocate for their right to attend and remain in school or increase retention of girls in schools by way of removing barriers to girls' education."

The right to water draws attention to the right of everyone to sufficient, acceptable, physically accessible, and affordable water for personal and domestic use. This is in line with the SDG service levels and as such, are included into the project results frameworks. Yet, since there are no Kebele- or Woreda-wide WASH baseline maps or WASH plans identifying priority areas i.e. showing the unserved or marginalized communities/households and their service levels, the MTE team cannot conclude whether all rights holders including marginalized groups have equal access and benefit from the intervention, or whether they have been consulted in the planning process. It is possible that the non-marginalised groups who know how to put their application for a water scheme in the Woreda office and how to lobby for it, are more likely to get a new water point.

Accepting large radius around the water point for counting beneficiaries "regardless of distance" makes it appear as if everyone is getting served. How "available" or "accessible" is water that still needs to be carried for 1 km? The lack of hoarding boards and public audits compromises transparency and accountability. Even WASHCO leading members may not know the actual cost of their water point, their information being limited to what the community itself has contributed. Lack of systematic water quality testing and missing critical quality parameters, such as fluorine, compromises the quality/safety aspect of right to water. The normative and cross-cutting criteria that applies to right to water and right to sanitation do appear in the capacity building plans and project output indicators (safe, accessible etc) but there appears to be a gap in between what has been envisioned and what is the actual situation at the community level.

COWASH IV has targets on gender but not on human rights. The targets set that relate to such as right to water or right to education are embedded into project in terms of WASH sector-specific quality criteria related to human rights but not termed as 'rights'. Similarly, the gender capacity gaps (e.g. legislation, policy, resources, political will) have been identified and are addressed in the manuals and guidelines, but the same does not apply to human rights.

Key challenges and opportunities for gender equality are identified and addressed as part of the expected results (including distribution and control of resources, gender roles, norms and values, participation and decision-making power, and discrimination). There is an opportunity to address GBV and particularly FGM in those regions and Woredas where it is relevant. In one WASHCO interviewed by the MTE team, senior WASHCO women members reported that had taken this initiative themselves, but that they do not have awareness materials or other things that they could use to support their work. The three women reported that they had contacted the Woreda office for them to take action. The MTE concludes from this that the project is human rights sensitive and gender transformative.

4.7 Unintended and unexpected consequences of the project

The MTE did not observe any unintended and unexpected consequences of the project, and none were reported by the project.

4.8 Conclusions on overall effectiveness

Progress towards achievement of the outcomes varies. Progress in core outcomes 1 (community water supply) and 3 (institutional WASH) has been reasonably good while it has been significantly weaker in outcomes 2 (community sanitation) and 4 (integrated WASH with sustainability inclusivity and behaviour change). It will naturally take longer to see progress in these last two outcomes. Considering this and the multiple serious challenges, lack of access and delays the project has faced particularly in its first year, and the corrective actions that project management has put in place, overall project progress and effectiveness would probably be considered as mostly satisfactory.

5 EFFICIENCY

I: EQ 6: Efficiency:

- 6.1: How efficient is the financial management system?
 - 6.1a: What was the effect on the COWASH programme of moving from Ethiopia funding Channel 2 to Channel 1, and what improvements can be made to the financial management of the project to increase operational efficiency, within the rules and procedures of the Channel 1 funding mechanism?
 - 6.1b: How the investment fund management for institutional facilities has affected?
- 6.2: What is the impact of cost inflation, and what are the remedial measures and alternatives?

“Efficiency” is a measure of how economical the project has been in using its funds and other resources to achieve its outputs and outcomes. The MTE did not have the time or access to the detailed expenditure information needed to make a detailed analysis of efficiency. The following rather superficial assessment therefore focused on the key factors that tended to indicate efficiency and those that tended to reduce it.

The project budget has around 90% going to the Regions with most of this for investment in WASH and only 10% for FTAT which focuses on TA and capacity building. This reflects a very strong focus on tangible WASH benefits indicating high efficiency.

In a sense, the project could be considered to have “leveraged” additional funding of EUR 2.1 mEUR from the community contribution, and at least some of the 20 mEUR to come from regional governments. Even if most of this would have been allocated to WASH without the project, COWASH influenced it use through community-led projects. This leverage indicates high efficiency.

On the other hand, the disjointed and partial organisation and reporting of expenditure information (section 4.5.1) would tend to reduce efficiency since it will impact financial management. The serious delays in disbursement in the first two years must have had a significant impact in reducing efficiency. This has recently been rectified.

The M&E system (section 4.5.2) is well set up with a comprehensive results framework and functioning and very useful online database. There are issues however with timeliness in updating key data and the

availability of reliable INDICATOR DATA in a timely manner. This hampers the timely access to information needed for adaptive management, as well as reporting.

With regard to human resources and project management, the picture is mixed. The project has good connections and makes very good use of the proper government or other agency for collaboration on training (e.g. TVETs), strategy and manual development (e.g. MoH for sanitation), WASH construction, and so on. Implementation efficiency is greatly strengthened by working through the appropriate government agencies and getting them to shift to community-centred, inclusive, climate resilient and safety conscious WASH. All these things tend to indicate high efficiency.

On the other hand, the project seems to have a large number of HR and administrative issues and sometimes has to tread lightly in sensitive areas and this takes much of the FTAT time. The multiple security issues and closure of offices and programmes to restart later all take extra resources.

The very high inflation that the project has had to contend with has had a negative impact on efficiency. Although the increase in unit costs for different types of WASH infrastructure increased (especially if involving materials or tools that need to be imported), this was largely unavoidable. The increase in cost during construction however led to budgets being used before completion and delays to re-budget and allocate funding during which time costs increased further. The project reduced this by having realistic budgets that factored inflation into the costings.

The overall conclusion of the MTE was that the project is reasonably efficient (satisfactory) particularly given the very challenging and much disrupted context in which it has to work.

6 LIKELY SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALABILITY

m: EQ 8: Main factors affecting Sustainability:

- *What are the possible factors enhancing or inhibiting sustainability?*
 - *8a: How well has the environmental sustainability been taken into consideration as a human rights issue and regarding the links between climate and environment?*
 - *8b: How well has COWASH been able to scale up and advocate the best practices developed by the project as national norms in Ethiopia?*
 - *8c: How capable is the GoE to act as a duty bearer in WASH in the current situation and how has COWASH contributed to this?*

Sustainability

Sustainability is defined as the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention / project continue or are likely to continue (OECD 2023). This has two aspects:

- The extent to which the behaviour changes, actor entities and systems that have been introduced or strengthened will continue to generate the benefits of the project.
- The extent to which the project as a whole has an adverse impact on social, economic or environmental sustainability.

For COWASH, this means essentially that the WASH facilities put in place will continue to operate, and the target communities will continue to have inclusive access and use these facilities with positive hygiene behaviour change.

The main behaviour changes, actor entities and systems can be clearly seen in the black-box birds eye view of the project (Figure 3) and in more detail in the simplified actor-focused TOC diagram for the project (Figure 1). This shows the main actors and what they should do under each of the three outcome “components” for water, household sanitation and institutional WASH. The ultimate beneficiaries are the rural communities who get improved water, sanitation and school or health centre WASH facilities and use them with positive hygiene behaviour change. The various government office at different levels are seen as

the “duty bearer” with responsibility to ensure that communities have inclusive access to WASH.

For the benefits to continue in the water supply part of the picture, WASHCOs need to be working well and linking with the WoWs and artisans when needed to carry out sound O&M. The WASHCOs are the critical link in this system. This was discussed in section 4.1.5. The conclusion was that the capacity of all three actor entities has been moderately well improved and most WASHCOs are likely to be able to manage although there are weaknesses in understanding and establishment of processes such as fee collection, organisation of tools routines and capacities for maintenance and overall management of operations. The quality of the works was found to be generally satisfactory but there are some issues and there is a possibility that some hand dug wells will dry up as the climate dries. There is need for continued follow up and on-the-job capacity building of all these actors.

The picture in the household sanitation (improved latrines) “component” appears to be mixed with relatively slow uptake of improved latrines and probably handwashing. Continued follow up and some pressure is needed from the CHWs and indeed the WASHCOs, to encourage behaviour change. This in turn needs follow up by the Woreda teams as part of their normal work. The RSUs can encourage and reinforce this with their own on-the-job training follow ups.

Once the school and health institutional WASH facilities have been put in place, it is expected that the PTAs with teachers and school clubs for schools, and Community Health Committees and the health facility staff themselves will take over and manage, with due attention to maintenance. Since the WASH facilities were constructed as Woreda rather than community managed projects in COWASH IV, these actors may have been less involved, and some effort should be made to build their understanding and sense of ownership. This should be integrated as far as possible into the construction process for a seamless uptake. As observed and reported, there are undoubtedly some issues with the quality of the works, and this will need strong O&M. It seems likely that strong schools in strong communities will manage, but others may struggle when setbacks occur. Again, the RSUs should encourage the who and WOE teams to follow up and provide support as needed.

With regard to the SLAs and sanitation (e.g. latrine slab) MSEs, the MTE feel there are high risks for sustainability, and many are likely to fall by the wayside. The project should regard those already started as pilots and not start any more unless these proved themselves.

Almost all beneficiary households are expected to use the water and sanitation facilities once constructed and operating. Those who have adopted more positive hygiene behaviour are expected to continue. In order to ensure continued operation of the facilities and adoption of positive behaviours, it will be important to reinforce and consolidate the progress made by continuing the follow up as mentioned above.

With regard to social, environmental and economic sustainability, the MTE does not see major adverse effects, and even some positive effects of the various interventions. The community-led approach, emphasis on women’s empowerment, disability, inclusiveness and access to water and sanitation are all likely to bring positive social and health benefits. A very small positive contribution to the economy will be derived from SLAs, MSEs, and other businesses involved. There is a small risk for localised and short term adverse environmental effects from WASH facilities during construction and possibly in use (concentration around facilities), but these are generally minor and are mitigated by water safety plans and climate resilience. There is of course scope for improvement.

Although there are tools and plans for the routine assessment of the sustainability of the constructed works, there were no reports available, from COWASH or the OOWNP¹⁰. This is cause for concern. Up to date information on how well the different facilities are working and what goes wrong will enable implementing agencies to put things right and make improvements to the approaches, designs and procedures. The OOWNP is supposed to do this for all water supply systems, but this is still a work in progress.

¹⁰ The MTE was told that the MoW’s Water Supply Service Sustainability Assessment has been made on a sample basis but did not receive the report.

The project therefore needs to find a way to make assessments of functionality and sustainability of all COWASH WASH infrastructure. A new and much simpler assessment tool should be developed (the current COWASH “Sustainability Assessment Tools” are far too complex) and a simple database prepared. If possible, this should be geo-referenced and use the same unique ID as in the online database¹¹. This should normally be run at least every two years (i.e., mid- project and EoP). Since the mid-term has now passed, this should be done at endline.

If the OWP system will be ready by endline, then this should be used for water. If not, the above initiative may help OWP to improve its own tools and methodologies.

The overall conclusion of the MTE is that if the project continues its efforts to build capacity, adoption and behaviour change as recommended and expected, then most of the main benefits achieved are likely to continue after the end of the project, especially. Overall sustainability is therefore considered as reasonably good although there are still moderate risks to sustainability.

Potential to scale up

n: EQ 3.2: Prospects to scale up CMP as a national approach:

- *EQ 3.2 What are the prospects to amplify or scale-up the CMP as a national approach?*
- *EQ 8b: How well has COWASH been able to scale up and advocate the best practices developed by the project as national norms in Ethiopia?*

“Scalability” concerns the ease or ability for expansion or scaling up of key aspects or benefits of a project to reach more ultimate beneficiaries and intermediate actors (e.g. WASHCOs), generally after the end of the project. The key question for COWASH is whether the CMP approach or aspects of it can be scaled up as a national approach within and integrated into the OWP as a normal part of that programme. COWASH is already a component of OWP but as a more or less separate add-on that generally operates in different areas than the rest of OWP where the WMP approach is used (see section 1.3) so full integration as a normal part is crucial.

COWASH is recognised as having better results than OWP, and this is attributed to using the CMP to generate stronger ownership that in turn leads to better O&M and sustainability. Section 4.4.6 reviewed the basis for this and recommended a study be carried out to draw on COWASH experience in comparison to OWP and find out (1) if CMP actually gives better results, (2) what specifically are the mechanisms responsible (e.g. participation, ownership, motivation, O&M, functionality and sustainability), the cutoff beyond which communities cannot manage CMP, and how this can be integrated into OWP.

The MTE asked many key stakeholders for their views on the applicability of CMP for OWP. While most were generally supportive, there seemed to be some hesitation about its acceptability to government. The main concern seemed to be “giving” money to communities and the communities’ ability to manage the process: bookkeeping, financial control, procurement and technical aspects of works. Several stakeholders mentioned that the tendering process to procure contractors for large works would be beyond a WASHCO and such large jobs would not be accepted by government. The new approach to financing WASHCOs through banks as in SNNP and Sidama is seen as a pilot to test if it works for the WASHCOs and for government. As pointed out in section 4.4.6, the MTE feels that the mechanism for generating ownership and strong O&M etc is not only about the money but much more nuanced, hence the study.

The MTE feels that a natural evolution for COWASH would be to purposively shift to fully integrating community approaches and CMP into OWP, as a normal part of that programme. The MTE further recommends that some groundwork for this (e.g. the study) be carried out during the rest of the project, and that this is a core part of a follow on COWASH project or phase. This is taken up as recommendations in sections 0 and 11.2.

¹¹ A good example that should support this can be found in the “WaterFund Joint Annual Operations Monitoring Exercise (JAOME) Reports” at <https://waterfund.go.ke/publications>.

7 LIKELY IMPACT

o: EQ 7: Likely Impact:

- *How well the progress has been made to achieve overall objective of the programme?*

COWASH IV has three main impact or goal indicators relating to a reduction in under 5 mortality and under-5 diarrhoea, and an improvement in women’s empowerment in WASH.

- G1: Under-5 Mortality in the Two Weeks preceding the survey.
- G2: Reduced under-5 diarrhoea in the two weeks preceding the survey.
- G3: Women Empowerment in WASH Index.

The COWASH IV Baseline Survey Report (2022) provides figures for Oromia, Sidama and SNNP regions, and these can be used to measure the impact with the endline surveys when these are due to be assessed.

There are two other indicators for schools and health institutions having and using a full package of WASH services (by all actors), but there was no data available on these indicators.

The causal logic of the project is strong. Increased availability of inclusive access to, and use of improved water and sanitation facilities in communities, schools and health centres is very likely to lead to improved health (particularly for women and under-5s because of better use of food nutrients). Since (as discussed above) there has been reasonably good progress on construction of community water and institutional WASH facilities in most areas, and modest progress in household sanitation and behaviour change, it is expected that this will lead to a significant impact in terms of the project’s goal. It is probably too early at the mid-term to measure these long-term effects, but they should be properly assessed in the endline study.

8 ADDITIONAL EVALUATION QUESTIONS

8.1 Effects of inflation and use of contingency and extra funds

p: Priority EQs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3: Effects of inflation & use of contingency / extra funds:

- *1.1: The issue of inflation and price increment: How can the project adjust its results under the current conditions?*
- *1.2: The evaluation team should assess the options presented by the project are whether the remaining committed project funds should be spread over the whole project period, or whether the program should be adjusted to complete all investment by the end of June 2024.*
- *1.3: The MTE is also expected to give guidance for the MFA decision-making in autumn 2023 whether the funding option (700,000 euros) need to be used and how it should be targeted, and possible requirements and preconditions for additional funding (maximum 1,700,000 euros in addition to the option if there will be no budget cuts).*

Cost inflation / escalation:

Official inflation in Ethiopia was around 25% in 2021 but increased markedly following the start of the Ukraine war in February 2022 and its impact on economies around the world. Official figures were not available for subsequent years, but project teams reported increases of 50% to 100% over one or two years for some externally sourced raw materials, or jobs such as borehole drilling that needs imported machinery and spares. This tends to reflect the exchange rate which increased from 37 ETB / EUR as used in the ProDoc at the end of 2020 to around 60 ETB / EUR in June 2023 (Figure 4), but is expected to follow the shadow rate of inflation more closely.

Inflation has drastically increased the cost (cost escalation) of construction of community and institutional water supply schemes (some types more than others) and institutional latrines and MHM blocks. This

means that the originally planned infrastructure targets cannot be achieved with the same funds. The project has identified six approaches to deal with this situation.

Figure 4: ETB / EUR from 2019 to 2023



Source: Exchange rate website.

- Shift to simpler technologies and / or find savings in construction through different materials:** The Project has already done this through, for example, shifting from deep boreholes to shallow (borehole) wells and reducing costs where possible. This appears to have helped significantly. The MTE supports this approach and recommends that it should continue, while paying due attention to the climate resilience of the technologies used. Better catchment conservation will mitigate risks, although deeper boreholes may still be needed in some areas.
- Use realistic budgets and adjusted unit costs that factor in cost escalation during implementation:** The project has already implemented this sensible initiative and it has helped. The unit costs for different types of infrastructure should be updated in due course (done by MoWE).
- Increase Region and community contributions:** The MTE was informed that Oromia Region had been able to increase its budget to cope with inflation, and the Water Bureau in Amhara Region had been able to maximise community participation. This can be encouraged but some Regions will struggle.
- Reduce the targets:** This seems to be sensible but on balance, an exercise to do this now is not recommended by the MTE. Discussion across the seven regions and then with MFA for approval, would be time-consuming and not a good use of resources. The project does not seem to be too far from its main infrastructure targets in the Result Framework. The number of infrastructures that can be constructed or rehabilitated depends ultimately on the budget available (using realistic budgets), and having access to work in the areas selected. Annual workplans and budgets are reduced in any case so this provides a mechanism for having realistic final targets for infrastructure by the EoP. In addition, the performance assessment thresholds (e.g. highly satisfactory achievement with above 80% of target rather than 90%) used to assess project performance at the endline can be reduced as appropriate to achieve the same end.
- Speed up the transfer of funds to finish all investment for construction by June 2024.** This is possible for the GoF funding, but the Regions would not be able to match this. The project has assessed that there are sufficient funds for two more years of operation (to mid-2025) and so has taken this option is not recommended.
- Increase the investment budget for Regions:** The MTE supports this and understands that funding is potentially available from several sources: It is recommended that the contingency funds and exchange rate gain are made available for all WASH infrastructure in the agreed workplans. This includes community water supplies and institutional WASH that are supposed to be covered by the GoE contribution.

