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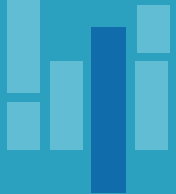


**DIVISION OF  
INTERNAL  
OVERSIGHT  
SERVICES**

Evaluation Office

# Evaluation of the World Water Assessment Programme

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**Commissioning office**

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# Abstract and Acknowledgements

## Abstract

The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) was established by UNESCO in 2000 in response to a call from the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development to produce a periodic, system-wide report on the state, use and management of the world's freshwater resources. The main objectives of WWAP are to provide UN member states and the international community with comprehensive, up-to-date, and reliable information on the state, use, and management of the world's freshwater resources and to equip water managers and decision-makers with the knowledge, tools and skills needed to formulate and implement sustainable water policies.

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### **Bernardin Assiene**

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# Acronyms

|                 |   |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|---|
| <b>ADB</b>      | Asian Development Bank  | <b>MENA</b>     | Middle East and North Africa  |
| <b>ADG</b>      | Assistant Director-General  | <b>MOOC</b>     | Massive Open Online Course  |
| <b>ADM</b>      | Sector for Administration and Management                                  | <b>MoU</b>      | Memorandum of Understanding   |
| <b>AECID</b>    | Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation                  | <b>OECD/DAC</b> | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee |
| <b>AMCOW</b>    | African Ministers' Council on Water                                       | <b>SC</b>       | Natural Sciences Sector of UNESCO   |
| <b>BIOPALT</b>  | Biosphere and Heritage of Lake Chad                                       | <b>SDG</b>      | Sustainable Development Goals   |
| <b>BSP</b>      | Bureau of Strategic Planning  | <b>SIDS</b>     | Small Island Developing States  |
| <b>C/4</b>      | UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy   | <b>SISTER</b>   | UNESCO's System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and the Evaluation of Results       |
| <b>C/5</b>      | UNESCO's Programme and Budget   | <b>UK</b>       | United Kingdom  |
| <b>CGIAR</b>    | Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research                 | <b>UN</b>       | United Nations  |
| <b>CSD</b>      | Commission on Sustainable Development                                     | <b>UNDP</b>     | United Nations Development Programme  |
| <b>ERG</b>      | Evaluation Reference Group  | <b>UNECE</b>    | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe   |
| <b>EU</b>       | European Union  | <b>UNECLAC</b>  | United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean                  |
| <b>FAO</b>      | Food and Agriculture Organisation   | <b>UNEP</b>     | United Nations Environment Programme  |
| <b>GDP</b>      | Global Domestic Product   | <b>UNESCO</b>   | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation                        |
| <b>GEF</b>      | Global Environment Facility   | <b>UNESCWA</b>  | United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia                             |
| <b>IW:LEARN</b> | International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (GEF)         | <b>UNIDO</b>    | United Nations Industrial Development Organisation                                      |
| <b>GGRETA</b>   | Governance of Groundwater Resources in Transboundary Aquifers (project)   | <b>USA</b>      | United States of America  |
| <b>HLPF</b>     | High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development                     | <b>USD</b>      | United States Dollar  |
| <b>HR</b>       | Human Resources   | <b>WHO</b>      | World Health Organisation   |
| <b>IHP</b>      | Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme                                  | <b>WSP</b>      | Water Science Policy  |
| <b>IMI</b>      | Integrated Monitoring Initiative  | <b>WWAP</b>     | World Water Assessment Programme  |
| <b>IOS</b>      | Division for Internal Oversight Services                                  | <b>WWDR</b>     | United Nations World Water Development Report   |
| <b>i-WSSM</b>   | UNESCO International Centre for Water Security and Sustainable Management |                 |   |

# Executive summary

1. The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) was established by UNESCO in 2000 in response to a call from the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to provide a global overview of the status, use, and management of freshwater resources.
2. WWAP's mandate is to equip water managers and policymakers with the necessary knowledge, tools, and skills to implement sustainable water policies. WWAP operates as a UNESCO programme based on voluntary contributions. Since 2007, it has been primarily funded by the Government of Italy and is located in Perugia, Italy. WWAP's activities are structured around the following pillars:<sup>1</sup>
  - (i) The production of the United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR)
  - (ii) The provision of capacity development services to Member States to support effective water policies.
  - (iii) The development of indicators for water resources (which WWAP has addressed through the creation of indicators on water and gender)
  - (iv) Engagement in communication initiatives to disseminate WWAP's products and raise awareness about water-related challenges.

## Evaluation objectives

3. The Natural Sciences Sector, in conjunction with WWAP, requested an evaluation of UNESCO's WWAP. This evaluation is designed to shed light on the accomplishments and challenges encountered by the programme over the past 10 years, while also contributing to the creation of a more robust framework for future operations.
4. The current evaluation, encompasses the activities undertaken by WWAP from 2015 to July 2023, providing a comprehensive review of the programme's initiatives since its last evaluation in 2015.
5. The primary audience for this evaluation includes the WWAP Secretariat, particularly its management, the senior management of UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector, and the Division of Water Sciences. Secondary users include UNESCO Member States, members of the UN Water family, members of the UNESCO Water Family, and the general public.

1. Signed Memorandum of Understanding between the UNESCO and the Government of the Republic of Italy on "Operation of the UNESCO Programme Office on Global Water Assessment Hosting the Secretariat of the World Water Assessment Programme in Perugia, Italy. (2012) and WWAP's validated intervention logic.

## Evaluation methodology

6. The evaluation employed a theory-based and mixed-method approach combining both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The assessment covers all revised OECD/DAC criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Impact. Data collection methods include a desk review, semi-structured interviews with representatives from various groups of stakeholders, an online survey of UN WWDR users, and bibliometric and backlink analysis. A total of 214 individual stakeholders were consulted during the evaluation (36 interviewees, 178 through the online survey). Given the large stakeholder ecosystem surrounding the UN WWDR, it is important to recognise some limitations of the evaluation's methodology in terms of representativeness and generalisability. To address these, the report has based its conclusions on triangulated data, meaning findings are established based on information that can be verified through several sources of data. An Evaluation Reference Group and UNESCO's Division for Internal Oversight Services contributed to quality assurance of the evaluation process and the validation of the report.

## Key findings

### Relevance

7. WWAP plays a pivotal role in achieving UNESCO's objectives, as outlined in the 41 C/4. This is accomplished through the production of the UN WWDR, the development of gender-related indicators for water resources, international cooperation, and capacity building with a focus on fostering sustainable development and environmental protection.
8. WWAP is a significant contributor to UNESCO's global priority on Gender Equality. This is achieved through its [toolkit for collecting sex-disaggregated data](#), its [Call for Action to accelerate gender equality in the water domain](#), and the integration of gender equality in the World Water Development Report (WWDR) editions.

9. Furthermore, WWAP's efforts contribute to realising UNESCO's global priority Africa. This is evident in the content of the UN WWDR and its dissemination efforts and particularly through the case studies developed in 8 African countries. The inclusion of several African stakeholders in WWAP's Call for Action further underscores this commitment. However, the capacity development efforts of WWAP in low-income nations could be constrained by the reliance on supplementary financial resources for its capacity building component.

10. WWAP also considers other priority groups in its initiatives. Several Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have benefited from capacity building activities on the use of WWAP's gender toolkit. Additionally, WWAP has organised numerous events targeting youth organisations.

11. WWAP is also relevant to the needs of Member States. The programme produces the UN WWDR series that focuses on pressing development issues that policymakers need to address urgently.

12. The evaluation finds that the report successfully addresses the requirements of policymakers and decision-makers. Policymakers appreciate the diversity of themes covered, the frequency of its publication, the structure of the report and its dissemination formats.

## Coherence

13. UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences promotes water security and sustainable water resource management. This division oversees two global initiatives: WWAP and the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP).

14. WWAP and IHP have complementary mandates. This has led to the development of synergies in their activities, particularly in the production of the UN WWDR and in promoting gender equality. There is a potential for stronger synergies between WWAP and IHP on capacity building activities in particular as relates to the UN WWDR's content. A robust collaboration exists between WWAP and UNESCO's field offices, which is instrumental in organising events related to World Water Day and disseminating the UN WWDR. UNESCO's field offices are willing to enhance this collaboration with guidance from WWAP.

15. The production of the UN WWDR is a complex process involving numerous contributors. UNESCO and UN Water have successfully clarified the roles of the different

organisations involved as well as the rules for the production and branding of the report. However lingering tensions remain within the UN-Water family on the preparation of the UN WWDR and contributing members' visibility.

16. Through the production of the UN WWDR, WWAP makes significant contributions to the priorities and principles of UN-Water. It further plays a crucial role in contributing to SDG6.

17. In terms of gender equality in the water domain, WWAP is a leading force within UNESCO, inspiring various initiatives and paving the way for progress. Nevertheless, the WWAP gender toolkit is not sufficiently visible within the UN-Water Family and UNESCO.

## Effectiveness

18. The UN WWDR is a high-quality report produced through an effective process. It is a valuable resource offering a comprehensive understanding of global water challenges and potential solutions. Its visibility is on the rise, as indicated by the growing number of downloads and the increasing number of languages it's available in. The report's media presence has also grown, with 25,000 articles written about it in 2023. Policymakers familiar with the UN WWDR claim they frequently use the data and statistics it provides.

19. In the area of gender equality, WWAP is playing a proactive role in implementing initiatives designed to combat gender imbalances in the water sector. Its gender toolkit serves as a unique resource in this regard. During the 2022-2023 biennium, WWAP successfully raised 1.2 million USD for its activities promoting gender equality. Capacity building initiatives in relation to its gender toolkit have reached 104 experts, 60% of whom are women, across 21 countries in this period alone<sup>2</sup>. WWAP's Call for Action, which aims to fast-track gender equality in the water sector, is backed by a diverse coalition of over 160 members from 62 institutions, 23 Member States<sup>3</sup>, and 8 regional organisations. WWAP has conducted a thorough needs assessment and developed a position paper that underpins the Call for Action, providing a series of action-oriented recommendations.

20. Despite these successes, there are limitations to consider. Capacity building efforts related to the themes of the UN WWDR have had limited success, largely due to WWAP's resource constraints, leading to a strategic focus on gender-specific capacity development. There is a need to bolster WWAP's communication efforts regarding the UN WWDR in Africa, where awareness among policymakers is lower. Visibility of WWAP's

2. UNESCO (2023), UNESCO In action for gender: 2022-23, p.43

3. <https://sdgs.un.org/partnership-progress/call-action-accelerate-gender-equality-water-domain-fri-12082023-1854>



gender-related activities, particularly its toolkit, could be improved. Lastly, WWAP's call for action to accelerate gender equality in the water domain has yet to translate into tangible actions.

