



2018 - 2030

**BLUE
DEAL**

Blue Deal Framework Phase 2:
**Accelerating our impact in the
decade of action to reach SDG 6**



Ministry of Infrastructure
and Water Management

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AUTHORITIES**



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Netherlands



**Helping 20 million
people around the
world to gain access
to clean, sufficient and
safe water by 2030**

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“I am convinced
that together we
will make even more
impact”



Luzette Kroon
Board member International Affairs at the
Association of Dutch Water Authorities

“The collaboration between all the organizations involved has really grown in this programme in recent years. We have learned how we can complement each other. So I am looking forward to the second phase, because I am convinced that together we will make even more impact. In addition, in the coming period we will continue to connect other parties to this important work on achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6.”

Summary & List of abbreviations

Summary

In 2018, the Dutch water authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management joined forces to work with other organisations around the world to achieve SDG6 in a collaboration called the Blue Deal. The Blue Deal programme comprises 17 international partnerships in which water managers from the Netherlands and other countries work together to achieve the goal of helping 20 million people around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient and safe water by 2030.

Water managers enter into a 12-year partnership in which they work on long-term solutions for the region. Climate adaptation and social inclusion are structural to such solutions. The Blue Deal strengthens capacity building of water authorities in other countries so that they can implement long-term solutions. The focus is on governance and integrated water management. This means that partners work together to promote:

- 1. adequate knowledge and expertise in the field of water management;
- 2. strong institutions;
- 3. collaboration with important stakeholders.

Important themes are the establishment of a well-functioning management and maintenance of water management and financial independence of the local partner. The programme is divided into two stages: 2019-2022 and 2023-2030. The programme started in 2019 with 17 instead of the planned 6 partnerships. The beginning of the first stage coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic delayed results, but also provided valuable lessons on hybrid working and the value of strong local teams.

Blue Deal Phase 2: Accelerate, increase focus and simplify management

At present – only a few years away from 2030 – the world is in a decade in which more decisive action is needed to achieve the SDG goals. So the Dutch water authorities and both ministries are deploying more resources to grow the Blue Deal in Phase 2 of the programme. They also extend Phase 2 to 8 years so that the programme can plan ahead. The aims are: ensure clearer ambition and focus, improve programme approach and management, enhance ties between knowledge and networks, and use the programme’s value as leverage for other investment programmes.

The projected impact planning of the programme is as follows:

Impact	2019-2022	2023-2030
Number of people reached	2 million	18 million

Table 1: Blue Deal impact planning

In addition to the main objective of helping 20 million people around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient and safe water, the programme has three additional objectives: to learn from other countries how water management in the Netherlands can be improved, to boost opportunities for Dutch businesses, NGO’s and knowledge institutions and to help make the Dutch water authorities more attractive as employers.

Improved design needed

An external, independent Mid-term Review (MtR) of the Blue Deal was carried out in 2020 and 2021. In summary, it found that the programme has huge potential, but that changes are needed to its design and approach in order to achieve its potential. The MtR’s recommendations have been a guiding principle in the process of drafting this proposal for Phase 2.

The following improvements will be made:

- Measures that proved effective during the pandemic will be continued in Phase 2, namely hybrid working, strong local teams and the deployment of Young Experts. A tailor-made programme for the latter is being set up within the Blue Deal (YEP programme).
- Climate adaptation and social inclusion will be the crosscutting themes in the programme, rather than the five themes from Phase 1. Each partnership will make this part of their approach.
- The Blue Deal will continue to work in the catchment areas of the water authorities abroad
- around the world, but the goal of implementing the programme in 40 catchment areas has been abandoned.
- The Theory of Change and the Monitoring & Evaluation framework will be adapted so as to tie in better with the water authorities abroad.
- The partnerships will work within their multi-year plans on a long-term vision that looks beyond 2030. Phase 2 is extended to 8 years to enhance this long-term vision.
- Internal communication will focus on increasing collaboration between partners within the programme, as well as the support base within organisations.
- A bolder approach will be adopted when reporting programme results, and the story of the water authorities abroad will be made more central.
- Programme governance will be simplified in order to allow for a more agile response when steering is called for. The new set-up will consist of a Steering Group, Programme Office and partnerships. External assessments will also take place in the form of evaluations (Mid-term and End-term Reviews) and informal consultations. Alongside the decision-making structure, there will be considerable focus on involving participating organisations and increasing their support base.
- There will be increased focus on the effectiveness of partnerships.
- The networks, knowledge and experience of the ministries involved will be exploited more effectively through the embassies and delta coordinators.
- Collaboration with other organisations and programmes will be strengthened.

New aspirations:

- Growing the programme’s financial scope from €16 million in Phase 1 (average of €5 million per year) to €80 million in Phase 2 (average €10 million per year).
- Lobbying for water governance so as to inspire other organisations to improve water management by entering into long-term partnerships geared to promoting expertise, strengthening institutions and enhancing collaboration with stakeholders.
- Collaborating with investment programmes so that the Blue Deal can be used as leverage to provide water authorities abroad with access to the investments they need. In the coming months, consultations will be held on this subject with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and Invest International.
- Setting up a training programme to enhance knowledge exchange between partnerships and with other organisations, for instance through Communities of Practice, training courses, peer reviews, regional meetings with multiple partnerships and a biennial conference.

The 17 partnerships from Phase 1 will submit a multi-year plan based on Phase 2 of the Framework. The steering group will take a decision on this in December 2022. The indicative budget of Phase 2 is as follows:

Phase 2 (2023-2030)			
Year	Yearly budget	Total budget for 8 years	%
Partnerships	9,200,000	73,600,000	90%
Learning programme	175,000	1,400,000	2%
Communication programme	220,000	1,760,000	2%
Programme Office	655,000	5,240,000	6%
Total costs	10,250,000	82,000,000	100%
Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Infrastructure and Water Management	5,000,000	40,000,000	49%
DWA/ water authorities abroad	5,150,000	41,200,000	50%
Association of Dutch Water Authorities	100,000	800,000	1%
Total contributions	10,250,000	82,000,000	100%

Table 2: Total budget of the Blue Deal for Phase 2

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Additional goals – Goals that are not in the Theory of Change but can be worked on within the Blue Deal. They are not mandatory, nor are they currently being monitored.

Association of Dutch Water Authorities in the Netherlands (UvW) - The Association represents the water authorities in the national and international playing fields, promotes their interests, and stimulates knowledge exchange and cooperation.

CCT – Cross-Cutting Themes. Themes that have special attention and are interwoven with the Blue Deal programme.

CINTER – DWA Committee for International Affairs.

CoPs – Communities of Practice. A type of community (online or otherwise) in which counterparts and experts come together to share best practices.

DGIS – Directorate General for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dutch Water Authority – regional water authority in the Netherlands. Numbering 21 in total, such authorities are responsible for the management of flood defences, regional water management and the purification of waste water.

DWA – Dutch Water Authorities. The international organisation of the regional water authorities in the Netherlands and their Association UvW. Its goal is to use its unique expertise to tackle water issues worldwide.

FTE – Full-time equivalent.

IGG – Department for Inclusive Green Growth at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

IWRM – Integrated Water Resources Management. IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximise the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems..

NGO – Non-governmental organisation.

NWB (Fund) – Netherlands Water Authorities Bank (Fund)

PO – Programme Office

SC – Blue Deal Steering Committee

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

ToC – Theory of Change. A Theory of Change is a theoretical framework used to describe long-term project goals and how to achieve them by carrying out short-term project activities.

UN – United Nations

Water governance - The set of systems that control decision-making with regard to water resource development and management.

WINTER – International Working Group of the Dutch Water Authorities

World Water Net (WWN)– the organisation that works for the Dutch Water Authority Amstel, Gooi and Vecht and for the municipality of Amsterdam. Wherever the framework speaks of DWA, it also refers to WWN.

“Learning from each other and with each other, in order to help 20 million people around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient and safe drinking water in a sustainable way”



René van Hell
Director Inclusive Green Growth at the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands

“The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a proud partner of the Blue Deal. In the first phase, we worked together to set up the partnerships and strengthen and build up water authorities in the 16 partner countries. For phase 2, our ministry wants to deepen these partnerships by focusing on learning, and by making climate adaptation and social inclusiveness a recurring theme in all partnerships. Learning from each other and with each other, in order to help 20 million people around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient and safe drinking water in a sustainable way.”

1

The Blue Deal

1 The Blue Deal

Water is an indispensable part of our lives. Yet worldwide access to clean, sufficient and safe water is not self-evident. Disastrous water issues are having an increasing impact on humans, animals and plants. Poor water management poses a risk to our health, environment and safety. At the same time, good water management is an opportunity to bring people together, increase climate resilience and create a sustainable and inclusive world. With the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations has therefore set itself the goal of giving everyone access to sustainable water and sanitation management (SDG6) by 2030.

2018: Start of the Blue Deal

In 2018 the Dutch Water Authorities, 17 water authorities abroad and Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Infrastructure and Water Management joined forces to contribute to achieving SDG6. This collaboration is called the Blue Deal. The Blue Deal is a programme that consists of long-term partnerships between water authorities in the Netherlands and abroad, extending to 2030. It involves working together on sustainable water management with the aim of giving 20 million people worldwide access to clean, sufficient and safe water.

1.1 Decade of action

The world is now – a few years before 2030 – in the decade where more action is needed to achieve the SDG goals. In 2023, the Netherlands will therefore co-host the UN 2023 Water Conference with Tajikistan and call on countries to take urgent steps to further these goals, in the light of the critical need felt by the Dutch government, DWA and both ministries to step up action within the Blue Deal. They want to help other water authorities abroad to speed up progress in providing clean, sufficient and safe water for people, plants and animals worldwide (SDG 6) and to adapt their water management to climate change (SDG 13).

DWA and both ministries are therefore deploying more resources to grow the Blue Deal in Phase 2 of the programme, provide a clearer ambition and focus, improve the approach and management of the programme, and put their knowledge and networks to even better use. They also aim to use the programme to create leverage with other investment programmes.

1.2 How does the Blue Deal make an impact?

The partners of the Blue Deal believe that water management at local or regional level is the key to really making a difference to the living environment of people, plants and animals. The ambition is that water authorities abroad are able to manage their water systems and associated infrastructure in a sustainable way, resulting in improved access to clean, sufficient and safe water for 20 million people.

The Blue Deal seeks to achieve this ambition through government-to-government 12-year partnerships. The Blue Deal approach is demand-driven, the local demand and context is leading. Dutch Water Authorities are partnered with mostly river basin, catchment- and waste water treatment organisations abroad. In the partnership they will work together on long-term solutions aimed at managing and maintaining water resources in the future. Climate adaptation and social inclusion are fixed elements of this long-term approach, as well as connecting regional and national water policy, and cooperation with other strategic partners.

The Blue Deal strengthens the partners' capacity to implement long-term solutions. This is done in the field of governance and integrated water management. This means they work together to promote:



1.3 Reach 20 million in two phases

The Blue Deal will run for 12 years, but is divided into two phases, each with an objective as shown in Table 1.

Impact	Phase 1 2019-2022	Phase 2 2023-2030
Number of people reached	2 million	18 million

Table 3: Phasing of the Blue Deal impact towards 2030

In Phase 1 of the programme, 17 partnerships were launched, rather than the 6 that were originally envisaged. The potential impact was therefore greater than the projected 1 million people. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the implementation of the programme in Phase 1, so not all results could be achieved. However, we succeeded in adjusting the programme quickly and effectively during the pandemic. In Phase 1, the programme probably reached around 2 million people¹.

The participating organisations are scaling up the Blue Deal budget in Phase 2 and are also focusing on collaborations with investment programmes. Phase 2 will also be extended from four to eight years. Originally, three phases were planned but the design has now been simplified by merging the last two phases into one. The Blue Deal is therefore expected to reach 18 million people in Phase 2.

1.4 Additional goals

In addition to the main goal of 20 million people, the programme has three additional goals which partnerships can optionally focus on:

1. The Dutch partners want to learn from their partners abroad, so as to expand knowledge and skills in the field of water management in the Netherlands.
2. The Dutch partners support the development of opportunities for (Dutch) business, NGO's and knowledge institutions, provided it helps our partners abroad to achieve their goals.
3. DWA wants to become more attractive as employers by offering our Dutch staff work experience abroad.

¹ First estimate of the impact will be made when the data from 2021 are in. Final measurement of impact of Phase 1 will be reported on in 2023 after the figures from 2022 are in.

1.5 Phase 2: a new course

In Phase 2 the Blue Deal will build on the partnerships from Phase 1, and their results and lessons learned. We will also use the recommendations of the Mid-term Review to further improve the design and approach of the programme. The change in Phase 2 entails the following actions:

1. Accelerating to achieve our ambition

- The financial size of the programme will be increased from €16 million in Phase 1 (average of €5 million per year) to €80 million in Phase 2 (average €10 million per year).
- There will be even greater focus on the effectiveness of the partnerships.
- The water authorities abroad will be at the heart of the programme.
- The Blue Deal aims to leverage other investment programmes.
- We will make even better use of the networks, knowledge and experience of the Dutch ministries involved via the embassies and delta coordinators.
- Learning from each other and other stakeholders will become an important part of the programme, for example through Communities of Practice.
- We will retain approaches that proved effective during COVID-19: hybrid working, strong local teams and the deployment of Young Experts.
- Where possible, we will lobby for water governance to inspire other organisations and programmes through our approach.

2. More focus in our approach

- The Cross-Cutting Themes are social inclusion and climate adaptation (instead of 5 cross-cutting themes in Phase 1).
- We will continue to work worldwide, but working in 40 catchment areas is no longer an aim.
- We are working on a long-term vision (post-2030) within the partnerships.
- In addition to the main ambition, the Dutch partners have set three additional goals on: learning for the Netherlands, stimulating the development of our own employees and opportunities for the (Dutch) business community, NGO's and knowledge institutes.

3. Programme governance will be simplified

- Phase 2 will be extended to 8 years in order to simplify the set-up of the programme and enhance long-term planning.
- We will simplify the organisation of the programme to increase agility.
- We will ensure that the M&E framework is simpler and more in line with the daily practice of our partners.
- We will clarify and improve the financial strategy.



“A Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030”



Henk Ovink
Water Envoy, Ministry of Infrastructure
and Water Management, the Netherlands

“The strength of the Blue Deal is that the programme ensures concrete knowledge exchange between local water managers in the Netherlands and local water managers in the partner countries. It is implementation-oriented in a way that local stakeholders are also involved (participatory process). The beauty of the Blue Deal is that it is an action-oriented programme. In the future we must safeguard this concreteness in order to give substance to a Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Knowledge exchange and advice on a climate-proof approach as well as sustainable water management form the core of the cooperation, with the partner countries ultimately having to take these steps themselves. Driving Action to Impact is the motto for the upcoming phase of the Blue Deal!”

2

Looking back on Phase 1



2 Looking back on Phase 1

A considerable part of Phase 1 was devoted to establishing a solid foundation for the programme. It was built with 17 partnerships, a baseline assessment was performed, multi-annual plans were implemented and we learned from the Mid-term Review (MTR). Unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic made implementation difficult, and had a major impact on the programme. Adapting to the new situation therefore dominated Phase 1.

Adjusting to COVID-19

The Blue Deal was set to go into full implementation for the first time in 2020 after two years of preparation (including a baseline assessment), but instead 2020 became the year of the pandemic. Everyone had to adapt to the new situation, which meant that only 60% of planned work could be carried out in that year. Nevertheless, the programme was soon able to continue after some adjustments. The local teams were expanded, a group of 14 Young Professionals (YEP) started and the switch was quickly made to a digital way of working together.

It was a process of trial and error, which proved particularly difficult for new partnerships and countries with internet or hardware problems. But after the first months of the pandemic, increasing progress was made with the Blue Deal. This growth curve continued in 2021 when live visits were partly possible again, and the expectations for 2022 are even more positive. The pandemic delayed results in Phase 1 of the programme, but it provided valuable lessons about hybrid working and the value of strong local teams, which likely will make Phase 2 more effective.