 - Contingency funds of EUR 920,000: This is already assigned to the regions but needs to be split or shared between them. The criteria and suggested proportions are discussed below.
 - Exchange rate gain: The amount is not yet known but will be determined by the MoF towards the end of the project. It seems that this will be a relatively small but not insignificant amount (which could be around EUR 600,000). For the sake of having a proposal on the table, the MTE suggests that this is allocated to the Regions to cover inflation using the same criteria and percentages as for the contingency funds. After all, it is the exchange rate change and inflation that generated this.
 - A further EUR 700,000 set aside in the Federal part of the budget, notionally for the FTAT. The MTE has proposed that project implementation should be extended by 6 months to the

end of EFY 2017 with a further 3 month to wind up, and prepare for and lead into a further phase (sections 8.2 and 8.3). The MTE therefore supports that this EUR 700,000 be assigned to the FTAT for this project extension.

- The MTE understands that a further EUR 1.700,000 may be available, particularly if there are no budget cuts to Finnish development assistance. For the sake of having a proposal on the table, the MTE suggests that at least EUR 1 million of this be used to repair or replace critical rural WASH infrastructure damaged by fighting in the worst affected Regional States. The rest can be allocated to all regions to complete WASH infrastructure commitments.

Sharing the contingency funding for regional investment:

The original regional budget of EUR 13,854,000 was split or shared among the regions according to a matrix of main and sub-criteria agreed by the Federal Steering Committee. This is shown in Annex 5b. The main criteria were (1) the Federal grant formula, (2) COWASH III performance, and (3) the level of regional commitment per Woreda to COWASH IV. These were assigned 70%, 15% and 15% of the total regional budget respectively. These criteria were approved by the National WASH Steering Committee and included in the project document (section 4.3.3).

The MTE suggests that the share of the contingency allocated to individual Regions be focused on their current needs, within their respective capacities to implement the work. The MTE has recommended that the focus for the rest of the project should shift to consolidation and sustainability through organisational capacity, quality, adoption and behaviour change (section 11.1).

The MTE therefore suggests that a fourth main criteria be added to cover the front-end loading costs for the relatively newer regions and those with less coverage and years of experience, or for newly split off regions for their extra startup costs. The costs to establish and build systems and capacities for community-led WASH are higher at the start and should reduce as experience grows over time. The extra funds will help these regions to properly establish their systems and capacities in community-led WASH and so be able to continue and spread the improved approaches and practices introduced.

The other criteria for regional performance and regional commitment per Woreda are valid although the weightings across the Regions may need to be adjusted to take account of phase IV experience on performance and commitment.

The Federal Grant Formula relates to overall Region needs, and these may or may not be the best way to represent the needs of that part of the rural WASH sector in each Region that would benefit from community WASH or where institutional WASH is poor (i.e. COWASH). The MTE proposes therefore to significantly reduce the weighting if it has to be included, or remove it if not. The MTE was told that this is not favoured as a criterion for COWASH by most Regions, but this is the way through which the MoF allocates its budgets.

In terms of assessing the needs of each region, It should be noted that the planned number of Woredas (a key factor in determining budget need) was determined very much by the original budget share that was based 70% on the Federal grant formula. This undoubtedly reflects population (amongst many other factors) on which the size of the WASH sector in the Region will depend. If data on the quality of WASH coverage is available by Region, this could be used to assess the need for COWASH support. This was not found however (the JMP data which many seem to use did not have data by Region). It was beyond the scope of the MTE to go further than this.

The FTAT has much better information and understanding of the needs and capacities of its regions than the MTE team, and so is much better placed to decide on the criteria and weighting between regions The MTE has nevertheless prepared a proposal that the project can adjust as needed. This is shown in Table 14. The calculations for this are provided in Annex 5e.

Table 14: Proposed share of Contingency funds for Regional investment

Regions	Share based on Federal Grant Formula (EUR)	Share based on COWASH III Performance (EUR)	Share based on Regional Commitment per Woreda to COWASH IV (EUR)	Share for front-end loading costs for each Region (EUR)	Total GoF Contingency allocated per Region (EUR)	Region share of Total Budget %
Share %	10%	30%	30%	30%	100%	
Amhara	23,649	39,489	16,605	13,800	93,542	10.2%
BGRS	2,004	40,009	46,123	44,160	132,296	14.4%
Oromia	37,728	39,769	22,855	13,800	114,152	12.4%
SNNP	14,126	38,928	37,608	44,160	134,823	14.7%
Sidama	4,492	38,928	49,813	44,160	137,393	14.9%
SWEP	3,400	39,429	39,429	57,960	140,217	15.2%
Tigray	6,602	39,449	63,567	57,960	167,578	18.2%
Total	92,000	276,000	276,000	276,000	920,000	100%

Source: Prepared by the MTE using Regional sub-criteria percentages from the original split, as explained in the text.

8.2 Rationale and proposal for a possible follow-on phase

q: Priority EQ 1.5: Suggestions for a possible follow-on phase:

- 1.5: It is also expected for the MTE to recommend on future continuation of COWASH after 2024; in order to guarantee sustainability and impact.

The MTE has recommended that there should be a follow-on phase V but this should be an evolution rather than a continuation with more of the same. After fourteen years of support (by the end of phase IV) and having tested and improved well-accepted community approaches and best practices, it is suggested the next stage in the evolution of COWASH is to phase these in to the CWA part of OOWNP in an appropriate way. The private sector involvement in the WASH sector is a largely untapped resource that is getting increasing attention and COWASH is building experience at the small-scale local community level of the scale (as opposed to large public-private-partnerships (PPP). The MTE therefore proposes that phase V should focus on three main areas:

- 1) Phasing / integrating community-led approaches and best practices into the CWA mainstream government part of OOWNP where appropriate, and as a normal part of its operations. This would be done through phased “roll out” from, and using, existing COWASH supported areas.
- 2) Practical “facilitated”¹² private sector and market system development, focusing at least initially, on the sole trader and micro-enterprise end of the scale, reinforced by...
- 3) Enhancing and learning from full WASH adoption and sustainability in previous COWASH-supported schemes and some new ones to consolidate Regional and Woreda learning on community and MSE approaches and procedures and increase coverage. This third component relates to further developing the approaches, mechanisms and systems that can trigger and support community behaviour change, and generate stronger ownership and O&M, and then embedding these into OOWNP’s CWA. This component also contributes to increased coverage.

The aim would be to enhance community ownership, quality and sustainability in OOWNP programmes in selected areas (a phased roll out), rather than COWASH-led construction of community and institutional WASH per se.

The balance in emphasis between the three components, how they should be implemented, and the implementation arrangements (FTAT versus RSU, funding arrangements, etc) will depend on the findings from key studies and the level of interest and commitment secured from a high-level engagement with the key OOWNP ministries (Water, Health and Education) and donors.

¹² Facilitation is the attempt by development actors to catalyse change in the market system while not assuming any long-term market function themselves. Their intervention role is temporary and catalytic. See for instance the work of the BEAM Exchange (<https://beamexchange.org/>) or Donor Consortium for Enterprise Development (<https://www.enterprise-development.org/implementing-psd/>).

Although COWASH initiatives in private sector development are mostly too supply and project driven (direct support) and have not yet taken root, the private sector is probably the most important and a largely untapped resource for WASH sector development in Ethiopia. With its feet in the communities, Woredas and Regions, and access to high-level technical expertise, COWASH is well placed to support the development of the sole-trader and very small microenterprise end of private sector development in collaboration with and complementary to the larger high-level initiative being developed by OWNPN with support of its major donors (e.g. World Bank).

The approach for PSD in the next phase should be different from that followed in COWASH IV (although this can provide useful learning). This should be “facilitated” development of existing, emerging, or potential individuals and micro-entrepreneurs and market systems¹³ for water supply spares and repair, latrine parts and construction, with support through e.g. vocational training, access to credit for tools and initial stock, and strengthening access to their market from WASH schemes. The project would work with TVET institutions and MFIs to get the programme running. Starter kit tools and spares may be provided (e.g. on credit or subsidised) until MFI credit instruments are available and the model has been proved. The project would collaborate with higher-level OWNPN PSD initiatives and as its expertise and technical capacity and experience grow, take on a stronger policy and strategy support role in PSD.

A high-level engagement of the competent partners with key OWNPN CWA ministries and donors will be needed at an early stage to secure real commitment and agree on the principles and scale of roll out. Without this, CWA integration into CWA will not work properly. This should be initiated by MFA, led by the Competent Partners, and supported as needed by FTAT. This engagement should be supported by the findings of the study on the generation and value of community ownership for O&M and sustainability, as recommended in section 4.4.6. This study should be carried out by the project as a priority with the report available to support the high-level engagement process as soon as possible in 2024.

The MTE asked a number of key stakeholders on their views about OWNPN CWA adoption of CMP. While almost all were positive, there seems to be some hesitance about whether it would actually work. If sufficiently strong commitment cannot be secured, then the design of the follow-on phase would need to be rethought. If commitment is secured and the principles and scale of possible rollout agreed, this should be sufficient for MFA to go ahead with the design and preparations for the follow-on phase. Since this can also take up to two years, the above process should be initiated early in 2024. If there is no follow-on phase, the project should develop a comprehensive phase out and closure plan at a fairly early stage,

8.3 Project end date

COWASH IV is due to end (EoP) on 31 December 2024. This is at the end of Finland’s financial year, but more or less halfway through the Ethiopia financial year EFY).

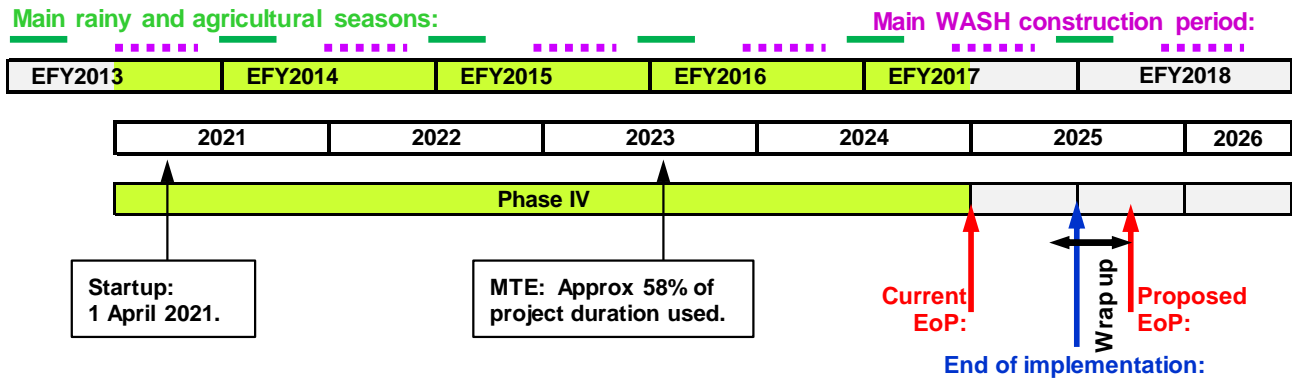
¹³ Facilitation is the attempt by development actors to catalyse change in the market system while not assuming any long-term market function themselves. Their intervention role is temporary and catalytic. See for instance the work of the BEAM Exchange (<https://beamexchange.org/>) or Donor Consortium for Enterprise Development (<https://www.enterprise-development.org/implementing-psd/>).

Figure 5 shows the main period for WASH construction and community engagement is outside of the main rainy and agricultural (planting to harvest) seasons, when the water table is high and people are busy. Well digging, spring protection, latrine construction, etc all need the water table to be at its lowest, and communities need to be free to engage in construction. The main period for this is January to May in most areas.

This means that the project should end in June to allow completion of construction for that year. This would align with the end of the Ethiopian Financial Year (when accounts are closed and annual accounts prepared), since this will make the preparation of final reports and accounts much easier. The project has enough funding for two years of full operation, taking it up to July 2025. In addition, it is proposed (section 11.2) that there should be a further follow-on phase of COWASH. It generally takes up to two years to fully prepare for a project of this size.

It is therefore recommended that the project end date should be shifted from 31 December 2024 to 30 September 2025, with the end date for implementation being the end of EFY 2017 or 7 July 2025, and three months allowed for final reporting and wrapping up. This will allow the project to have two full years of implementation (to reach as close as possible to targets and consolidate capacity gains), which would give sufficient time to prepare for the proposed phase V (if agreed) and a seamless continuation.

Figure 5: Proposed project end date: aligning with the main seasons and financial year



Source: prepared by the MTE using seasonal timings from the COWASH FTAT.

8.4 Bilateral WASH Support Benefits for Finland (EQ 9)

r: EQ 9: Bilateral WASH support benefits for Finland:

- What are the additional benefits for Finland on working bilaterally on the WASH sector in Ethiopia with regards to other opportunities such as policy influencing or trade opportunities?

Bilateral cooperation allows Finland to align its support with Ethiopia's broader development goals and strategies. By integrating WASH initiatives into the larger development framework, Finland can contribute to Ethiopia's overall sustainable development and poverty reduction efforts. Bilateral partnership enables Finland to tailor its support to the unique challenges and needs of Ethiopia's WASH sector. This flexibility allows for the development of customized solutions that align with the local context and priorities, enhancing the effectiveness of interventions, and for innovating for solutions that can open additional opportunities. With a bilateral approach, Finland can closely monitor and evaluate the outcomes of its investments. This accountability helps ensure that the resources are being utilized effectively and that the desired outcomes are being achieved. The monitoring and overall field presence, in turn, build the local knowledge and increased the understanding of the local community. This is also relevant for building trade opportunities or policy influencing.

Humanitarian and diplomatic considerations: Bilateral collaboration in the WASH sector can have positive humanitarian implications. COWASH presence in the vulnerable regions contributes to inclusive social transition and stability by addressing basic needs: access to water, sanitation and hygiene amid an otherwise unstable situation. In this context, COWASH can continue providing tangible options for institutional transformation in Ethiopia by advancing reforms and provision of services, working together and through the local governments at regional and Woreda levels, and by bringing in the community and its representatives in seeking options for sustainable and inclusive local development.

Long-term engagement and enhanced partnerships: By working directly with the Ethiopian government and relevant local institutions, Finland can establish stronger relationships and partnerships. Bilateral cooperation facilitates long-term engagement and commitment between Finland and Ethiopia. The regional presence established through bilateral cooperation provides a vantage point for identifying trade opportunities. Given the substantial socio-economic and cultural diversity within Ethiopia, such opportunities can often be context and region specific. The TA staff, equipped with insights gained from significant infrastructure funding, offer long-term perspective on the trade landscape, with insights in considerations like currency and inflation fluctuations, and their impact on such as operational costs and logistics. Furthermore, the TA team associated with a bilateral WASH project is uniquely positioned to understand the intricate dynamics of the Ethiopian socio-economic landscape than influences trade.

Visibility and reputation: Successful bilateral collaborations in critical sectors like WASH can enhance Finland's visibility and reputation as a committed partner in global development efforts. Positive outcomes can reflect well on Finland's international standing and its commitment to addressing pressing global challenges. Locally the visibility and reputation can open up trade opportunities, the multi-faceted bilateral

project such as COWASH IV having potential to show-case and give visibility for Finnish know-how and technologies, for instance. However, this type of commercial cooperation should be carefully considered and should not compromise the project's priorities and resources.

Innovation and research: Bilateral partnerships can foster innovation and research exchanges. Finland can bring innovative solutions and technologies to the Ethiopian WASH sector, while learning from local innovations that have been effective in addressing local challenges. A bilateral endeavour such as COWASH possesses inherent advantages in piloting, innovating, and disseminating global best practices at large-scale to amplify research findings originating from smaller actors, including non-governmental organizations and academia. The agility of a bilateral project is evident in its ability to swiftly adapt and experiment, in contrast to endeavours funded through sector support or multilateral channels, which often require more predefined approaches.

Policy dialogues and knowledge sharing across sectors: In addition to contributing WASH sector policy dialogues with tangible hand-on real life experience at scale, there is an opportunity to contribute to education sector policy dialogue given that such policy topics as MHM and inclusion are high in COWASH IV agenda. Similarly, there is an opportunity to engage in the health sector policy dialogues given that such as COVID-19 has recently highlighted the importance of handwashing, and with that, drawn attention to WASH at the health facilities. Furthermore, bilateral projects/programmes with their TA team and government stakeholders can contribute to a range federal and regional knowledge sharing and other policy influencing events.

PART 3: CONCLUSIONS, LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS ON PERFORMANCE

COWASH IV supports targeted rural communities to construct safe community water supply systems and run and maintain them, construct their own improved household latrines using their own resources, and adopt positive hygiene behaviour changes and especially zero open defecation and handwashing. The project also provides investment for Woreda-led construction of school and health centre water and sanitation facilities and supports positive hygiene behaviour change for these institutions. The aim is integrated use of water and sanitation facilities (full WASH) with adoption of positive hygiene behaviour change leading, to improved health and well-being.

The project has faced a number of major external challenges that have seriously impacted implementation and achievement. These include the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 / 21; serious conflicts in Tigray, Amhara, BGRS and Oromia that have prevented access for different periods of time and damaged or destroyed WASH infrastructure in some areas; the split of SNNP Regional State; and the rapid increase in costs for WASH constructions materials, etc. following the invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The war in Tigray prevented any engagement until June 2023 when a MoU was signed. Implementation in the other states affected by conflict has progressed or stalled according to the ebb and flow of conflict.

The MTE assessed the project as being relevant to highly relevant and fully coherent with its context. Project objectives are highly relevant to all stakeholders, and the design appropriate and relevant to achieve these objectives. The design strongly integrates gender, women's empowerment and disability inclusion and supports human rights through inclusive access to water and sanitation. The project is inherently complicated however, with multiple implementers at different levels across seven regional states and two sources and channels of financing in different currencies. The MTE found the design to also be over ambitious, with the introduction of or stronger emphasis on several new innovative areas (enhanced water safety planning, market-based sanitation, access to credit, etc), the change to MFA funding through the Ministry of Finance ("Channel 1B") rather than direct to the Regions, and expansion of geographic coverage. These factors combined with the serious delays in disbursement of funds in the first two years were serious internal challenges for implementation. Project management has been competent and strongly adaptive however and was able to cope with the external and internal challenges and

maintain relevance during implementation.