## Efficiency and sustainability

21. WWAP has demonstrated resilience and adaptability in the face of financial challenges. The government of Italy secures core funding for WWAP, however, due to horizontal cuts to the overall State budget in 2017, this amount has been reduced by about 400,000 USD per year. WWAP's core funding is essential for maintaining the operations of WWAP's Secretariat and its reduction has put significant pressure on the Secretariat.

22. Between 2013 and 2023, the WWAP Secretariat successfully mobilised about 3.4 million USD for specific projects, including 1.2 million USD allocated for gender-related projects in 2022-2023. However, efforts to gather additional resources to increase core funding have achieved limited success so far, indicating the need for strong support from UNESCO in finding additional donors for the programme.

23. WWAP operates efficiently with a clear distribution of roles among staff members. Despite a substantial decrease in staff levels since 2015, with just over half of the staff who were employed in 2015 (10 out of 19) continuing to work at WWAP as of 2024, the organisation has maintained the quality and timely production of the UN WWDR. This is particularly noteworthy given the shift from a triennial to an annual report, which has led to a significant increase in workload due to simultaneous production processes.

24. Budget cuts from 2021 onwards have resulted in the programme functioning without a Deputy Coordinator (P5), placing additional responsibilities on the Director and the Senior Programme Specialist and potentially impacting their other duties. WWAP's structure puts significant pressure on its staff and poses potential risks for the programme's execution, with any absences potentially jeopardising the timely production of the UN WWDR.

25. Furthermore, WWAP operates from premises in Perugia, a location that does not entirely meet the organisation's present requirements. Its relative isolation makes accessibility difficult and the location lacks appeal for posting additional international personnel. Furthermore, three quarters of WWAP's premises were declared unsafe and hence, unusable in 2019.

## Pathways to impact

26. The UN WWDR holds substantial potential to influence policy. It has been referenced in many instances when discussing water-related status or trends in policy documents and dialogues. The report has gained recognition and usage within the scientific community and the international development sphere. The number of citations of the UN WWDR in 2023 is five times as many as in 2015. The content and added value of the WWDR are almost unanimously approved by surveyed and interviewed academics and policymakers.

27. Quantifying the impact of the UN WWDR on policy can be challenging, but the evaluation provides compelling evidence that policymakers utilise the report. According to the Overton database, UN WWDRs published between 2015 and 2023 have been cited 128 times in policy documents. Intergovernmental organisations are the primary contributors to these citations, accounting for 76% of the citations. Of these, UN organisations make up two-thirds of the citations. About 13 citations out of 128 come from national governments (6) and the European Union (7). The backlink analysis reveals that the report is extensively interconnected with NGOs, UN agencies, and global institutions of higher education and research, underscoring a strong affiliation with the sphere of international development.

28. However, 26% of academics and 42% of policymakers believe the UN WWDR is not sufficiently known. To amplify the WWDR's impact on policy, it is crucial to persist in efforts to boost the report's visibility, advocate for actions, and engage with policymakers.

## Conclusions

29. The UN WWDR is highly valued and relevant, providing comprehensive analysis, data, and recommendations to tackle urgent water challenges worldwide. It holds substantial credibility within the international development sphere and the scientific community. Policymakers rely on this authoritative reference for policy decisions and dialogue at both domestic and multilateral levels. However, its influence on policy also depends on factors within individual countries which are outside the control of WWAP.

30. The Italian Government guarantees continued financial support to WWAP. However, WWAP faces significant financial constraints due to budget cuts in its core funding and higher inflation rates. These financial challenges affect its operations and staffing levels. Moreover, WWAP's core budget is only sufficient to cover the production of the WWDR and current communication activities, not outreach and capacity development activities (whether for the WWDR or the Gender Toolkit). These activities rely on project-related funding from various donors, which lacks long-term commitments.

31. The capacity development programme should be purposefully designed to enhance the influence of the UN WWDR and the gender Toolkit on policy. WWAP has successfully leveraged funding for capacity building in relation to its gender toolkit but has struggled to fully develop capacity development in relation to the WWDR series.

32. In addition, WWAP lacks sufficient permanent senior personnel to support its strategic vision. The absence of a Deputy Coordinator has posed a substantial challenge for WWAP. There is a need for senior personnel to bolster WWAP's fundraising capacities, fortify its communication strategy and branding, and mould WWAP's vision for the future.

33. WWAP's headquarters in Perugia, Italy, no longer align with the organisation's operational requirements. The location presents difficulties due to its remoteness, lack of direct international flights, and unattractiveness to international staff.

34. The UN WWDR has gained significant prominence due to the diligent efforts of WWAP in translating the report into multiple languages and disseminating it across various formats and locations. For further visibility, WWAP needs to amplify its communication strategies in Africa and effectively promote its gender-related initiatives.

35. Opportunities for synergies, especially on gender-focused capacity building, have been recognised by both WWAP and IHP. It is essential to continue this collaboration and to thoughtfully evaluate the positioning of WWAP in relation to the future objectives of UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences.

36. While the roles of WWAP and UN-Water have been successfully defined and the overall process of collective design of the WWDR has been positive, some misunderstandings have been noted between some UN Water members and WWAP. There is room to further improve dialogue to ease those partnerships and promote collective decision-making.

## Recommendations

- ▶ **Recommendation 1** – Clarify WWAP's strategic vision and objectives.
- ▶ **Recommendation 2** – Develop a sound fundraising strategy to increase WWAP's core funding.
- ▶ **Recommendation 3** – Relocate WWAP's premises.
- ▶ **Recommendation 4** – Optimise WWAP's capacities and organisational structure.
- ▶ **Recommendation 5** – Enhance the visibility of WWAP's work.
- ▶ **Recommendation 6** – Enhance the synergies and complementarities with other UNESCO entities with the aim to amplify the impact of WWAP's work on water policies.

# Management Response

## Overall Management Response

The evaluation highlighted WWAP's good work during the evaluation period and clearly identified impediments to its optimal functioning. It provided several useful recommendations that the sector will follow. WWAP needs to produce, within its mandate, a forward-looking strategy aligned with the IHP IX strategy and the overall SC strategy. Any future repositioning of WWAP must be aligned with the available funding.

| Recommendations   | Management response   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Recommendation 1:</b><br/><b>Clarify WWAP's strategic vision and objectives</b><br/>Addressed to: ADG/SC with the support of DIR/HYD and WWAP Coordinator<br/>Time frame: June 2025</p>   | <p><b>Accepted</b><br/>The sector will work with DIR/HYD, IHP Chair and WWAP to bring out the combined strategic vision and objectives for WWAP.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation 2:</b><br/><b>Develop a sound fundraising strategy to increase WWAP's core funding</b><br/>Addressed to: ADG/SC with the support of DIR/HYD, WWAP Coordinator, and BSP<br/>Time frame: June 2025</p>   | <p><b>Accepted</b><br/>The sector will work with BSP, HYD Division and WWAP to develop a new resource mobilisation strategy for WWAP linked to recommendation 1. This will be done in parallel to the process of developing WWAP's strategic vision and objectives</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation 3:</b><br/><b>Relocate WWAP's premises</b><br/>Addressed to: ADG/SC with the support of ADG/ADM<br/>Time frame: December 2025</p>  | <p><b>Partially Accepted</b><br/>The provision of accommodation is also part of the agreement between the Donor and UNESCO. The sector will jointly work with ADM to negotiate suitable accommodation for the WWAP facility.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation 4:</b><br/><b>Optimise WWAP's capacities and organisational structure</b><br/>Addressed to: ADG/SC together with WWAP Coordinator<br/>Time frame: June 2025</p>  | <p><b>Accepted</b><br/>The sector will collaborate with HYD Division, WWAP, and other central services to optimise the current capacities and organizational structure.</p>   |
| <p><b>Recommendation 5:</b><br/><b>Enhance the visibility of WWAP's work</b><br/>Addressed to: The WWAP Coordinator<br/>Time frame: June 2025</p>   | <p><b>Accepted</b><br/>The sector will work with IHP, WWAP and CPE to enhance the outreach and visibility of WWAP deliverables.<br/>To ensure a smooth transition, given the WWAP coordinator's upcoming departure in October 2024, it would be beneficial to allow the new incumbent time to discuss the new outreach and visibility strategy with the team and the SC Sector.</p> |
| <p><b>Recommendation 6:</b><br/><b>Enhance the synergies and complementarities with other UNESCO entities with the aim to amplify the impact of WWAP's work on water policies</b><br/>Addressed to: The WWAP Coordinator with the support of ADG/SC<br/>Time frame: June 2025</p> | <p><b>Partially accepted</b><br/>We recommend combining recommendations 1 and 6, as both complement each other concerning the programme's objectives.<br/>It should be part of the strategic vision and objectives.</p>   |

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Object of the evaluation

1. Water is one of the most pressing issues of our time. As the global population continues to grow, so does the demand for this finite resource. According to the 2023 UN World Water Development Report, 2 billion people (26% of the population) did not have access to safe drinking water, and 3.6 billion (46%) lacked access to safely managed sanitation in 2023. Ensuring access to clean, safe water for all is a critical challenge, with implications spanning from public health and sanitation to agriculture, industry, and the environment. Climate change further exacerbates this issue, as changing weather patterns and extreme events can lead to both water scarcity and water-related disasters<sup>4</sup>.

2. As illustrated in Figure 1, the United Nations has been working to address the global water crisis for several decades. Through its mandate WWAP contributes to this effort.

3. The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) was established by UNESCO in 2000 in response to a call from the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to produce a UN system-wide periodic global overview of the status, use, and management of freshwater resources through the production of the United Nations World Water Development Report (UN WWDR)<sup>5</sup>. Through the UN WWDRs and complementary activities, WWAP's mandate is to equip water managers and policy and decision-makers with knowledge, tools, and skills necessary to formulate and implement sustainable water policies<sup>6</sup>.

4. WWAP operates as a UNESCO programme funded through voluntary contributions. During its nascent years (2000-2006), WWAP was funded by Japan and operated within UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris. Since 2007, it has been primarily funded by the Government of Italy and located in Perugia in the region of Umbria, Italy at the UNESCO Programme Office for Global Water Assessment.