The results of Phase 1 will be added as an annex to the final version of this Framework because the data on 2022 will be known in 2023.

2.1 Results of the Mid-term Review

In 2020 and 2021, an external independent MTR of the Blue Deal was conducted by MDF consultancy in collaboration with IRC. The MTR aimed to evaluate the programme's potential to reach its target of 20 million people by 2030, as well as provide lessons learned and recommendations. The Mid-term Review helped to make interim adjustments and provided a great deal of valuable information.

A Dutch research team and six local researchers examined the design and progress of the Blue Deal over a period of more than five months. Stakeholders at all levels of the programme and from all countries involved provided input. Six Blue Deal partnerships were also investigated as on-site case studies. In summary, the evaluation found that the Blue Deal had great potential, but that to achieve it, adjustments were needed to its design and approach. The MTR's recommendations informed the design of the Blue Deal in Phase 2. Appendix 1 contains all the recommendations and the management response to them.

Summary results

The Blue Deal distinguishes itself from other initiatives through the long-term duration (12 years) and unique approach that strengthens other governments. Themes that stand out are the establishment of a well-functioning management and maintenance of water management and financial independence of the water authority abroad. The Blue Deal even has the potential to boost attention for water governance worldwide. The programme adapted quickly and well to the COVID-19 pandemic and the partnerships are relevant to the challenges of water management. The international work of the water authorities has also been highly professionalised by the Blue Deal, the Programme Office is functioning well and people working on the programme are committed and highly motivated.

However, a number of important improvements are needed in the design and approach of the programme. The ambition must be clearer and a number of strategic choices must be made. In addition, the decision-making structure (governance) of the Blue Deal is too complicated, which prevents swift action. The Dutch ministries and water authorities have different expectations of the partnership they have entered into for the Blue Deal. Finally, the capacity of the Programme Office and coordinators is under pressure. There must be a better balance between tasks and capacity.



Interview with Yepper Loay Alatrash

After the success of the Young Expert Programme (YEP) in the first phase of the Blue Deal, another round of the YEP programme starts in the fall of 2022. Every Blue Deal partnership can apply for one or two Yeppers. The past two years 14 Yeppers have finished their YEP programme. Loay Alatrash is the local Yepper who has been working for the Blue Deal in the Palestinian territories. He speaks about his experience.

What did you learn?

"I started the YEP programme on April 1, 2020 and I finished it on April 1, 2022. I can't compare myself now to the person I was two years ago. The YEP programme gave me the opportunity to learn a lot. For example about leadership, programme management, dealing with different people, negotiation. I was familiar with the water situation in Palestine, now I am familiar with the water situation in all the world. I also learned about climate change, food, energy, and how it is all connected to each other."

"Even though there was COVID-19, I used this period well. I gained experience, improved my English, my skills. I used the YEP training and network to improve myself. My YEP programme has ended, but I can stay on for another year for the Blue Deal programme."

What is the Blue Deal programme working on?

"Our pillars are to support the reform of the water sector in Palestine, to make the waste water chain sustainable and capacity building of the Palestinian employees by transferring the Dutch knowledge to the Palestinians."

What was your role as a Yepper?

"I was the local project leader for the Blue Deal programme in Palestine, so I was basically the eyes and ears for the Blue Deal. Especially in these past two year where no one could travel. There are 65 Palestinian colleagues involved in this programme and 15 from the Netherlands, so it was complicated to combine all of them. I've also helped to organise training programmes."

Do you have any tips for new Yeppers?

"The maximum benefit from this programme comes from your commitment and the love you have for your job, then you will succeed. You should be open to all the cultures, because you will deal with people from all over the world."

"I also have some advice for the Blue Deal. The Blue Deal is a programme focused on the long term, so it should also think about how to keep the good people who are working for them. Who will be responsible? You need a local person for this, someone on the ground."

**“You have to leave
difficult jargon
behind and have an
eye for the people
within the larger
technical problems”**



Minta Aboagye
chairman of the Water Resources
Commission, Ghana

“With the installation of the new board in the Lower Volta Delta, we are taking a great step in integrated water management in this region. Both in making plans and in implementation. We are happy with the knowledge and experience we exchange with our Dutch partners. The assignment I give the new board in the Lower Volta Delta for the future is to pay attention to communication with stakeholders and local residents and provide simple explanations of complex processes. In doing so, you have to leave difficult jargon behind and have an eye for the people within the larger technical problems.”

3

Theory of change and objectives Phase 2

3 Theory of Change and objectives Phase 2

3.1 Problem statement

In many countries there is a lack of safe, clean and sufficient water. There are often multiple underlying causes. Some are related to geology and climate in a region, some are related to the existing institutional set-up and institutional strength of organisations responsible for Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM). The organisations responsible for water management not infrequently lack knowledge and expertise, skilled staff and necessary financial resources. Regularly, operation and maintenance, for example, is not (fully) functioning. Also the infrastructure for cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders is often inadequate.

3.2 Ambition of the Blue Deal

We believe that water management at local or regional level is the key to really making a difference to the living environment of people, plants and animals. Our ambition is that water authorities abroad are able to manage their water systems and associated infrastructure in a sustainable way, resulting in improved access to clean, sufficient and safe water for 20 million people worldwide.

3.3 Theory of Change

To create the change that we aim for, the Theory of Change (ToC) is that when we strengthen the water governance¹ in a region this subsequently clears the way for sustainable implementation of climate-resilient Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM).

The way this is achieved is by peer-to-peer capacity strengthening from Dutch water authorities to water authorities abroad, to make progress on two Blue Deal outcomes: improved water governance and, specifically, improved climate-resilient IWRM. We strengthen the implementation capacity of our partners through a three-tier approach to capacity: promoting adequate knowledge and expertise on water, strong institutions and good cooperation with key stakeholders.² In this capacity-building approach, attention for climate change and climate adaptation is interwoven with activities. To sustain the improved IWRM, working on operation & maintenance forms an essential part of the Blue Deal partnerships.

The assumptions underlying the Blue Deal's Theory of Change are described in the extensive version of our ToC (Appendix 3). The manner in which the Blue Deal is monitored can be found in the chapter on monitoring and evaluation.

The partnerships all work demand-driven within the boundaries of the ToC, to ensure the relevance of Blue Deal actions. On the Dutch side, the partners are staff of Dutch Water Authorities; their partners in the other countries are their counterparts, i.e. staff of regional or local water authorities. Both Dutch ministries have an active role: they deploy their networks (in the Netherlands and worldwide) with the partnerships wherever possible and use them to promote good water governance.

The aim of the long-term programme is to ensure systemic sustainability of the results. We seek to achieve this by incorporating social inclusion as a cross-cutting theme in our programme. It is therefore a prerequisite for all our partnerships to work on this theme. (Figure of ToC on next page).

² This is based on the three-layer model of good water governance by Havekes, H. et al., 2016, Building blocks for good water governance. This is in alignment with the OECD assessment of good water governance.



What does working on clean, safe and sufficient water within the Blue Deal entail?

Clean water

- Reducing the discharge of untreated industrial effluent: through improved enforcement and control, and by setting up an appropriate registration and licensing system and a relevant policy framework which requires all those involved to contribute to the improvement of water quality in equal measure;
- Improving the processing of household effluent: through an improved wastewater treatment infrastructure and improved maintenance and management of existing installations;
- Improving the quality of ecosystems: by reducing uncontrolled discharges, better monitoring and the development of policy frameworks which take account of environmental values.



Sufficient water

- Reducing water stress by developing policies, including distribution scenarios (in the sense of both time and space) for water catchment areas, improved management plans, a licensing system and better groundwater management;
- Better planning for climate change, i.e. including climate change scenarios in water management plans, creating drought management plans;
- Increasing productivity through improved water buffering and conservation, better distribution of available water supplies, more effective policies and integrated water management plans.



Safe water

- Reducing the risk of floods by sea, rivers or precipitation by: for example, conducting problem and risk analyses, developing climate-adoptable safety plans and extending and maintaining water infrastructure (dikes, drainage canals, etc.);
- Reducing the impact of floods by introducing climate adaptation measures, like water retention areas;
- Increasing self-sufficiency: by improving early warning systems, raising awareness and arranging participatory consultation in water management;
- Limiting the risk of injury and damage.



3.4 Blue Deal's approach

A prominent theme in the international water agenda anno 2022 is the need to deepen and broaden water governance. Enabling stakeholder engagement through multi-stakeholder platforms, connecting to other sectors, ensuring integrity, transparency and accountability are critical elements in strengthening water governance. Water governance is an area in which the Dutch Water Authorities have extensive experience. The Blue Deal's approach is to make use of this experience in a sustainable and effective manner. This is done by:

- long-term (12 year) partnerships, enabling sustainable capacity-building and providing the partnership with a clear understanding and overview of the context;
- a three-tier approach to strengthening water governance: adequate knowledge and expertise on water, strong institutions and good cooperation with key stakeholders;
- working in a demand-driven way, within the boundaries of the ToC;
- focusing on operation & maintenance, an important gap that the Blue Deal fills. Moreover, as operation & maintenance is less tied to large-scale new plans (and hence to politics), this is an area where a lot of progress can be made;
- capacity-building with a peer-to-peer model, ensuring a continuity that cannot be offered by NGOs (who must hire specific consultants);
- capacity-building by working on the job;
- ensuring a strong local presence of the partnership, for instance by stationing Young Experts (YEP) and local residential managers;
- embracing digital working where possible, thus reducing the carbon footprint through fewer flights;
- promoting a learning culture (for more information on how we do this see the chapter on Learning).

3.5 Capacity development approach

Capacity development is defined as "the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time" in order to achieve development results (definition adopted from UNDG, 2017).

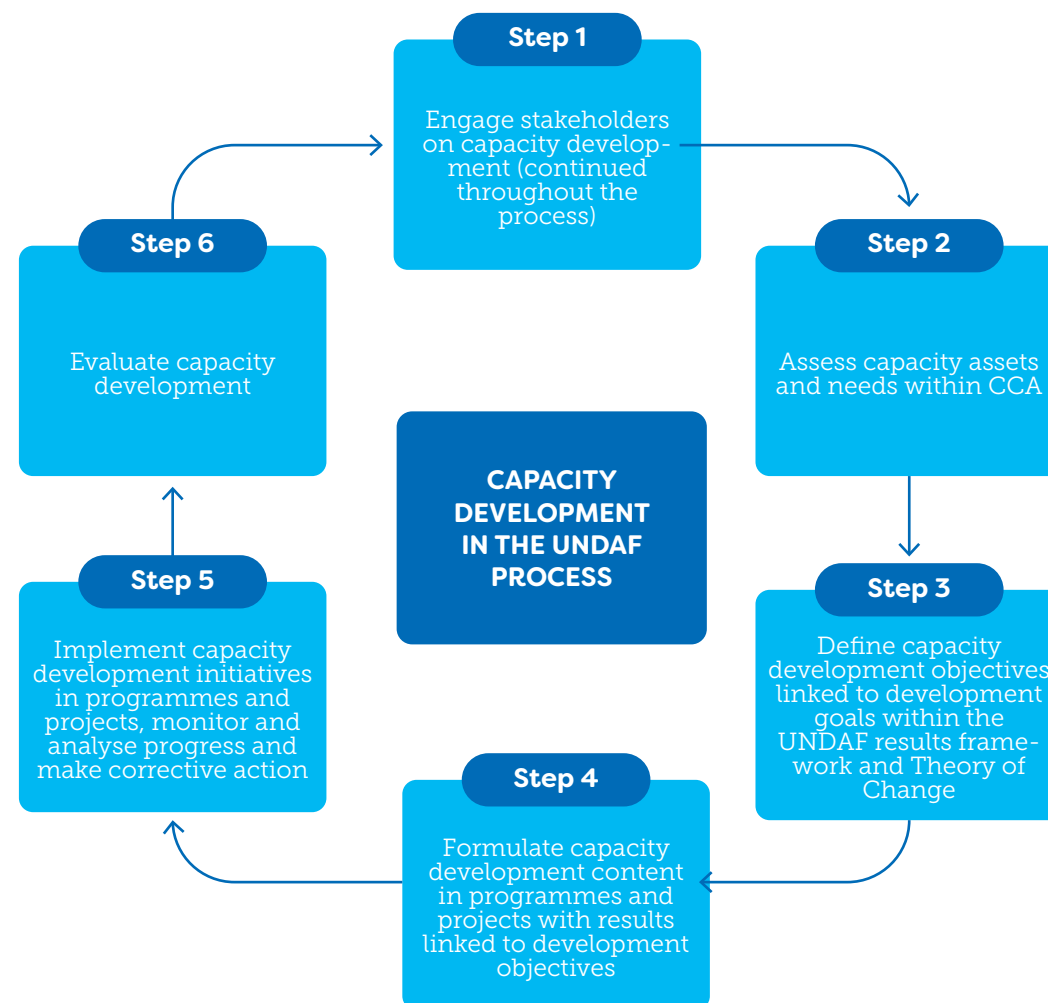
Capacity development on water governance is at the core of the Blue Deal's work. The model of capacity development that is adopted is that capacity development is aimed at three layers: developing capacity at the knowledge layer, the institutional layer and the stakeholder engagement layer (Havekes, et al., 2016).

3.5.1 What capacities do the partnerships develop?

The Blue Deal works as mentioned on capacity development on the three layers of good water governance. The three layers can be specified into 15 aspects of good water governance (Table X). These 15 aspects comprise capacity development of both technical and functional capacities, as well as so-called "soft" and "hard" skills. The 15 aspects largely overlap with the UN model of capacity development at the three levels named "enabling environment", "organisational level" and "individual level".

The capacity development process that is used by the Blue Deal's partnerships follows the UNDAF (UNDP, 2017) six-step process cycle closely.

BLUE DEAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Step 1 All Blue Deal partnerships started with this step.

Step 2 This is done via water governance assessment, held at the start of Phase 1 and Phase 2. Then repeated every 2 years.

Step 3 Partnerships objectives are formulated and monitored via the Blue Deal M&E framework: they are the central part in the Multi-Annual Plans. They are linked to the Blue Deal outcomes, which are linked to SDGs 6 and 13.

Step 4 The Blue Deal (Multi)- Annual Plans

Step 5 Implementation Phase

Step 6 Evaluated via the Blue Deal M&E cycle and via external Mid-term and End-term Reviews

3.5.2 For who is capacity developed?

As mentioned in previous chapters, in the Blue Deal partnerships are formed between Dutch Water Authorities and regional water authorities abroad. Within this regional water authority, the capacity is strengthened at the layer of the institution as well as the relational layer. At the individual layer, it will depend on the partnerships objectives whose capacities are developed. This can be technical staff, but also supportive (HR, financial) or managerial staff.

3.5.3 Capacity development interventions

The choices which capacity development interventions are used in the partnerships are discussed within partnerships. There are a whole range of interventions that are used in the Blue Deal (for some examples, see Table 4). Training on how to effectively use these methods is (among others) taught via the Blue Deal Learning Programme. In Phase 2 attention will be given how to ensure interventions are as effective as possible. For

example, research shows that key enablers of successful implementation of development interventions are positive team dynamics, good balance of competencies, effective communication and engagement within teams, team leaders' capacity to innovate, and personal interests such as career progress. Lack of funding, limited decision space, organisational bureaucracies, and poor infrastructure were the key constraints to the implementation of activities. Lack of mentorship and ongoing support from trainers delayed progress. Because of the latter, the Blue Deal focuses on having a continuous approach to capacity development, rather than a visit-based approach.

In the (Multi-) Annual Plans, partnerships are asked to outline which interventions they plan on using; in the M&E framework these interventions are monitored.

Development intervention	Description
Mentoring	Pairs a seasoned individual who possesses specific knowledge or expertise with a less experienced individual.
Peer-to-peer learning	Brings together individuals with similar skills and responsibilities to share tools and resources and exchange ideas, with the intention of applying this learning back at their organisations.
Workshops	Gathers a selected group of participants at a single event so they can learn or improve skills and knowledge in a specific discipline.
E-learning/Online training courses	Uses electronic technologies to provide an educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom or workshop. Can be self-directed learning (SDL) or facilitated (instructor-led).