The project has done well and mostly achieved its mid-term community water supply construction targets. The project has supported community-led construction of 1,318 community water supply schemes of various types (78% of the mid-term target) and rehabilitation of 337 water schemes (108% of target). This has benefitted a total population of 426,068 (90% of mid-term target) with basic (82%), limited (17%) or safely managed (1%) water supplies.

The project has done moderately well in Woreda-managed construction of institutional (school and health) WASH infrastructure. A total of 227 schools (69% of mid-term target) were supported with safely managed water supplies or latrines with handwashing, water storage and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) blocks according to what they did not have or were inadequate. This aimed to upgrade these schools to full safely managed WASH for the benefit of a total of 149,423 students. A total of 138 rural health institutions (42% of mid-project target) were similarly upgraded to full safely managed WASH services.

While the project has done reasonably well on the number of facilities constructed, there are some issues with the quality of the works, water safety planning and organisation and management (O&M). This will impact functionality and sustainability if not corrected.

The project lags behind in the uptake and adoption of household-constructed improved latrines, handwashing and positive hygiene behaviour change (community sanitation). The project has promoted these through training, behaviour change communication material and awareness campaigns by Community Health Extension Workers, the Woreda WASH Teams and others. More focused and coordinated multi-actor approaches with behaviour change communication materials that target identified behaviour change determinants still need to be developed. The pilot “sanitation marketing” effort through group enterprises (MSEs) for latrine slabs, etc. and village SLAs that should support HH latrine uptake have not yet started sales or made more than a handful of loans for various reasons.

The project has put a major effort into capacity building through a large, cascaded TOT training programme and reached over 45,000 people (40% women) at all levels. The project’s capacity building and high-level engagement with WASH stakeholders should be able to influence practice and possibly even policy. The project needs to clarify its objectives in this however, particularly in relation to the adoption of community approaches and other best practices, and focus more purposively on this.

The FTAT and project management more generally have been strong, and the project has adapted its approaches, strategies and plans well in the face of considerable challenges. This included joining the RSUs in their training to improve the quality of the training of lower levels and implementation in the field. The FTAT has also started on-the-job training through practical support of work in the field. The FTAT has also recently resolved the late disbursement of funds by starting earlier on the basis of 11-month reports and provisional Core Plans. Both initiatives are strongly commended and supported by the MTE. The FTAT has had to spend significant time and energy on dealing with the various external and internal challenges that have arisen. This has taken time away from more reflective management and a stronger focus on outcomes.

The project, perhaps understandably at this stage, has tended to put greater focus on training and construction of water and sanitation works, than on integration, behaviour change and other higher-level outcome areas. This needs to be addressed during the second half of the project. Considering the multiple serious constraints faced by the project and confidence that shortcomings will be addressed during the second half of the project, overall effectiveness was assessed as satisfactory.

It is too soon to assess impact and the project has not yet assessed this. The project has built a strong foundation however with its WASH infrastructure and capacity building efforts. If the project shifts to consolidate organisational capacity and systems to improve quality, water safety, operation and maintenance and strengthen community sanitation uptake as expected, it is expected to mostly achieve its outcomes by the end of the EoP. The project’s causal logic is strong and so it is expected that it will achieve reasonable impact after the project has ended.

Although there are currently significant risks to sustainability of WASH infrastructure and community

sanitation uptake and behaviour change has been weak, if the project shifts to strengthen its focus on quality, O&M, inclusivity and behaviour change as expected, the main project benefits are likely to be mostly sustainable by the EoP.

The MTE has therefore assessed the project as being relevant to highly relevant, fully coherent, efficient and mostly effective in overall terms. If the project continues to improve and adapt as expected, the MTE considers that the project is likely to be mostly sustainable and achieve a satisfactory impact (assuming that the security and economic situations remain stable).

10 MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED

A small number of important lessons that have wider applicability beyond the project emerged during the evaluation and are highlighted below. Other lessons (learning) within and useful to improve project implementation and achievement are presented in the foregoing sections.

- **Community Ownership:** “Community ownership” is an elusive concept; and how it is generated and how it helps are not well understood. In the case of WASH, “community ownership” is actually a kind of shared ownership somewhere on the spectrum between full community responsibility and ownership to government ownership. While communities manage and maintain the WASH assets the Woredas have a backstopping and last resort role. Controlling the funds for construction is a strong factor in creating ownership, but it is probably participation in decision making generally that is important. If we are to strengthen community ownership, we need to better understand these things so that approaches can be tailored to focus on the trigger areas in a smart way.
- **Need for different guidelines at different levels:** A TOT training programme that cascades through several levels (as in COWASH) generally needs different levels of guideline (and training material) at the entry and lower levels. A comprehensive and broad guideline covering the conceptual framework, background theory and multiple approaches and technologies may be needed for the first high-level people (trainers) trained. The field level trainees and the “users” who should be doing something with the knowledge and skills they learn. They will generally be at a lower technical level and focus on a limited range of the practical things they do. They therefore need more practical and more easily understood field or user guides.
- **Institutionalising disability inclusion in communities:** The acceptance of disability Inclusion in communities will take time but the work done so far provides a good starting point. COWASH has targeted, integrated and mainstreamed disability inclusive approaches in tangible ways. The project has introduced ramps for the water points, and school and health facility toilets, and data is already sex and disability disaggregated although not specific on what type of disability. While it appears that in some of these cases one could probably not access the water point location itself (ledges blocking the top of the ramp) or be able to enter the toilet cubicle beyond the ramp with a wheelchair (quite narrow with no turning room), these are nevertheless good visual reminders and triggers for further thinking what access and inclusion actually means? What it could mean at the household level, for instance with regards to household toilet location and design, or how domestic water and handwashing facilities are available and accessible for all family members? The ramp user experience could feed into more systematic thinking of such as technical design standards (width of the doors, the way doors open or are locked, overall access to the water points, arrangements that guide visually impaired, etc). Disability issues in WASH are about awareness, equal opportunities and technical designs, among others, and with all this, about encouraging local government officials and staff, active community groups, technical individuals and entrepreneurs alike to come up with real solutions that ensure access to WASH for all, and which encourage people with disabilities to get involved and to make their voice be heard. COWASH would have real-life experiences that can be used to influence policy.
- **Stopping slippage and improving ODF:** Incorporating a sanitation and hygiene related programme is essential for full realization of health benefits of improved water sources. One-off promotion and support for ODF and declaring new ODF areas is not enough. There needs to be a continuous,

coordinated and focused effort that is tailored to the local situation and related behavioural determinants. The focused attention needs to stay with the completion of a “better-than-unimproved” latrine and use of the toilets by all family members before diverting the attention to too many other behaviours and “things-to-do” such as described in SBC Strategy, the WSP+++ (and WSP4+), and other related documents.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

s: Priority EQ 1.4: Recommendations for the remaining project period:

- *1.4: Recommendations for the remaining period of the project how the progress can be improved with a view to maximizing achievements in the current situation.*

The specific recommendations of the MTE are presented below. Most of these concern two recommendation areas that can be considered as overarching recommendations. The first is that during the second half of COWASH IV, the project should shift to strengthen its focus on quality, inclusivity and sustainability of the WASH infrastructure constructed or rehabilitated, as well as achieving community sanitation uptake and behaviour change. The second main recommendation area concerns the preparation and support for developing and moving towards a possible COWASH phase V, or developing and implementing an exit / closure plan. The MTE has also made a small number of specific recommendations on dealing with inflation, working through Channel 1 B, the project end date and improving financial management, project M&E and reporting.

The findings and rationale for these recommendations are presented in the preceding chapters. The key points are summarised but not repeated in the recommendations below. These are the same as in the Executive Summary Table. References are provided to allow cross referencing.

11.1 Recommendations to improve performance during the rest of the project

A number of often linked and mutually reinforcing recommendations are provided to improve performance during the rest of the project. Most of these focus on this through:

- Strengthening the organisational capacity of WASHCOs and linkage with WWT offices and local spares and repair service providers.
- Enhancing the understanding and capacity of WWT offices to support the above through practical user guides and on-the-job training and support as well as cascaded training.
- Finding a way to strengthen the involvement of PTAs and CHCs in the WMP approach now used for school and health WASH infrastructure in order to strengthen ownership, quality, O&M and sustainability.
- Finding a way to have more coordinated, coherent and effective community sanitation and ODF promotion programmes involving multiple partners. This will need a solution-focused study to better understand the main triggers for adoption and behaviour change, develop better targeted SBCC, and strengthen the coordinated operation of community sanitation and ODF programmes.

Project design and implementation issues:

Recommendation: Addressing RSU motivation (EQ 2): (section 8.1):

The change from Channel 2 to Channel 1B contributed indirectly to two main issues for implementation. The contribution to delays in budget disbursement were almost fully mitigated by the FTAT-initiated revised procedure for EFY 2016. The need to apply government pay scales uniformly across all Regions remains however and has resulted in reduced salaries and demotivation for a number of RSU staff. The MTE regard the **motivation of RSU teams** to be critical for the cascaded training and field support they provide to work properly, and recommends that:

- Considering that RSU staff are contracted and do not enjoy the level of job security that goes with

“permanent & pensionable” government employment, and are often required to work beyond the call of duty, the project should consider paying them a small percentage-of-salary stipend, if this is at all possible from FTAT funds and there is sufficient budget. This is not permitted through Channel 1B. To keep it manageable, this should be paid as a single annual payment in arrears.

- FTAT should work to strengthen RSU motivation further through enhancing professional development: The FTAT initiative for joint review and team building meetings is strongly supported by the MTE and should be continued. Other opportunities (e.g. for training) may arise and should be supported.

Recommendation: Dealing with inflation (EQ 1):

The project’s shift to using simpler technologies and realistic budgets that take account of likely cost increases are entirely appropriate and should be continued. The additional funding available can be used to cover cost increases as below (section 8.1).

- EUR 920,000 regional budget contingency: Share to regions in line with an agreed formula using clear weighted criteria based on the need of each region for, (a) front-end loading to cover extra costs for newer regions and those with less coverage and experience (to consolidate learning and build wide understanding, and capacity), (b) the need to improve WASH in communities, (c) ability of the Region to properly manage and use funding, and (d) the priority attached to community WASH and level of engagement by the Region (not only financial contribution). The project is best placed to develop the criteria and assign weightings but the MTE has prepared a template to support this.
- Exchange rate gain: small but significant. Share to regions using the same share percentages as above.
- EUR 700,000 set aside in the Federal part of the COWASH IV budget: Use to cover FTAT costs during the extension.
- Additional EUR 1,700,000 may be available. If it is, use most to repair war damage to critical rural WASH infrastructure.
- It is recommended that the contingency funds and exchange rate gain are made available for all WASH infrastructure in the agreed workplans. This includes community water supplies and institutional WASH that are normally covered by the GoE contribution.

The MTE does not recommend reducing targets at this stage because: (1) discussion across the seven regions and then with MFA for approval would be time-consuming and not the best use of resources: (2) achievement does not seem to be too far from most Result Framework targets: (3) the final targets will ultimately depend on the budget available and will be approved as part of the planning process: (4) the performance assessment thresholds (e.g. highly satisfactory, etc) should be lowered (by the Competent Authorities) for the final evaluation in line with what it should have been possible to achieve. This can also take account of other serious external challenges such as insecurity.

Community water supplies (Core OC 1):

Recommendation: Strengthen WASHCO organisational capacity for improved water safety, O&M and sustainability (EQ 5.2):

- The project should intensify its focus on further strengthening and consolidating the organisational capacity of WASHCOs and their understanding of, and linkages with, the WoW, artisans and other private sector water service providers. This should aim specifically to get the WASHCOs to sustainably operate and maintain their water scheme through routine management, monitoring and maintenance, tariff collection, carrying out or linking to repair service providers and the WoW, and implementing the water safety plan. On the job training follow up monitoring and support visits with targeted training if needed may be enough for most WASHCOs (section 4.1.5). WASHCOs should also be encouraged also to support promotion of household latrines and handwashing for full wash and behaviour change.
- **SECRSM and WSPs:** The project and more specifically WWTs should ensure that SECRSM and WSP plans are systematically carried out, documented and more closely followed up to ensure implementation, especially periodic water testing and treatment.

Recommendation: Carry out a solution-focussed comparative study on the generation and value of community ownership for O&M and sustainability,

The MTE recommends that the project should carry out a practical solution-focussed comparative study of different community approaches used in CMP and WMP to better understand how community ownership is generated, and if and how this leads to better quality, O&M and sustainability (section 4.4.6). This is a priority study needed to support discussions on a possible phase V as well as OCs 1 and 3. The report should therefore be available early in 2024.

- The different community approaches studied would be from (i) WASHCO CMPs through MFIs, and (ii) banks, (iii) institutional WASH WMPs (involving PTAs or CHCs), and (iv) WMP approaches for comparable water projects under CWA.
- The aim would be to find out (1) if CMP gives better results than OWNP: (2) what generates the benefits (e.g. the level of community involvement, control of finance, etc): and (3) what is the size cutoff or other criteria beyond which community-led approaches do not work.
- This should be used to improve outcomes in WASHCO CMP community water supply projects and PTA / CHC institutional WASH WMP projects in COWASH, and provide guidance on how community approaches can be integrated into CWA OWNP WASH projects.

Household sanitation (Core OC 2):

Recommendation: Formative and solution-focussed study to understand community sanitation and behaviour change triggers and strengthen the strategy for community sanitation and behaviour change (EQ 5.2):

- The project needs to rethink its strategy on HH sanitation and find a way to mobilise the multiple actors who are supposed to support this, and focus in a smart way on behaviour change “triggers”.
- This will require a **formative study** to better understand the behavioural and motivational factors and the BC triggers for household adoption of improved sanitation and hygiene. identify appropriate and acceptable “improved” but cost-effective latrine designs for different areas, and devise appropriate strategies to mobilise actors and promote behaviour change. This should probably be tailored to local (e.g. Woreda and Region) level needs and opportunities. The Social Behaviour Change Strategy needs to be more focused at Woreda and WASHCO levels.

Institutional WASH (Core OC 3):

Recommendation: Further strengthening the involvement and capacity of PTAs and CHCs to improve institutional WASH quality, O&M and sustainability (EQ 5.2):

- The MTE recommends that the project strengthens its approaches to more systematically improve the involvement of PTAs and CHCs at an early stage in institutional WASH, so as to improve ownership, O&M, and ultimately functionality and sustainability.
- This should be done over time through the collective experience and learning of project teams and the understanding generated by the recommended study on the generation and value of community ownership.
- The organisational capacity of PTCs and CHCs should be strengthened as for WASHCOs, through on-the-job training, monitoring and support visits with targeted training if needed.
- If this is successful, the key learning should be documented and taken as best practice for a possible phase V.

Training and human capacity building (OC 4):

Recommendation: Strengthening field level implementation capacity and operations (EQ

5.1 and 2):

- The project should continue to prepare simple “**user guides**” for field-level use where practice falls below expectations. The higher level “**trainer**” guidelines are of limited use to field level practitioners. This can be approached in stages over time during the second half of the project. (section 4.4.1).
 - Identify knowledge and practice gaps in actual operations: this can be done through on-going monitoring and field support by drawing on the collective experience of teams through e.g. the joint review meetings that the project supports.
 - Develop, test and roll out practical field-level “**user guides**”.
 - Adjust the main manual as needed to bring high level training closer to field operation.
- The FTAT’s practical **on the job** training and implementation support initiative is strongly supported and should be a major focus in the second half of phase IV to build real capacity and quality of implementation in the field. Efforts should be focused on actor and organisational capacity in key areas of importance for quality, O&M, full WASH, adoption, behaviour change and sustainability. Key organisations targeted would be WASHCOs, PTAs and CHCs in institutional WASH, CHWs and communities for household sanitation, and the WWTs.

Gender, women’s empowerment and disability & social inclusion (High-level OC 4):

Recommendation: Formative and solution-focussed study to better understand women’s empowerment and disability inclusion attitude change and “triggers”, and strengthen the strategies for achieving these (EQ 3.1 & 5.1):

- The project should continue to monitor the quality of women’s empowerment and disability inclusion activities and resulting attitude and behaviour change, particularly in WASHCOs and PTAs CHC, or other community-based organisations involved in school or health WASH. The work done so far is already having an impact and provides the basis for building understanding and attitude and behaviour change.
- The project should carry out a formative and solution-focussed study mid-way through the second half of the project (when more pressing issues have been addressed) to better understand how gender and disability understanding and attitudes are changing in WASHCOs, PTAs and CHCs and what the “triggers” are.
- The learning generated can be used to improve the project’s SBCC material and further strengthen gender and disability inclusion strategies.
- Ensure that the cascaded training does cascade the essential knowledge and understanding to community, WASHCO and institutional WASH levels, and brings meaningful positive changes. Strengthen the integration of gender, women’s empowerment and disability inclusion into training, organisational capacity building and follow up support visits made for different purposes.

Private sector support / sanitation marketing (High-level OC 4):

Recommendation: Strengthening the project’s approach and strategies for improving access to sanitation loans (EQ 5.2):

The MTE Recommends that the project supports this through a two-pronged strategy during the rest of phase IV:

- Strengthen collaboration with VisionFund MFI to help them develop and roll out an appropriate sanitation lending instrument. The project can support VisionFund to understand the sanitation sector and link it with potential demand areas (where the project promotes adoption). VisionFund should use their own capital for lending.
- Focus on fully operationalising the existing SLAs and proving the concept, before starting new ones. Try to find and partner with an experienced SLA NGO or other agency for them to take this up in the

project areas. SLAs require considerable training and follow up support. The MTE is concerned that this is not really the job of Woreda Health and Water staff and they may not have the time and transport resources needed.

Recommendation: Learning from private sector support to feed into private sector strategy development for a possible phase V:

The MTE recommends that the project should strengthen and learning from its private sector support during the rest of the project.