5. WWAP's intervention logic is structured around three pillars and a cross cutting activity<sup>7</sup>:

4. [UNESCO website, Imminent risk of a global water crisis, warns the UN World Water Development Report 2023](#)

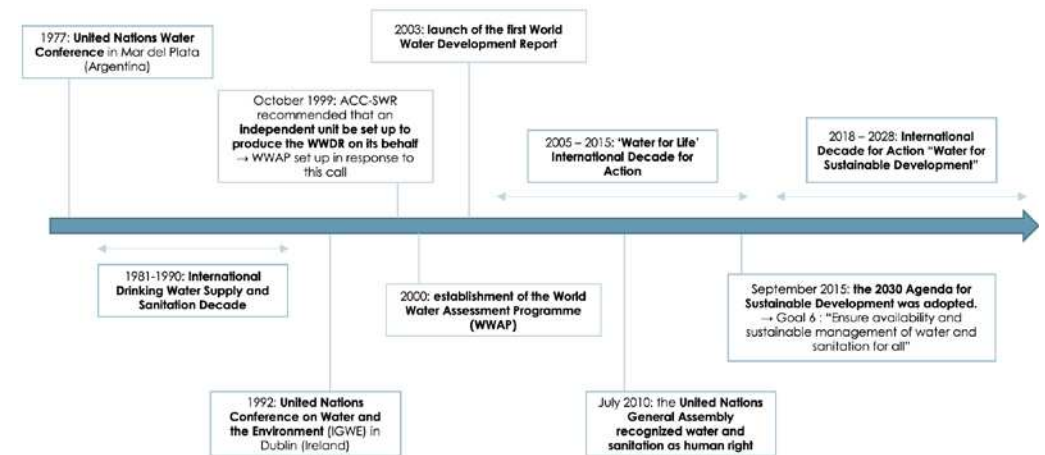
5. World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) Overview document

6. <https://www.unesco.org/en/wwap/about>

7. Sources: Evaluation Terms of references and WWAP's validated intervention logic.

8. The UN WWDR « series » refer to all the editions of the report. The UN WWDR is an annual report since 2014.

Figure 1. UN response to water-related issues



Source : Technopolis Group

- The production of the United Nations World Water Development Report series<sup>8</sup>
  - The provision of capacity development services to Member States to inform decision making processes and support effective water policies.
  - The engagement in communication initiatives to disseminate WWAP's products and ensure that findings from the UN WWDR series and other knowledge products are widely accessible. WWAP also advocates for sustainable water policies by raising awareness about water related challenges.
6. The promotion of gender equality (cross-cutting activity) through the development and promotion of a [toolkit for sex-disaggregated data on water](#)

initially published in 2015 and updated in 2019<sup>9</sup>. In 2021, it further brought together a multistakeholder coalition of over 100 members and issued the [call for action to accelerate gender equality in the water domain](#)

7. The UN WWDR is the UN's flagship report on water and sanitation issues focusing on a different theme each year. It stands as the primary product of WWAP.
8. The report is published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water<sup>10</sup> and its production is coordinated by UNESCO WWAP. The report is a collaborative effort, drawing on contributions from UN-Water Members and partners, and other experts. The UN WWDR serves as the UN's comprehensive and cohesive analysis of freshwater-related challenges and emerging issues. Initially, the report was published every three years. In 2014, WWAP began publishing the UN WWDR annually following UN-Water's recommendation to change the periodicity of the report<sup>11</sup>, endorsed in UNESCO's 37 C/5<sup>12</sup>. Each year the report delves into a specific topic relevant to the formulation and implementation of sustainable water policies.

## 1.2 Evaluation purpose and scope

9. The Natural Sciences Sector and WWAP requested the evaluation of UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme. The evaluation aims to provide insights into the achievements reached and the obstacles faced by WWAP, and to contribute to the development of an enhanced framework for the future.
10. WWAP was last evaluated in 2015. The evaluation scope for the current exercise thus comprises WWAP's activities over the past nine years, from 2015 to July 2023 and covers the full spectrum of activities led by WWAP.

9. This toolkit includes 4 main tools: [Gender-responsive indicators for water assessment, monitoring and reporting](#); [Methodology for the collection of sex-disaggregated water data](#); [Guidelines on the collection of sex-disaggregated water data](#); [Questionnaire for the collection of sex-disaggregated water data](#)

10. [UN-Water is a coordination mechanism comprised of United Nations entities and international organisations working on water and sanitation issues](#). Its role is to ensure that its members and partners 'deliver as one' in response to water-related challenges. There are 35 UN-Water members from the UN system. Examples of UN contributors to the UN WWDR are ESCAP, UNECE, UNECLAC, UNESCWA, FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UN Habitat, UNIDO, and WHO. More information on UN-Water is available at: <https://www.unwater.org/>

11. Based on the findings of a global stakeholder survey conducted by UN-Water in 2011.

12. "UNESCO's benchmarking activities on the assessment of the world's freshwater resources will be reinforced via annual World Water Development Reports, a flagship product of UN-Water", paragraph 02042 page 100.

13. A programme's intervention logic is a strategic approach that outlines how a desired change will be achieved through the implementation of planned activities. It reflects the current situation, its underlying causes, and the change which the programme seeks to achieve.

14. The [OECD-DAC defines the evaluation criteria](#) as follows:

**Relevance:** Is the intervention doing the right things? Relevance is the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.

**Coherence:** How well does the intervention fit? Coherence measures the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.

**Effectiveness:** Is the intervention achieving its objectives? The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.

**Efficiency:** How well are resources used? Efficiency measures the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

**Impact:** What difference is the intervention making? Impact measures the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

**Sustainability:** Will the benefits last? Sustainability measures the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.

11. The evaluation is summative in nature but also includes formative elements: while its focus is to provide an assessment of what has been achieved in the past, it also aims to inform learning by identifying lessons learned, and making strategic and operational recommendations that will support WWAP's future programming and adaptive management.

12. The main target audiences for this evaluation consist of the following users: The WWAP Secretariat and particularly its management, senior management of UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector and the Division of Water Sciences. The secondary users are UNESCO Member States, UN Water family members, UNESCO Water Family members and the general public.

13. The evaluation report is based on evidence gathered during data collection and focuses on answering the main evaluation questions presented in Appendix A.

## 1.3 Methodological approach

14. The evaluation adopted a theory-based and mixed-method approach combining both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The evaluation findings are based on the alignment between WWAP's intervention logic<sup>13</sup> (Cf. Appendix D) and the six OECD/DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact<sup>14</sup>. The data collection methods adopted by the evaluators are summarised in the table below.

**Table 1. Data collection methods and sources**

| Data collection method                                      | Description  | Data sources  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Desk review</b>  | Analysis of relevant documentation, including the UN WWDR series itself, WWAP's website, strategic documentation, monitoring data, progress reports, financial data, and relevant previous evaluations   | 125 documents consulted (Cf. Appendix B)  |
| <b>Semi-structured interviews (remote and face to face)</b> | Remote and in-person semi-structured interviews with WWAP stakeholders from UNESCO and other UN agencies, governments, donors, and academia. Stakeholders were selected based on their roles in relation to WWAP, including users of the UN WWDR, existing and potential funders, partners and contributors to WWAP's activities and to the production of the UN WWDR, and WWAP staff. Sampling was done to have a group of interviewees that is collectively representative of WWAP's activities. The sampling also aimed to have a diverse group in terms of gender and regional representation. | 36 interviewees including 14 women and 22 men (Cf. Appendix C)  |
| <b>Field visit to Perugia</b>                               | A field visit to WWAP's premises in Perugia to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allow direct observation</li> <li>• conduct individual interviews with WWAP's staff and local stakeholders.</li> <li>• carry out two focus group discussions with WWAP's staff</li> </ul>   | 2.5-day field visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 interviewees (cf. Appendix C)</li> <li>• 2 Focus group discussions</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Online surveys</b>                                       | Two online surveys aiming to have a better understanding of the visibility and use of WWAP's products including the UN WWDR series. Each survey targeted different stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policymakers in Member States<sup>15</sup> (the survey was sent to all UNESCO Permanent delegations and National Commissions and IHP National Committees)</li> <li>• Academia (the survey was sent to the mailing list of all UNESCO water-related Category II Institutes and UNESCO Chairs)<sup>16</sup></li> </ul>   | Survey among Member States : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of respondents: 134 out of 415</li> <li>• Response rate: 32%</li> </ul> Survey among Academics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of respondents: 44 out of 130</li> <li>• Response rate: 34%</li> </ul> |

15. This includes representatives of UNESCO National Commissions, Representatives of IHP National Committee, other policy markers including from Ministries responsible for water issues, water agencies, and international organisations.

16. Both surveys were disseminated through mailing lists provided by UNESCO's Sector for Natural Sciences (SC) and the Sector for External Relations and Priority Africa (PAX). The three lists for policymakers included a total 415 emails. Those for the academics had 130 emails.

| Data collection method              | Description  | Data sources   |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Bibliometric analysis</b>        | Bibliometric analysis on Scopus <sup>17</sup> to examine the scope and extent of coverage of the UN WWDR editions and WWAP in academic research since 2015   | <p>Following keyword searches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “World Water Development Report” “All fields” “Article”: for this research 6,003 documents were found and analysed.</li> <li>• “World Water Assessment Programme” “All fields” “Article”: for this research, 785 documents were found and analysed.</li> </ul> <p>Global analysis of the data available on Scopus for these two searches, looking in particular at: documents by year, author, affiliation, country, journal, subject area.</p> <p>Details of the methodology are given in Appendix L.</p> |
| <b>Analysis of policy influence</b> | <p>Analysis of the policy influence of the UN WWDR series using the Overton<sup>18</sup> database for the period 2015-2023</p> <p>For 2023 and 2022, analysis of the report’s outreach was measured by using a backlink checker, an online tool that connects UNESCO’s UN WWDR webpages to all associated websites (i.e. websites that refer to it).</p> | <p>Analysis of outputs from the Overton database for the period 2015-2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 67 policy documents citing the UN WWDR</li> <li>• Type of organisations citing the UN WWDR series</li> </ul> <p>Backlink analysis for the UN WWDR 2023</p> <p>Analysis of purpose of the citations</p> <p>Details of the methodology are given in the Appendix M.</p>  |

17. Scopus is a multidisciplinary abstract and citation database with comprehensive coverage of scientific, technical, medical and social sciences literature. It offers bibliometric indicators that can help understand the impact of a research in its field.