Table 4: Example of capacity development interventions

3.5.4 Blue Deal's principles of capacity development

Below the Blue Deal principles on capacity development are outlined. These are largely adopted from the UNDP principles on capacity development (UNDP, 2009):

- Capacity development is a long-process. It can be promoted through a combination of shorter-term results that are driven from the outside and more sustainable, longer-term ones that are driven from the inside.
- It requires sticking with the process under difficult circumstances, and changing strategy if the process does not result in positive outcomes.
- It looks beyond individual skills and knowledge and a focus on training to address broader questions of institutional change, leadership, empowerment and public participation.
- It emphasises the use of national systems, not just national plans and expertise. It discourages stand-alone project implementation units; if national systems are not strong enough, it deems that those be reformed and strengthened, rather than bypassed.
- It requires adaptation to local conditions and starts from the specific requirement and performance expectations of the water authority (i.e. bottom-up, demand-driven) it supports. There are no blueprints.
- It makes the links to broader reforms, such as those in education, agriculture, taxes, etc. There is little value in designing isolated, one-off initiatives.
- It results in unplanned consequences that must be kept in mind during the design phase. These should be valued, tracked and evaluated.
- It measures capacity development systematically, via a M&E cycle.

“I hope that we will continue learning from each other and that I will be able to visit the Netherlands to see with my own eyes how you manage the water”



Philip Karanja Munyua
Water Resources Authority (WRA), regional technical
manager Tana Basin Office, Kenya

“During phase 1 we have learned from each other on integrated water resource management (IWRM) and we have succeeded in carrying out various activities such as training on monitoring, developing the water evaluation and planning tool (WEAP) tool for the Thika catchment, and the execution of the abstraction and pollution survey for the Thika river. During phase 2 I expect that we will be able to engage more with other stakeholders to achieve tangible results in the Thika catchment and that we will be looking into opportunities to scale up and expand activities to other parts of the Tana catchment. I hope that we will continue learning from each other and that I will be able to visit the Netherlands to see with my own eyes how you manage the water.”

4

Partnerships

4 Partnerships

In Phase 1 of the Blue Deal, 17 partnerships in 15 countries formed the programme. These are also the partnerships that will submit a multi-year plan for Phase 2. In this multi-year plan, partnerships will describe their ambition for 2030 and how they will reach this the upcoming years. The local context and the local demand will be the bases of the plan. A connection will also be sought between the multi-year plans of the Blue Deal and the multi-year strategy of the Dutch embassies. After they submit their plan and it is approved, a programme book will be made with a summary of their focus and objectives in Phase 2. The summary as shown in table 5 is a preliminary description of the content of Phase 2.

Partnership	Dutch partner	Local partner	Summary
Argentina	Dutch Water Authorities: Brabantse Delta (lead)	Provincia de Buenos Aires represented by ADA (Autoridad de Agua de la provincia Buenos Aires) in cooperation with DPOH, DPM and DIPAC	The Tandil-Lavalle catchment area in Argentina suffers from serious flooding, combined with salinisation at high tide, as well as aridity in combination with saline groundwater. The scarce freshwater supplies are polluted, due to deficient water treatment. Dutch Water Authorities is working together with the province of Buenos Aires to build local institutions for local operational water management. To this end, a water organisation is being set up for the Tandil-Lavalle rural catchment area.
Burkina Faso	Dutch Water Authorities: Amstel Gooi en Vecht (lead), Drents Overijsselse Delta, Hunze & Aa's, Noorderzijlvest	Agence de l'Eau du Mouhoun, Agence de l'Eau du Nakanbé, Agence de l'Eau du Gourma, Agence de l'Eau du Liptako, Agence de l'Eau des Cascades, Secrétariat Permanent du Plan d'Action pour la Gestion Intégrée des ressources en Eau	The partnership functions as a catalyst to effective water management in Burkina Faso. The local water authorities (Agences de l'Eau) have set up local water committees (Comité Locaux de l'Eau, CLE) with help from Dutch Water Authorities. Besides regular activities to achieve the outcome targets, there is a specific focus on assisting water authorities to successfully set up the water infrastructure financed by the Dutch Embassy (ECDD project). The ECDD project includes the realisation of water reservoirs and anti-erosion measures by the local water authorities and local water committees. The Blue Deal will provide training to ensure a high-quality execution and maintenance afterwards.

Partnership	Dutch partner	Local partner	Summary
Colombia	Dutch Water Authorities: De Dommel (lead), Rijn & IJssel, Vallei & Veluwe, Aa en Maas, hoogheemraadschap Hollands Noorderkwartier, Zuiderzeeland, Noorderzijlvest, hoogheemraadschap de Stichtse Rijnlanden, Limburg, Brabantse Delta	Corporación Autónoma Regional del Alto Magdalena (CAM), Cormagdalena, Gobernación de Santander, Corporación Autónoma Regional de Caldas (Corpocaldas), Corporación Autónoma Regional del Valle del Cauca (CVC), Aguas de Manizales, Aguas del Huila, Acuavalle, AsoCARs, Corporación Autónoma de Santander (CAS), Corporación Autónoma Para la Defensa De La Meseta de Bucaramanga (CDMB)	The Blue Deal Partnership Colombia is called "InspirAgua": mutual inspiration between Dutch and Colombian water institutions is key. InspirAgua helps strengthening water governance in five Colombian regions via a direct collaboration with eleven Colombian public(-private) water organisations. In Phase 2 of the Blue Deal, the focus is mainly on improving integrated water management, based on a three-tier water governance model. The approach involves operation of water treatment plants, making management plans more workable, regulation of industrial discharge and working with reliable data. Experience will be translated into widely applicable methods, directives and procedures, and linked to players at national level. This will enhance water security, availability and quality.
Ethiopia ABBAY	Dutch Water Authorities: Amstel Gooi en Vecht (lead), hoogheemraadschap Hollands Noorderkwartier	Abbay Basin Development Office	The Blue Deal Partnership supports the local water authority Abbey Basin Development Office in achieving equitable, balanced and efficient distribution of water in the Abbey basin. This includes setting up an information system and professionalising the method whereby water data is converted into information, as well as improving the laboratory's quality system. In this way, the Blue Deal partnership is contributing directly to an equitable distribution of water, a professional information supply and manageable water quality.
Ethiopia AWASH	Dutch Water Authorities: Zuiderzeeland (lead), Amstel Gooi en Vecht, Hunze en Aas, Noorderzijlvest, Vallei en Veluwe, Hollandse Delta, Drents Overijsselse Delta, Vechtstromen, Brabantse Delta, De Dommel, UvW	AWASH Basin Development Authority and AWASH Basin Development Office	The Blue Deal partnership supports the AWASH Basin Development authority and the AWASH Basin Development Office on three fronts: basin plan implementation, basin information management and (industrial) wastewater discharge regulation. Within these projects the partnership empowers administrators; interventions will primarily focus on knowledge-related, institutional and relational challenges, while this improved capacity should be applied to thematic fields (quality, shortage, floods).

Partnership	Dutch partner	Local partner	Summary
Ethiopia WWTP's	Dutch Water Authorities: Vallei en Veluwe (lead), Aa en Maas, Hunze en Aa's, Zuiderzeeland	Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy (MoWie), Water Development Commission (WDC)	The World Bank Second Ethiopia Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project (UWSSP II) is the basis for the partnership. The Blue Deal team gives technical support to their Ethiopian partner, the Water Development Commission of the Ministry of Water and Energy, in their efforts to implement UWSSP II. This World Bank project has two main components, infrastructure development and capacity building. During the design process of infrastructure, it is necessary to train cities in environmental and management aspects, as well as provide operational training. The specifics are to be worked out in an implementation document per city by the WDC and contractor. The Blue Deal team supports WDC advice on the technical aspects of this process.
eSwatini	Dutch Water Authorities: Vechtstromen (lead), Limburg, Drents Overijsselse Delta, Wetterskip Fryslân, UvW	Joint River Basin Authorities – Project Board, Ministry of Natural Resources & Energy, Usuthu River Basin Authority, Mbuluzi River Basin Authority, Komati River Basin Authority, Ngwavuma River Basin Authority, Lomati River Basin Authority, UNDP Eswatini, Eswatini Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (ESWADE), WaterAid Eswatini, Global Water Partnership	The partnership in Eswatini focuses on better water distribution and better water availability and also on better rural water supply for local communities. It is a continuation of the earlier projects of Dutch Water Authorities under the leadership of water authority Vechtstromen. The partnership is called 'All Hands on Deck' and will work over the next twelve years to combat over-exploitation and establish a more efficient use of available water. Dutch Water Authorities supports five local water authorities in efforts to professionalise their organisation, with a focus on stakeholder management and increasing water awareness in the region. Improving water management in Eswatini has a positive cross-border impact for both South Africa and Mozambique.
Ghana	Dutch Water Authorities: Aa en Maas (lead), Amstel Gooi en Vecht, Drents Overijsselse Delta, Hunze en Aas, Brabantse Delta, Noorderzijlvest	Water Resource Commission (WRC) River Basin Authorities of WRC in White Volta and Black Volta	The partnership in Ghana focuses on the improvement of national and regional water governance (Volta Delta, White Volta) to ensure implementation of the prioritised water management actions as listed in the various management plans of the national water policy. Because the executional power and structure of the organisation in the Volta Delta and the White Volta is limited, Dutch Water Authorities is supporting the establishment of a Volta Delta governance structure and development of a Volta Delta management plan for flood protection and resources management. The partnership is improving the capacity of the White Volta Basin and the development of a financing strategy for the management of water resources and sanitation.

Partnership	Dutch partner	Local partner	Summary
Indonesia	Dutch Water Authorities: hoogheemraadschap van Schieland en Krimpenerwaard (lead), hoogheemraadschap van Delfland, hoogheemraadschap Hollands Noorderkwartier, Aa en Maas, Zuiderzeeland	Bappeda's (Planning Agencies) of Pekalongan Regency & Pekalongan City, Semarang City and Tangerang Regency	In this partnership the main theme of cooperation is flood management and flood safety. Focusing on three different geographical areas (Tangerang, Semarang and Pekalongan), but with a strong coherent working approach, the Blue Deal Indonesia partnership will concentrate on improving water governance and identifying the different stages and levels of implementing IWRM plans. The added value of this partnership lies in alignment with existing government plans, other programmes and the existing water governance systems in each area. As such, in Semarang it will focus on improving and expanding the existing polder systems while in Tangerang and Pekalongan it will help to draw up and implement Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plans.
Kenya	Dutch Water Authorities: Amstel Gooi en Vecht (lead), Aa en Maas hoogheemraadschap De Stichtse Rijnlanden	Water Resources Authority (WRA), Water Resources Authority, Tana Catchment Area (WRA-TCA)	The partnership in Kenya is led by World Waternet and concentrates on improving quantitative water management in the upstream areas of the Tana River. This area is important for the (drinking) water supply for the capital Nairobi. In Phase 1 of the Blue Deal partnership, the partners have worked together on drawing up water management plans and water allocation plans. Special attention has been paid to the information needed on water availability and water users, and to improving data management by setting up water information systems. This Blue Deal partnership is linked to the ongoing Waterworx project in Nairobi.
Mali	Dutch Water Authorities: Amstel Gooi en Vecht (lead), Rijn en IJssel, De Dommel	Agence Nationale de Gestion des Stations d'Épuration du Mali (ANGESEM), La Direction Nationale de l'Assainissement et du Contrôle de la Pollution et des Nuisances (DNA-CPN)	The partnership in Mali is called Dji Don, ' meaning 'water knowledge' or 'water gift' in the local Bambara language. The aim of the partnership is to strengthen the wastewater treatment sector in Mali. The local partner ANGESEM is responsible for the operation and maintenance of 8 WWTPs in Mali. The partnership focuses on three priorities: professionalising technical maintenance and supervision of the largest wastewater treatment plants, increasing institutional resilience and achieving a more integrated approach to relationship management.
Mozambique	Dutch Water Authorities: Wetterskip Fryslân (lead), de Dommel, Hunze en Aa's, Rijn en IJssel, NWB Fonds, Vechtstromen, Vallei en Veluwe	ARA Norte, ARA Centro, ARA Sul, Municipality of Beira (MCB), National Directorate for Water Resources Management (DNGRH), National Directorate for Water Supply and Sanitation (DNAAS)	In this Blue Deal partnership, Dutch Water Authorities is working with the three ARAs (the Mozambican water authorities) and the water and sanitation department of the municipality of Beira to strengthen their capacity in the fields of water security, water distribution and water quality. The focus of the programme is on improvement of operational work processes, and training Mozambican professionals. The partnership executes pilots designed to showcase for the ARAs timely flood prediction and protection measures, as well as measures to improve water quality, to distribute available water more fairly at times of scarcity, and to improve operational plans.

Partnership	Dutch partner	Local partner	Summary
Palestinian Territories	Dutch Water Authorities: Amstel Gooi en Vecht (lead), Limburg, HHNK	Palestinian Water Authority (PWA), Governorate of Salfit, Governorate of (North) Hebron	Collaboration between Dutch Water Authorities and the Palestinian Water Authority focuses on improving water quality in the Palestinian Territories, especially in the Governorates of Salfit and North Hebron (incl. Halhul). The aim is to curb untreated wastewater discharges, thereby reducing the negative impact on the environment and enhancing groundwater quality. Activities include developing and installing small, decentralised wastewater treatment plants at locations where untreated wastewater is now discharged, as well as advising and supporting the Palestinian partners in exploring ways to raise utility revenues to cover the growing costs of water and wastewater management. All activities support PWA in implementing the water sector reform (from 300 to 4 service providers) to reach a financial sustainable water sector and sound water cycle management (together with a WaterWorX partnership in the same focus areas).
Peru	Dutch Water Authorities: Noorderzijlvest (lead), Hunze en Aa's, Rivierenland	National Water Authority of Peru/ Autoridad Nacional del Agua (ANA), Water resource council Tumbes/ Consejos de Recursos Hídricos Tumbes, Water resource council Chira-Piura/ Consejos de Recursos Hídricos Chira-Piura	All the Blue Deal themes are addressed in the partnership in Peru. The partners are working on clean water, sufficient water and flood protection. Dutch Water Authorities first collaborated with Peru in 2015 – a year when the north of Peru was hit by floods – in the context of disaster risk reduction. The Blue Deal partnership in Peru focuses on improving the technology and management of two regional Water Resources Committees (WRCs) in the two catchment areas of Tumbes and Chira-Piura. These are regional networks in which the affiliated organisations carry out water management activities.
Romania	UvW (lead), waterschappen: Noorderzijlvest, Limburg, Hunze en Aa's, Hoogheemraadschap van Rijnland, Drents Overijsselse Delta, Scheldestromen, Zuiderzeeland, Hoogheemraadschap De Stichtse Rijnlanden	National Administration Romanian Waters: WBA Siret, WBA Buzau lalomita, WBA Jiu, WBA Somes Tisa, central office National Institute for Hydrology and Water Management	The Blue Deal partnership in Romania is working with the national water authority, National Administration Romanian Waters (NARW), to find structural solutions for flood prevention, water scarcity and finance. The partnership is working in several regional water basin catchment areas to pilot and demonstrate improvements in implementation through such solutions. The aim is to start applying the improvements at national NARW level and in other regional water authorities.