- The project should focus on fully operationalising the existing women-led group sanitation MSEs and proving the concept, before starting new ones.
- If a phase V with private sector support is agreed (as recommended), the project should carry out a solution-focused study towards the end of phase IV to support private sector support strategy development in phase V. The study should learn from the COWASH IV latrine slab group MSE, MFI and SLA initiatives, and examples of successful rural water supply spares and repair, water supply construction and latrine construction MSEs, as well as the market for such and the need for a policy shift to strengthen the enabling environment.
- If phase V is not agreed, the learning from COWASH private sector support should be captured through a small internal study or the endline study.

Project management (OC 5):

Recommendation: Appointment and work of a dedicated Financial Management Specialist for the project (EQ 6.1):

After some delay, the MoF has assigned a member of staff to cover the dedicated Financial Management Specialist role provided for in the ProDoc. The FTAT should make sure that they are providing the services intended in the Project Document and needed by the project, and push for the engagement of a dedicated FMS or other arrangement that would provide the support needed by the project. The FMS should be asked for instance to compile the regional GoE expenditure and provide data in the format and tables needed by FTAT for reporting and analysis (section 4.5.1).

Recommendation: Reporting use of funds rolled over from phase III:

The MoF should work with the BoFs to agree on how to report the expenditure from the funds rolled over from phase III with due accountability, and provide the necessary data to the FTAT. This should be resolved at a fairly early stage so the data can be reported in the next mid-year report.

Recommendation: Improving project reporting EQ 6.1):

The MTE recommends that the project should continue to improve the structure and consistency of its performance reports during the rest of the phase IV. In particular, reports should provide a clearer view of progress towards higher-level outcomes and endline goals. Data tables in reports should include cumulative achievement against the cumulative target as well as for the reporting period. The financial report part should include tables with cumulative expenditure against budget. Project reports should include a results framework table annex with summary data for each indicator. This should show cumulative progress against the cumulative target or situation and towards the endline. This should include qualitative notes to explain progress or challenges or when data may be available as appropriate.

Learning, documentation, dissemination and policy / practice influence (OC 5):

Recommendation: Strengthening practice and policy influence (EQ 8):

- An important focus towards the latter part of the project will be to capture, document and disseminate important learning. This is covered by the recommendation for a possible phase V or project exit plan. Four specific studies have been recommended on community ownership, private sector support, community sanitation and behaviour change, and women's empowerment and disability inclusion.

- The project should strengthen and gradually elaborate its strategy for identifying and promoting best practice for adoption by other One WASH and particularly CWA partners. This should focus on key areas of practice where the project has strong learning and is well placed to influence practice or possibly strategies and even policy. This is a workstream in its own right but is also a part of preparations for phase V or project closure (section 4.5.4).
- Most efforts would be incorporated into normal project operations such as team learning reviews or cascaded trainings. The recommended studies and endline could generate important learning for this.

Sustainability:

A number of recommendations are strongly related to sustainability (e.g. WASHCO organisational capacity and linkages, PTA and CHC involvement in institutional WASH) and should be followed to strengthen the basis for sustainability.

Recommendation: Assessing functionality & sustainability (EQ 8):

Sustainability of WASH infrastructure is crucial for COWASH. The project should develop a simple and practical tool to assess functionality (function delivery) and likely sustainability of all COWASH WASH infrastructure on a regular basis (e.g. every one or at least two years). This needs to be a much simpler assessment tool with geo-referencing capability to allow analysis. Since the mid-term has now passed, this should be done towards, but before, the EoP. Work should start soon so that the tool can be piloted before full use.

11.2 Recommendations for a possible phase V or exit plan

Recommendations for a possible follow-on phase V of COWASH:

t: Priority EQ 1.5: Suggestions for a possible follow-on phase:

- 1.5: It is also expected for the MTE to recommend on future continuation of COWASH after 2024; in order to guarantee sustainability and impact.

Recommendation for a follow-on phase of COWASH (EQ 1.5):

The MTE recommends that governments of Finland and Ethiopia should support a further phase of COWASH building on the strong relevance and success areas of the project. This should be an **evolution** rather than a continuation of the same. This would involve:

- **Integrating community-led approaches and best practice** into the CWA mainstream part of OWNPN where appropriate, and as a normal part of its operations. This would be done through phased “roll out” from, and using, existing COWASH supported areas.
- **Practical “facilitated”¹⁴ private sector development** focusing, on the sole-trader and micro and small enterprise end of the scale, reinforced by
- Enhancing and learning from full WASH adoption and sustainability in previous COWASH-supported schemes and some new ones to consolidate Regional and Woreda learning on community and MSE approaches and procedures and increase coverage. This third component relates to further developing the approaches, mechanisms and systems that can trigger and support community behaviour change, and generate stronger ownership and O&M, and then embedding these into OWNPN’s CWA.

A **high-level engagement** of the competent partners with key OWNPN CWA ministries and donors will be needed at an early stage to secure real commitment and agree on the principles and scale of roll out.

¹⁴ Facilitation is the attempt by development actors to catalyse change in the market system while not assuming any long-term market function themselves. Their intervention role is temporary and catalytic. See for instance the work of the BEAM Exchange (<https://beamexchange.org/>) or Donor Consortium for Enterprise Development (<https://www.enterprise-development.org/implementing-psd/>).

Without this, CWA integration into CWA will not work properly. This should be initiated by MFA, led by the Competent Partners, and supported as needed by FTAT. This engagement should be supported by the findings of the **study on the generation and value of community ownership** for O&M and sustainability, as recommended below. This study should be carried out by the project as a priority with the report available to support the high-level engagement process as soon as possible in 2024. Further details are in section 8.2.

Recommendations for a project exit plan and closure if not continued:

Recommendation: Development and implementation of an exit plan if a follow-on phase V is not agreed (EQ 1):

If there is no follow-on phase V for COWASH, then a properly thought through exit plan should be developed at an early stage and implemented during the rest of phase IV. This will include capturing, documenting and disseminating key project learning to influence practice in line with several recommendations above, completion of workplans, endline study, final reporting, asset audit and hand-over, and closure of accounts.

Recommendation: Phase IV end date (EQ 1):

The project should be extended for 9 months to 30 Sept 2025: This would take implementation to the end of EFY 2017 (7 July 2025) and align with the rainy, agricultural and constructions seasons to allow completion of implementation, and provide a further 3 months to wrap up. Sufficient funds are available for this 9 month extension. The alignment with the Ethiopian Financial Year will make closure of accounts and final phase IV reporting much easier. The additional time will allow timely preparation for a possible phase V (as recommended) and a seamless continuation (section 8.3).

MAIN DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Programme Documents / Proposal and related documentation:

COASH IV Final Programme Document: MFA Finland and MoWIE, October 2020.

Final Appraisal Report for COWASH IV: Maria Notley and Yemarshet Yemane, June 2020.

Project Progress Reports:

- COWASH IV Inception Report (01/04/2021 – 31/12/2021): January 2022.
- COWASH IV EFY 2014 (2021/22) Overall / Regional Annual Performance Report: November 2022.
- COWASH IV EFY 2014 (2021/22) FTAT Annual Performance Report: September 2022.
- COWASH IV EFY 2015 Overall / Regional Annual Performance Report: April 2023.
- COWASH IV EFY 2015 FTAT Nine Months Performance Report: May 2023.
- COWASH IV EFY 2015 FTAT Annual Performance Report: July 2023.
- Regional State report presentations to Steering Committee Meetings, June 2023: for Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP, and SWEP Regional States.

MoF Financial Reports for COWASH IV:

- MoF, Interim Unaudited Financial Report (IFR) for the years ended: 7 July 2022: 10 Oct 2022: 8 Jan 2023: 8 April 2023.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- COWASH III Result Based Completion Report (01/08/2015 – 06/07/2020): Volume 1 (Main Report), December 2020.
- COWASH IV Baseline Survey Report: Final, December 2022.
- COWASH IV Baseline Main Indicators Survey Findings, December 2022.
- COWASH IV Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and WASH Facility Web-Based Database User Manual, June 2022.
- COWASH IV Sustainability Assessment Tool (Checklists): Sustainability Indicators and Questions for: (1) Community Water Supply: (2) Household Sanitation, Hand Washing and Hygiene Promotion: (3) Institutional Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion: (4) Institutional Water Supply.
- COWASH IV Result Framework and Performance Monitoring Plan (version 3).
- COWASH IV Project Indicators Reference Sheet.

Guidelines and training material produced or used by COWASH:

- CMP Investment Fund Management Manual by Woreda Finance Office via Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE)/Woreda Finance Office.
- Community Managed Project (CMP) Implementation Manual for Water Supply Schemes using MFIs.
- Institutional WASH Implementation Guideline using Woreda Managed Project (WMP) Approach.
- COWASH IV Water Safety Planning 4+ Working Manual.
- COWASH IV Social, Environment, Climate Risk Screening Management (SECRSM) Guideline.
- COWASH III (July 2017): Guideline for Women-led Micro and Small Enterprises Development in

COWASH Phase III (final).

- Gender Transformative & Disability Inclusive WASH Strategy: November 2021.
- Women Empowerment in COWASH: May 2022.
- Training Guideline on Women's leadership in WASHCO Management: (Apr 2022) Revised Feb 2022.
- COWASH IV Disability Inclusion Guideline (Revision).
- COWASH IV Social and Behaviour Change Strategy: Jul 2021.
- COWASH IV Social and Behaviour Change Training Manual: Aug 2021.
- National ODF Campaign 2024 (Nov 2019): Total Sanitation to End Defecation and Urination (TSEDU).
- Ministry of Health (Nov 2022): National ODF Verification and Certification Protocol,
- COWASH IV Business Skill Development Training Manual: July 2022.
- COWASH IV Business Health Assessment for established COWASH IV enterprises (questionnaire tool).
- COWASH IV: WASH SLA Facilitator Training Guide: March 2022.
- COWASH IV: SLA Member Savings Book.
- School WASH Facilities O&M Training Manual.
- COWASH IV Financial Management Training Manual: October 2021.

Other COWASH reports and documents:

- ToRs for Regional Support Units in COWASH IV.
- Federal Steering committee minutes: a selection.
- Allocation of COWASH IV Government of Finland budget to the Regions (Final).
- Report on the Oromia Region on the Job Training on CMP Cycle Management, SECRSM and WSP4+ Implementation: May 2023.
- Report on the SNNPR Region on the Job Training on CMP Cycle Management, SECRSM and WSP4+ Implementation: April 2023.
- Behailu et al (Sept 2016): Comparison of community managed projects and conventional approaches in rural water supply of Ethiopia.
- Michael Wood, Consultant (March 2023): Summary Report on Technical visits to 10 Selected COWASH IV Woredas.

OWNP Documents:

- OWNP CWA II Programme Operation Manual, Vol 1, Main: Sep 2019.
- OWNP CWA II Programme Operation Manual, Vol 2, Annexes: Sep 2019.
- OWNP CWA II: EFY 2015 Q2 Progress Report: Mar 2023.
- OWNP CWA II: Five year and 2012 EFY Annual Physical and Financial Plan: Water, Health, Education and Finance.

Other relevant documents:

- UNICEF (2017): Sustainability-Checks: Guidance to Implement sustainability Moni in WASH.
- MoH (2020): National Market-Based Sanitation Implementation Guideline.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1a: Terms of Reference for the COWASH IV MTE

1. Background to the evaluation

Project fact sheet

Project Title	Community-led Accelerated WASH Project, Phase IV (COWASH IV)	
Sector	Natural Resources.	
Sub-sector	Water Supply, Sanitation and Health.	
Project Area	104 Woredas (Districts) of seven administrative regions of Ethiopia (Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP), South-west Ethiopia Peoples (SWEP) and Tigray).	
Duration	April 2021– December 2024 (Ethiopian Fiscal Year, EFY 2013 Q4 – EFY 2017 Q2)	
Project Financing	Total Grant	EUR 42,219,710
		ETB 2,279,864,311
	Government of Finland (GoF) Grant	EUR 18,961,341 (EUR 18.4 million plus EUR 561,341 rolled over from the Phase III regions and GoF budgets)
		ETB 1,023,912,414
	Government of Ethiopia (GoE) Grant	EUR 21,819,480
		ETB 1,178,251,897
Beneficiary Communities in kind and in cash	EUR 1,438,889	
	ETB 77,700,000	
Competent Authorities	Ministry of Finance (MoF)	
	Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland	
Lead implementing agencies and programme oversight	Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE), Water Resources Development Bureaus of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP (Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region), SWEP (South-West Ethiopia Peoples' Region), and Tigray National Regional States in association with regional water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) partners: Bureaus of Health (BoH), Bureaus of Education (BoE), Bureaus of Finance (BoF) and Bureaus of Women Affairs (BoWA)	
	National WASH Steering Committee, Regional WASH Steering Committees, Zone WASH Teams and Woreda WASH Teams	
Impact Statement	Improved public health and well-being, social development and climate resilience in the communities in the Project area	
Outcome Statement	Increased and sustained coverage of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in rural areas of selected Woredas	
Exchange rate	1 EUR equals 54 ETB (28/02/2023 = 56.79 ETB/€)	

1.1 Programme context

Finland and Ethiopia have long-term cooperation in water sector development that started in early 1990s. COWASH project has been implemented since 2011. The first phase was implemented 2011–2014 and the second phase 2014–2016. The COWASH III started in July 2016 and ended in July 2021. COWASH IV is implemented in 2021–2024. Technical assistance is provided by Niras Finland Ltd. Finnish support focuses on capacity building while Ethiopia supports investments for physical WASH infrastructure construction.

The water supply, sanitation and health (WASH) sector in Ethiopia has developed towards sector wide approach. Several important policy, coordination and implementation mechanisms have been developed for WASH sector. They include WASH Implementation Framework (WIF) and WASH sector programme One Wash National Program (OWNP II). The OWNP II is the Ethiopia's main instrument for achieving the goals set out in the Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II).

OWNP was designed to have a financing system through three channels:

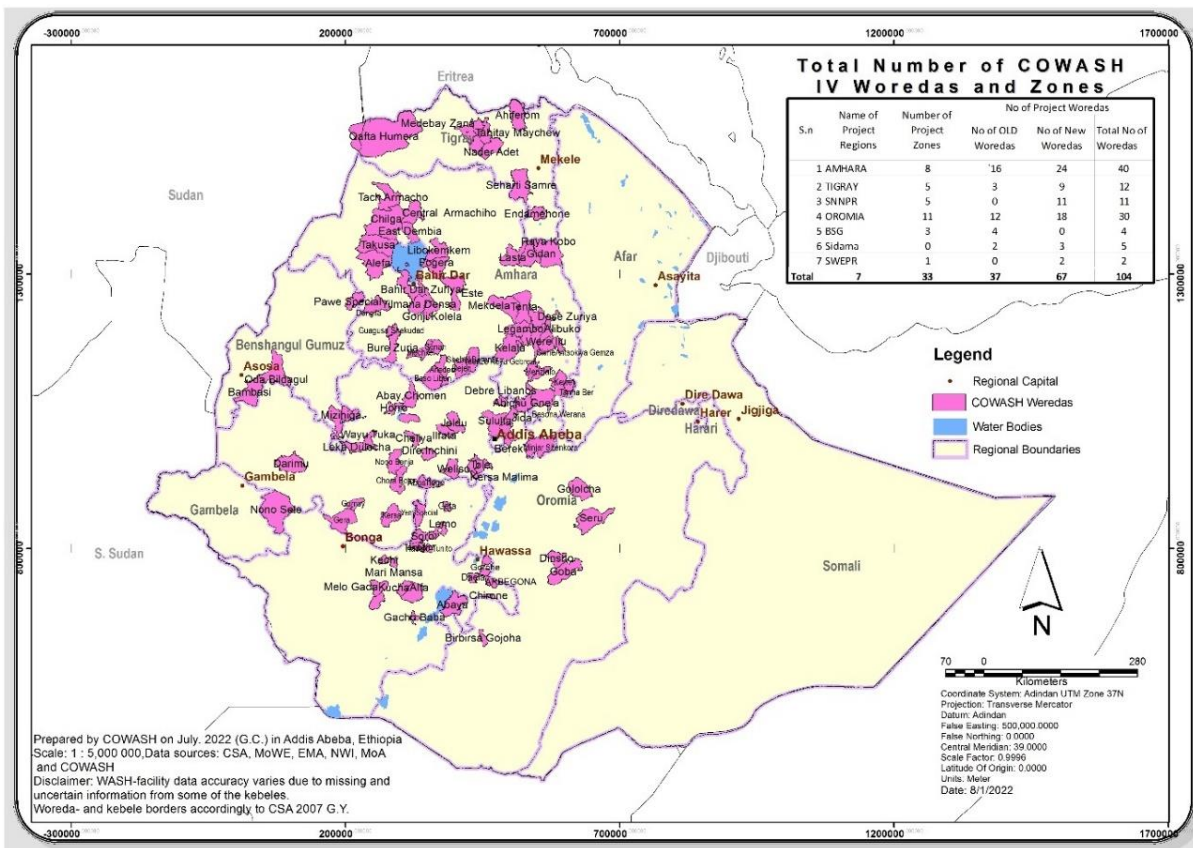
- Channel 1 – Consolidated WASH Account (CWA), which donors contribute to the basket fund that is managed by MOF; Finland is contributing by 4 million euros during 2020–2023.
- Channel 2 – Cash transfer by Development Partners, (DPs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other organizations directly to government implementing partners in the water, health and education sectors; and
- Channel 3 – Direct implementation by DPs, NGOs or other organizations as per project agreements with the respective WASH sector offices.

COWASH IV is implemented through Channel 1 and it complements CWA.