18. Overton is a searchable index of policy documents, guidelines, think tank publications and working papers. It collects data from 188 countries and over a thousand sources worldwide. Nonetheless, the quantity of available data varies per region. For instance, as of March 2024, Overton has a total of 183,281 policy documents from Africa in comparison with 9,039,392 in OECD countries.



## 1.4 Strengths and limitations of the methodology

15. The methodology presents several strengths. It merges both quantitative and qualitative methods amplifying the breadth and depth of gathered insights; it aligns OECD/DAC criteria with the continuous reconstruction of the programme's intervention logic (See Appendix D), to ensure strong theoretical foundation across the evaluation process; and engages rich and varied perspectives on the work of WWAP, including those of its funders and of the evaluation users.

16. Another strength of the evaluation is that it adopted a gender responsive evaluation approach assessing progress toward achieving gender-related objectives and goals set out by WWAP. Gender equality was a key factor at all stages of the evaluation process:

- In the design of the evaluation plan: ensuring that the evaluation questions and methodology were designed to capture gender-related results.
- In the data collection: the evaluators used gender-disaggregated data wherever possible.
- In the data analysis: the data analysis highlights how WWAP addresses gender equality and what are the key achievements and areas of improvement in this regard.

17. An evaluation reference group of 9 people accompanied the evaluation process and provided feedback on the inception report (i.e. the evaluation's methodological approach) and the draft evaluation report. They discussed the main findings and recommendations during a dedicated validation workshop to close the data collection phase. The reference group included representatives from different entities, namely, the WWAP Secretariat, UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector – more specifically the Executive Office and the Division for Water Sciences –the Division for Gender Equality, UN-Water, and the government of Italy. The reference group met periodically and was consulted in the different stages of the evaluation.

18. Nonetheless, it is important to note the limitations of the evaluation process.

- A total of 42 interview invitations were sent. Out of these, 36 were available and willing to participate in the evaluation. Among interviewees, 40% were female. The sample of stakeholders involved cannot encompass all the diverse viewpoints and voices related to WWAP. For this reason, the methodology included two surveys that sought to capture the perspectives of a wider range of stakeholders.
- The survey was sent in English and French to 415 Policy Makers and 130 Academics. These two categories were reached by disseminating the survey through all UNESCO National Commissions, Permanent Delegations, and National Committees of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) and UNESCO Water-related Chairs. The response rates were relatively low: 134 responses from Policy Makers (Response rate: 32%) and 44 from Academics (Response rate: 34%).
- Assessing the influence of WWAP on water science policies in Member States was challenging. Therefore, the evaluation team used a combination of data sources and collection methods:
  - (i) the Overton database which hosts one of the largest searchable policy databases<sup>19</sup>, provided an indication of coverage of the UN WWDR in public policies. However, the tool is not exhaustive, as the evaluators were able to identify policy documents citing the UN WWDR that were not captured by Overton. Furthermore, the database contains larger data sets for certain regions compared to others (e.g. Africa is amongst the least represented regions with 183,281 policy documents).
  - (ii) Ahrefs<sup>20</sup> a toolset designed to help improve search traffic of websites. The tool was used to explore the backlink profiles of the UN WWDR in 2023, revealing metrics such as the number of referring domains and the number of backlinks. It also offered the opportunity for in-depth analysis of the type of organisation linking to the UN WWDR reports and the reasons for linking to the UN WWDR's pages.
  - (iii) the survey data and a Google search provided many examples of how the UN WWDR was used by policymakers.

19. It includes over 12 million policy documents such as white papers, guidelines, think tank publications, and working papers from 188 countries.

20. <https://ahrefs.com/>



## 2. Relevance: is WWAP doing the right things?

19. This chapter first examines the relevance of WWAP and its associated products in relation to the needs of policy makers and decision-makers. It then considers the alignment of the mandate and activities of WWAP with UNESCO's strategic objectives and priorities as outlined in the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4) and other strategic documents.

### 2.1 The World Water Assessment Programme's work is fully aligned with UNESCO's strategic objectives and priorities

**WWAP's objectives and activities contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives as defined in the 41 C/5 Approved programme and budget.**

20. WWAP is integrated into UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector within the Division of Water Sciences. It contributes to the achievement of UNESCO's Major 'Programme II on Natural Sciences and more specifically to Strategic Objective 2 (SO2) of UNESCO's Medium-Term strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4): *Work towards sustainable societies and protecting the environment through the promotion of science, technology, innovation, and the natural heritage.*

21. WWAP's mandate and activities are aligned with two outcomes and two outputs of SO2:<sup>21</sup>

#### **Outcome 3: Enhance knowledge for climate action, biodiversity, water and ocean management, and disaster risk reduction.**

- **Output 3. SC2:** Water science, innovation, education, management, cooperation, and governance bolstered for a water secure world in a changing environment.

#### **Outcome 4: Advance international cooperation in science, technology, and innovation**

- **Output 4. SC.5:** Institutional and human capacities in basic sciences, technology, research, innovation, and engineering

22. The development of the United Nations World Water Development series and its associated products and activities contributes to the achievement of the above outcomes and outputs by:

- Enhancing knowledge on the global status of water resources regarding water availability and uses (Outcome 3).
- Disseminating information through the UN WWDR series which helps Member States assess the efficiency and effectiveness of their water policy decisions and programmes and monitor the implementation of various internationally agreed water related goals, including SDG6. It serves as a reference in international cooperation and discussions on water (Outcome 4).

23. The second main pillar of WWAP's mandate is capacity development which is also aligned to the objectives of Output 4. SC.5 and Output 3.SC2. WWAP's functions as described in its MoU with the Italian government indicate:

- Assisting Member States to build and improve their capacities to collect and analyse data that is of relevance to their water policy initiatives.
- Analysing data, in partnership with policymakers and researchers, and encouraging broader and more informed use of data for policy purposes at various levels.
- Developing indicators for water resources (which WWAP has addressed through the creation of indicators on water and gender).

24. WWAP's capacity building efforts have concentrated on two components: assessing and monitoring gender equality in the water sector building on the creation of the innovative methodology and the set of indicators (Toolkit) produced in 2015 and revised in 2019; and drawing upon the insights of the UN WWDR editions.

25. While the production of the UN WWDR series is assured by funding from the MoU with Italy, capacity building activities rely on the availability of additional funding (i.e. voluntary contributions). This situation constrains the ability to strategically guide capacity building activities. The funding situation limits WWAP's ability to meet the capacity development needs of low-income countries, and in particular African countries, unless they are considered a priority by a donor. In recent years, WWAP has managed to secure funds for capacity-building initiatives using its toolkit for gender-disaggregated water data. primarily in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. Over the period

21. As defined in UNESCO's Approved programme and budget 41C/5 (2022-2025)

2016-2022, funding from the Sultan bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud Foundation supported a sequence of training sessions in Arab States, drawing upon the insights of recent UN WWDR editions.

### **WWAP's mandate and activities are fully aligned with UNESCO's global priority Gender Equality.**

26. UNESCO's 41 C/5 underlines the persistence of a distinct disparity between men and women in terms of their ability to access, control, and reap the benefits of water and sanitation services. Through WWAP, UNESCO aims to contribute to better understand the root causes of these disparities, and to quantify them by collecting and utilising gender-specific water data. The objective is to enable the implementation of appropriate corrective measures in the governance and management of water resources, through the creation of gender-transformative policies, reforms, and plans<sup>22</sup>.

27. Gender equality is not mentioned as a priority in the signed MoU with the government of Italy, however, Article 4 of the MoU urges WWAP to 'develop conceptual and methodological frameworks for data and indicators related to water resources that can be compared on an international scale.' In line with UNESCO's global priority, WWAP has chosen to focus these indicators on enhancing gender considerations in the field of water. WWAP developed a [toolkit for the collection of sex disaggregated data](#), including a set of 105 gender-responsive indicators that aim to help address gender-related water challenges. The programme supports Member States in applying these gender-responsive indicators in their policies, considering the impact of global changes to strengthen inclusive water management and governance. To enhance the outreach of the Toolkit, WWAP has translated it in Spanish, French and in Russian<sup>23</sup>.

28. In addition, WWAP has initiated a [Call for Action to Accelerate Gender Equality in the Water Domain](#). This call aims to raise awareness on the importance of addressing gender equality in the field, break down stereotypes, and encourage government institutions and funding bodies to pledge tangible support to further gender equality in the water domain.

29. Finally, the topic of gender is mainstreamed in each UN WWDR to bring to light the existing obstacles and potential opportunities for enhancing the empowerment of

women and girls in the water domain. The 2015, 2016, 2019 and 2021 editions have provided more information and data on gender equality.

### **WWAP's work is aligned with UNESCO's global priority Africa.**

30. According to UNESCO's 41 C/5, the UNESCO Water Family will be mobilised for coordinating action on the African continent toward accelerated improvements in water resources management, advancing knowledge on water resources, particularly on groundwater, and substantially increasing the number of skilled water professionals on the continent.

31. The UN WWDRs include regional chapters, including one specifically on Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, numerous boxes within the reports provide a focus on the African region. Annually, in conjunction with World Water Day and the release of the UN WWDR, regional and national events are coordinated with the support of UNESCO's regional and field offices, with several taking place in African countries.

32. The 2022 WWDR covered the subject of Groundwater, a topic of significant relevance to the African continent. The report was unveiled at the UN World Water Forum held in Dakar, Senegal with the participation of interest of the President of Senegal and other African heads of state confirming the high-level of interest in this WWDR. Furthermore, celebratory events were held in five cities in Africa<sup>24</sup> to mark the launch of the 2022 UN WWDR. The UN WWDR 2021 on Valuing Water organised a presentation of the Arabic edition of the report at the 4th Cairo Water Week in October 2021<sup>25</sup>. Additionally, national events were organized in 12 African cities.<sup>26</sup>

33. WWAP's Call for Action Initiative for accelerating the achievement of gender equality in the water domain includes several African stakeholders: the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), the Pan-African Women's Organisation (PAWO), Women in Water and Sanitation Association Kenya (WIWAS) and Members States from five African countries (i.e. 22% of the countries that endorsed the call).