Partnership	Dutch partner	Local partner	Summary
South-Africa	Dutch Water Authorities: Hollandse Delta (lead), De Dommel, Delfland, Drents Overijsselse Delta, Hollandse Delta, Hoogheemraadschap Hollands, Noorderkwartier, Limburg, Hoogheemraadschap van Rijnland, Rivierenland, Vallei & Veluwe	Department for Water & Sanitation (DWS) (lead partner), Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA), South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA), Water Research Commission (WRC) Regional water institutions in water management areas	The South Africa Blue Deal partnership springs from the Dutch Water Authorities' Kingfisher programme. In that programme, the partners worked to set up local catchment management agencies (CMAs). The Blue Deal Partnership focuses on improving operational water management and entails working with local water managers and stakeholders in South Africa to provide sufficient clean water. In 2019, the South Africa partnership selected three areas as the most favourable Water Management Areas (WMAs) to establish local projects on water quality and water availability: Inkomati-Usuthu, Vaal and Pongola-Umzimkulu. The projects in these areas are intended as showcases for South Africa's National Water & Sanitation Master Plan.
Vietnam	Dutch Water Authorities: Vechtstromen (lead), De Dommel, Limburg, Hoogheemraadschap Stichtse Rijnlanden, Vallei en Veluwe	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Can Tho University, Royal HaskoningDHV Vietnam	The Blue Deal partnership in Vietnam is called 'Blue Dragon' and is led by the Dutch Water Authority of Vechtstromen. Vechtstromen already has a long-term partnership with Vietnamese partners in the Mekong Delta. This Blue Deal partnership seeks to achieve results in the field of flood protection and better water distribution and availability. The partnership defines how cooperation between 'provinces' and urban regions can improve on these issues. Expert groups have been introduced, consisting of Vietnamese and Dutch experts, who give substance to this assignment. In addition, a Blue Dragon Academy, Accelerator and Community will provide upscaling possibilities, academic embedding and knowledge exchange.

“It is the first time
that a partner is
really sitting beside
us; our office is their
office!”



Idrissa Maiga
Head of the department 'Implementation and Works' at
ANGESEM, Mali

"For ANGESEM, the Blue Deal is unique. It is the first time that a partner is really sitting beside us; our office is their office! Our Dutch colleagues understand our challenges and help us solve our problems. Furthermore, they share their networks with us and introduce ANGESEM to the international water sector. We look forward to another eight years of Blue Deal Partnership!"

5

Communication
and advocacy

5 Communication and advocacy

5.1 Communication

Communication has played an important role in Phase 1 of the Blue Deal and will continue to do so in Phase 2. The following objectives have been identified for Phase 2.

Within the programme (Dutch water authorities, ministries, water authorities abroad):

- Stimulate knowledge exchange and the collaboration as partners (for instance through a two-year review meeting of all the water authorities abroad).
- Specifically on the Dutch side: maintain support for the work in the Blue Deal among the boards of the Dutch water authorities and senior management in ministries.
- Ensure visibility of the activities and progress of partnerships and projects.
- Communicate clearly on the results and impact of partnerships and projects.
- Adopt a realistic communication style that matches the needs of all organisations involved.
- Raise awareness of the Blue Deal by highlighting the activities and progress of the partnerships and projects.

Outside the programme (stakeholders that are important to the programme, but are not a main partner of the Blue Deal):

- Raise stakeholder awareness of the Blue Deal.
- Maintain support for the Blue Deal among taxpayers/the Dutch public/parliament.
- Advocate the Blue Deal approach by highlighting the activities and progress of the partnerships and projects.

5.1.1 Communication strategy

In the Phase 2 of the Blue Deal, the communication strategy will focus on:

1. Telling the stories of the water authorities abroad

Contributing to the SDG or Blue Deal goal to help 20 million people gain access to clean, sufficient and safe water by 2030 can be experienced as very abstract and remote by the average water authority employee or Member of Parliament. The challenge is to make the partnerships more personal by communicating about the stories of people's work. The perspective of the water authorities abroad needs to be given a much more central place in communications.

2. Show the contribution to SDG's

All the main partners are contributing to the SDGs through the Blue Deal. It is important to communicate regularly and clearly about the results achieved and the impact in the partner countries, in order to show what efforts they are making in this regard. It is also important that the House of Representatives of the Netherlands is kept informed about this on an ongoing basis.

3. A bolder reporting strategy as a communication tool

Phase 2 of the Blue Deal programme calls for bolder communication on the partnerships. The impact and results of efforts should become more visible on the websites and other channels of DWA and the ministries. We want to use reports – for example the annual report – as a communication tool.

4. Knowledge: a two-way process

Working with foreign partners also provides the water authorities and ministries with knowledge that can be put to good use in the Netherlands, such as lessons learnt from flooding or drought. Communication therefore needs to be balanced, showing what knowledge and experience is gained through the partnerships, as well as the impact of the knowledge and skills of Dutch water authorities abroad.

5.2 Advocacy

A new ambition in Phase 2 is advocacy for the Blue Deal approach. Lobbying will focus on two specific topics:

1. the Blue Deal governance model: long-term partnerships between water authorities focusing on three aspects of water management: adequate knowledge and expertise on water, strong institutions and good cooperation with key stakeholders;
2. mobilisation and leverage of investment finance through Blue Deal partnerships.

The key partners on programme level in these lobbying efforts are DWA, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and IGG of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Phase 2 we will jointly agree a lobbying strategy which we will implement together.

The strategy still has to take shape but will probably target the House of Representatives, the European Commission and financing institutions. Its aims will likely be to:

1. attract financing and investments for local Blue Deal partners;
2. convince key stakeholders to commit to and engage in the Blue Deal approach by raising awareness and building recognition of the added value and comparative advantage of good governance;
3. share results and reflections more widely with national and international sector practitioners and key policymakers, so as to influence policymaking and practice;
4. help partnerships scale up by cooperating with relevant organisations.



Ramon Lea Leal (left) and Alexcevith Acosta (right)

Partners speak: Colombia

The partnership with Colombia, InspirAgua, is one of the largest programmes of the Blue Deal. By mutually inspiring each other and sharing knowledge and experience, this partnership ensures a further professionalization of water management in both the Netherlands and Colombia. Two Colombian directors talk about their experiences with the Blue Deal.

Colombia has regional environmental authorities. These organizations are also responsible for water management. ASOCARS is the umbrella organization of these environmental authorities.

What are you learning from the Blue Deal?

Ramon Lea Leal, executive director of ASOCARS: "We think the Blue Deal is a very good programme because it helps to strengthen our governance model. The model of the Dutch water authorities is very similar to the model in Colombia. We are still grappling with challenges, such as strengthening our financial situation. So we are very interested in that, in how the Dutch water authorities approach this."

Alexcevith Acosta, director of the regional environmental authority CAS in San Gil, Santander, and currently also president of ASOCARS: "We already received a lot of knowledge through the Blue Deal. We also got to know the organizational structure of water management in the Netherlands. We learn how we can achieve our goals faster and how we can work well with different actors. So that we can strengthen our water management."

What will you focus on in the second phase of the Blue Deal?

Leal: "We will focus on what we can do in the field of climate adaptation. We also want to strengthen the relationships between our environmental authorities and the community, the private sector and public institutions, such as the provinces and municipalities."

Acosta: "Other important topics are the role of water in sustainable agriculture and the energy transition."

Do you have any other ideas for the Blue Deal?

Leal: "Currently, InspirAgua involves eleven partners, including five regional environmental authorities and ASOCARS. But Colombia has a total of 33 regional environmental authorities. It would be nice if these five could share their best practices with the other organizations. They do not necessarily have to become part of InspirAgua, but they must be able to use their knowledge."

“The programme also increases the knowledge of council members and technical staff, for example through the mutual exchange of experiences”



Fausto Asencio Díaz
Technical secretary of the Water Resources
Council Chira-Piura, Peru

“The Blue Deal programme is a very important support for us as a Regional Water Council to improve the Integrated Water Resource Management in our Chira-Piura River Basin, because we have the technical assistance to make improvements through the experts on the Blue Deal missions on, among others, the following themes: the management of water treatment plants, the formulation and implementation of the water distribution plan and the formulation of the reconstruction plan against flooding in the Piura River. The programme also increases the knowledge of council members and technical staff, for example through the mutual exchange of experiences. For us, this exchange of ideas and experiences is an excellent opportunity to receive tailor-made technical support, so that we can then improve our services for our water users.”

6

Planning,
monitoring,
evaluation and
learning

6 Planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning

6.1 Monitoring of the partnerships: updated m&e framework

Phase 2 of the Blue Deal starts with an updated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. The framework will give partner organisations – as mentioned in the ambition outlined above – an even more central role in the Blue Deal Programme. The monitoring objectives of the Blue Deal partnerships are:

1. Monitoring to increase effectivity
2. Accountability

Furthermore, supporting partner organisations in institutionalising monitoring and evaluation will receive extra attention in Phase 2.

This translates into a new monitoring framework that:

- Fits the day-to-day work of partnerships and is relatively easy to understand;
- Has flexibility to ensure a good fit with 17 different partnerships;
- Allows for evaluation at programme level;
- Incorporates learning;
- Relates outputs to our impact on clean, safe and sufficient water.

Practically, this means activities and outputs will be monitored each year, as well as progress on the partnership's 4-year objectives, which all contribute to the Blue Deal's two outcomes: (1) improved water governance and (2) improved climate-resilient IWRM.

Additionally, bi-annually there will be an adapted, more extensive Water Governance Assessment. This replaces the outcome monitoring on 15 Water Governance Aspects at outcome level that was part of the Monitoring & Evaluation framework in Phase I. This allows for a more SMART and clear assessment.

Climate adaptation and social inclusion are conditional for all partnerships and will be required to be reported on twice per year (annual plan and annual report), both qualitatively and quantitatively. This means that activities relating to these themes will be described in the annual plan and report, and that the output will be monitored. A clear definition of both themes is elaborated in cooperation with external organizations specialized in these themes.

See Appendix 3 for a schematic overview of what is monitored within the Blue Deal and how this links to the Theory of Change.

6.2 Impact assessment of the Blue Deal

The ambition of the Blue Deal is that regional public organisations and water authorities abroad are capable of managing their water systems and related infrastructure in a sustainable way, contributing to clean, sufficient and safe water for 20 million people in 2030. This thus contributes to improving clean, sufficient and safe water.

Every two years the Blue Deal will estimate how many people benefit from improved clean, sufficient and safe water. This estimate is linked to the improvement in water governance, which is assessed via the Water Governance Ladder Assessment. For more information on the impact assessment, see Appendix 2. In 2022 this assessment will be further elaborated. For this, the Blue Deal intends to work together with RVO, IGG and IOB MEL advisors.

6.3 Monitoring of the programme as a whole

The core activities at programme level by the main partners will also be monitored. The Steering Committee will decide in what way this will be done. The contribution of all the partners will be a recurring subject on the Steering Committee agenda.

The core activities are:

- Efforts by the ministries to connect their networks, and facilitate in connecting national and regional policies;
- Efforts by DWA and the water authorities abroad to provide sufficient and qualified people for the programme;
- The effectiveness of the learning programme;
- The functioning of the programme as a whole (measured by summarising the results of the partnerships) ;
- Progress on recommendations of MtR and EtRs.

6.4 External evaluation of partnerships and programme

In 2026 there will be an external evaluation. The Mid-term Review of Phase 2 (MtR) will be of a couple of selected partnerships (focusing on effectiveness and sustainability) and some main points at programme level (focusing on effectiveness and efficiency). The results of this evaluation will be used to improve Phase 2 and for the update of the Multi-Annual Plans for 2027-2030.

The End-term Review (EtR) will likely take place in 2030 and will be a broader evaluation.

6.5 Planning: reporting schedule

Table 6 shows the different types of reports that will be prepared as part of the programme, the frequency and deadline of reporting. A distinction is made between the deadline of the partnerships and the DGIS deadline of the Programme Office.

Description		Deadline partnerships	Deadline DGIS
1. Plan 2023-2030	Plan 2023-2030 per partnership	14-10-2022	13-11-2022
	Update multi-year plan per partnership	14-10-2026	13-11-2026
2. Progress Report	Partnership progress report as per IATI standards (only the financial report in IATI)	18-7-2023	1-9-2023
		18-7-2024	1-9-2024
		18-7-2025	1-9-2025
		18-7-2026	1-9-2026
		18-7-2027	1-9-2027
		18-7-2028	1-9-2028
		18-7-2029	1-9-2029
		18-7-2030	1-9-2030
			(1-10 IATI)
3. Annual Plan	Annual plan and budget per partnership.	14-10-2022	13-11-2022
		1-11-2023	1-12-2023
		1-11-2024	1-12-2024
		1-11-2025	1-12-2025
		1-11-2026	1-12-2026
		1-11-2027	1-12-2027
		1-11-2028	1-12-2028
	1-11-2029	1-12-2029	
4a. Annual progress	Annual progress and financial report per partnership as per IATI standards (financial and narrative report on curtain indicators in IATI)	1-3-2024	1-5-2024
4b. Report & Annual Financial Report		1-3-2025	1-5-2025
		1-3-2026	1-5-2026
		1-3-2027	1-5-2027
		1-3-2028	1-5-2028
		1-3-2029	1-5-2029
4c. Audit report		1-3-2030	1-5-2030
	1-3-2031	1-5-2031	
	An audit is performed per consortium partner by an independent certified accountant as per the agreed audit protocol.		
5a. Mid-term Review	At mid-term and end-term of the programme an independent external evaluation will be carried out		Q2 2026 (MTR)
5b. End-term Review			Q2 2030 (ETR) ³

Table 6: Planning & control reports of the Blue Deal in Phase 2

³ The Terms of Reference of the MTR should be finished by June 1st 2025. The deadline of the ETR will be discussed in 2027 during the recalibrating of the Blue Deal.



“The Dutch Water Authorities can do something that we as research institutes cannot do, and that is water management”



Mr. Le Viet Dung
Deputy Rector of the University of
Can Tho, Vietnam

“The University of Can Tho is centrally located in the Mekong Delta and works together with research institutes from all over the world to preserve the Delta. Why we still want to support the Blue Deal programme? Because the Dutch Water Authorities can do something that we as research institutes cannot do, and that is water management. This peer-to-peer capacity building does not yet exist in the Delta and we expect a lot from it, all the more because of the long duration of the programme.”

7

**Blue Deal learning
programme**

7 Blue Deal learning programme

The ambition of the learning programme is to increase the expertise of Blue Deal partners, both abroad and in the Netherlands, to promote knowledge exchange and to foster continuous reflection. Its envisioned impact is to enhance the effectiveness of the partnerships and to ensure sustainable results.

This ambition marks a step forward from Phase 1, when the activities of the learning programme focused solely on Dutch experts. Barriers to including international partners have largely been removed thanks to an increase in digital communication and training options, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.1 Learning programme at individual level

At individual level there are two different target groups for the learning programme: the partnership managers and the experts (sometimes these roles are combined). The ambition for Phase 2 is to further foster the learning curve for improved project management and experts' skills to effectively implement Blue Deal activities.

Partnership managers need to have a minimum set of skills to effectively manage the planning and control cycle, finance, M&E, HRM, cross-cutting themes and communication. The Mid-term Review of 2021 found that the partnership managers are mostly highly content-driven professionals who are not necessarily selected for their project management skills. Furthermore, experts active in partnerships need adequate skills in communication (including in an intercultural setting) and workshop facilitation and advising. The Blue Deal will implement a tailor-made individual training plan for partnership managers and experts.

7.2 Learning programme at partnership level

The emphasis of the learning strategy in Phase 2 is on mutual learning between partnerships. The objective of sharing knowledge is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the partnerships.

The learning programme has two implementation methods. The first of these involves Communities of Practice (CoPs) organised by the Programme Office. Each CoP consist of experts from different partnerships who meet regularly to share knowledge and act as sparring partners on specific topics. The CoPs also invite external organisations to bring in new knowledge. Based on the priorities of the partnerships within Phase 1, the following themes were identified for the current CoPs:

1. Water quality monitoring
2. Water allocation
3. Urban wastewater management
4. Stakeholder participation
5. Water safety

In 2022 the effectiveness and themes of the CoPs will be evaluated in order to improve their implementation in Phase 2.