1.2 Description of the programme to be evaluated

Project overview

1. The Community-led Accelerated WASH Project, Phase IV (COWASH IV) is a bilateral initiative between the Governments of Finland and Ethiopia, which is being conducted under the umbrella of the One WASH National Program. Its overarching goal is to improve public health and well-being, social development and climate resilience in the communities of the project area. The objective is increased and sustained coverage of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in the rural areas of the selected Woredas.
2. COWASH IV is building on the work of the three earlier phases of COWASH and focuses on the achievement of targets through the establishment of an enabling environment and the implementation of community managed project (CMP) interventions. Compared to the previous phases, COWASH IV is working in an expanded project area and now covers 104 Woredas in 34 zones of seven Ethiopian Administrative Regions (Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' (SNNP), South-West Ethiopia Peoples' (SWEPE) and Tigray) as indicated in the following figure:



Notes:

- Five out of the 12 Woredas in Tigray Region have been excluded from the map because they are the result of the sub-division of other Woredas, and their borders are not accurately known.
 - The border between SNNP and SWEPR regions has been excluded as an accurate map is not yet available.
3. The number of COWASH IV Woredas in each region, and the change from previous phases is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Project regions, zones and Woredas

Region	No. of Zones	No. of Woredas			Total
		Phases 1-3	Phase IV		
			Carried forward	New	
Amhara	8	40	16	24	40
Benishangul-Gumuz	3	9	4	0	4
Oromia	11	12	12	18	30
Sidama	0	-	2 (from SNNP)	3	5
SNNP	5	8	0	13-2=11	11
SWEPR	1	0	0	2	2
Tigray	5	7	3	9	12
Total	34	76	37	67	104

Notes: During Phases 1 to 3, Sidama and SWEPR Regions were still part of SNNP Region

4. Both Sidama and SWEPR Regions were created by splitting the original SNNP Region. While

Sidama Region was formed prior to start of COWASH IV, the SWEF Region was only created after project work had commenced. On the start date of 01 April 2021, SNNP Region included 13 project Woredas but this was reduced to 11 when two (Mari Mansa and Kechi) were transferred to the new SWEF Region. The required Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and SWEF's Bureau of Finance (BoF) was signed on 26 September 2022 and as such SWEF officially joined COWASH IV.

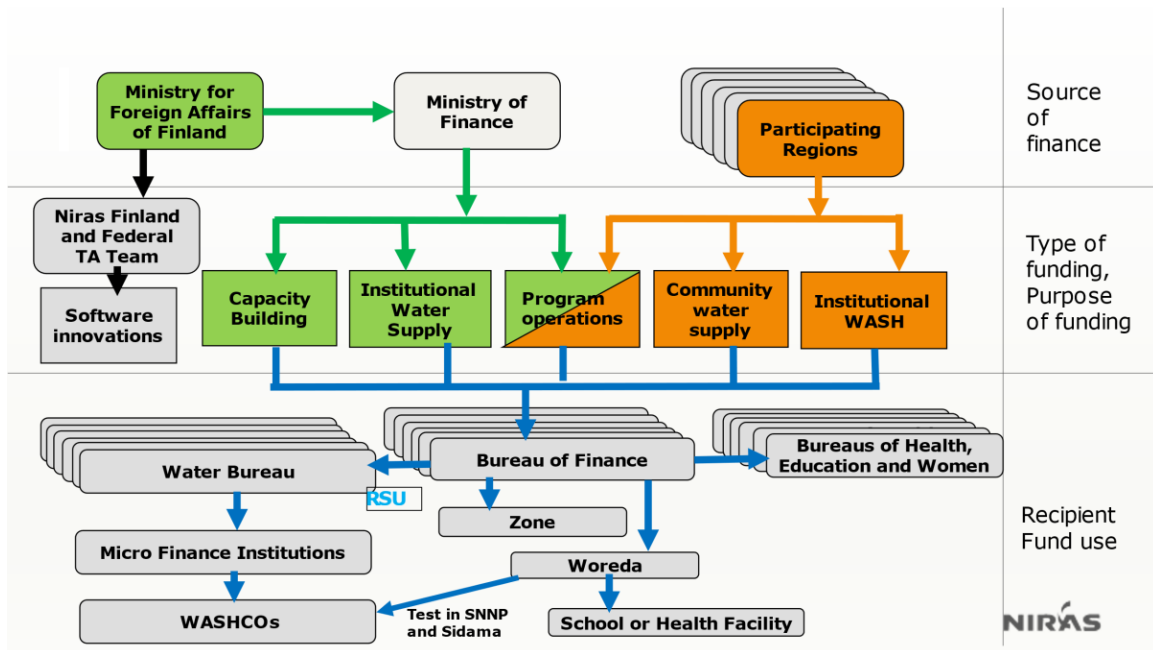
5. Since the commencement of COWASH IV to date, it has not been possible to carry out any project work in Tigray Region due to the hostilities. Indeed, while the MoU between the MoF and the Tigray BoF has been drafted, it has not yet been signed.
6. A number of WaSH schemes have been destroyed or damaged partially due to the conflict in the COWASH implementing regions of Amhara and Tigray. Due to security problem, the same has happened in Benishangul Gumuz and Oromia regions. The exact number and level of damage will be known (reported) after the assessment by the regions. The Amhara region has completed initial assessment of the damages caused by the conflict. However, Tigray and Affar regions have very little information on damages.

COWASH IV goal and objectives

7. As stated above, the overarching goal of COWASH IV is to improve public health and well-being, social development and climate resilience in the rural communities (beneficiary population 1.1 million) of the project area. The achievement of this goal is to be assessed through baseline and end-line surveys.
8. The objective of COWASH IV is increased and sustained coverage of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in the rural areas of the selected Woredas. The result chain adopted for the monitoring and measurement of COWASH IV activities and progress is based on the COWASH IV Results Framework presented in the Project Document with some minor amendments made for clarification purposes. The result chain includes five outcomes as follows:
 - Outcome 1: Increased and sustained access to safe climate resilient community water supplies in the rural areas of project Woredas;
 - Outcome 2: Increased access to and usage of improved household latrines and increased practice of handwashing with soap in the COWASH IV water supply beneficiary households of project Woredas;
 - Outcome 3: Improved institutional WASH by narrowing the gap in improved institutional latrines, climate resilient and safe water supply and menstrual hygiene management (MHM);
 - Outcome 4: Sustainability and inclusivity of achieved WASH outcomes enhanced;
 - Outcome 5: COWASH IV implementation effectively managed, lessons learnt, documented, communicated and shared and put into action.

Project Organization

9. The essence and key operating philosophy of COWASH IV is the empowerment of the rural communities of Ethiopia to develop their own WASH facilities through the establishment of an enabling environment and the implementation of CMP interventions. Under COWASH IV, rural communities apply for support and are empowered to design, implement, operate and manage their own WASH facilities.
10. All work is jointly financed by the Government of Ethiopia (GoE), through the regional budgets and the Government of Finland (GoF), working through the Channel 1 mechanism of the Ministry of Finance. While the GoE funds are primarily focused on the construction of community WASH facilities, the GoF funds are focused on human and physical capacity development together with the construction of school and health institution WASH facilities. The communities are expected to contribute to the project but normally through in-kind contributions such as materials or labour.



11. In addition to the overall management and coordination of COWASH IV, the key role of the Federal Technical Assistance Team (FTAT) is to train and guide the Regional Support Units (RSUs) who cascade CMP training and knowledge down to the community level. Full details can be found in the Project Document.

Project Financing

12. The first three phases of COWASH were implemented through the MoF's Channel 2 Facility under which funds were transferred directly from Development Partners, such as the MFA, to the Government implementing partners in the water, health and education sectors, which in the case of COWASH is the Regional Bureaus of Finance. However, COWASH IV is being implemented through the MoF's Channel 1 Facility under which funds from the Development Partners are managed at Federal level by the MoF.
13. Under the first three phases of COWASH, all investment funds for community water supply schemes in all regions were transferred from the region to the WASHCOs via Micro Finance Institutions. While this procedure has remained in place for COWASH IV in Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia and Tigray Regions, in Sidama, SNNP and SWEP Regions, a new fund channelling system is being tested. In the case of these three regions, funds are being transferred to a CMP account controlled by the responsible Woreda Office of Finance via the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia and then transferred onwards to each WASHCO.
14. Under the first three phases of COWASH, all investment funds for institutional facilities were channelled through Parent-Teacher Associations and Health Committees, whereas under COWASH IV, the funds are being managed by the Woreda Office of Finance in all regions.
15. As per the Project Fact Sheet the total grant for COWASH IV is Euro (EUR) 42.22 million, or Ethiopian Birr (ETB) 2,280 million using an exchange rate of 54.0. The total contribution of GoF includes the originally allocated EUR 18.4 million plus EUR 327,740 (excluding Tigray region) rolled over from the Phase III regions' and GoF budgets.
16. The contribution of the GoE is ETB 1,178,251,897 which is equivalent to EUR 21,819,480 using the project exchange rate of 54.0. The distribution of the GoE contribution between the original six regions, for each of the four years of the project, is presented in Table 3.
17. The community contribution to the project is given as ETB 77,700,000 in the Project Document. This is equivalent to EUR 1,438,889 at an exchange rate of 54.0.
18. Of the originally allocated EUR 18.4 million contribution from the GoF, EUR 13,854,000 is

allocated to the regions, EUR 350,000 to a combination of the MoF and the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) for operation purposes and EUR 4,196,000 for the work of the FTAT.

19. Of the EUR 13,854,000 allocated to the regions, EUR 920,000 was kept as a contingency and the remaining EUR 12,934,000 was allocated to the regions for the purposes of physical and human capacity building together with the development of institutional WASH facilities as follows:

- Amhara: EUR 2,787,293
- Benishangul-Gumuz: EUR 903,554
- Oromia: EUR 4,226,440
- Sidama: EUR 1,161,078
- SNNP: EUR 2,361,112
- Tigray: EUR 1,494,523

20. With the further division of the SNNP Region to create the new SWEPE Region, 15.38 per cent (EUR 363,139) of the SNNP Region allocation was reallocated to the SWEPE Region.

21. The transfer of funds to the regions during EFY 2014 (2021/22) was, as per standard COWASH IV practice, based on the core plans prepared by the regions at the start of the fiscal year and approved by both the regional and national steering committees. Due to the situation in the north of the country, Tigray was not able to prepare a core plan. The other regions all prepared their EFY 2014 (2021/22) core plans using the template developed by the FTAT and these became the basis for the first six-month funding requests submitted to the MoF. The MoF subsequently made a collective request for approximately ETB 160.55 million of funding to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland. The MFA transferred the requested amount in two instalments, one in December 2021 and the second in March 2022. The received funds were subsequently transferred by the MoF to the project regions in February 2022 and April 2022 respectively. The fund requests and actual transfers are summarized in Table 4.

Table 2 GoF fund requests and transfers in EFY 2014 (2021/22) (ETB)

Region	Request to MFA	1 st Transfer to Regions	2 nd Transfer to Regions	Total transferred
Amhara	32,925,930	17,000,000	15,925,930	32,925,930
Benishangul-Gumuz	12,069,540	6,200,000	5,869,540	12,069,540
Oromia	56,938,322	28,000,000	28,938,332	56,938,332
SNNP	44,476,522	23,000,000	12,848,077	35,848,077
Sidama	14,137,131	7,200,000	6,937,130	14,137,130
Total	160,547,454	81,400,000	70,519,009	151,919,009

22. The total disbursements from the GoF from the beginning of the project until the end of March

2023 have been as follows:

2021: 4.195 million euros

2022: 5.542 million euros

1-3/2023: 70,500 euros

23. The funds transferred from MoF to the SNNP Region were reduced for the second transfer to take account of the separation of the new SWEP Region and the need to reallocate funds.

24. At the end of EFY 2014 (2021/22) each region prepared a performance report on the achievements of the year together with EFY 2015 (7/2022–6/2023) Core Plans which formed the basis of their fund request for EFY 2015. The request for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 funds was forwarded to the MFA on 23 November 2022 and is summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 3 Fund Request for EFY 2015 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2

No.	Region	GoF Fund Planned for EFY 2015 (Birr)	GoF Fund Planned for Q1 and Q2 (Birr)	GoF Transferred in EFY 2014 (Birr)	GoF Fund Spent in EFY 2014 (Birr)	Unused Balance (Birr)	GoF Fund Request (Birr)
1	Amhara	57,825,499	51,370,736	32,925,930	19,595,015	13,330,915	38,039,821
2	Benishangul-Gumuz	17,716,922	14,337,768	12,069,540	9,841,221	2,228,319	12,109,449
3	Oromia	91,059,047	63,110,651	56,938,332	44,073,724	12,864,608	50,246,043
4	Sidama	18,533,890	13,327,347	14,137,130	14,127,121	10,010	13,317,338
5	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples	45,432,694	33,383,878	35,848,077	20,717,927	15,130,150	18,253,727
6	South-west Ethiopia Peoples	9,722,421	7,428,491	0	0	0	7,428,491
7	Tigray	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		240,290,472	182,958,870	151,919,009	108,355,007	43,564,002	139,394,868

FTAT Project Activities to Date

25. The FTAT project activities to date are summarized in the key documents as follows:

- The COWASH Phase IV Inception Report, dated January 2022;
- The COWASH IV FTAT 2014 EFY Annual Performance Report, dated September 2022;
- The COWASH IV FTAT EFY 2015 First Quarter Performance Report, dated November 2022
- The COWASH IV FTAT EFY 2015 Second Quarter Performance Report was submitted in February 2023.

Key Issues and Challenges

26. The key issues and challenges faced in the implementation of the project to date are summarized below:

Ref	Issues and challenges
1	<p>Crisis in the North of Ethiopia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has not yet been possible to commence work in Tigray Region. • Towards the end of 2021, the conflict spread to Amhara Region and, for a while,

Ref	Issues and challenges
	<p>it was not possible to work in 20 target Woredas. This situation was resolved in the third quarter of the EFY and normal work activities could be resumed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant infrastructure was destroyed in Tigray, but also in Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz regions, leading to pressure to reallocate funds for rebuilding and emergency relief. • Amhara Region re-allocated part of the human capacity building funds to physical capacity building. • Baseline data collection in Tigray, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, and some 10 project Woredas of Oromia Region was not possible.
2	<p>International staff evacuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the security crisis, the international staff were instructed to leave Ethiopia. • Mobilization of the short-term international consultants was postponed.
3	<p>Security challenge in Oromia Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No access has been possible to 10 out of the 30 target Woredas in Oromia. • Baseline data collection has been limited to 20 Oromia Woredas.
4	<p>Delay in the establishment of COWASH IV financial management at the MoF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dedicated Financial Specialist required under the COWASH IV Project Document was not employed. • Delays occurred in project account opening. • The transfer of funds from Finland was delayed. • The transfer of funds to the regions was delayed.
5	<p>Delay in the establishment of Sidama RSU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delay in the transfer of GoF funds impacted the employment of the RSU team. • The Sidama RSU was appointed, except the Team Leader, by the end of the third quarter of EFY 2014 (1-3/2022). The Team Leader has still not been appointed.
6	<p>The Oromia RSU was dismantled and COWASH IV coordination re-organized</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWASH IV coordination was transferred from the Community Participation Directorate to the Stakeholders Coordination Directorate. • Only one (Financial Specialist) of the earlier RSU staff contracts was extended. • Recruitment of the new RSU was delayed until the end of the third quarter of EFY 2014 (2021/22) with a clear impact on project progress.
7	<p>Lack of GoF funds in the regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no funds available to pay the salaries of RSU staff in Amhara for the 4th quarter of EFY 2013 (Apr to Jul 2021) and the first half of EFY 2014 (July to Jan 2021). • No funds were available for the supervision, monitoring and capacity building for the first half of the reporting period.
8	<p>Delay in Procurement of project vehicles</p>

Ref	Issues and challenges
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delays resulting from to security concerns, COVID-19 etc. impacted the vehicle procurement progress. • The National Steering Committee decided to utilize UNOPS for vehicle procurement because a centralized procurement was more inexpensive, MoF was unable to get a Letter of Credit for the vehicle procurement, and MoWE lacked capacity to do the procurement. • The vehicle payment to UNOPS was made on 30 November 2022 and the arrival of the consignment expected in June/July 2023.

1.3 Results of previous evaluations

Mid-term evaluations have been carried out in previous phases of COWASH in 2015 and 2018 (MTE reports: 15.6.2015, 5.7.2018).

The key conclusions of the COWASH III MTE were related to relevance, impact and sustainability: While the relevance of COWASH III to MOWIE (Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy) was confirmed, a critical challenge remained that government has proved unwilling to adopt the CMP approach for scaling up beyond the current programme. Ownership by the ministries of health and education was also weak. The relevance of COWASH III to beneficiary communities was confirmed though. Progress for new community water supply schemes was good, but the institutional WASH component of the programme was found to be constrained by limited investments by the bureaus of health and education, reflecting the low priority afforded to this component in comparison to community water supply.

COWASH III was making a significant contribution to GTP water supply targets at local level, but it is difficult to establish how far the programme has contributed to progress in household sanitation. The programme has been active in advocating for ODF targets, but as data is poorly available it has been somewhat challenging to assess the actual impact during annual monitoring. The programme was piloting the establishment of WASH enterprises led by unemployed women. The MTE identified a risk that these enterprises might become grant-funded production centres rather than real businesses. Sustainability of the schemes developed under the programme was generally found to be good. The MTE found that more could be done to document and disseminate the lessons generated on sustainability.

2. Rationale, purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation (MTE) is to assess the progress of the COWASH IV programme towards meeting the goals set out in the Project Document and recommend measures how to achieve the objectives during the rest of the project duration. It is also expected to give guidance for the MFA decision-making in autumn 2023 whether the funding option (700,000 euros) need to be used and how it should be targeted, and possible requirements and preconditions for additional funding (maximum 1,700,000 euros in addition to the option if there will be no budget cuts).

The MTE will determine the impact of the issues and challenges arising during the course of the project to date and will assess the likelihood of achieving the project targets. Furthermore, the MTE will identify and assess the key factors that will affect the project for the remaining period and will provide action-oriented recommendations on how to mitigate the challenges and improve COWASH IV operations and performance in order to maximize its outputs. It is also expected for the MTE to recommend on future continuation of COWASH after 2024; in order to guarantee sustainability and impact.

The priority issues of this evaluation are:

- The issue of inflation and price increment: How can the project adjust its results under the

current conditions? The evaluation team should assess the options presented by the project are whether the remaining committed project funds should be spread over the whole project period, or whether the program should be adjusted to complete all investment by the end of June 2024. Recommendations for the remaining period of the project how the progress can be improved with a view to maximizing achievements in the current situation.

- The assessment of the current COWASH structure: The current phase is under the Ethiopian guidelines of Channel one, which has not been the case before. The current modality was suggested during the planning of the COWASH 4 phase. What are the benefits and challenges of the new approach?

3. Scope of the evaluation

The MTE will cover the period April 2021 to March 2023. It covers the whole geographical area of the project.