34. In 2016, WWAP carried out a series of national case studies involving eight African countries: Botswana, Tanzania, South Sudan, Mozambique, eSwatini, Cabo Verde, Nigeria, Ghana. However, when it comes to capacity development WWAP's contributions to the

22. Source : UNESCO 41 C/5 paragraph 02060 page 97

23. Source: 41 C/5 SISTER WWAP. The Russian version will be launched at the Dushambe Water Summit in June 2024

24. Abuja, Accra, Libreville, Maputo, Windhoek

25. Source: UNESCO WWAP 2021 Report to donor

26. Alexandria, Bamako, Kaduna, Abuja, Nairobi, Accra, Kampala, Brazzaville, Kinshasa, Harare, Windhoek, Maputo

African continent have been somewhat limited. Current limitations in funding could hinder WWAP's ability to address the needs of low-income and African countries unless prioritised by a donor.

#### **WWAP takes into account other UNESCO priority groups.**

35. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is another UNESCO priority group. WWAP secured voluntary contributions<sup>27</sup> for a project on capacity development in 13 Pacific SIDS. A project was developed and implemented to address SIDS' critical water challenges linked to climate change and focusing on gender equality considerations. Targeting mid-to-high level representatives from water-related government agencies and utilities, the initial phase of the programme focuses on learning how to apply the WWAP Gender Toolkit. The second phase focuses on developing a gender-sensitive data collection application on water, sanitation, and hygiene.

36. Youth is also a UNESCO priority group. Starting in 2020, youth has been another target group of WWAP's communication activities. In 2021 and 2022, WWAP launched actions at the global level with the Water for Youth Network, the World Youth Parliament for Water, and the Water Science Policy (WSP), a youth-led multilingual multimedia platform for water journalism. WWAP was also present at the Youth Pavilion at Expo 2020 in Dubai. In 2023, WWAP engaged with students from Italy who participated in the water hackathon organised by the Italian Ministry of Education at the Festival of Contemporary Thinking. The students were exposed to key data and facts from the 2020 UN WWDR on Water and Climate change. A group of students were given the opportunity to create a [video](#), which served as a platform for them to express their emotions and reactions upon uncovering the findings detailed in the 2020 UN WWDR. All these initiatives highlight WWAP's efforts to engage with young people.

## **2.2 The United Nation's World Water Development Report is well aligned with the needs of policy makers and decision-makers**

**The UN WWDR focuses on critical development challenges that policy makers need to address.**

37. The United Nations World Water Development Report is WWAP's most visible product. Its primary audience includes government policymakers and decision-makers in water resource policy and management. The report provides a wide range of policy-relevant, timely, and reliable information related to water resources development and management. The goal is to assist them in formulating and implementing sustainable water policies that contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG6).

**The themes of the UN WWDR series are relevant to the needs of policymakers.**

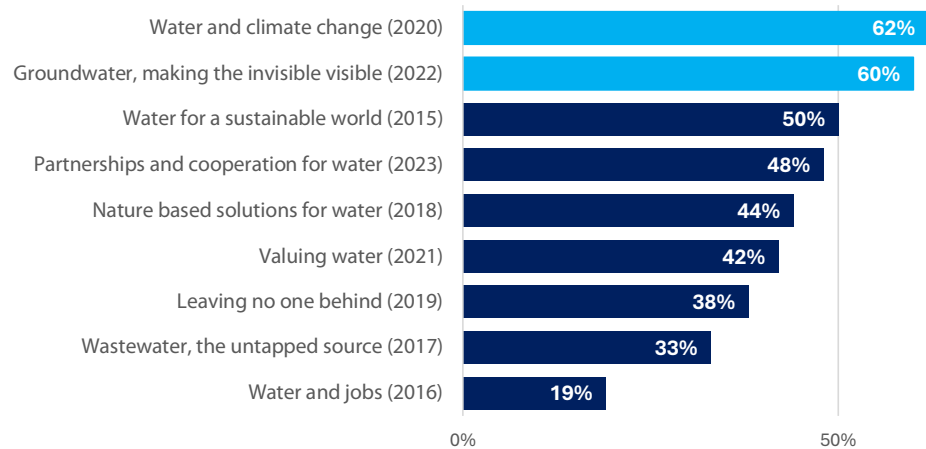
38. Most of the surveyed policymakers (80% of respondents) considered that the themes and topics addressed in previous editions of the UN WWDR reflected priorities in their respective countries. However, the survey data indicates that some reports generated more attention than others. As illustrated in Figure 2 the most widely read UN WWDR was the 2020 edition, which focused on Water and Climate Change. It was consulted by 62% of respondents. Following closely was the 2022 UN WWDR, which delved into the topic of groundwater and garnered interest from 60% of respondents.

39. Interviewed representatives of Member States confirmed that they eagerly anticipate the UN WWDR each year. Some highlighted that they consult the report depending on the topic of focus. They mentioned a particular interest in the 2022 report on Groundwater and the upcoming 2024 report on Water for Prosperity and Peace. They have highlighted the importance of choosing topics that are relevant to the needs of policymakers.

40. The information presented in the figure below indicates that consultation frequency is not directly related to the year of publication. This means that a recently published report might attract more consultations if it sparks greater interest, even though older reports can continue to be consulted long after their publication.

27. Collaboration with the ADB Water

**Figure 2. Surveyed policymakers consulted some UN WWDR editions more than others (% of respondents who consulted each report)**



Source: Evaluation survey (question: Which editions of the UN WWDR have you consulted? (n=52))

41. Nonetheless, several stakeholders, including Member State representatives emphasised the importance of the report's thematic diversity because policymakers and decision-makers require comprehensive data on all water-related subjects to address the world's multifaceted challenges. A representative specifically cited the 2017 Wastewater report, asserting its continued relevance as a key reference on the subject. This implies that although the theme of wastewater is not as appealing as other topics, it is nevertheless useful to have a UN WWDR covering this subject because the information on this sub-field is valuable to policymakers. Therefore, the fact that a UN WWDR is less consulted does not mean it is less valuable.

#### The frequency of publication of the UN WWDR meets Member States' needs.

42. A large majority of member states (74% of survey respondents and all interviewed representatives of member states) consider that the frequency of the publication of the UN WWDR meets their needs.

**Figure 3. A majority of surveyed Member States support the annual publication of the UN WWDR**



Source: Evaluation survey (question: Since 2014, the UN-WWDR is published on a yearly basis. In your opinion, what is the most relevant frequency for the publication of the UN-WWDR? (n=49))

43. The primary rationale for an annual publication is the pressing and ongoing need to tackle the water crisis. Given the rapidly evolving global water situation, a report that is published frequently enables policymakers to address emerging challenges and crises. Member States maintain that an annual publication helps in keeping water issues at the centre of international attention. It also provides a chance to address a wider array of water-related topics in the UN WWDR series. Member States and WWAP's partners also highlighted the importance of maintaining the synchronization of the report's release with the World Water Day as it provides greater visibility to the report.

## 3. Coherence: how well does the intervention fit?

44. This chapter assesses the coherence of WWAP's work within UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences and its support to the goal of working on Gender Equality within the UN.

### 3.1 The mandates of WWAP and IHP are complementary, and collaborations are growing with a potential for stronger synergies on capacity building

45. UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences promotes water security and sustainable water resource management. The division operates two international programmes: WWAP and the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP). The IHP is the only intergovernmental, science-based water cooperation programme of the United Nations system. Together, both programmes assist Member States in achieving SDG 6 on water and sanitation.

#### WWAP and IHP programmes are different but complementary.

46. Stakeholders interviewed indicated instances of collaboration and synergy between WWAP and the IHP. For example:

- IHP contributes to the production of the UN World Water Development Report and mobilises experts in its network for the production of thematic or regional chapters.
- WWAP was involved in activities led by the IHP, such as the GGRETA project (Governance of Groundwater Resources in Transboundary Aquifers).
- WWAP's expertise in addressing gender equality within the water sector is acknowledged within the Division of Water Sciences. The IHP collaborates with WWAP in the organisation of capacity building activities, specifically aimed at enhancing capacities to address gender equality in the water domain. There is also an IHP council resolution recommending the use of WWAP's gender toolkit<sup>28</sup> by national IHP committees.

- The evaluation noted strong collaboration between WWAP and UNESCO's field offices in the organisation of events in relation to the World Water Day and the dissemination of the UN WWDR.

47. The main complementarities mentioned during interviews were on the respective scopes of operation of the two programmes. UNESCO IHP's mandate covers water research, water resources management, and education and capacity building; while WWAP – in collaboration with the UN-Water family – provides an overview of the situation with regards to freshwater resources worldwide, through the UN WWDR.

48. IHP's focus on capacity building has been on addressing water security issues. For instance, under the water-related disasters and hydrological change theme, IHP supports institutions at national and regional level to develop research and training programmes on floods and drought risk management related to climate extremes to strengthen countries' adaptation capacity<sup>29</sup>.

49. WWAP also provides training to Member States grounded on the findings extracted from the UN WWDR editions. Many of IHP's capacity-building themes are covered in the UN WWDR series. There is therefore a possibility of interconnections on the themes covered by IHP and WWAP in their capacity building efforts.

50. To give an example, IHP supported Member States to improve integrated water resources management by combining nature-based and engineering solutions. Similarly, WWAP has developed training to provide policy and decision makers with a comprehensive understanding of what nature-based solutions (NBS) are, and how they can enhance water availability, improve water quality, and reduce risks associated with water-related disasters and climate change.

51. While these interventions took place in different countries and addressed different target audiences, they illustrate a potential for stronger collaboration between IHP and WWAP. Both IHP and WWAP would benefit from stronger synergies in the development and implementation of capacity building activities.

52. Given the limitations of WWAP's resources and abilities, some interviewees suggested that WWAP could add value by offering training to other UNESCO colleagues involved in capacity building. This training would focus on the key takeaways from the

28. Resolution XXIII-2 adopted at the 23rd session of the Intergovernmental Council Paris, 11-15 June 2018

29. [https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ihp-igc-xtr-iv\\_inf3\\_programme\\_implementation.pdf](https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ihp-igc-xtr-iv_inf3_programme_implementation.pdf)

UN WWDR series and the use of WWAP's gender toolkit. It would involve colleagues in field offices and those in IHP. Interviewees further noted that this is not about replacing WWAP, but rather about helping colleagues better understand WWAP's products to encourage them to cooperate and incorporate references to findings from the UN WWDR and the gender toolkit in their work. WWAP has already done this to a certain extent with field offices and IHP colleagues, and stakeholders agreed it would be useful to expand this effort.