The second method of implementation is through knowledge exchange meetings with several partnerships in the region. Learning within the region gives the international teams of the Blue Deal the opportunity to connect with other Blue Deal partnerships and international projects of other organisations. The embassies and other important stakeholders will be encouraged to participate, allowing for a collective discussion of the challenges faced and lessons learned. These regional meetings – facilitated by the Programme Office of the Blue Deal – will foster the opportunity for partnerships to learn from more each other about a specific theme. A pilot regional meeting with the partnerships of eSwatini, South-Africa and Mozambique is scheduled for 2022. Based on this experience, a plan will be made for regional meetings in following years.

7.3 Learning programme at programme level

At programme level, the objective of the learning programme is to foster an open learning culture across all governance levels. This will be put into effect through various actions, including:

1) A programme-wide congress

This will be a 2-day event held every other year. It will focus on the partnerships and how they can learn from each other. The first congress will be organised in the Netherlands, the other times in a partner country.

2) Facilitation of continuous reflection within the programme

Besides the regular planning and control activities within the programme, specific tools and activities will be implemented to foster learning and reflection. This will entail peer-review meetings for the annual plans, coaching and using the monitoring and evaluation framework to learn.

7.4 Tailor-made programme for Young Experts

A tailor-made programme for Blue Deal Local Young Experts will be set up in collaboration between the Programme Office and the YEP programme. The training programme will be tailor-made for the Blue Deal and carried out by the YEP Programme Office.

Blue Deal Congress

Starting in 2023 the Blue Deal aims to organize a congress for all partners involved in the Blue Deal partnerships. This congress will take place every two years. The first will be held in the Netherlands. After that, it will be organised in the country of one of the partnerships. The aim of the congress is to share knowledge and experience with each other on topics that several partnerships are dealing with. We also aim to strengthen the bond between our partners and intensify the relationships within the Blue Deal 'family'.



“The Blue Deal is an enriching experience technically but also culturally. In addition to the knowledge that is shared, the Blue Deal allows an impacting cultural mix”



Kabore W Ghislain Anselme
National coordinator Blue Deal programme
Faso Koom, Burkina Faso

“The Blue Deal is an enriching experience technically but also culturally. In addition to the knowledge that is shared, the Blue Deal allows an impacting cultural mix. Professionally, the biggest lesson I take away from the Blue Deal is the experience of small steps. The second phase of the Blue deal must be a phase of consolidation of achievements. The Blue Deal must also take into account the evolution of needs, because the water agencies of Burkina are developing rapidly. It should also be more open to strategic partners such as the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture for a more integrated vision of water resource management. For this, new themes must be explored.”

8

Organisation

8 Organisation

A major change is taking place in the governance of the Blue Deal. After a careful and inclusive process, a more decisive and effective governance has been chosen. The basis of this is a valuable partnership between all participating organisations.

8.1 Lessons learned

The Mid-term Review identified various weaknesses in the governance of the Blue Deal in Phase 1.⁴ The four main ones are:

1. Sub-optimal partnership between the ministries and DWA, because roles, tasks and mandate are unclear.
2. Limited decisiveness and leadership, resulting in a complicated decision-making process.
3. The performance of the Programme Office is under pressure.
4. Conflicting expectations of the role of the project leaders (partnership managers).

In addition, the Steering Committee formulated conditions for an improved governance model:

1. Governance is effective and facilitates the achievement of goals.
2. Communication with the organisations of DWA, Association of Dutch Water Authorities and both ministries functions well, ensuring sufficient support and sufficient mandate to steer.
3. Management is based on trust and open communication.
4. Roles, mandate and duties are clearly defined.
5. In principle, representation reflects the contribution of resources per organisation: two or three representatives of DWA and two representatives of the ministries sit on the Steering Committee.
6. The Programme Office has sufficient mandate for efficient and effective implementation.
7. Supervision of the whole is organised independently and ensures that the system functions properly.
8. There is cohesion and involvement on the right scale.
9. Sufficient expertise is available in the different layers of governance.

8.2 Partnership Blue Deal

The Blue Deal is a partnership between DWA, water authorities abroad and the Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Infrastructure and Water. In this partnership all the participants are equal and contribute in their own way.

Water authorities abroad

Partners abroad are organisations that work together with Dutch water authorities in a partnership. They are mostly local or regional water authorities, but can also be ministries or other national bodies, or cross-border organisations. They are equal to the Dutch water authorities within the partnerships. They learn from each other, assess what is needed in the local context and develop projects. The water authorities abroad play a crucial role in ensuring that the needs of the most important stakeholders in the area are taken into account and that activities fit the local context.

They contribute – together with DWA – 50% of the budget. Their contribution mainly consist of experts that lead and implement the programme of the Blue Deal. They are represented at programme level through DWA in the governance of the Blue Deal. They organize the governance at partnership level with DWA in their own way. Water authorities abroad sign the Blue Deal partnership proposal together with the Dutch partners, commit to the plan and contribute financially or in kind to the partnership. In this proposal, the governance of the Blue Deal partnership in their country is described.

DWA

All the 21 Dutch Water Authorities and the Association of Dutch Water Authorities are a partner in the Blue Deal program. They contribute – together with the water authorities abroad – 50% of the budget. Their contribution mainly consist of experts that lead and implement the programme of the Blue Deal. They are represented in the Steering Committee, the program consultation group and the partnerships. They also represent the water authorities abroad and organize the governance at partnership level together with them. The Association of DWA manages the programme through the Programme Office on behalf of all the participants of the Blue Deal.

Dutch ministries

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Infrastructure and Water are a partner in the Blue Deal programme. They contribute together 50% of the budget, and are represented in the Steering Committee and in the program consultation group. Through the Blue Deal, they aim to contribute to SDG 6 to help 20 million people around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient and safe water by 2030.

In this partnership, the Ministries will deploy their worldwide networks to stimulate implementation on the ground, link the Blue Deal with other relevant activities, and promote good water governance. This could be done in bilateral discussions on various levels and during high level conferences. They give substance to their contribution, particularly through the embassies and delta coordinators. A connection will also be sought between the multi-year plans of the Blue Deal and the multi-year strategy of the Dutch embassies. Ministries will additionally contribute at the program level to the ambition to leverage the Blue Deal and advocacy for the Blue Deal approach.

8.3 New governance set-up in Phase 2

Twynstra & Gudde were asked to advise the programme on simplifying the governance structure that had been used in Phase 1. All the stakeholders involved and the MtR gave Twynstra & Gudde input, which resulted in a new set-up (Figure 3). In summary, the Steering Committee directs the Blue Deal programme through the Programme Office and the partnerships. Together with the water authorities abroad, the partnerships mainly carry out the activities abroad. The partnerships are accountable to the Programme Office and the Programme Office is accountable to the Steering Committee. Supervision of the programme as a whole is shaped to a degree by existing instruments, namely the regular MtR and EtRs that are carried out in the context of the contract with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A full description of the roles and responsibilities involved in Blue Deal governance can be found in the Implementation Guide to the Blue Deal.⁵

⁴ More information on the recommendations of the Mid-term Review can be found in Appendix 1

⁵ The Implementation Guide can be obtained from the Programme Office

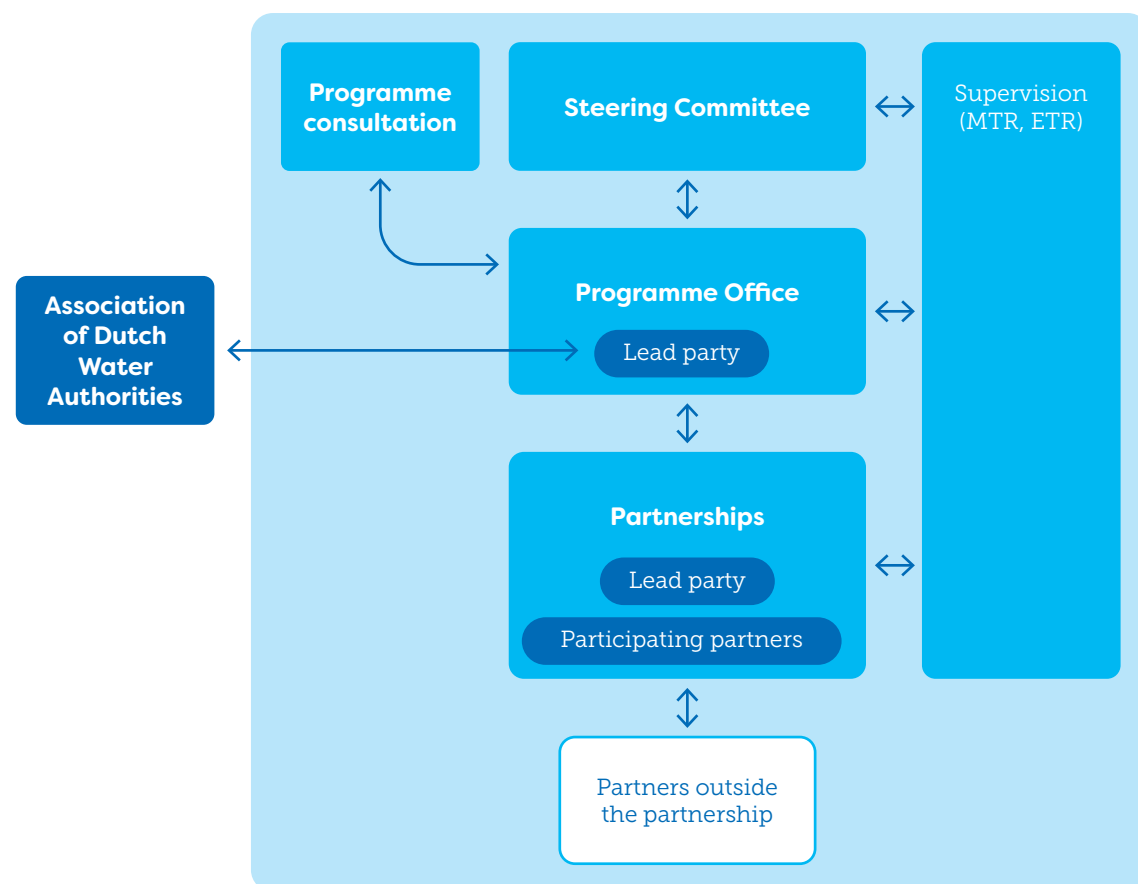


Figure 3: New organisation chart of Blue Deal governance

8.3.1 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee consists of representatives of DWA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. DWA's representation will decrease from three to two persons (the chairs of WINTER and CINTER), provided there is sufficient trust and mandate from DWA. In addition, one representative on behalf of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management will sit on the Steering Committee, as well as one representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The chair of CINTER also chairs the Steering Committee. The chair is responsible for the Programme Office and serves as the first point of contact for the programme director on behalf of the Steering Committee. In the event that views are split at a meeting of the Steering Committee, the chair takes the final decision. The programme director is the secretary of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee meets four times a year and has the following role within the programme:

Determines the ambition, goals and strategy

The Steering Committee determines the ambition, goals and strategy by approving the Framework for Phase 2. It is responsible for ensuring that the ambition and the associated goals are achieved by the Programme Office and the partnerships during implementation. They do this on behalf of the organisations that participate in the Blue Deal. The Steering Committee is also responsible for establishing an eight-year plan with associated resources (financial and manpower) and updating it after four years. In addition, it approves the annual plans of the programme. The Steering Committee decides on the appointment of the programme director nominated by the Association of Dutch Water Authorities (UvW). It has the competence to decide on issues that fall within the scope of this framework. On all other issues, it will consult its organisations.

Is responsible for the support of participating organisations

It must ensure cohesion between all the organisations, include them in programme developments and speak on behalf of the organisations where its mandate so provides. This includes the financial and legal colleagues.

Is an ambassador for the programme

The Steering Committee members act as representatives of the programme, and foster its ambition and efforts, both internally and externally.

Is an inspiration for the Programme Office and partnerships

The Steering Committee acts as an inspirational force with regard to the ambition and achievement of the goals according to the desired strategy. It also stimulates the programme's learning culture.

8.3.2 Programme consultation

The programme consultation consists of a group of delegates from the organisations participating in the Blue Deal, whose input can be called upon by the Programme Office. The programme consultation is primarily used for (preliminary) consultation and as a sounding board on matters that fall within the established frameworks. Although it is an informal group and has no role in the decision-making process, it is crucial for information flows, connection to the organisations of the Blue Deal and mutual understanding. The delegates can provide solicited and unsolicited advice to the Programme Office. The group's makeup reflects that of the Steering Committee: one representative from DWA/UvW and one from each Dutch ministry.⁶

6. The former name of this group was the "opdrachtgeversoverleg".

8.3.3 Programme Office

In the new governance model, the Programme Office is responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of the programme. It translates the ambitions set by the Steering Committee into concrete objectives (for the entire programme as well as the partnerships). The Programme Office draws up an annual plan and a multi-year plan for the programme that the Steering Committee decides on. It has a mandate to steer the programme within the boundaries of the multi-year plan of the Blue Deal. Issues outside the multi-year plan are submitted to the Steering Committee. The UvW is the lead party of the Programme Office.

The Programme Office:

- Manages the programme objectives and is the main contact for all internal and external parties interested in the programme.
- Determines the distribution of the financial resources (budget of the total programme) among the partnerships and checks whether they comply with the agreed financial rules.
- Monitors the progress of the partnerships based on established criteria: effectiveness, sustainability and partnership management. If a partnership does not meet these criteria, the Programme Office will help them reach it. If that does not succeed after several attempts, it can advise the Steering Committee not to submit the partnership in Phase 2.
- Facilitates the partnerships and the organisations that participate in the Blue Deal, for example with the professionalisation of the programme at various levels.
- Reports twice a year to the Steering Committee on the ambition and target reach of the total programme and the partnerships as described in the multi-year plan, as well as the deployment of resources (manpower/financial).
- Informs the Steering Committee frequently (quarterly and ad hoc) about relevant new developments in outline to generate involvement. Informs WINTER, CINTER, the UvW board, representatives of the ministries etc. and, on request, individual organisations that participate in the Blue Deal. These parties are regularly updated on progress to maintain their commitment to and involvement in the Blue Deal. They are also informed about major changes relevant to them.
- Escalates to the partnership manager if issues arise with a partnership. Escalates to the director of a water authority if an issue arises with a partnership or partnership manager that cannot be solved with the partnership manager. Escalates to the Steering Committee when issues arise with a partnership that cannot be solved with the director of a water authority.
- Escalates to the Steering Committee when issues arise that fall outside the established multi-annual plan of the Blue Deal.
- Facilitates the deployment of resources from DWA through, for example, a capacity pool, but is not responsible for capacity issues within the partnerships.

The Programme Office consists of a Program director, executive assistant, financial controller, PMLE officer, senior advisor and communication expert. Additional capacity is needed to give substance to the new ambition to use the Blue Deal for leverage, to lobby and to cooperate more with other organisations.

8.3.4 Partnerships

Through their projects, the partnerships of the Blue Deal help to achieve the ambition and objectives of the Blue Deal. The partnership consists of a collaboration between water authorities abroad and in the Netherlands. Each partner contributes financially/in kind to the partnership, is equal and has a say in the decisions that are made within the partnership.

The partners jointly draw-up a multi-annual plan setting out their collective ambition, goals and approach. They organise the decision-making within a partnership in their own way and lay down their cooperation in an agreement. The governance that is described in the Framework focuses on decision-making at programme level. The lead Dutch water authority has an important role in that decision-making process, but the water authority abroad and participating Dutch water authority are crucial for the progress of a partnership.

Lead Dutch water authority

Every partnership is assigned a Dutch water authority that takes the lead on behalf of all the other participating authorities. This organisation is financially and substantively responsible for the partnership. The directors of the Dutch water authorities that take the lead in a partnership meet regularly (2x a year) with the programme director to discuss the capacity of DWA for the programme. The lead water authority provides a partnership manager. The partnership manager is responsible for the daily work. He or she is the main point of contact for the partnership, has overall supervision and coordinates the implementation of projects within the partnership.