In preparing the MTE, the consultant shall consult with all relevant project stakeholders including, but not limited to, the MoWE, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Water Resources Development Bureaus of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP, SWEP and Tigray, together with the Regional Bureaus of Finance, Health, Education and Women and Child Affairs and the One WASH National Program.

4. Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions

While the evaluation questions indicate the priority issues under each criterion, the evaluation team should not limit the evaluation to these questions only.

The evaluation questions by evaluation criteria are:

Relevance

- To what extent the promotion of human rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and climate resilience are integrated in programme design and implementation?
- What are the prospects to amplify or scale-up the CMP as a national approach?

Coherence

- How is the synergy and coherence of COWASH to other modalities of OWNPP (e.g. CWA) towards achieving the GoE WASH sector goals?
- What are the major items/elements/documents that COWASH has brought to the sector?

Effectiveness

- How the approach, scope and geographical coverage of the project affect its effectiveness?
 - What is the effect of geographical coverage of the project, with particular reference to its expansion to six, now seven regions with the splitting of SNNP, and the increase in the number of project Woredas from 76 to 104?
 - What is the feasibility of including Tigray region for the remainder of the project, and the work approach to be adopted?
 - What is appropriateness and the state of implementation of the innovative features relating to (i) water safety planning; (ii) women and disability inclusion; (iii) social and behavioural change; iv) integrated water supply and sanitation including the

development of business skills development, support to micro-small enterprises and the promotion and organization of saving and loan associations; and (v) menstrual hygiene management.

- How has the approach promoted human rights based approach and MFA cross-cutting objectives?
- What are the achievements and possible shortcomings of the implementation towards the project results?
 - To what extent objectives of the training and knowledge cascading process are being achieved, and the appropriateness of cascading process to be at Woreda level?
 - What are the bottle necks of the actors to fulfil their role?
 - The degree to which the required knowledge, skills and messaging is reaching the community level?

Efficiency

- How efficient is the financial management system?
 - What was the effect on the COWASH programme of moving from Ethiopia funding Channel 2 to Channel 1, and what improvements can be made to the financial management of the project to increase operational efficiency, within the rules and procedures of the Channel 1 funding mechanism?
 - How the investment fund management for institutional facilities has affected?
- What is the impact of cost inflation, and what are the remedial measures and alternatives?

Impact

- How well the progress has been made to achieve overall objective of the programme?

Sustainability

- What are the possible factors enhancing or inhibiting sustainability?
 - How well has the environmental sustainability been taken into consideration as a human rights issue and regarding the links between climate and environment?
 - How well has COWASH been able to scale up and advocate the best practices developed by the project as national norms in Ethiopia?
 - How capable is the GoE to act as a duty bearer in WASH in the current situation and how has COWASH contributed to this?

Additional evaluation questions

- What are the additional benefits for Finland on working bilaterally on the WASH sector in Ethiopia with regards to other opportunities such as policy influencing or trade opportunities?
- How COWASH contributes to the objectives of open defecation free area?

5. Methodology

The MTE is to be carried out as a participatory, open and transparent process for all stakeholders including the final beneficiaries. The MTE team is to base their observations, analysis and recommendations on relevant documentation, interviews and other relevant methods. The assignment includes both desk study and fieldwork. Multiple methods are expected to be used to validate the findings, both quantitative and qualitative. In data analysis, data should be disaggregated by gender, age group or other relevant categories. The Consultant is to propose the work methods in more detail, and they will be finalized in the inception report. The key documents to be analysed are listed as an annex to this ToR.

6. The evaluation process and time schedule

The Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) is expected to take place in May-September 2023. While a detailed work plan will be left to the evaluators to propose, the tentative schedule is as follows:

Schedule	Actions
May	Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) Kick-off meeting with FADER consultant Service Order
–June - July	Kick-off meeting with the team and finalizing the ToR Desk review Draft inception report Final Inception report MTE mission in Ethiopia
August	Feedback session to Ethiopian and MFA Finland representatives in Helsinki Draft MTE report, with two weeks period reserved for MFA consolidated comments Meeting on MFA's comments (if necessary)
September	Final MTE report

The MTE must provide evidence-based information and recommendations that are credible, reliable and useful to the implementers and decision-makers involved in the Project. Its conclusions and recommendations shall be formulated so that they will be easily understood by all parties and applicable to the remaining period of Project implementation.

7. Reporting

Inception Report

The inception report needs to be prepared and accepted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) before the fieldwork. The report needs to include findings from the desk review, work plan and time schedule. The desk review should include (but is not limited to):

- a. The Project Document, contracts, management structures, related agreements, and other relevant materials
- b. Annual work plans and budgets
- c. Progress and technical reports, monitoring reports from the Technical Assistance (TA) team, relevant government reporting and development partners reports, if any.

Power Point presentation

The Consultant shall make a presentation of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations at the end of August, based on the draft report. It will be presented in the MFA of Finland in Helsinki (with representatives of the key Ethiopian organizations).

MTE draft report and final MTE report

The draft report will be prepared after the field mission and will be submitted to the competent authorities for comments. The final MTE report shall be prepared within one week after receiving the consolidated comments from MFA.

Each deliverable is subjected to MFA's approval. The evaluation team is able to move to the next phase only after receiving a written statement of acceptance by the MFA.

8. Expertise required

The evaluation team can consist of three members, including international team leader and at least one Ethiopian expert. The team can also have one junior expert. The anticipated input is approximately two months. The evaluation team shall be based in Addis Ababa with the COWASH IV team, but with possible visits to project partners in Assosa, Bahir Dar and Hawassa, to be discussed. The COWASH IV team will support the consultant with office space and logistics.

The Team Leader shall have

- Master's Degree in water and/or sanitation engineering, rural development or a similar field.
- Extensive working experience in the WASH sector in developing countries.
- Extensive experience in the evaluation and assessment of development programs funded by bilateral and multilateral organizations.

The evaluation team shall have solid experience and knowledge in the following fields:

- Programme evaluations and planning in the WASH sector.
- Project cycle management (PCM) and Results Based Management (RBM), and their application in programme design, monitoring and evaluation (M&E);
- Relevant sectoral experience, including community-based approaches in WASH sector.
- Assessment, monitoring and evaluation of WASH infrastructure development projects.
- Projects with multiple stakeholders both at the central and local levels.
- Experience in Ethiopia would be considered an advantage.
- Experience in integrating human rights based approach and cross-cutting objectives of the MFA development policy (gender equality, non-discrimination, climate resilience, low emission development and protection of the environment with emphasis on safeguarding biodiversity) in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; promotion of human rights and gender equality, non-discrimination and climate resilience.

The Team Leader will have the overall responsibility for the design and implementation of the evaluation, writing of the report, and timely submission of the draft and final version. Detailed responsibilities of each team member should be determined at the beginning of the mission and outlined in the methodology.

MFA Senior Adviser will join the evaluation team in the field as an observer.

9. Mandate

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organizations. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on

behalf of the Government of Finland.

Annexes:

Annex 1: MFA evaluation manual (including all templates related to evaluation)

<https://um.fi/development-cooperation-evaluation-manual>

Annex 2: List of documentation

- COWASH IV Appraisal Report, June 2020
- COWASH IV Final project document, October 2020
- COWASH Phase IV Inception Report, January 2022
- COWASH IV FTAT 2014 EFY Annual Performance Report, September 2022
- COWASH IV FTAT EFY 2015 First Quarter Performance Report, November 2022
- COWASH IV FTAT EFU 2015 Six Months Performance Report, February 2023
- Minutes of meetings conducted with regard to COWASH IV

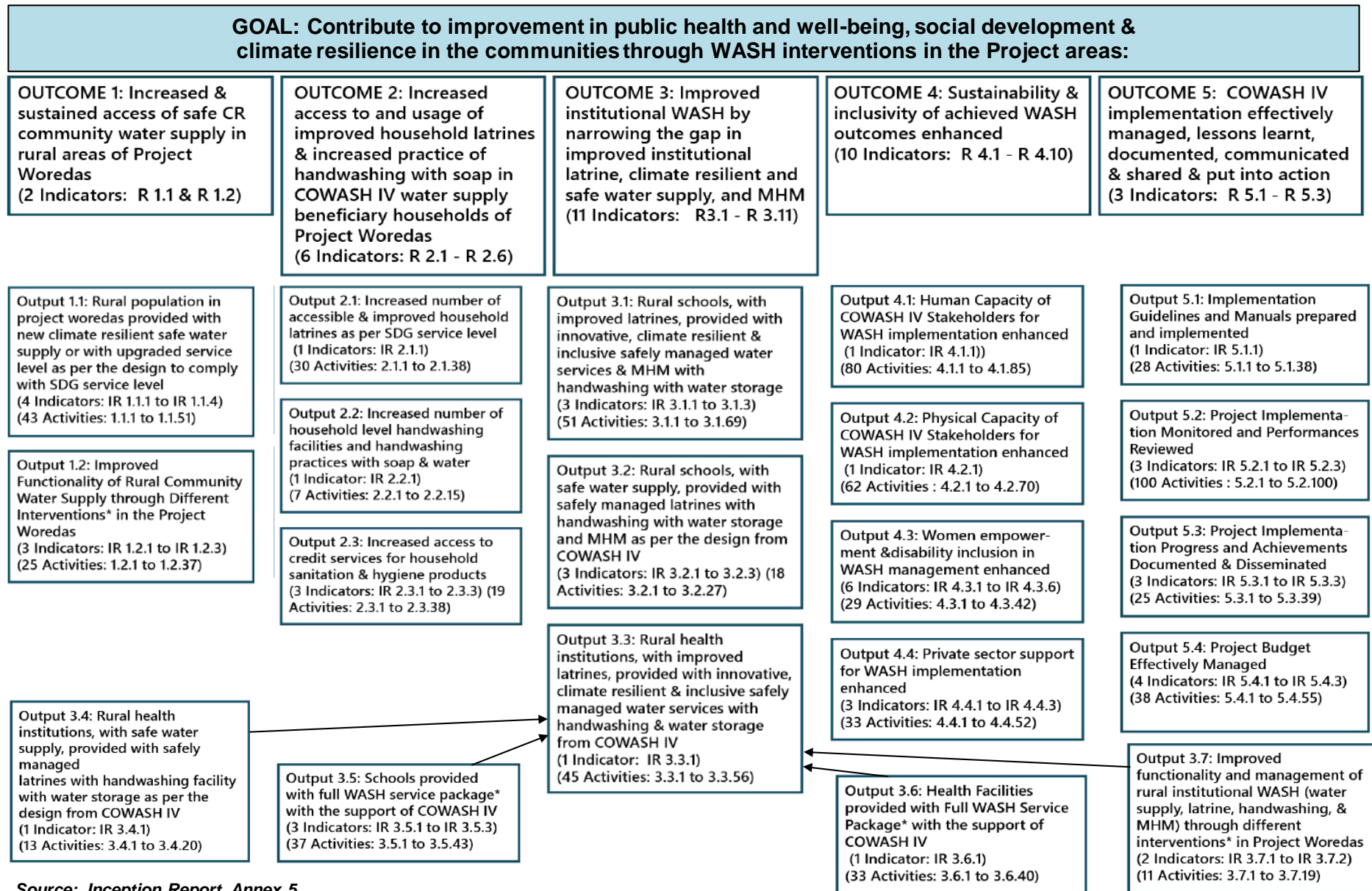
ANNEX 1b: Numbered list of “Evaluation Questions” from the MTE TORs

#	Key aspect / focus	Evaluation Question (EQ) from the TORs
Priority EQ 1	Inflation and use of the remaining, contingency and extra funds:	<p>1.1: The issue of inflation and price increment: How can the project adjust its results under the current conditions?</p> <p>1.2: The evaluation team should assess the options presented by the project are whether the remaining committed project funds should be spread over the whole project period, or whether the program should be adjusted to complete all investment by the end of June 2024.</p> <p>1.3: The MTE is also expected to give guidance for the MFA decision-making in autumn 2023 whether the funding option (700,000 euros) need to be used and how it should be targeted, and possible requirements and preconditions for additional funding (maximum 1,700,000 euros in addition to the option if there will be no budget cuts).</p> <p>1.4: Recommendations for the remaining period of the project how the progress can be improved with a view to maximizing achievements in the current situation.</p> <p>1.5: It is also expected for the MTE to recommend on future continuation of COWASH after 2024; in order to guarantee sustainability and impact.</p>
Priority EQ 2	COWASH IV Structure (Channel 1B)::	2: The assessment of the current COWASH structure: The current phase is under the Ethiopian guidelines of Channel one, which has not been the case before. The current modality was suggested during the planning of the COWASH 4 phase. What are the benefits and challenges of the new approach?
EQ 3	Relevance:	<p>3.1: To what extent the promotion of human rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and climate resilience are integrated in programme design and implementation?</p> <p>3.2: What are the prospects to amplify or scale-up the CMP as a national approach?</p>
EQ 4	Coherence:	<p>4.1: How is the synergy and coherence of COWASH to other modalities of OWNPN (e.g. CWA) towards achieving the GoE WASH sector goals?</p> <p>4.2: What are the major items/elements/documents that COWASH has brought to the sector?</p>
EQ 5	Effectiveness:	<p>5.1: How the approach, scope and geographical coverage of the project affect its effectiveness?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5.1a: What is the effect of geographical coverage of the project, with particular reference to its expansion to six, now seven regions with the splitting of SNNP, and the increase in the number of project Woredas from 76 to 104? ○ 5.1b: What is the feasibility of including Tigray region for the remainder of the project, and the work approach to be adopted? ○ 5.1c: What is appropriateness and the state of implementation of the innovative features relating to (i) water safety planning; (ii) women and disability inclusion; (iii) social and behavioural change; iv) integrated water supply and sanitation including the development of business skills development, support to micro-small enterprises and the promotion and organization of saving and loan associations; and (v) menstrual hygiene management.

#	Key aspect / focus	Evaluation Question (EQ) from the TORs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EQ 5.1d: How has the approach promoted human rights based approach and MFA cross-cutting objectives? <p>5.2 What are the achievements and possible shortcomings of the implementation towards the project results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5.2a: To what extent objectives of the training and knowledge cascading process are being achieved, and the appropriateness of cascading process to be at Woreda level? ○ 5.2b: What are the bottle necks of the actors to fulfil their role? ○ 5.2c: The degree to which the required knowledge, skills and messaging is reaching the community level?
EQ 6	Efficiency:	<p>6.1: How efficient is the financial management system?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6.1a: What was the effect on the COWASH programme of moving from Ethiopia funding Channel 2 to Channel 1, and what improvements can be made to the financial management of the project to increase operational efficiency, within the rules and procedures of the Channel 1 funding mechanism? ○ 6.1b: How the investment fund management for institutional facilities has affected? <p>6.2: What is the impact of cost inflation, and what are the remedial measures and alternatives?</p>
EQ 7	Likely Impact:	7: How well the progress has been made to achieve overall objective of the programme?
EQ 8	Likely Sustainability:	<p>8: What are the possible factors enhancing or inhibiting sustainability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8a: How well has the environmental sustainability been taken into consideration as a human rights issue and regarding the links between climate and environment? ○ 8b: How well has COWASH been able to scale up and advocate the best practices developed by the project as national norms in Ethiopia? ○ 8c: How capable is the GoE to act as a duty bearer in WASH in the current situation and how has COWASH contributed to this?
EQ 9	Bilateral WASH support benefits for Finland:	9: What are the additional benefits for Finland on working bilaterally on the WASH sector in Ethiopia with regards to other opportunities such as policy influencing or trade opportunities?
EQ 10	COWASH Contribution to ODF areas:	10: How COWASH contributes to the objectives of open defecation free area?

Source: COWASH IV MTE Terms of Reference (TORs).

ANNEX 2: Project Results Framework diagram



Source: Inception Report, Annex 5.