#### The synergies between the two programmes could be further enhanced.

53. Two areas for potential increased collaboration were identified. First, collaboration between the IHP and WWAP on gender-related issues. Despite enthusiasm from both teams, and a recognition of WWAP's expertise on gender issues, staff are stretched so initiatives aimed at finding spaces for collaboration remain limited. Several projects incorporating a gender component in the Division of Water Sciences did not seek support from WWAP, which is a missed opportunity. Moreover, despite the decisions made by IHP's own Bureau and Intergovernmental Council to use the WWAP gender toolkit, its application has not yet become a standard practice across all projects.

54. Second, joint fundraising efforts. The benefits of collaboration on fundraising are multiple. Collaborative fundraising can help WWAP and IHP to reach a wider audience through their respective networks and lead to increased fundraising potential. Together WWAP and IHP can offer greater impact to donors with proposals assembling their respective strengths. Collaboration can also lead to more efficient use of resources invested in fundraising efforts.

#### A future science based global water assessment report entails risks and opportunities.

55. At the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York, the IHP announced its intention to create a 'science-based global water assessment report'. This initiative was sparked by a call from the President of the UN General Assembly for the scientific community to generate innovative solutions to the water crisis. The proposed science-based global water assessment report would offer an exhaustive review of water sciences, modelled after the process of the Intergovernmental Panel on climate change (IPCC). Unlike WWAP, which is thematic, this report would strive to present a comprehensive overview of available freshwater resources. Moreover, it would be geared towards achieving

scientific consensus and would be based on data provided by the countries themselves. Conversely, the UN WWDR represents the perspectives of the members and partners of the UN-Water family<sup>30</sup>.

56. Staff in the WWAP Secretariat view the introduction of a new science-based global water assessment report as a potential risk for the UN WWDR. Mostly they point to a decrease in its added value and further challenges for WWAP in mobilising funds as attention moves to the new report. Representatives of the Natural Sciences Sector at UNESCO believe this new report would be relevant to the demand for a scientifically grounded assessment report on freshwater resources and that WWAP could be instrumental in the development of the report. Further, they explained that the report, which would be published every 5 to 6 years, could coexist with the UN World Water Development Report as their audiences and goals are different. While the UN WWDR is a shorter high-level thematic report for policymakers, the new report would be a more technical, comprehensive report designed for experts.

57. A complex institutional setting explains to a certain extent the limited integration between WWAP and the IHP. The Director of UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences is also the Secretary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP). Meanwhile, WWAP operates under its own distinct Director and reports to the ADG of the Natural Sciences Sector, creating a complex hierarchical relationship. Additionally, WWAP's main task is the production of the UN WWDR, which is a flagship report on water and sanitation produced on behalf of UN Water – a mechanism representing the entire UN system – not only UNESCO. As one interviewee put it, *"While the IHP has one master, UNESCO- WWAP has two, UNESCO and UN-Water"*, which complicates the governance and implementation of the programme and the coordination with IHP.

58. The collaboration between WWAP and IHP is also complicated by the physical distance, as WWAP is located in Perugia, Italy and the IHP in Paris, at UNESCO Headquarters. Only WWAP's Senior Programme Specialist is based in Paris and serves as WWAP's liaison officer with the IHP and other parts of UNESCO. WWAP's physical isolation from other science-related programmes further hinders collaboration between staff.

59. In addition, IHP and WWAP operate within the same sector and are therefore in competition for funding because they are targeting the same pool of resources or donors, despite having unique and complementary mandates. As mentioned further above, collaboration for joint fundraising can also be beneficial to maximise resource utilisation and impact.

30. The Division of Water Sciences is currently engaged in securing funds for this new report. It has successfully raised funds for a pilot project aimed at achieving a comprehensive understanding of water issues in a select number of countries.



## 3.2 There has been progress in the collaboration with UNESCO field offices, but this needs to be further strengthened

60. Interviewees noted progress in the collaboration between field offices and WWAP. Existing partnerships already facilitate the translation, distribution, and production of the regional chapters of the UN WWDR series, as well as the coordination of in-country training sessions. However, stakeholders interviewed also raised the need for further efforts to consolidate cooperation, with more robust guidance from WWAP as to what regional offices can do to support WWAP and how. Areas for cooperation that have been identified during the evaluation, besides those previously mentioned, are:

- The further promotion of the gender toolkit.
- Field Offices' role in conveying the information needs and expectations they have identified at the country level with regards to WWAP's activities to the Secretariat.
- Support in the identification and seizing of funding opportunities. This would require a revision of the terms of reference of IHP's regional hydrologists to accommodate the interests of WWAP more effectively.

## 3.3 Synergies between WWAP and the UN-Water family have been enhanced and should be carefully monitored

### WWAP's work contributes to the priorities and principles of UN-Water

61. WWAP's role in the production of the UN WWDR is aligned with the UN principle of "delivering as one" on water issues. The aim of the "delivering as one" principle is to maximize system-wide collaboration and coherence, addressing the cross-cutting nature of water issues. This principle is particularly important in the context of the Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6), which aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030. In essence, "delivering as one" means that all members and partners of UN-Water work together in a unified manner to respond to water-related challenges, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and impact of their collective efforts.

31. UN-Water. (2020). Meeting Report of the 32nd UN-Water Meeting 28 – 29 January 2020 in Rome, Italy, Item 1.7

62. The preparation of the UN WWDR series supports the dialogue between members of UN-water on water-related issues and illustrates the collaborative work of UN Agencies in this sector (see Box 1).

### Box 1. Major contributors to the UN WWDR series

- Major contributors (lead agencies) to the UN WWDR series since 2015 are UNESCO, the FAO, and the United Nations Regional Commissions,
- 10 UN-Water members have regularly contributed to the UN WWDR as Chapter lead Agencies (more than 5 times over the 9 past years):
  - Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
  - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO-IHP)
  - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
  - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
  - United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
  - United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)
  - United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (UNECLAC)
  - Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
  - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (UNESCWA)
  - United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- There is a growing number of major contributors to the UN WWDR, as well as an increase in the number of contributors that are not members, but rather partners of UN-Water.
- The network of contributors is very large and includes academics and NGOs.

### While the roles of WWAP and members of the UN Water Family have been clarified and agreements reached, some tensions persist.

63. WWAP brings together UN agencies intervening on water via the preparation of the UN WWDR series. However, there are tensions underlying the cooperation. In 2020, UN-Water issued a document outlining clarifications and writing arrangements for the UN WWDR.<sup>31</sup> It makes explicit the roles and responsibilities distribution between the organisations involved in the UN WWDR preparation and provides guidelines for communication around the series. This document has successfully reduced tensions

related to the management of the UN WWDR publication. Nevertheless, frustration remains at some levels, as detailed below.

64. Every year, UN-Water members and partners establish a theme for World Water Day, which also determines the theme and title of the UN WWDR. This is achieved through a consultative process which draws on UN-Water members and partners' experience and expertise on current and future global water related challenges.<sup>32</sup> Although the process stipulates a collective decision, some stakeholders within the UN Water Family noted that WWAP has a significant influence on the final decisions related to WWDR title. In response to these observations, the WWAP Secretariat emphasises that as coordinator they may at times need to adjust the report to ensure consistency between the title and the report's content. Nevertheless, making such changes without the formal consent of other UN-Water members, has resulted in an erosion of some partner agencies' trust and cooperation.

65. In terms of content development, the evaluation noted, overall, a high level of satisfaction from the contributing agencies on the process of content development for the UN WWDR. Every year, during a workshop in September, the contributors to the year's edition meet to discuss the chapters' content and articulation as well as the division of labour. This is considered as instrumental in the coordination. Nevertheless, the interviews shed light on three limitations to the collaboration:

- Interviewees reported the need for more inclusive processes in shaping the content of the UN WWDRs. While contributors are actively invited in content decisions during workshops, certain agencies are concerned by the weight of WWAP on the final outcomes. The impact of transitioning to online workshops after the Covid-19 pandemic led to mixed responses. While virtual sessions allow broader participation by accommodating contributors who could not attend physical meetings, some contributors contend that the absence of face-to-face interactions exacerbates the distance and asymmetry between WWAP and other participants.<sup>33</sup>
- Even though the content and the structure of the report is collectively decided upon, the chapters are developed in silo by chapter lead agencies which does not allow for a more integrated and holistic approach.

- WWAP faces significant strain in bringing together a timely and comprehensive report as chapters are authored by diverse contributors, often external experts, who do not consistently meet deadlines or adhere to expected quality standards.

**The branding processes for the UN WWDR have been clarified. However, there are still ongoing concerns regarding the visibility of the contributors.**

66. Efforts have been made to clarify the roles and branding of WWAP and UN-Water in the UN WWDR.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, some agencies feel they continue to have low visibility as contributors (authors). Further, they contend that the collective nature of the report is not clear and that some readers see it as a UNESCO product more than a collective UN output.

67. The perception of low of visibility and its collective nature by UN partners has consequences for the UN WWDR series. First, if UN agencies consider that their contribution is not sufficiently visible, they may choose, in the future, to reduce their involvement in its preparation affecting the quality and relevance of the report. Second, the UN WWDR series may be missing outreach and partnership opportunities. Should the UN WWDR series be more identified as the production of a collection of UN agencies, the stakeholders revolving around these partner agencies would pay more attention to the report, automatically enlarging the UN WWDR's audience.

### **3.4 The work of WWAP fully supports the goal of working on Gender Equality within the UN**

68. WWAP is actively engaged in addressing gender-related issues, aligning with the United Nations' priorities. It focuses on gender through specific initiatives and ensures that gender considerations are integrated into the UN WWDR series.

69. No duplication of efforts between WWAP and other UN agencies were identified. Interviewees within UNESCO and among Member States acknowledge WWAP's significant value added to UN gender-related initiatives, particularly through its innovative Toolkit. Previously, there was no established method to collect data on the intersection of gender and water. The Toolkit now fills this significant knowledge gap.

32. The United Nations World Water Development Report. Clarifications and writing arrangements. (2020).

33. WWAP cannot host workshops in their premises anymore because of space restrictions from the Region of Umbria.

34. UN-Water. (2020). Meeting Report of the 32nd UN-Water Meeting 28 – 29 January 2020 in Rome, Italy; Item 1.7.



And by using the Toolkit, WWAP generates valuable insights that help raise awareness about gender issues within the water sector.