The manager of a partnership:

- Manages the SMART goals that contribute to the programme objectives, which are addressed in an annual and multi-year plan.
- Is accountable to the Programme Office about the goal of the partnership and the resources used (manpower/financial).
- Is responsible for implementing agreements with and from the Programme Office.
- Is responsible for maintaining support among participating partners of the partnership.
- Is responsible for making arrangements about the capacity of all participating organisations and manages capacity deployment.
- In the event of a capacity problem within a partnership, the partnership manager takes the initiative to solve the problem with the participating partners. If this is not successful, they will seek assistance from all the 21 Dutch water authorities through the foreign countries coordinator. They will inform the Programme Office.
- Informs and communicates with the involved partners (water authorities abroad, Dutch Water Authorities, embassies, delta coordinators etc.) within the partnership on progress and changes.
- Stimulates the learning culture within a partnership, ensures that partners take part in the learning programme and shares relevant lessons learned with the Blue Deal.
- Escalates within the partnership. Only when matters cannot be resolved within the partnership will the partnership manager escalate to the Programme Office.
- Escalates to the Programme Director if issues arise about the Programme Office or Blue Deal in general. Escalates to the director of UvW if an issue arises with the Programme Director or Programme Office that cannot be solved with the Programme Director.

Participating Dutch water authority

A Dutch water authority can choose to participate in a partnership without leading it. They allocate the time of staff members to the partnership, sign the Blue Deal partnership proposal together with the other partners, commit to the plan and contribute financially or in kind to the partnership. They are responsible for delivering their own contribution to the partnership.



“We have learned from the Blue Deal that a strong and lasting mutual relationship is the key to success”



Abinet Wassi
local project leader, Ethiopia Abbay

“We are working on the implementation of integrated water resource management (IWRM), so that water resources are managed in an integrated, equal, resilient and sustainable way by 2030. We have learned from the Blue Deal that a strong and lasting mutual relationship is the key to success. A long-term partnership is therefore a must. Physical missions are also a necessity to have a real impact. For the second phase of the Blue Deal we will work on capacity building through the exchange of knowledge and expertise. In addition to this, we also pay attention to investments in data management, establishment and maintenance of monitoring stations and water quality management/ urban waste management.”

9

Collaborations with others

9 Collaborations with others

Involvement of and cooperation with local organisations at partnership level is essential to achieve the projected impact of the programme. This of course includes cooperation with water authorities abroad (e.g. NGOs, knowledge institutes, government organisations) with specific knowledge or expertise which is not yet available (or insufficiently available) to the existing Blue Deal partners. This applies, for example, to specific knowledge of local networks, knowledge institutes (e.g. Nuffic) and social inclusion.

The Blue Deal partnerships also collaborate with international and Dutch organisations at programme level, as specified in their multi-annual and annual plans, as for instance with NCEA, knowledge institutes (i.e. WUR), investment institutes and VNGi. Specific collaborations with these and other local and regional partners at partnership level started under Phase 1 and will continue or intensify in the next phase. Conversely, the Blue Deal programme can provide added value to the work of other programmes or organisations.

Leverage of finance

The long-term approach of the Blue Deal programme in support of local counterparts makes it attractive for investment programmes to connect their investments with the Blue Deal partnerships. This kind of financial leverage is something that started within a few partnerships but will be encouraged during Phase 2 through closer cooperation with investment programmes (Invest International and the World Bank) and RVO.

9.1 Cooperation at programme level

1. NWB (Fund) (content)

The NWB (Fund) is the natural partner of DWA. NWB, DWA and the Blue Deal together make sure that the international activities of the Dutch water authorities are aligned. Regular contact between the three parties supports this aspiration, with a focus on strong connection between training, communication, networking and funding of additional activities. The NWB (Fund) aims to boost climate adaptation and inclusivity by funding activities within partnerships (crosscutting themes) and by training DWA staff for this purpose (KIWI Climate Game Changers programme).

2. WWX (content and knowledge)

The Blue Deal is an important program for the MoFA, next to WaterWorX and WASH-SDG, one of the three core DGIS programs to contribute to goal 6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, just like e.g. WaterWorX. Each of these core programmes is managed by a different group of Dutch WASH/IWRM stakeholders (civil society NGOs under the WASH-SDG programme, Dutch Water Authorities under the Blue Deal programme and the water utilities under WaterWorX) and focus their interventions based on their particular experience and areas of expertise.

At the programme level we aim to continue our collaboration. The regular meetings between coordinators, M&E and financial controllers will continue. At partnership level there are some close connections. An example is the Palestinian territories, where Blue Deal and WWX are combined, but there are also connections with WaterWorX partnerships on the content of water treatment and IWRM in Ethiopia, Mali and Kenya. We want to exchange best practices on peer learning, (waste) water treatment, IWRM and inclusion. For this we want to explore options on developing joint CoPs, on IWRM and water governance / enabling environment, and possibly more. We aim to continue our in-country collaboration with WWX projects in Ethiopia, Mali and Kenya, and want

to explore upscaling collaboration (with the combined WWX / Blue Deal partnership in Palestinian territories as an example) to other regions like Ethiopia and Ghana. In the development of country strategies, the respective WWX partnerships will also be involved.

3. WASH SDG Consortium (knowledge and content)

We will continue to work with the WASH SDG consortium and its partners. We aim to collaborate more on sharing best practices and inviting each other to CoP sessions and (regional) conferences, specifically on global themes like gender and inclusion within the water sector, climate, enabling environment and Monitoring & Evaluation. In the preparations for annual and multi-annual plans we see options for the involvement of preparation tools like the social inclusion assessment. At local level, in countries where there is no overlap between the programmes, involvement of the individual consortium partners of the WASH SDG consortium on the topic of social inclusion is under consideration.

4. SIWI (knowledge, advocacy)

Synergies and complementarity between the Blue Deal and SIWI are strong. SIWI's strategic objectives are to a large extent in line with the objectives of the Blue Deal. Strengthening water governance is at the heart of SIWI, where enabling multi-stakeholder collaboration and capacity building take central stage. SIWI has extensive experience in implementing and (facilitating) learning around the Blue Deal crosscutting themes and is strong in bottom-up knowledge development. SIWI does not however have staff on the ground.

During the first year of Phase 2 of the Blue Deal, we will further discuss cooperation opportunities between both programmes. There are options for shared learning on water governance related themes such as sustainability, gender, multi-stakeholder participation, equity and social inclusion, and accountability both for implementation at country level but also for strengthening the team's/partnerships' capacities in addressing those issues on the ground. At programme level there is ample opportunity for cooperation around knowledge building, for example during the (regional) conferences. At country level it will be interesting to see if a logical connection can be made within the partnerships in the coinciding countries.

5. RVO (knowledge, content, leverage)

The potential for collaboration with RVO at programme level and in the countries, at partnership level, is considerable. RVO is responsible for the implementation of a diverse collection of water-related programmes that could be relevant for the Blue Deal. These include Partners for Water, the Sustainable Water Fund (FDW), the Dutch Surge Support facility (DSS), the Dutch Risk Reduction Team (DDR) programmes, the Valuing Water Initiative (VWI), Water as Leverage (WAL), Water OS and the YEP water programme, for which RVO has a monitoring, evaluation and learning responsibility. To cover all those programmes, cooperation at organisational level is considered more efficient. Together with RVO we aim to search for ways to ensure that the lessons learned and best practices are shared and incorporated in our programmes. Concrete collaborations at partnership/country level, for instance the implementation of the Water Agreement in the Awash River Basin in Ethiopia, are encouraged.

In the specific case of the Partners for Water programme, the intention is to seek connection with their investment leverage programme in the coinciding Delta countries and with the Community of Practice on Social Inclusion.

The Water OS programme, an advisory programme, includes the country water platforms and the Strategic Water Advisors who support the Dutch embassies in ten of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' partner countries, six of them coinciding with the Blue Deal countries.

A strong connection and efficient working relations with the Strategic Water Advisors are essential to make sure that the Dutch water-related development efforts in the coinciding countries are aligned with each other. Present relations will be continued. After the tender for the extension of the Water OS programme has been finalised, new connections will be made with new strategic advisors.

6. NWP – YEP (content)

NWP is a network organisation of the Dutch water sector, working worldwide on co-creating futureproof solutions and catalysing global water impact. It also implements Young Expert Programmes (YEP) on several themes, including Water. A tailor-made YEP programme will be set up specifically for the Blue Deal. Envisaged collaboration within the Blue Deal involves providing training to 25 more local young experts and helping them to grow their careers in the Blue Deal partner organisations.

NWP-YEP is currently in the process of localising part of its training support in Africa and intends to work more and more with regional training companies like MDF. In addition, NWP provides new young experts with training & coaching support by alumni young experts from the region. NWP-YEP has created a strong YEP global network consisting of more than 500 young experts, in which the Blue Deal young experts participate fully.

7. Global Water Partnership (network, advocacy)

GWP wants people to have clean water to lead healthy lives, to have communities protected from water-related threats, and to harness the productive power of water for sustainable development while protecting vital ecosystems. GWP therefore advocates for the application of an integrated approach to water resources management (IWRM), as adopted within SDG 6 (on water) and strives for an all-of-society involvement. This takes a credible, neutral, experienced multi-stakeholder network. GWP has over 3,000 institutional partners in more than 170 countries with 68 accredited Country Water Partnerships and 13 Regional Water Partnerships spanning the developing world and emerging economies. This combined platform embodies a core GWP belief: that only when a broad range of stakeholders work together will we change water management for the better.

GWP partners with more than 3,000 organisations that share its aims and values in tackling the sustainable development, management, and use of water resources. Partners share information and experiences, and draw on each other for advice and assistance. It is the intention of the Blue Deal to become (through DWA) a partner within this network, with the aim of strengthening local networks within the partnerships and establishing a platform to exchange knowledge and experiences on IWRM.

8. GCA (advocacy)

GCA is an international organisation working as a solutions broker to accelerate action and support for adaptation solutions, from the international to the local, in partnership with the public and private sector, to ensure that we learn from each other and work together for a climate-resilient future. Its work focuses on those who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including the poorest people in the poorest countries. They are the least prepared to withstand the triple health, social and economic impacts of our climate emergency. The value proposition of GCA as a solutions broker combines its ability to mobilise finance with three pillars of activities: programs and action; knowledge acceleration; and agenda setting and advocacy supported by crosscutting activities. Cooperation opportunities with GCA will be further explored.

9.2 Cooperation at partnership level

1. NCEA (content, local context)

The NCEA's work is founded on three principles: expertise, independence and transparency. It is the combination of these three that allows the NCEA to provide unbiased support and advice. The NCEA supports environment and sectoral ministries, environmental assessment professionals and non-governmental organisations in efforts to improve their environmental and social assessment practice. The NCEA advises on the quality of the process and content of these assessments, both at project level (environmental and social impact assessment or ESIA) and strategic level (strategic environmental assessment or SEA).

A large part of the work within the Blue Deal partnerships is concentrated around integrated basin development plans as part of larger (spatial) country plans (e.g. county development plans, land use plans, water allocation plans, etc). Cooperation with the NCEA will help to better position the work of the Blue Deal within the local and regional policy arena and increase its impact. We intend to start the cooperation in an initial pilot (Kenya) and will use the experience to see if cooperation in more areas is possible. NCEA is also in the process of developing a new phase of their programme. In the second half of 2022, strategic cooperation will be further elaborated upon.

2. Investment funds - Invest International (II) and World Bank (as leverage)

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals have to be achieved all over the world. To live up to this enormous challenge, Invest International explores and facilitates tailored project development and investment arrangements that create new business opportunities. Former development funds like D2B and DRIVE are part of II's portfolio. At partnership level, e.g. Mali and Burkina Faso, II and the Blue Deal work closely together. The Blue Deal partners support the development and execution of the D2B and DRIVE projects in these countries. A similar role could be possible in other coinciding countries as well, and will be further explored in close cooperation with the II team.

Within other Blue Deal partnerships (i.e. Burkina Faso and Ethiopia) there is a close connection with WB investment programmes. The long-term commitment of the Blue Deal makes investments potentially more sustainable in the long term and therefore of interest to larger investment programmes. Collaborations of this kind should be explored within other Blue Deal partnerships.

3. Knowledge Institutes (e.g. WUR) (content)

On several occasions during Phase 1, experts were hired from various knowledge institutes (e.g. Deltares, IHE). For the next phase we seek further cooperation opportunities with those institutes, for example the WUR, which has a strategic cooperation agreement with DWA. This agreement will form the basis to further strengthen cooperation between our two organisations and to connect our international networks.

4. VNGi (local context)

VNG International are experts in strengthening democratic local government in developing countries and countries in transition. Local governments play a key role in the provision of basic services, including water, waste management, healthcare and housing. They have a profound impact on areas such as safety, food security, the rule of law and women's rights. Their projects contribute in a sustainable way to better futures for people, communities and countries. During the first phase of the programme there has been some cooperation at partnership level (e.g. Ethiopia). Further cooperation within other partnerships with the aim of strengthening connections within the local and regional communities relevant for the Blue Deal partnerships will be explored.

9.3 Agreements

To establish partners' roles and responsibilities within the programme, they will enter into agreements at two levels:

1. Agreements at central level

- a. The Blue Deal Framework for Phase 2, in which the shared ambition and input of all the participating organisations is described. This document will be signed by all participating water authorities, UvW and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Infrastructure and Water Management. The document forms the basis of all the other contracts.
- b. A public-private agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Association of Dutch Water Authorities (UvW) and a cooperation agreement between UvW and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Infrastructure and Water Management. The Dutch Water Authorities are legally represented by UvW in both contracts, in its capacity as lead party for the whole programme.
- c. A cooperation agreement between the UvW and the Steering Committee on the efforts of the Programme Office.

2. Agreement at partnership level

- a. Individual agreement between Dutch water authorities that take the lead in a partnership and UvW. The agreement with the lead party describes how their role and responsibilities will be given shape.
- b. Individual partnership agreements between the lead Dutch water authorities and the participating Dutch water authorities and the water authorities abroad, within which projects are carried out. This contract will state the role and responsibilities of each party and the capacity provided for the partnership.
- c. A letter of intent or MOU between the Blue Deal key partners and other programmes/ organisations to finalise cooperation.



“We did not have an easy start, but in the second phase we can make progress”

Mr. Doctor Hhlongwane
Chairman of the executive board of the
Joint River Basin Authorities, eSwatini

“As five River Basin Authorities (RBAs), we did not have an easy start. Because decentralization of water management is a process that causes resistance in certain people who are losing power. Another issue was that the RBA's were too small to do their jobs efficiently by themselves. Therefore, we have set up the Joint River Basin Authorities, a joint executive organization for the execution of the day-to-day work for all five RBA's. Now we can make progress.”

10

Finance

10 Finance

10.1 Lessons learned

Phase 1 of the Blue Deal started with 17 partnerships instead of the 6 that were planned in the Framework. Along the way, one partnership (Volta) ended in 2019 and one new partnership (Indonesia) was added in 2021. Starting the programme with more partnerships created the opportunity to make a bigger impact than anticipated. The downside was that it also put pressure on the budget of Phase 1, which resulted in several expenditure cuts. The lack of clarity on the long-term finance for partnerships also meant that much time had to be spent on short-term financial planning. A lesson from Phase 1 is that the partnerships need a fixed multi-year budget so that they can plan ahead and have more flexibility to shift their budgets between years if necessary.

The same goes for the Programme Office. In Phase 1, the Office's budget was 10% of the actual expenditure of the partnerships. The latter was found to fluctuate due to various factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, whereas the Office's expenditure remained consistent because most costs are personnel. Another lesson from Phase 1 is that a balance is needed between the number of partnerships and the capacity of the Programme Office. The increase in partnerships at the start of the programme led to too much pressure on the Programme Office, which had been set up to guide 6 partnerships.

The third lesson is that the Blue Deal programme can leverage other investment programmes. Several partnerships work together with the World Bank, for instance. The long-term presence of the Blue Deal in the region and the focus on strong management and maintenance increases the chance of an investment being successful in the long run. Lastly, Phase 1 showed the effectiveness of several components: strong local teams, deployment of the Young Experts (YEP programme) and collaboration with knowledge institutes. It also showed the need for scope for making small investments and organising regional activities with a number of partnerships.