ANNEX 3: Project Results Framework and Monitoring Plan

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: -Goal(G), -Outcome (R), -Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
IMPACT: Contribute to improvement in public health and well-being, social development & climate resilience in the communities through WASH interventions in the Project areas						
G 1: Under-5 Mortality in the Two Weeks preceding the survey	%	G	-			
G 2: Reduced under-5 diarrhoea in the two weeks preceding the survey	%	G	-			
G3: Women Empowerment in WASH Index	%	G	-			
G4: % of schools (in the sample kebeles) having and using a full package of WASH services By ALL Actors	%	G	-			
G5: % of health institutions (in the sample kebeles) having and using a <i>full package</i> of WASH services By ALL Actors	%	G	-			
Outcome 1: Increased & sustained access of safe climate resilient community water supply in rural areas of Project Woredas						
R 1.1: Rural Community Safe Water Supply Access Coverage (as defined in CWA) By ALL Actors	%	R	61.5	69.2%	75.8%	
R 1.2: % of rural people using safe water services constructed/rehabilitated by COWASH IV(as per SDG service level)	%	R	-	5.0%	9.2%	
Output 1.1: Rural population in project Woredas provided with new climate resilient safe water supply or with upgraded service level as per the design to comply with SDG service level						
IR 1.1.1 No. of New Community Water Supply Schemes constructed by COWASH IV as per the design (disaggregated by technology)	No	IR	-	1,687	2,988	
IR1.1.2: No. of Community Water Supply Schemes Rehabilitated with the support of COWASH IV (disaggregated by technology)	No	IR	-	481	1,106	
IR 1.1.3: No. of rural people having access to safe community water services constructed/rehabilitated by COWASH IV <i>as per the design & SDG service levels</i>	No	IR	-	508,403	961,073	
IR 1.1.4: No. of Micro-Catchment-Based Water Safety Plans (WSPs) implemented in project Woredas	No	IR	3	2,168	4,094	

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: - Goal(G), - Outcome (R), - Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
Output 1.2: Improved Functionality of Rural Community Water Supply through Different Interventions* in the Project Woredas						
IR 1.2.1: No. of community water supply schemes having legalized WASHCOs	No	IR	-	2,168	4,094	
IR 1.2.2: No. of community water supply schemes started tariff collection (<i>excluding the upfront cash contribution</i>)	No	IR	-	2,168	4,094	
IR 1.2.3: No. of COWASH IV WASHCOs aware of spare parts & repair services are available with payment	No	IR	-	1,697	3,626	
Outcome 2: Increased access to and usage of improved household latrines & increased practice of handwashing with soap in COWASH IV water supply beneficiary households of Project Woredas						
R 2.1: % of rural households having access to improved latrines constructed as per the SDG service level (safely managed, basic, limited) By ALL WASH ACTORS	%	R	34.4	60.9%	75.9%	
R 2.2: % of COWASH IV beneficiary HHs having access to improved latrines constructed as per the SDG service level (safely managed, basic, limited)	%	R	-	39.9%	82.8%	
R 2.3: % of rural households (HH members) reached with sanitation & hygiene and other thematic areas (disability inclusion, women empowerment, HTPs, management of water supplies) behaviour change messages (By ALL ACTORS)	%	R	-			
R 2.4: % of mothers/adult women able to mention the names of critical times for washing hands with soap (By Survey)	%	R	-			
R 2.5: % of mothers able to mention critical times and who mention that they wash their hands with soap at critical times (By Survey)	%	R	-			
R 2.6: % of mothers/adult women whose household has handwashing facility (attached with latrine) and washing hands with soap (By Survey)	%	R	-			
Output 2.1: Increased number of accessible and improved household latrines as per SDG service level						
IR 2.1.1: No. of rural COWASH IV beneficiary households having access to improved latrines fulfilling the SDG service levels (safely managed, basic, limited)	No	IR	-	71,035	148,954	
Output 2.2: Increased number of household level handwashing facilities and handwashing practices with soap and water						
IR 2.2.1: No. of COWASH IV WP beneficiary rural households with handwashing facility with	No	IR	-	71,035	148,954	

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: - Goal(G), - Outcome (R), - Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
soap and water available on premises						
Output 2.3: Increased access to credit services for household sanitation and hygiene products						
IR 2.3.1: No. of COWASH IV WP beneficiary households took loan from any credit source (RUSACCOs, MFI or Banks) for household improved latrine construction	No	IR	-	26,155	96,896	
IR 2.3.2: Amount of loan (in Birr) borrowed from credit sources (RUSACCOs, MFI for improved household latrine construction	Birr	IR	-	71,733,200	258,554,500	
IR 2.3.3: % of COWASH IV WP beneficiary hhs who took loan from credit sources for improved latrine construction and REPAID all the loan	%	IR	-	28.3%	80.0%	
Outcome 3: Improved institutional WASH by narrowing the gap in improved institutional latrine, climate resilient and safe water supply, and MHM						
R 3.1: % of schools having access to safe water supply By ALL Actors	%	R	35.1	52.4%	69.3%	
R 3.2: % of schools having access to improved latrine facilities By ALL Actors	%	R	33.3	51.1%	68.9%	
R 3.3: % of health facilities having access to safe water supply By ALL Actors	%	R	21.7	48.5%	74.6%	
R 3.4: % of health facilities having access to improved latrines By ALL Actors	%	R	43.3	63.2%	81.3%	
R 3.5: % of schools, <i>with improved latrine facilities</i> , and using climate resilient (CR) and inclusive safely managed water supply and MHM facility as per the design from COWASH IV	%	R	-	3.5%	8.2%	
R 3.6: % of schools, <i>with safe water supply</i> , and using safely managed latrines and MHM facility as per the design from COWASH IV	%	R	-	3.6%	7.4%	
R 3.7: % of health facilities, <i>with improved latrine facilities</i> , and using climate resilient and inclusive safe water supply as per the design from COWASH IV	%	R	-	5.8%	12.0%	
R 3.8: % of health facilities, <i>with safe water supply</i> , and using safely managed latrines as per the design from COWASH IV	%	R	-	7.9%	14.4%	
R 3.9: % of school girls (age 12+) using MHM facilities constructed By ALL Actors (disaggregated by disability) (by Survey)	%	R	-			
R 3.10: % of schools having no observable faecal matter inside/outside their latrines (by Survey)	%	R	-			
R 3.11: % of health facilities having no observable fecal matter inside/outside latrines (by	%	R	-			

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: -Goal(G), -Outcome (R), -Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP
Survey)					
Output 3.1: Rural schools, with improved latrines, provided with innovative, climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water services & MHM with handwashing with water storage					
IR 3.1.1: No. of schools (with improved latrine facilities) having access to climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water supply with handwashing facility with water storage and MHM from COWASH IV	No	IR	-	110	252
IR 3.1.2: No. of people in schools (with improved latrine facilities) who have got access to climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water supply with handwashing facility with water storage and MHM from COWASH IV (<i>disaggregated by sex & disability</i>)	No	IR	-	67,300	155,150
IR 3.1.3: No. of school girls (age 12+) attending school with improved latrine and having access to COWASH IV MHM (<i>disaggregated by disability</i>)	No	IR	-	17,304	39,534
Output 3.2: Rural schools, with safe water supply, provided with safely managed latrines with handwashing with water storage and MHM as per the design from COWASH IV					
IR 3.2.1: No. of schools, with safe water supply , and having access to safely managed latrine with MHM and handwashing facility with water storage as per the design from COWASH IV	No	IR	-	110	223
IR 3.2.2: No. of people in schools, having safely managed water supply , who have got access to safely managed latrines with MHM and handwashing facility with water storage from COWASH IV (<i>disaggregated by sex & disability</i>)	No	IR	-	67,900	137,350
IR 3.2.3: No. of school girls (age 12+) attending school with safe water supply and having access to COWASH IV MHM facilities (<i>disaggregated by disability</i>)	No	IR	-	13,945	28,208
Output 3.3: Rural health institutions, with improved latrines, provided with innovative, climate resilient and inclusive safely managed water services with handwashing and water storage from COWASH IV					
IR 3.3.1: No. of health institutions, with improved latrine facilities , and having access to climate resilient, and inclusive safely managed water supply with handwashing facility and water storage from COWASH IV	No	IR	-	108	218
Output 3.4: Rural health institutions, with safe water supply, provided with safely managed latrines with handwashing facility with water storage as per the design from COWASH IV					
IR 3.4.1: No. of health institutions (with safe water supply) and having access to safely managed latrine with handwashing facility with water storage as per the design from	No	IR	-	155	266

Mid-Term Evaluation of the COWASH IV project: 2021 to 2024

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: -Goal(G), -Outcome (R), -Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
COWASH IV						
Output 3.5: Schools provided with full WASH service package* with the support of COWASH IV						
IR 3.5.1: No. of schools having access to full WASH services package as per the design with the support of COWASH IV	No	IR	-	18	39	
IR 3.5.2: No. of people having access to school Full WASH Services Package as per the design with the support of COWASH IV (disaggregated by sex & disability)	No	IR	-	12,800	25,950	
IR 3.5.3: No. of school girls (age 12+) attending school in the FULL WASH SERVICES Package schools having access to the COWASH IV MHM facilities (disaggregated by disability)	No	IR	-	2,585	5,248	
Output 3.6: Health Facilities provided with Full WASH Service Package* with the support of COWASH IV						
IR 3.6.1: No. of health institutions having access to Full WASH Services Package as per the design with the support of COWASH IV	No	IR	-	23	55	
Output 3.7: Improved functionality and management of rural institutional WASH (water supply, latrine, handwashing, and MHM) through different interventions (treatment, monitoring, WSP, availability of spare part supply, private sector, WASH clubs, PTAs & Health Committees) in Project Woredas						
IR 3.7.1: No. of schools fulfilling the criteria for WASH functionality (AT LEAST established WASH clubs, conducted inspections, WASH & MHM management training provided, regularly cleaning their latrines, etc.) through COWASH IV support	No	IR	-	239	563	
IR 3.7.2: No. of health facilities fulfilling the criteria for WASH functionality (AT LEAST conducted inspections, WASH management training provided, regularly cleaning their latrines, construct placenta pits & incinerator, etc.) through COWASH IV support	No	IR	-	279	558	
Outcome 4: Sustainability and inclusivity of achieved WASH outcomes enhanced						
R 4.1: % of non-functional RURAL water supply schemes in the COWASH IV Woredas	%	R	15.9	12.8%	7.2%	
R 4.2: % of COWASH IV Non-Functional Water Supply Schemes	%	R	-	0.6%	1.8%	
R 4.3: % of community members who are aware of O&M and management responsibility of WSs by beneficiary community	%	R	-			
R 4.4: % of rural kebeles verified to be free from Open Defecation (OD) BY ALL ACTORS	%	R	30.8	42.8%	58.3%	
R 4.5: % of community water supply schemes accessible to ALL By ALL ACTORS	%	R	-			

Mid-Term Evaluation of the COWASH IV project: 2021 to 2024

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: -Goal(G), -Outcome (R), -Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
R 4.6: % of institutional water supply schemes accessible to ALL By ALL ACTORS	%	R	-			
R 4.7: % of schools having latrines accessible to ALL By ALL ACTORS	%	R	-			
R 4.8: % of health facilities having latrines accessible to ALL By ALL ACTORS	%	R	-			
R 4.9: % of WPs with Water Safety Plans (WSP) implemented	%	R	-	94.6%	94.6%	
R 4.10: % of women-led profitable COWASH IV supported MSEs in COWASH IV Woredas	%	R	-	40.2%	61.5%	
Output 4.1: Human Capacity of COWASH IV Stakeholder holders for WASH implementation enhanced						
IR 4.1.1: No. of people received different CMP management and related trainings (as per the standard) with the support of COWASH IV (disaggregated by sex & disability)	No	IR	-	72,998	140,232	
Output 4.2: Physical Capacity of COWASH IV Stakeholders for WASH implementation enhanced						
IR 4.2.1: % of COWASH IV stakeholders (offices) who procured and registered ALL fixed assets from the project in the government asset registry form	No	IR	-	100.0%	100.0%	
Output 4.3: Women empowerment and disability inclusion in WASH management enhanced						
IR 4.3.1: % of women who have the attitude and confidence to accept WASHCO leadership positions (Chair, Treasury, Secretary) in COWASH IV Woredas (By Survey)	%	IR	-			
IR 4.3.2: % of COWASH IV Community WPs WASHCOs having at least 50% women members	%	IR	-	96.6%	99.0%	
IR 4.3.3: % of COWASH IV Community WPs WASHCO leadership positions filled with women	%	IR	-	28.5%	36.6%	
IR 4.3.4 : % of COWASH IV Community WPs WASHCOs having women in all three main management positions	%	IR	-	7.3%	11.7%	
IR 4.3.6: Average one-time water collection time (round trip/person in minutes) from improved water source (disaggregated by including queuing & excluding queuing) (By Survey)	Minute	IR	-			
IR 4.3.5: No. of members of COWASH IV Community WPs WASHCOs with some kind of disabilities (disaggregated by sex)	No	IR	-	1,175	2,289	
Output 4.4: Private sector support for WASH implementation enhanced						
IR 4.4.1: No. of WASH MSEs established or strengthened with the support of COWASH IV	No	IR	5	15	29	

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: -Goal(G), -Outcome (R), -Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
(disaggregated by women-led & men-led)						
IR 4.4.2: No. of artisans who are engaged in WASH facilities construction with the support of COWASH IV (disaggregated by sex)	No	IR		764	895	
IR 4.4.3: No. of private spare part sales shops established or strengthened with the support of ALL ACTORS	No	IR		153	224	
Outcome 5: COWASH IV implementation effectively managed, lessons learnt, documented, communicated and shared and put into action						
R 5.1: % Respondents who mention at least one of the peculiar characteristics of COWASH/CMP (By Survey)	%	R				
R 5.2: % of rural household members respondents who have heard messages about thematic areas in WASH (<i>climate change, disability inclusion, harmful traditional practices, menstrual hygiene, women empowerment, water quality, tariff collection, COVID-19 pandemic, human rights, etc.</i>)	%	R				
R 5.3: % of WASH actors (regional & Woreda level) identified by COWASH IV as being of strategic importance in the WASH sector whose work has been influenced by COWASH learning products (By Survey at Regional & Woreda levels)	%	R	-			
Output 5.1: Implementation Guidelines and Manuals prepared and implemented						
IR 5.1.1: No. of manuals and guidelines developed and implemented in COWASH IV	No	IR	-	26	31	
Output 5.2: Project Implementation Monitored and Performances Reviewed						
IR 5.2.1: No. of quarterly & annual performance reports prepared for COWASH IV (Regional and National Consolidated)	No	IR	-	36	76	
IR 5.2.2: No. of supportive supervisions conducted and reported by FTAT	No	IR	-	6	12	
IR 5.2.3: No. of Regional Performance Review & Planning Workshops conducted	No	IR	-	20	40	
IR 5.2.4: No. of COWASH Steering Committee Minutes of Meetings (MoM) prepared and approved (Disaggregated by Federal and Regional)	No	IR	-	20	40	
Output 5.3: Project Implementation Progress and Achievements Documented and Disseminated						
IR 5.3.1: No. of case studies, lessons learnt, and case stories prepared on COWASH IV	No	IR	-	12	34	

Indicator: ■ G = Goal: ■ R = Outcome (R): ■ IR = Output:	Unit	Indicator Type: -Goal(G), -Outcome (R), -Output (IR)	Baseline Value: (End of EFY 2013)	Total Cum. Target at MTR	Total Cum. Target at EoP	
interventions						
IR 5.3.2: No. of Press Conferences/Releases given by FTAT	No	IR	-	6	10	
IR 5.3.3: No. of thematic messages (WSP, CC, INCLUSION, MSE, HTP, CMP, MHM, HR, ODF, WOMEN EMPOWERMENT, GENDER, COVID-19) developed and communicated in the Project Areas	No	IR	-	12	24	
Output 5.4: Project Budget Effectively Managed						
IR 5.4.1: Cumulative GoE budget transferred	Birr	IR	-	760,548,108	2,507,380,442	
IR 5.4.2: Cumulative GoE budget utilized	Birr	IR	-	750,291,961	2,486,221,223	
IR 5.4.3: Cumulative GoF budget transferred	Birr	IR	-	584,668,389	1,693,052,180	
IR 5.4.4: Cumulative GoF budget utilized	Birr	IR	-	577,064,487	1,679,540,743	

Source: Project M&E. Updated version #3.

ANNEX 4: Performance assessment framework: rating system and main criteria

#	Performance level	How much "on track" or behind	Level of achievement of the target	Level of corrective actions needed: related
1	Highly Satisfactory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very good: only minor shortcomings. Meaning Highly Relevant, Effective, Efficient, etc for these. 	Fully on track or ahead:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative Target Fully achieved or exceeded (notionally > 90%). EoP Target likely to be fully achieved. 	Continue with due monitoring and management.
2	Satisfactory: or Mostly or Moderately Satisfactory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good but with modest / moderate shortcomings. Meaning Relevant, Effective, Efficient, etc for these. 	Mostly / almost on track: slightly / moderately behind schedule:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative Target Mostly but not fully achieved (notionally 60% to 90%). EoP Target Likely to be mostly (but not fully) achieved. 	Modest / moderate corrective action are needed soon: To be done by the implementing entity.
3	Partly Satisfactory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some success, but below expectations: has significant shortcomings. Meaning Partly Relevant, Effective, Efficient, etc for these. 	Significantly behind schedule:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative Target only Partly achieved (notionally 30% to 60%). EoP Target Likely to be Partly achieved. 	Significant and fairly urgent corrective action is needed: Supervising body to follow up.
4	Poor / Unsatisfactory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious shortcomings. 	Seriously behind schedule:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative Target Not yet achieved to a satisfactory degree (notionally < 30%). EoP Target unlikely to be achieved to a satisfactory degree. 	Serious and very urgent corrective action needed: Supervising body to intervene.
5	Unable to assess: No information or cancelled.			

Source: Prepared by the MTE in line with generally accepted norms.

Note: The "notional" percentage limits for achievement against indicator targets cannot sensibly be used for COWASH because of the very serious constraints faced in almost all outcome and output areas. The assessment made in this report are based on subjective judgement from experience.

ANNEX 5a: COWASH IV Budget Summary in EUR and ETB (from ProDoc)

Exchange rate ETB to EUR		37						
Budget line	Government of Finland	Regional States	Community Contribution 15 %	All contributions	Government of Finland	Regional States	Community Contribution 15 %	All contributions
Currency	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	ETB	ETB	ETB	ETB
Regional level budget								
Investments								
- Community WASH		14 000 000	2 100 000	16 100 000		518 000 000	77 700 000	595 700 000
- Institutional WASH	2 000 000	2 000 000		4 000 000	74 000 000	74 000 000		148 000 000
- Innovation funds for construction		500 000		500 000		18 500 000		18 500 000
Capacity Building	10 134 000			10 134 000	374 958 000			374 958 000
Operational budget	800 000	3 000 000		3 800 000	29 600 000	111 000 000		140 600 000
Regional budget	12 934 000	19 500 000	2 100 000	34 534 000	478 558 000	721 500 000	77 700 000	1 277 758 000
Contingencies	920 000	975 000		1 895 000	34 040 000	36 075 000		70 115 000
Regional financing, total (40/60)	13 854 000	20 475 000	2 100 000	36 429 000	512 598 000	757 575 000	77 700 000	1 347 873 000
Federal level budget								
Costs of the personnel support to MOF	250 000			250 000	9 250 000			9 250 000
Other costs (travel etc) to support MOF and MOWIE in programme management	100 000			100 000	3 700 000			3 700 000
Total support to federal level	350 000			350 000	12 950 000			12 950 000
Technical assistance								
Technical Assistance	3 556 000			3 556 000	131 572 000	-		131 572 000
Federal level capacity building	240 000			240 000	8 880 000			8 880 000
Innovation, research and piloting	400 000			400 000	14 800 000			14 800 000
Total through TA support	4 196 000			4 196 000	155 252 000			155 252 000
TOTAL	18 400 000	20 475 000	2 100 000	40 975 000	680 800 000	757 575 000	77 700 000	1 516 075 000

Source: COWASH IV Project Document (Dec 2020).

Note 1: The foreign exchange rate used was 37 ETB / EUR, as at the time of the ProDoc (Dec 2020).

Note 2: The project now uses a fixed exchange rate of 54 ETB / EUR for all its conversion calculations. This was the rate in force at the end of Inception.