70. There is no established partnership on gender between WWAP and other UN agencies, but WWAP has successfully collaborated with various UN agencies. For example, UN Women helps integrate gender considerations into the UN WWDR and referenced WWAP's Gender Toolkit in UN Women's publication on gender and water.<sup>35</sup> WWAP also contributed to the inclusion of gender considerations in UN Water's IMI-SDG6 indicators.<sup>36</sup> Within UNESCO, the recent UNESCO Call for Action "Closing the gender gap in science"<sup>37</sup> launched in February 2024 is an example of successful inspiration from WWAP's Call for Action.

71. Nevertheless, interviews revealed that the WWAP gender toolkit lacks visibility among other UN agencies, including those within the UN-Water family. Even within UNESCO, the toolkit is not consistently utilised. Despite this, stakeholders recognize that the toolkit addresses a crucial need for better addressing gender-related issues in the water sector. It has been emphasised that in addition to training Member States on how to use the WWAP gender toolkit, there is also a need to train colleagues within UNESCO, specifically those in field offices and in the Division of Water Sciences. Extending this training to other UN agencies within the UN-water family would enhance the toolkit's potential impact.

### 3.5 WWAP is a strong contributor to SDG 6

72. According to the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Italian Government, WWAP is expected to support Member States in the implementation of their water policy decisions and programmes and in the monitoring of the "implementation of various internationally agreed water related goals, including the Millennium Development Goals" (which preceded the SDGs).

73. SDG6 monitoring is a collaborative effort involving several organisations. UN-Water plays a central role in coordinating and facilitating efforts related to water and sanitation and monitoring progress towards SDG 6. UN-Water leads the Integrated Monitoring

Initiative for SDG 6 (IMI-SDG6), which aims to support countries in monitoring water and sanitation issues within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. IMI-SDG6 generates data that enables stronger accountability, increased commitment, and more effective decision-making.

74. WWAP contributes to SDG 6 in several ways. First, the UN WWDR is the primary tool for global advocacy that UN-Water uses to expedite progress towards SDG 6. For example, the 2017 UN WWDR titled 'Wastewater, the Untapped Resource' aligns with Target 6.3.<sup>38</sup> Second, WWAP coordinated the development of the 2018 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation with the UN-Water Task Force.<sup>39</sup> The synthesis report was launched in June 2018 as UN-Water's input for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, as a global review of SDG 6 for policy and decision makers. WWAP was also engaged in Public Dialogues to discuss the report and its main messages (online forums and questionnaires).

75. WWAP is also active in the monitoring of SDG 6. In 2023, WWAP was a member of the Executive Committee of the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative (IMI) on SDG 6 and as technical advisor on gender contextualization of indicator SDG 6.5.2. It was involved in the implementation of country pilots in Brazil, and in following the preparation for Philippines and Senegal. In 2021, it contributed to the report on the progress of indicator 6.5.2 on Transboundary water cooperation published by UN-Water under the co-leadership of UNESCO and UNECE.

35. <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/from-commodity-to-common-good-a-feminist-agenda-to-tackle-the-worlds-water-crisis-en.pdf>, page 42.

36. <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/integrated-monitoring-initiative-sdg-6>

37. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/closing-gender-gap-science-accelerating-action>

38. Target 6.3: By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.

39. The Task Force is Composed of several UN-Water Members and Partners and their representatives.

## 4. Effectiveness: is WWAP achieving its objectives?

76. The effectiveness chapter delves into the role of WWAP in coordinating the publication of the United Nations World Water Development Report and examines the extent to which capacity-building activities and initiatives that promote gender equality have been successful. Furthermore, this chapter analyses the effectiveness of outreach efforts and the utilisation of WWAP's products by Member States.

### 4.1 The UN WWDR, a high-quality report produced following an effective process.

77. The UN WWDR is a primary source of information on global freshwater resources. 84% of policy makers and 95% of academics surveyed acknowledge its reputation as one of the main reference documents in the domain. 80% of policy makers and all academics surveyed perceived the report's data and information as accurate and reliable. Both groups largely agree that the report's content is relevant to the status and future trends of freshwater resources.

#### The UN WWDR is utilised by most of the policymakers who are aware of its existence.

78. 4 in 10 policymakers who responded to the evaluation survey have consulted or used a UN WWDR. Of these, about 13% indicated that they consulted all the UN WWDR reports published since 2015. The remaining 86% had consulted more than one edition. This suggests that policymakers view the information contained in the UN WWDR as useful and they regularly consult them.

79. Interviewed policymakers emphasised that the report offers essential information about the global status regarding a specific water-related topic. It serves as a reference, providing insights into available data, the current situation, and recommended actions. The report equips Member States with accurate data that forms a reliable collective foundation for international and multilateral dialogue with other governments. It also acts as a standing point for domestic debates, as comparing the national scenario with

the situation in the rest of the world is crucial in persuading decision makers or civil society entities.

80. The main reasons *policymakers* consulted the UN-WWDR were to learn about current issues and challenges related to freshwater resources and their management (67%), to access the latest global water-related metrics and statistics (56%) and to gain insights and new perspectives about a specific theme (52%). The main reasons *academics* consulted the UN-WWDR were to gain insights and new perspectives about a specific theme covered by the report (79%), to use it as source material for research (63%) and to access the latest global water-related metrics and statistics (58%). The report is also used by academics to learn about progress on SDG6 and as a source material for teaching and capacity development.

#### Policymakers appreciate the reduced scope and thematic focus of the UN WWDR.

81. In 2014, the UN WWDR series underwent a significant transformation, shifting from a comprehensive triennial report of over 400 pages to a more concise annual thematic publication, ranging between 100 and 200 pages. The revamped report was more accessible to a wide variety of readers, grounded in facts, shorter in length, and with a distinct thematic focus. The UN WWDRs examined from 2015 to 2023 are well-structured, visually attractive, and engaging. Since 2016, WWAP has also consistently produced a separate Executive Summary of about 10 pages translated in 8 to 12 languages<sup>40</sup> and a Facts and Figures document of about a dozen pages (cf. further details in Appendix K).

82. A large majority of policymakers (survey respondents and interviewees) felt that the report was well structured, making it easy for readers to absorb information. Interviewed policymakers mentioned that it is helpful to keep the report's structure as is because they are used to it and know exactly where to collect the information they need. Dissemination formats that are particularly appreciated include<sup>41</sup> the Executive summary, and the Facts and Figures document. The Thematic chapters, the Regional Perspectives, the Prospects and Challenges, and the Way Forward (recommendations) are also well-received.

40. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Mongolian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish.

41. Based on interviewed and surveyed policymakers.

### The shift in publication frequency has not affected the quality of the UN WWDR.

83. In 2014, the themes of the UN WWDR and that of the World Water Day were harmonised enabling the official release of the UN WWDR to coincide with World Water Day. This strategic decision enhanced the report's visibility. However, the decision to switch to annual periodicity and to consistently launch the UN WWDR on the same date each year, had an impact on its production process. WWAP now simultaneously works on three reports. The development of an annual report spans over two years, with an additional year dedicated to dissemination and communication activities. This has led to an increased workload for both WWAP and its UN-Water contributors.

**"We have to shuffle three reports in parallel. This year we will be promoting the 2023 report while working on the 2024 report. And in parallel we are discussing topics for the content of the 2025 UN WWDR."**

84. Interviewed stakeholders examined the possibility of changing the frequency of publication of the UN WWDR from an annual to a biennial or triennial exercise. This would allow WWAP and contributing agencies to produce a higher-quality report with more in-depth research, analysis, and synthesis. It could also free up resources (time, funding) for communication and capacity development efforts to help enhance use of the findings and recommendations outlined in the UN WWDR. Nevertheless, by reducing the frequency of publication, you risk losing visibility and the political momentum achieved so far. The release of the UN WWDR on World Water Day consistently garners extensive media coverage across the globe, and it remains a resource frequently cited by numerous civil society organisations (see Chapter 6 on impact). The attention it receives every year serves as a crucial mechanism to encourage policymakers to act on water-related topics. Member States also fear that moving away from a yearly publication may result in missed opportunities to highlight emerging water-related issues.

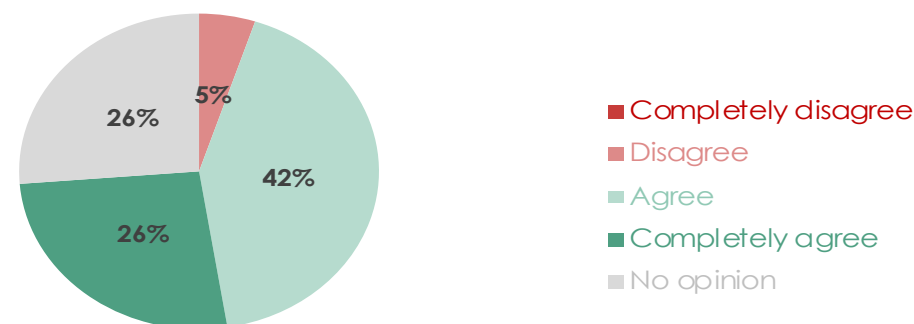
85. From these discussions, there was no clear consensus. It is apparent, however, that there was no evident desire to re-evaluate the frequency of the publication as Member States have clearly expressed that they expect an annual publication (cf. section 2.2.).

86. Despite budget and staff decreases (cf. Chapter 5 on efficiency), and the added pressure from the increased demand, WWAP has successfully delivered high-quality reports within rigid timeframes. WWAP's coordination of the publication process has been instrumental to ensuring the report's prompt delivery and maintaining its high standards.

## 4.2 WWAP has been actively working on promoting gender in water policies.

87. WWAP has undertaken several initiatives to promote gender equality in the water sector. The mainstreaming of gender-disaggregated data in the UN WWDR editions has contributed to raising awareness about the challenges of women. Surveyed academics view this as contributing to the promotion of gender equality (cf. Figure 4) and interviewed stakeholders have indicated that in certain instances this data has served as scientific evidence of gender inequalities in water-related fields and informed policy changes.

**Figure 4. 7 in 10 academics believe the UN WWDR contributes to promoting gender equality in science**



Source: Evaluation survey (question: To what extent do you agree with this statement?: The UN WWDR helps promote gender equality) (n=19)

88. WWAP has also developed a variety of products and publications that contribute to awareness raising about water issues and to equip water managers and policy- and decision-makers with the knowledge, tools, and skills necessary to formulate and implement sustainable water policies (see Appendix F). Many of these products are connected to WWAP's work on water and gender equality.