As the Mid-term Review shows, the Blue Deal needs a new financial strategy for Phase 2, as set out in this chapter.

10.2 Financial approach for Phase 2

The lessons learned in Phase 1 have prompted the following new financial strategy:

- The programme's budget will be linked more to partnership effectiveness.
- The programme will work with multi-year budgets for the partnerships and the Programme Office to create more flexibility.
- Changes have been made to the governance of the programme to achieve greater decisiveness on budget issues.
- The programme budget will increase to €10 million a year (€50 million in total for Phase 2). The extra budget will be used by the partnerships for activities that have proven to be effective: strong local teams, a tailor-made YEP programme, collaboration with knowledge institutes, small investments and regional activities with several partnerships. The Programme Office will use the extra budget for a programme on knowledge exchange and communication.
- An important new ambition is to create investment leverage with other programmes to benefit the needs of local Blue Deal partners.

10.3 Financial rules for Phase 2

The Blue Deal programme is primarily financed by the key partners: the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Infrastructure and Water Management, 21 Dutch water authorities and our partner organisations abroad. The Association of Dutch Water Authorities (UvW) hosts the Programme Office.

Together they have agreed the following rules:

1. In Phase 2, the Blue Deal budget will increase to €80 million (€10 million per year).
2. Around 50% of the total costs of the partnership will be met by the Dutch Water Authorities (including UvW and, on request, the NWB Bank) and the water authorities abroad, and a maximum of 50% by the ministries. The contribution of the DWA and the water authorities abroad will consist mainly of hours spent on the partnership at a set rate per day.⁷
3. All the key partners will commit to an eight-year budget (2023-2030) for the Blue Deal programme as a whole, on the basis of a multi-annual estimate. The grant from the ministries is a fixed amount, the partnership costs should not exceed that sum. The Programme Office will divide the budget amongst the partnerships based on their multi-year plans, giving them the flexibility to shift budgets between years if necessary. The Programme Office will coordinate the expenditure of the total budget.
4. The budget for the Programme Office is a fixed amount for eight years and does not depend on the expenditure of the partnership.
5. The programme will comply with the financial rules and regulations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as laid down in the contract and will follow the Blue Deal planning & control manual.
6. No government support is permitted.

7. The suggested day rate for DWA is €750,-, the day rate for the water authorities abroad will be added as an annex to the final Framework

10.4 Budget of the partnerships

During Phase 2 of the programme there will be a budget for the partnerships, while central costs will be managed by the Programme Office. The various partnerships will each draw up their own budget for the coming five years. These will be based on demand from the water authorities abroad. The distribution of the total budget among the partnerships for Phase 2 of the Blue Deal will be known in December 2022 when decision-making on the partnerships proposals has been completed. The total budget per partnership for Phase 2 will be made known in December 2022. Until then, an indicative budget has been drawn up based on the budget 2022.

Description	Deadline DGIS
Argentina	€136,000
Burkina Faso	€343,000
Colombia	€1,081,000
eSwatini	€740,000
Ethiopia Abbay	€304,000
Ethiopia Awash	€568,000
Ethiopia WWTP	€245,000
Ghana	€294,000
Indonesia	€627,000
Kenya	€294,000
Mali	€274,000
Mozambique	€1,431,000
Palestinian Territories	€394,000
Peru	€568,000
Romania	€327,000
South Africa	€850,000
Vietnam	€723,000
Total	€9,200,000

Table 4: Indicative budge per year per partnership for Phase 2

The budget of the partnerships consists of six budget lines. The indicative budget gives an idea of the purpose and size of each budget line. The shift in the budgetlines are also indicative and partnership-dependent:

1. Days worked by DWA (40%)

This refers to the number of days worked by DWA staff on the partnerships. The Blue Deal is a capacity-strengthening programme and this budget line is therefore by far its biggest expense (around 40% of the total budget). The number of DWA days will probably significantly increase in Phase 2.

2. Days worked by water authorities abroad (17%)

This refers to the number of days worked by water authorities abroad on the partnerships. They actually work twice as many days as DWA, it being a demand-driven partnership. The reason that the expense projected in this budget line is lower than for DWA is because the fixed local day rate is in most partnerships much lower than for DWA.

3. Travel and expenses (16%)

These are the expenses incurred by DWA when travelling to the local partner, or by a local partner travelling to the Netherlands. Domestic travel also falls under this budget line. Its expenses will be probably substantially less than the projected budget of Phase 1, because the partnerships will be working in a more hybrid way. This only applies to the partnerships that have a good local internet connection.

4. Contractors (experts) (9%)

The contractors are often knowledge institutions or other organisations that complement the knowledge of DWA and thereby strengthen the programme. The expenses for this budget line will probably increase in Phase 2.

5. Project expenses (17%)

This budget line covers miscellaneous expenses, for example small investments for pilots (equipment, repairs etc.), as well as the development of e-learning modules. The expenses for this budget line will probably remain the same as in Phase 1.

In the first phase, the partnerships additionally divided their budgets among four work packages: knowledge & expertise available at the local partner, well-functioning inclusive and sustainable organisation, cooperation and participation, programme coordination. These workpackages matched the Theory of Change and linked the budget to the substantive work. In the second phase, the Theory of Change is adjusted and therefore the partnerships will now dived their budget among three packages:

- 1. Clean water
- 2. Sufficient water
- 3. Safe water

10.5 Budget of the programme office

In line with the Mid-term Review recommendations, the programme management will be strengthened and the role of the coaches will change. Other budget items are: the M&E officer and the audit.

	Phase 2
Programme director	1 FTE
Management assistant	0.9 FTE
Controller	1 FTE
M&E officer	0.7 FTE
Total personnel	3.6 FTE
Office costs	€82,500
Contingency	€75,000
Audit	€82,000
Total	€655,000

Table 5: Budget per year of the programme office for Phase 2

The Programme Office also manages the budget for the learning and communications budget. Its total FTE is therefore 5.2 FTE.

10.5.1 Learning programme

The opportunity to create a strong learning programme in Phase 2, as described in the Chapter on Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, will significantly improve the Blue Deal. A special budget of 2% of the total Blue Deal budget will be allocated for this programme. A pilot version was financed by the NWB Fund during Phase 1. The costs will be covered by the Blue Deal in Phase 2 and managed by the Programme Office. Budget items are: the coordinator of the programme, training courses, communities of practice (CoPs) and regional meetings with several partnerships.

	Phase 2
Coordinator learning programme	0.7 FTE
Training courses	€83,000
Communities of Practice	
Regional meetings	
Total	€175,000

Table 6: Budget per year of the learning programme for Phase 2

10.5.2 Communication and advocacy

Another significant improvement is the opportunity to set up a communication and lobbying strategy in Phase 2, as described in chapter 5. A special budget of 2% of the total Blue Deal budget will be allocated for this purpose. A pilot version was previously financed by the NWB Fund during Phase 1. The costs are now covered by the central budget and managed by the Programme Office. Budget items are: a communications officer, communications, tools and events. A biennial congress with all the water authorities abroad will account for a large part of the budget. The purpose of this congress is to learn for each other, but because the costs are more communicative it is a part of this budget instead of the learning programme.

	Phase 2
Communications officer	0.9 FTE
Communications tools	€137,000
Events	
Total	€220,000

Table 7: Budget per year for communication and advocacy for Phase 2



10.6 Total budget for Phase 2

Phase 2										
Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total	%
Partnerships	9,200,000	9,200,000	9,200,000	9,200,000	9,200,000	9,200,000	9,200,000	9,200,000	73,600,000	90%
Learning programme	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	1,400,000	2%
Communication programme	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	1,760,,000	2%
Programme Office	655,000	655,000	655,000	655,000	655,000	655,000	655,000	655,000	5,240,000	6%
Total costs	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	82,000,000	100%
Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Infrastructure and Water Management	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	40,000,000	49%
DWA/ water authorities abroad	5,150,000	5,150,000	5,150,000	5,150,000	5,150,000	5,150,000	5,150,000	5,150,000	41,200,000	50%
UvW	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	800,000	1%
Totale bijdragen partners	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	10,250,000	82,000,000	100%

Table 8: Total budget per year of the Blue Deal for Phase 2

APPENDIX 1: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO MTR

Main recommendations

1. Ambition

- Clarify the Blue Deal's vision and ambition: decide whether to
- 1. keep the current ambition limited in its policy influencing contributions to the SDG and IWA, implying a limited role for the ministries or
- 2. broaden the ambition to influence the international water and climate agenda and contribute to the SDGs, with a more active role for the ministries in leveraging their knowledge and international networks.
- Define the results to be achieved on the different dimensions of the ambition, such as for knowledge development and innovation, learning, business development and employment of Dutch organisations and for networking and partnership development. It will also need to clarify the expected results of addressing the prioritised thematic areas (gender and poverty alleviation, innovation, climate change and sustainability).

Management response

In chapter 1 the new vision and ambition is presented, based on the decision of the Steering Committee to broaden the the programme's ambition.

In chapter 7 a learning strategy is presented, learning now being an important theme in Phase 2. In chapter 5 a communication and advocacy strategy is presented. Advocacy is a new theme in the programme.

2. Partnership on programme level

- Make the partnership more solid. Dedicate time and resources for improving the partnership functioning by making its foundation more solid. After the Blue Deal has clarified its ambition, the Blue Deal partners will be in a good position to define the kind of partnership it wishes to be. The MTR sees two options: co-funding relationship or partnership with joint responsibilities. It is important that the ministries have their internal discussion about both their expectations and about what they realistically can contribute prior to or in parallel with the visioning exercise and defining the Blue Deal's ambition.

Management response

The Blue Deal will continue as a partnership with joint responsibilities as described in §1.5. The Dutch ministries will contribute financially but also through the knowledge and expertise of the embassies, delta coordinators and the offices in The Hague. They will help the partnerships and also connect the Blue Deal with investment programmes.

3. Organisation

- Simplify the governance structure and processes. To enhance the decisiveness and strategic leadership by the Blue Deal governance, the MTR recommends untangling the Blue Deal and DWA to enhance PMOs' mandate, and better position the Blue Deal governance for an enhanced strategic leadership role. It is also suggested to improve the connectedness between the Blue Deal governance and the partnerships, particularly on strategic matters.
- Rethink the partnership management model. Independent of the direction that the Blue Deal adopts, the MTR recommends organising the management of the partnerships more professionally. It is important that rethinking the partnerships' management model happens with DWA and considers the DWA longer-term vision on their continued work in international development, beyond the Blue Deal. In-country presence and separating partnership development, project management, and content expert roles are options to be considered.

Management response

In chapter 8 a new, simpler governance model is presented. WINTER and CINTER committees are no longer part of the decision-making process, but it is crucial that they remain involved in the programme.

The organisation of the partnerships will be part of the multi-year plans that are being made in the autumn of 2022.

4. Finance

The MTR scored the financial strategy of the Blue Deal as 'least satisfactory', but didn't give a recommendation.

Management response

A new financial approach to increase budget effectiveness is presented in §10.2. An important new ambition is to create investment leverage with other programmes to benefit the needs of local Blue Deal partners

5. Approach

- Make the country partners and partnerships a more integrated part of the Blue Deal vision and ambition. The MTR recommends working towards more ownership by the country partners by bestowing the partnerships a more strategic role in achieving the Blue Deal ambition and impact. This is recommended based on the MTR's assumption that the Blue Deal will embrace a broader ambition that better reflects the partnership's policy goals.
- Update the strategic framework for programme implementation. Following the clarified ambition and partnership nature, the programme will need to update its ToC and strategic and M&E framework to guide its activities towards achieving results. The framework will need to incorporate advocacy, communication, financing and learning strategic choices by the partnership.

Management response

The country partners are the heart of the programme as described in §1.5, chapter 3, §5.1.1. They will become a more integrated part of the Blue Deal vision and ambition.

The updated ToC and strategic M&E Framework are presented in §3.3. and chapter 6. They are both now more in line with the needs of the partnerships.

The framework has incorporated advocacy and communication in chapter 5, financial strategy in §10.2 and a learning strategy in chapter 7.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

- Institutionalise learning and adaptive management in the programme structure and processes: The MtR recommends that the Blue Deal partnership becomes more adaptive by placing learning and reflection more central to the programme, aiming to foster more openness for learning and continuous reflection by all programme partners, across and at all levels. Linking learning directly to the Blue Deal vision and ambition will help this process.

Management response

Learning had become a crucial part of the new M&E approach in chapter 3 and a special learning strategy is presented in chapter 7 with a matching budget as shown in §10.5.1

7. Communication

- Value communication as key element. The MtR concludes that despite the limited resources, communication activities have satisfactorily contributed to establishing the Blue Deal brand. However, the MtR also considers that the communication activities are a largely undervalued key element of the Blue Deal programme that urgently needs appropriate and dedicated resources and a strategy and plan for more directed activities, targeting prioritised Dutch and internationally-based stakeholders (audiences).

Management response

In chapter 5 a communications and advocacy strategy is presented. A special budget is reserved for communication and advocacy in §10.5.2

APPENDIX 2: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Defining impact

The outcomes of the Blue Deal, to which every partnership contributes, are improved water governance and improved climate-resilient water resource management (IWRM). The impact is defined as the result “on the ground”, i.e. more people having improved access to improved clean, safe and sufficient water. Many factors influence the impact (Figure 1), as the impact, by definition, is only indirectly influenced by the Blue Deal programme.

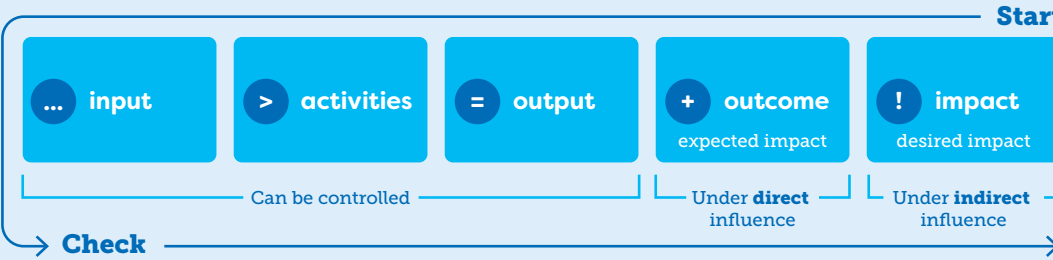


Figure 4: The sequence of activities, output, outcome and impact. Activities and output can be controlled, outcomes are under direct influence, however impact is only under indirect influence.

Determination of impact - number of people reached

The Blue Deal uses a three-step method to estimate its impact.

Step 1 is to determine the number of inhabitants in the management areas of the regional water authorities abroad, by using their data. Special care is taken to include only the inhabitants of the watersheds, catchments, cities or pilot areas that are under the management of the partner organisation.

Adding up these numbers gives the total number of people to which the Blue Deal indirectly contributes to improving clean, sufficient and safe water. This number thus increases if a partnership scales up, or if an extra partnership is added, and this number decreases if a partnership comes to a standstill (for example due to political unrest) or stops.

Step 2 is to measure, in a systematic manner, the progress in aspects of water governance of the Blue Deal’s partner organisations abroad. This will be done by a Water Governance Ladder Assessment (WGLA), which will be carried out once every two years. This assessment is based on the Water Governance Indicator Framework (OECD, 2018), yet adapted to the context of the Blue Deal. The assessment is a participative “self-assessment” (i.e. not carried out by an external party) consisting of scoring water governance indicators. This will be carried out by all Blue Deal partnerships and will show the level of improvement in the organisations and water governance in general in the area of interest. In Q4 of 2022 the baseline will be measured.

Step 3 is to estimate how many people have benefited from the progress in water governance. This will be done by multiplying the number of people in the management areas by the progress in water governance in those areas, and will be corrected by a factor that includes a rough estimate of other contributors during the same period in the same area. This will take account of the fact that the Blue Deal contributes to the impact along with other factors and contributors (Figure 2).