ANNEX 5b: GoF Regional Budget Share for COWASH IV (EUR)

(Share of the GoF budget for Regions, as allocated by the Federal Steering Committee)

Regions	70% share based on Federal Grant Formula (EUR)	15% share based on COWASH III Performance (EUR)	15% share based on Regional Commitment per Woreda to COWASH IV (EUR)	Total GoF Budget allocated per Region (EUR)	Region share of Total Budget %
Amhara	2,327,279	323,842	136,172	2,787,293	22%
BGRS	197,192	328,108	378,254	903,554	7%
Oromia	3,712,873	326,139	187,428	4,226,440	33%
SNNPR	1,733,441	319,249	308,423	2,361,112	18%
Sidama	433,315	319,249	408,515	1,161,078	9%
Tigray	649,701	323,514	521,308	1,494,523	12%
Total	9,053,801	1,940,101	1,940,100	12,934,000	100%
	70%	15%	15%	100%	

Source: Inception Report, December 2021.

Note: The project uses 54 ETB / EUR to calculate ALL equivalent amounts in EUR or ETB.

Note (#1): The ETB 9,636,467 rolled-over funds in Tigray Region were used for a combination of COVID-19 mitigation, the salary back-payments to the RSU and other physical investment agreed between Tigray Region and the Embassy of Finland.

ANNEX 5c: GoF funds rolled over from Phase III (ETB):

Region	GoF funds rolled-over from Phase III (ETB)
Amhara	4,073,295
BGRS	1,255,275
Oromia	5,020,878
SNNPR	5,545,948
Sidama	
SWEP	
Tigray (#1)	9,636,467
Sub Total	25,531,863
Finland	4,780,566
Total	30,312,429

Source: COWASH IV FTAT EFY 2015 Performance Report (July 2023).

ANNEX 5d: GoE Regional Budget Contributions for the whole of COWASH IV (ETB)

Region	EFY 2014	EFY 2015	EFY 2016	EFY 2017	Total
Amhara	65,061,461	75,000,000	78,000,000	69,938,539	288,000,000
Benishangul-Gumuz	1,131,852	10,372,716	60,372,716	8,122,716	80,000,000
Oromia	88,506,962	74,617,244	70,180,400	64,000,026	297,304,632
Sidama	27,474,200	26,841,935	26,841,935	26,841,930	108,000,000
SNNP	47,000,000	55,000,000	55,000,000	55,000,000	212,000,000
Tigray	40,499,740	50,582,104	55,100,080	46,765,340	192,947,264
Total	269,674,215	292,413,999	345,495,131	270,668,551	1,178,251,896

Source: COWASH IV FTAT EFY 2015 Performance Report (July 2023).

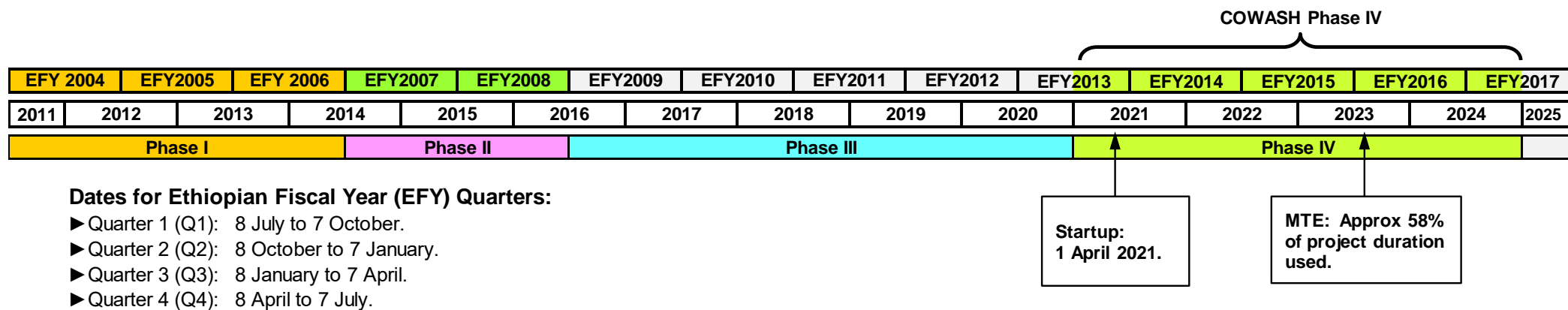
ANNEX 5e: Proposal for sharing the GoF Regional Contingency budget (EUR)

COWASH IV Regions	Share based on Federal Grant Formula (EUR)	<<< as % of Total	Share based on COWASH III Performance (EUR)	<<< as % of Total	Share based on Regional Commitment per Woreda to COWASH IV (EUR)	<<< as % of Total	Share for front-end loading costs for each Region (EUR)	<<< as % of Total	Total GoF Contingency allocated per Region (EUR)	<<< as % of Total
Share %	10%		30%		30%		30%		100%	
Amhara	23,649	25.7%	39,489	14.3%	16,605	6.0%	13,800	5%	93,542	10.2%
BGRS	2,004	2.2%	40,009	14.5%	46,123	16.7%	44,160	16%	132,296	14.4%
Oromia	37,728	41.0%	39,769	14.4%	22,855	8.3%	13,800	5%	114,152	12.4%
SNNP	14,126	15.4%	38,928	14.1%	37,608	13.6%	44,160	16%	134,823	14.7%
Sidama	4,492	4.9%	38,928	14.1%	49,813	18.0%	44,160	16%	137,393	14.9%
SWEP	3,400	3.7%	39,429	14.3%	39,429	14.3%	57,960	21%	140,217	15.2%
Tigray	6,602	7.2%	39,449	14.3%	63,567	23.0%	57,960	21%	167,578	18.2%
Total	92,000	100%	276,000	100%	276,000	100%	276,000	100%	920,000	100%

Source: Prepared by the MTE using Regional sub-criteria percentages from the MoF Federal Budget Proclamation Part 1 for EFY 2016, and original split, as explained in the text.

ANNEX 6: COWASH phases in Ethiopian (EFY) and Gregorian calendars


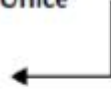
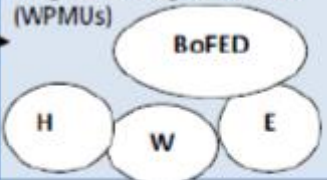
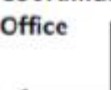
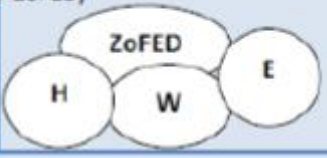

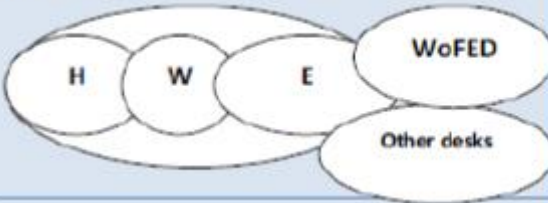
EFY = Ethiopian Fiscal (Financial) Year.



ANNEX 7: Manuals, Guidelines & Strategies developed in COWASH IV

- COWASH IV Federal Project Administration Manual (Revision).
- COWASH IV Planning, Monitoring, Reporting, WASH Facility Web-Based Database User Manual.
- COWASH IV Financial Management Manual.
- Regional Support Unit (RSU) ToR.
- Roles and Responsibilities of COWASH IV Stakeholders (Revision).
- CMP Investment Fund Management Manual by Woreda Finance Office via Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE)/Woreda Finance Office.
- Community Managed Project (CMP) Implementation Manual for Water Supply Schemes using MFIs.
- Institutional WASH Implementation Guideline using Woreda Managed Project (WMP) Approach.
- WASHCO Procurement Guideline for COWASH IV (Revision).
- COWASH IV Water Safety Planning 4+ Working Manual.
- COWASH IV Social, Environment, Climate Risk Screening Management (SECRSM) Guideline.
- COWASH IV sustainability checks for community and institutional WASH.
- School WASH Facilities O&M Training Manual.
- Gender Transformative and Disability Inclusion Strategy.
- COWASH IV Disability Inclusion Guideline (Revision).
- Training guideline on Women's Leadership in WASHCO Management.
- COWASH Community Level Disability Inclusion Guidebook.
- Brochure on Women Empowerment in COWASH.
- COWASH IV WASH- SLA Training Facilitators Guide.
- COWASH IV Business Skill Development Training Manual.
- COWASH IV Social and Behaviour Change Strategy.
- COWASH IV Social and Behaviour Change Training Manual.

ANNEX 8: Institutional structure of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP)

Level	Governance & Guidance	Oversight & Management	Program Implementation	Program Coordination
Federal	National WaSH Steering Committee	National WaSH Technical Team	Federal Sectors' WaSH Program Management Units (WPMUs) 	National WaSH Coordination Office 
Regional	Regional WaSH Steering Committee	Regional WaSH Technical Team	Regional Sectors' WaSH Program Management Units (WPMUs) 	Regional WaSH Coordination Office 
Special Zones (or others Zones where applicable)	Zonal WaSH Management Team		Zonal WaSH Program Management Units – (Water, Health, Education, and ZoFED) 	Zonal WaSH Coordination Office 
Woreda	Woreda WaSH Steering Committee (Woreda Cabinet)		Woreda WaSH Team 	
Town/City	Town/City WaSH Steering Committee (Town Cabinet)		Town/City WaSH Technical Team Municipality Health Desk Education Desk Town Water Board Town Water Utility	

Source: From COWASH IV Project Document (p17).

ANNEX 9: Definition of Service Levels for SDG 6.1 & 6.2 Indicators

1: Water Supply Services

Service Level	Definition
SAFELY MANAGED	Drinking water from an improved water source that is located on premises , available when needed , free from faecal and priority chemical contamination
BASIC	Drinking water from an improved water source , provided collection time is not more than 30 minutes for a round trip , including queuing
LIMITED	Drinking water from an improved water source for which collection time exceeds 30 minutes for a round trip , including queuing
UNIMPROVED	Drinking water from an unprotected dug wells or unprotected spring
SURFACE WATER	Drinking water directly from a River, Dam, Lake, Pond, Stream, Canal or Irrigation Canal
Note: Improved water sources include Piped Water, Boreholes or Tubewells, Protected Dugwells, Protected Springs, Rainwater, and Packaged or Delivered Water. NIRAS	

2: Sanitation Services

Service Level	Definition
SAFELY MANAGED	Use of improved facilities that are NOT SHARED with other households and where excreta are safely disposed of in situ or transported and treated offsite
BASIC	Use of improved facilities that are NOT SHARED with other households
LIMITED	Use of improved facilities SHARED between two or more households
UNIMPROVED	Use of pit latrines WITHOUT a slab or platform, hanging latrines or bucket latrines
OPEN DEFECATION	Disposal of human faeces in fields, forests, bushes, open bodies of water, beaches or other open spaces or with solid waste.
Note: Improved facilities include Flush/Pour Flush to Piped Sewer Systems, Septic Tanks, or Pit Latrines; Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) Latrines, Composting Toilets, or Pit Latrines with Slabs. NIRAS	

3: Hygiene services: Handwashing with soap:

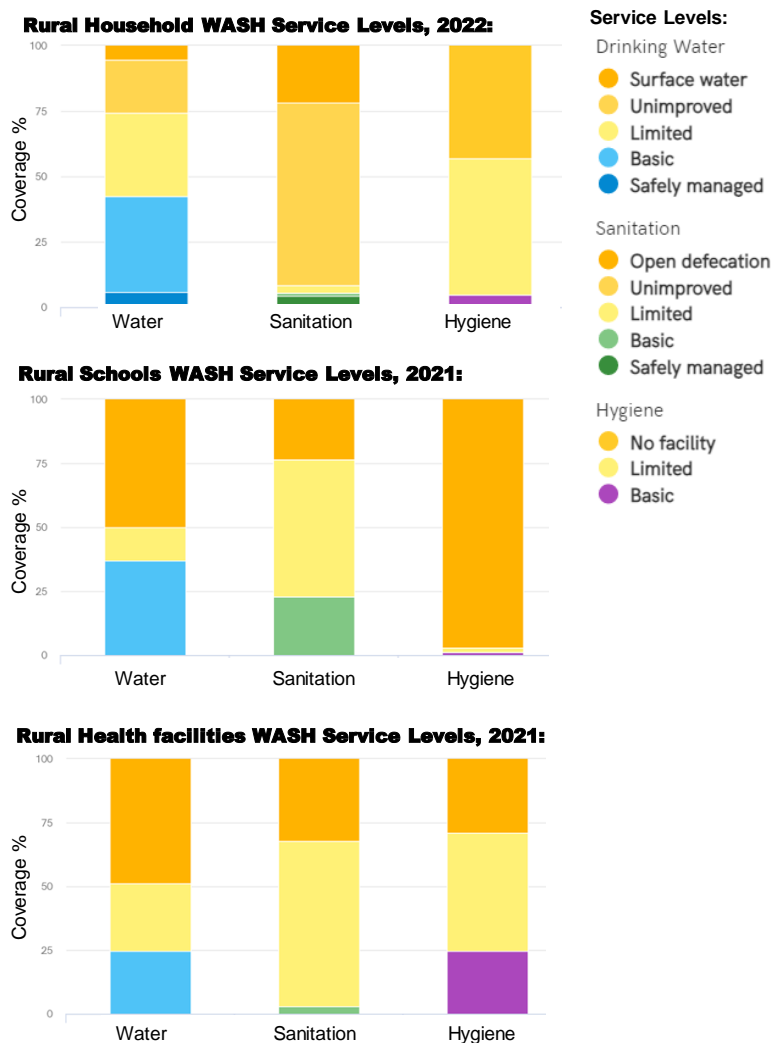
Service Level	Definition
BASIC	Availability of a Handwashing Facility on Premises with Soap & Water
LIMITED	Availability of a Handwashing Facility on Premises without Soap & Water
NO FACILITY	No Handwashing Facility on Premises

Note: Handwashing facilities may be fixed or mobile and include a Sink with Tap Water, Bucket with Taps, Tippy-Taps, and Jugs or Basins Designated for Handwashing. Soap includes Bar Soap, Liquid Soap, Powder Detergent, and Soapy Water, but does not include Ash, Soil, Sand, or other Handwashing Agents.

Source: COWASH FTAT M&E.

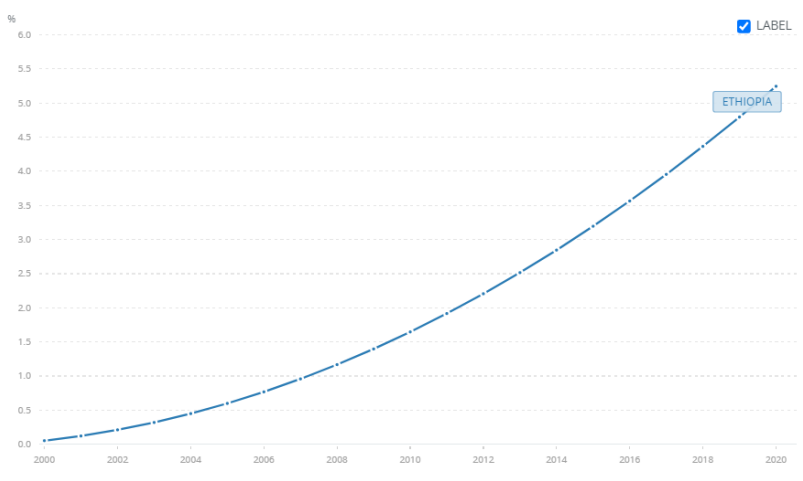
ANNEX 10: WASH Service Level data for rural areas of Ethiopia

Figure 6: WASH Service Level data for HHs, schools and health facilities in rural Ethiopia



Source: Most recent data available from WHO / UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP): see <https://washdata.org>

Figure 7: Growth in people using safely managed drinking water in rural Ethiopia



Source: World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.H2O.SMDW.RU.ZS?locations=ET>

ANNEX 11: Field work itinerary

Date	Place	Activity
Sat, 1 Jul 23	Fly to Addis Ababa:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly to Addis Ababa: depart.
Sun, 2 Jul 23	Addis Ababa:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly / Arrive Addis Ababa: arrive. • MTE Team meeting.
Mon, 3 Jul 23	Fly Addis to Asosa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly from Addis Ababa to Asosa (am). • Meetings with FTAT. • Meeting with RSU.
Tue, 4 Jul 23	Asosa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benishangul-Gumuz (BG) Steering Committee mtg. • Meet with key stakeholders on sidelines and informally. • Meeting with MFA representatives.
Wed, 5 Jul 23	Asosa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visits from Asosa: hand dug well, protected springs x 2, OWNP water tank, health facility latrine. • Meeting Woreda Administrative Officer etc.
Thu, 6 Jul 23	Fly Asosa to Bahir Dar via Addis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly from Asosa to Bahir Dar via Addis. • Meetings RSU, BoF.
Fri, 7 Jul 23	Bahir Dar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visits Bahir Dar: hand dug wells and HH latrines x 2 sites. • Meeting Woreda Wash Team at Woreda offices. • Meetings with RSU team. • Dinner with FTAT, RSU, BoF.
Sat, 8 Jul 23	Bahir Dar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amhara Steering Committee meeting, • Meet with key stakeholders on sidelines and informally.
Sun, 9 Jul 23	Fly Bahir Dar to Hawassa via Addis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly from Bahir Dar to Hawassa via Addis.
Mon, 10 Jul 23	Hawassa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visits from Hawassa to Sidama Region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting at Woreda Water Office. ○ Shallow well (borehole) & WASHCO meeting, ○ School latrine and MHM blocks, ○ Meeting Savings and Lending group. • Meeting COWASH consultant (Mike Wood).
Tue, 11 Jul 23	Hawassa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Sidama RSU. • Meeting SNNP RSU. • Field visit from Hawassa to SNNP Region: Sanitation MSE and Woreda WASH Team.
Wed, 12 Jul 23	Fly Hawassa to Addis Ababa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly from Hawassa to Addis Ababa. • Meeting FTAT MEL Specialist.

Thu, 13 Jul 23	Addis Ababa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with MoF team. • Meeting MoE specialist. • Meeting World Bank OWNPs specialists. • Meeting FCDO specialist.
Fri, 14 Jul 23	Addis Ababa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting MoWE State Minister. • Meetings with FTAT CTA and specialists individually. • Round up meeting with MTE team. • Depart for airport Addis Ababa.
Sat, 15 Jul 23	Return to home base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly from Addis Ababa to Finland / UK.