The resulting sums of the (currently 17) partnerships will show the total number of people who have benefited from the Blue Deal every two years. Use of this method implies that if you do not make progress on your objectives and outcomes, then the people in that watershed/management area are not counted.

For IGG, the Blue Deal will also determine, in line with the DGIS/IGG water results framework , the “# of people benefitting from improved river basin management and safe deltas”. In order to do so, step 3 will be repeated, but leaving out the Blue Deal partnerships that only focus on urban waste water treatment (i.e. they only focus on clean water), as this does not fit with the stated outcome.

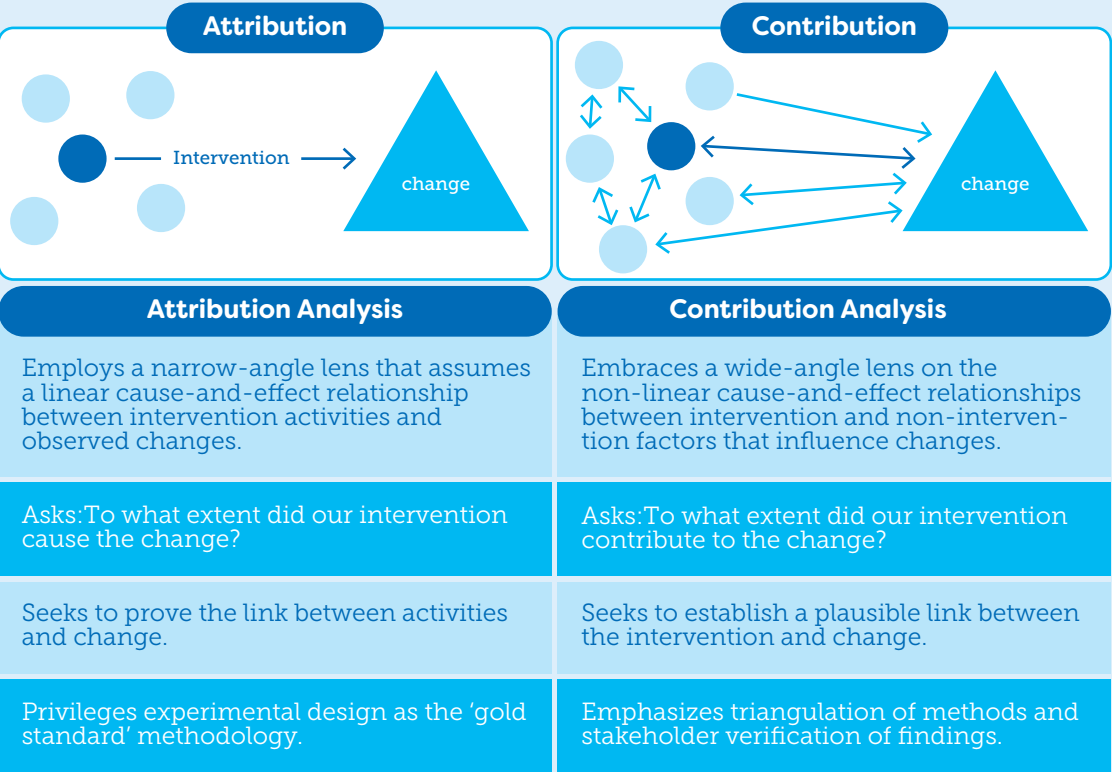


Figure 5: The difference between attribution versus contribution. The Blue Deal contributes to people having improved clean, sufficient and safe water.

Impact assessment is a proxy

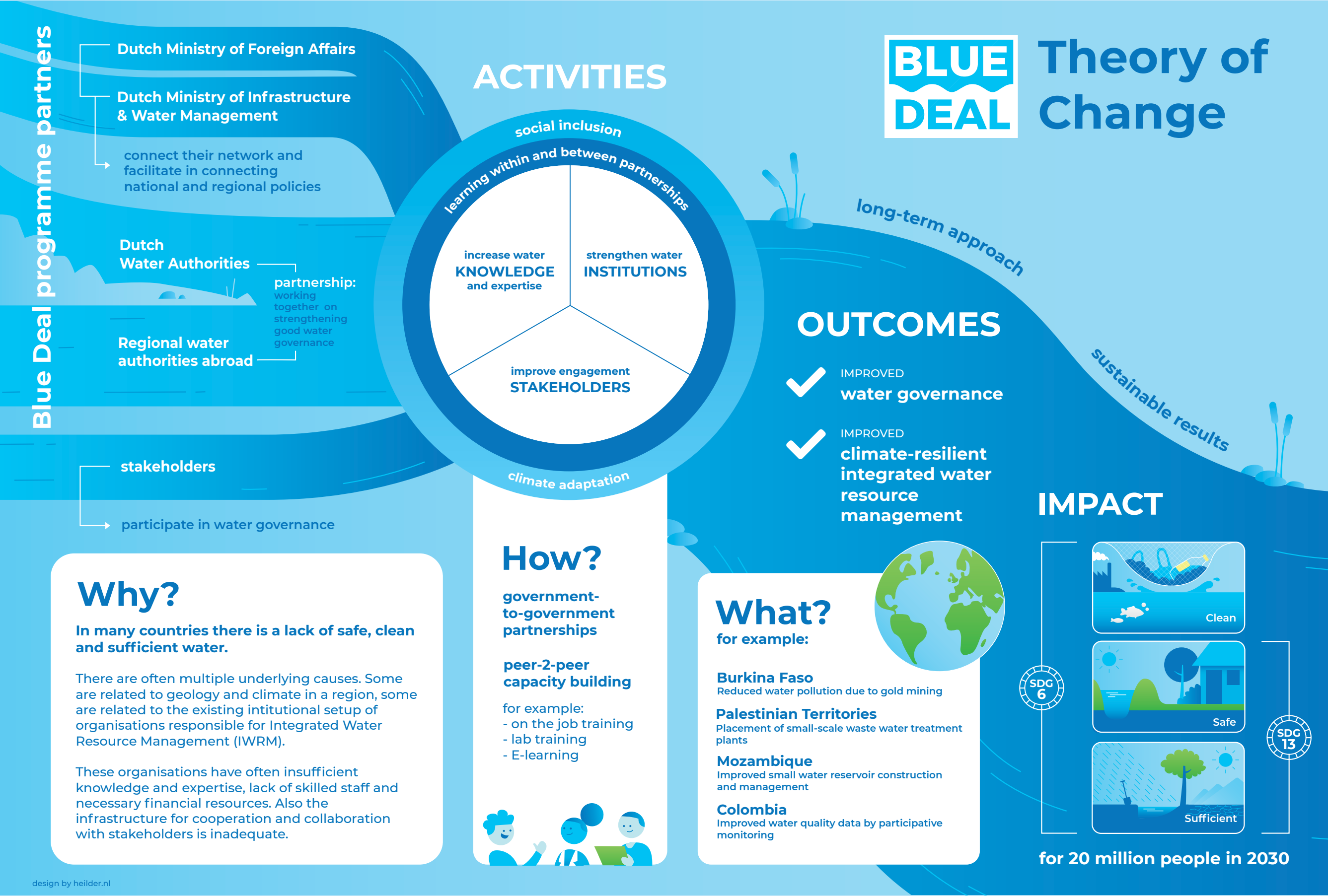
In summary, the Blue Deals’ proposed method for estimating impact implies that the Blue Deal reports on the number of people in terms of an improvement in water governance. Using this proxy for the number of people reached means the Blue Deal does not actually report on the number of people who now have really clean, sufficient and safe water. There is a trade-off between having very accurate measurements of impact versus the amount of effort, time and money estimating these costs. In other words: every hour and euro spent on measuring impact is not used on making the impact itself. On the other hand, it is important to measure whether the Blue Deal reaches its outcomes to be able to account for our programme. Blue Deal monitoring is very focused on monitoring the results we have on an outcome level. This is used for learning and adapting our partnerships in order to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Blue Deal programme. For measuring impact, we seek a middle ground, i.e. we estimate the impact, but we avoid doing surveys and investigations on the ground, as these are very time-consuming and costly.

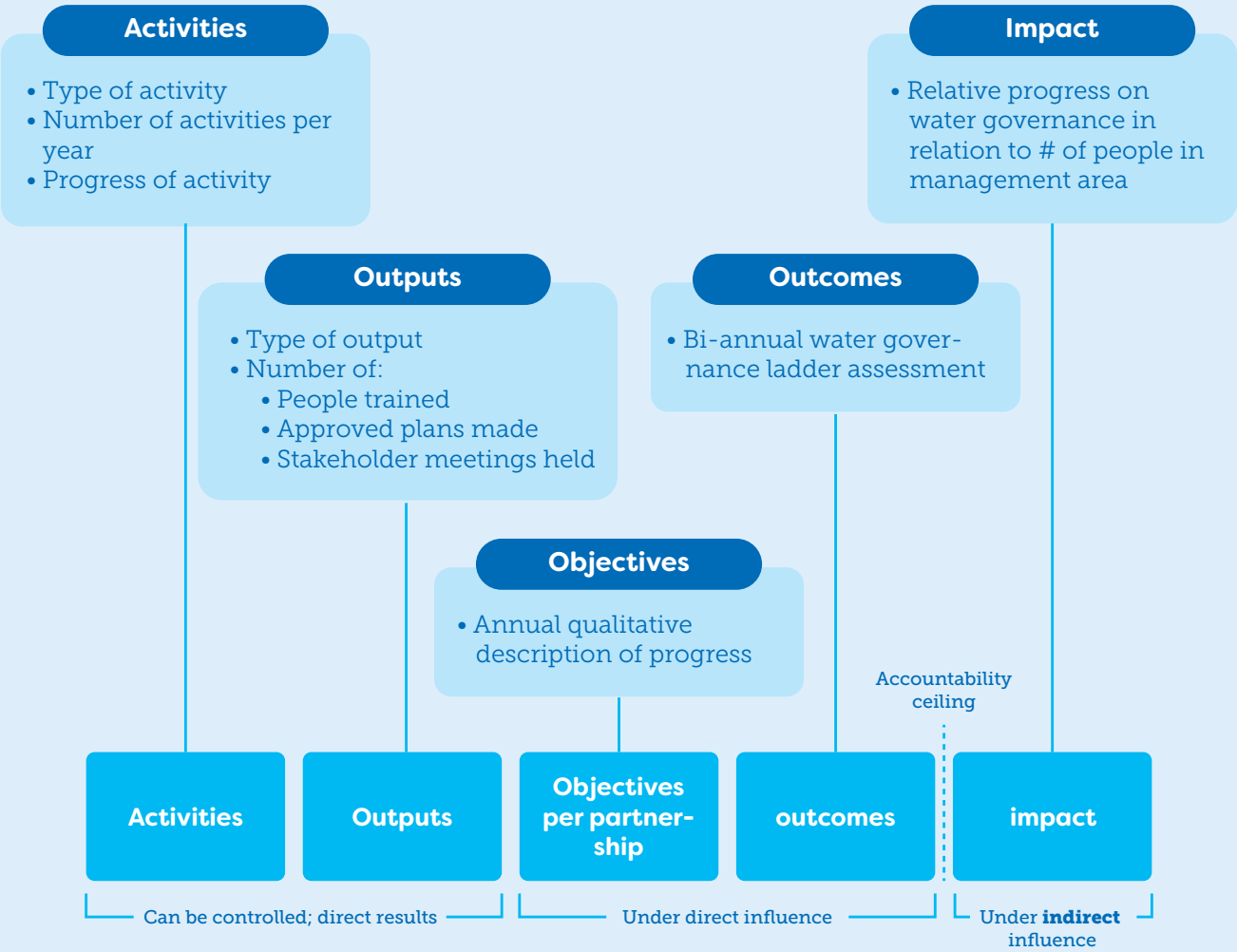
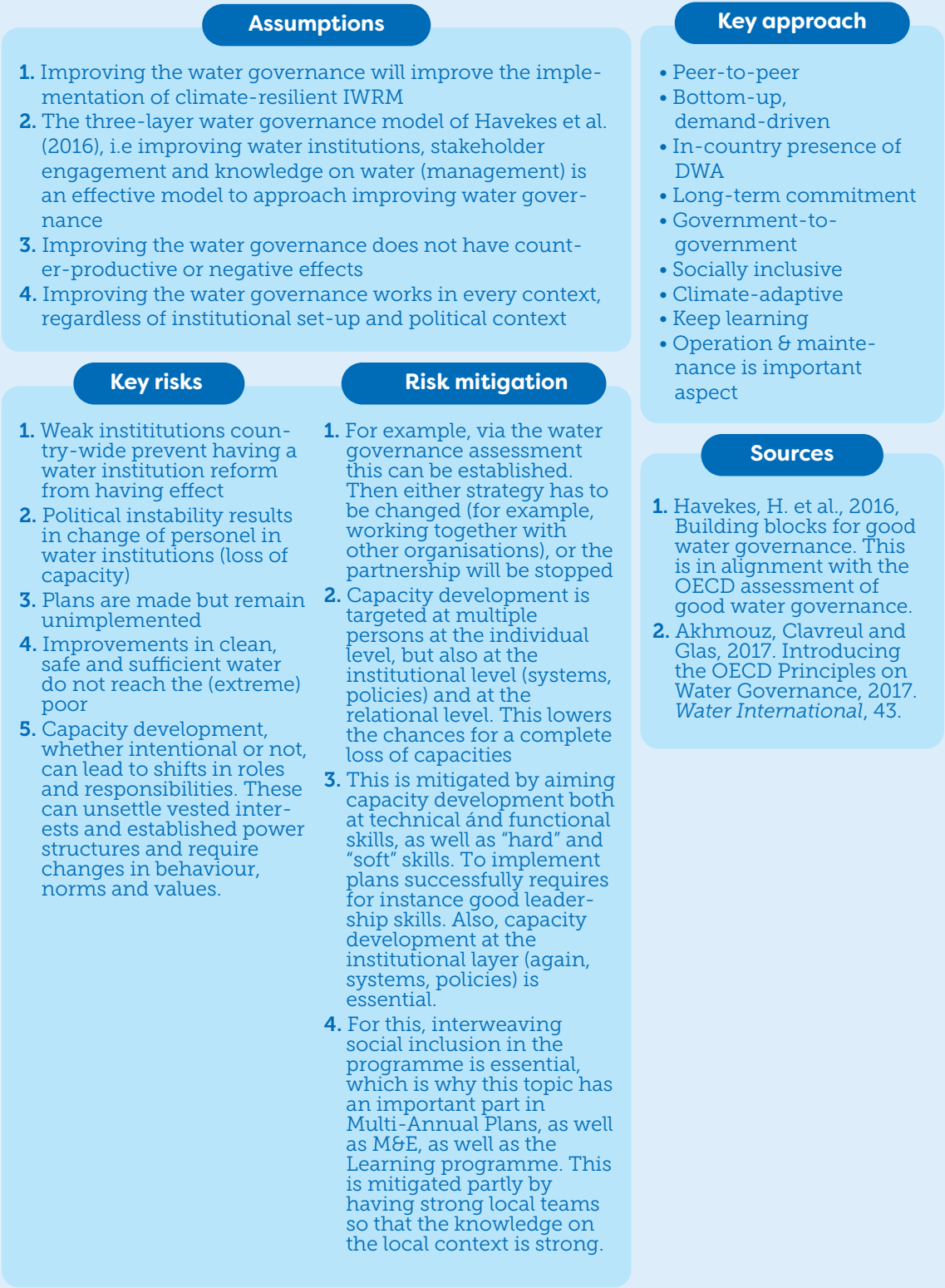
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APPENDIX 3: THEORY OF CHANGE, ASSUMPTIONS AND MONITORING OVERVIEW





2018 - 2030

BLUE DEAL

Helping 20 million people around
the world to gain access to clean,
sufficient and safe water

7 June 2022

Text: Dutch Water Authorities
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management

Design: Studio Duel

Image: Unie van Waterschappen

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