89. As will be outlined in the next section (section 4.3), the toolkit has been used extensively by WWAP to develop capacities in many countries and it has done so successfully.

90. The Call for Action is backed by a multistakeholder coalition comprising more than 160 members from 62 institutions, 23 countries<sup>42</sup> and 8 regional organisations,<sup>43</sup> who have committed to implementing voluntary actions that promote gender mainstreaming and empower women in the water domain. The evaluation, however, was unable to pinpoint specific actions originating from the Call of Action. It has not yet materialised into tangible actions.

### 4.3 Capacity development: a pillar that has had significant success in its gender equality component but limited results in its UN WWDR component.

91. Capacity building is the second pillar of WWAP's theory of change. Through this pillar, WWAP's ambition is to assist Member States to build and improve their capacities to collect and analyse data of relevance to their water policy initiatives, and to assess their water resources and the efficiency and effectiveness of their water policy decisions and programmes.

92. This pillar is implemented along two components:

- Developing capacity on assessing and monitoring gender equality in the water sector
- Strengthening capacities on the themes of the UN World Water Development Reports

93. According to WWAP's monitoring data, in the period 2016-2022, WWAP has trained over 1,200 individuals in more than 90 countries, of which 60% are women. Most of these trainings were on gender equality in the water sector.

94. From 2015 to 2023, WWAP primarily concentrated on enhancing capacities related to gender equality in the water domain. This was built upon the field-tested methodology and the set of indicators produced in WWAP's gender toolkit.

95. This capacity-building axis focusing on water and gender equality assessment, has been strategically important for fundraising and is a source of pride for the WWAP Secretariat. WWAP leveraged 1.2 million USD during the 2022-2023 biennium and delivered training to countries in Central and Southern America, Western Africa and to Caribbean and Pacific SIDs. For a summary of the most recent gender related trainings, see Appendix F.

96. WWAP's capacity building pillar also aims to strengthen Members States' capacities on the themes of the UN World Water Development Reports. The objective of connecting the knowledge from UN WWDRs to policies and practices was not fully achieved due to limited human resources at WWAP. Italy anticipated that WWAP would allocate part of its core funding to mobilise additional resources for capacity development. WWAP did do so, until 2021, with 1.8 million USD mobilised for UN WWDR-related expenses.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, these additional funds mostly secured the report's translation in varied languages and activities linked to the dissemination of the report with only a fraction devoted to trainings.

97. The closure of around 80% of WWAP's premises in Perugia since 2019 has further constrained capacity development activities. Previously, WWAP could host participants for intensive, multi-day trainings at the guesthouse (the last trainings carried out at WWAP premises were in 2015 and 2016). However, this is no longer feasible, and WWAP now travels to the countries or regions to deliver its capacity development services as was done for Arab states.<sup>45</sup> Overall, the capacity-building component remains underdeveloped.

98. Among surveyed policymakers, 16% had taken advantage of WWAP's capacity development activities which limits the evaluation's ability to fully assess the satisfaction of trained Member States. These beneficiaries were asked to evaluate their experience on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not useful at all and 5 being extremely useful. The average score from the 14 responses collected was 3.9, showing a high level of satisfaction.

99. WWAP's gender-focused capacity development programmes span an extended duration of time (up to two years), providing opportunities for comprehensive training programmes allowing Member States to identify data gaps, test the methodology and

42. <https://sdgs.un.org/partnership-progress/call-action-accelerate-gender-equality-water-domain-fri-12082023-1854>

43. AMCOW, UN ECLAC, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), Mediterranean Youth for Water Network (MedYWat), Geneva Water Hub, Tavolo Nazionale dei Contratti di Fiume, Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), Mekong Regional Water Governance Programme (Oxfam).

44. Source: WWAP's financial data. See Figure 16 for more detail on the resources mobilised by WWAP in 2013-2023.

45. A complete overview of WWAP's capacity development outputs is displayed in Appendix F, together with a list of WWAP publications that contribute to the dissemination of WWAP's knowledge and to its visibility.

collect data that can inform policy. Initiatives centred on the UN WWDRs are condensed over a shorter period of time, so their effect on enhancing beneficiaries' capacities might be more limited.

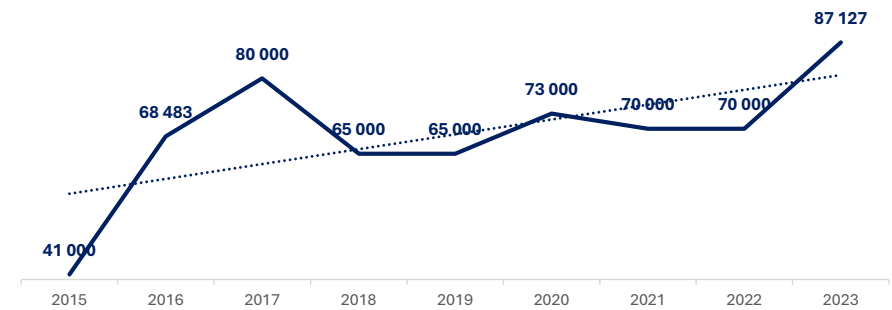
#### 4.4 The UN WWDR is gaining in visibility, yet WWAP's communication efforts need to be strengthened in Africa and on its gender related activities.

100. Most survey respondents (52% of policymakers and 60% of academics) are aware of the World Water Assessment Programme, but they do not know much about its activities and products. In fact, a closer analysis of the survey results showed significant differences in the visibility of WWAP's different tools.

##### WWAP's outreach and communication metrics around the UN WWDR have improved.

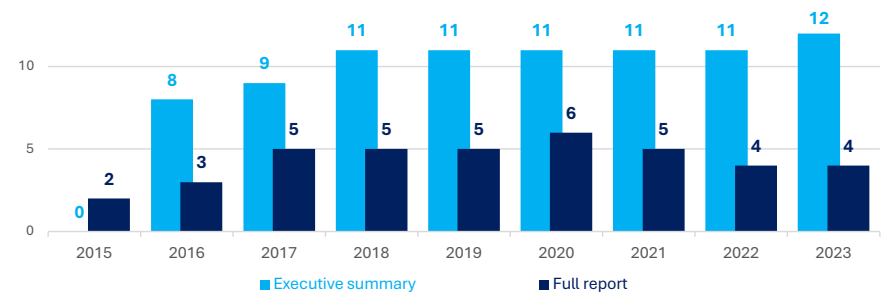
101. Interviewed and surveyed stakeholders are positive about the communication and dissemination of the UN WWDR. The majority of WWAP's communication efforts are dedicated to the dissemination of the UN WWDR series. Key communication metrics (more details in Appendix H) indicate a steady increase in the number of UN WWDR downloads, illustrated in the figure below. The number of downloads of the report increased from approximately 41,000 in 2015 to over 87,000 downloads in 2023. This surge may partly be due to efforts made to translate the report into more languages.

Figure 5. Evolution of the number of UN WWDR downloads



Source: WWAP's data

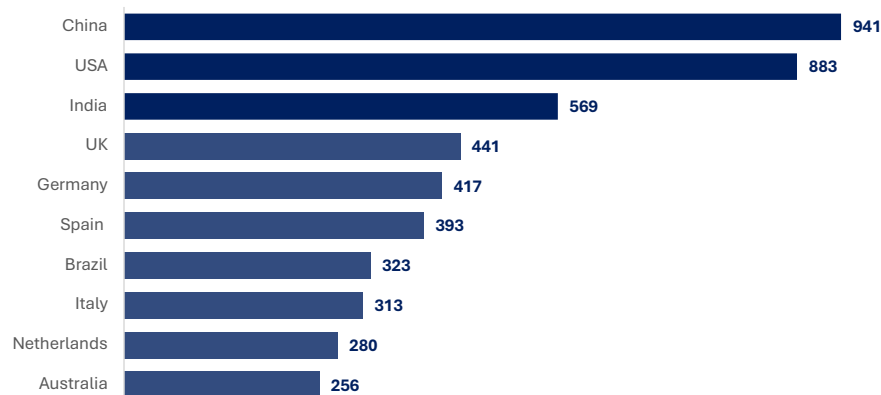
Figure 6. The UN WWDR is available in more languages



Note: the numbers displayed represent the languages. Source: WWAP's data.

102. The number of press articles about the UN WWDR has also seen an upward trend over the same period, moving from an average of 490 articles between 2015 and 2021, to 3,400 articles in 2022, and 25,000 articles in 2023. The 2023 UN WWDR received substantial press coverage in countries like Brazil, the USA, Germany, Italy, and India. This is aligned with results from the bibliometric analysis displayed in Figure 7.

**Figure 7. China, the USA and India cited the UN WWDR reports the most in the period 2015-2023**



Source: Scopus

103. The launch of the report generates up to 50 national and regional events per year demonstrating the strong collaborations between WWAP and UNESCO's field offices, such as in Abuja, Accra, Brasilia, Kingston, New Delhi, and San Jose.

104. WWAP has voluntarily reduced the number of distributed hard copies of the UN WWDR and aimed to increase its visibility on social media. WWAP has reached 13,518 followers and over 500,000 impressions on WWAP's Twitter account. The UN WWDR is also published on UNESCO's Twitter account. However, despite being a good platform to reach policymakers, no WWAP account was found on LinkedIn. Since 2020, WWAP has conducted specific communication actions targeting youth (cf. Section 2.1 above).

105. Starting in 2018, the distribution efforts expanded to include the release of short videos and/or audiobooks of the Executive Summary in English, French, and Spanish. The videos are engaging. The audiobooks are intended foremost for visually impaired readers which attests to an inclusion effort. For the general public, however, the audiobooks are quite extensive, with durations ranging from 40 to 60 minutes and including complex concepts. This complexity can make them difficult to follow in an audio-only format.

106. The UN WWDR has introduced other innovations in its communication efforts. At the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York, WWAP<sup>46</sup> used art to convey key messages from the 2023 UN WWDR.<sup>47</sup> This approach aimed to evoke emotions while communicating important information. Several interviewees, including a member state, have expressed their appreciation for this initiative combining arts and science. Another approach, also centred on emotional engagement, was implemented via a video produced by WWAP with Italian students as part of a hackathon organised by the Italian Ministry of Education.

107. The Scopus analysis carried out over the period 2015-2022 (Cf. Chapter 6) provides metrics on the report's visibility and references in national research journals.

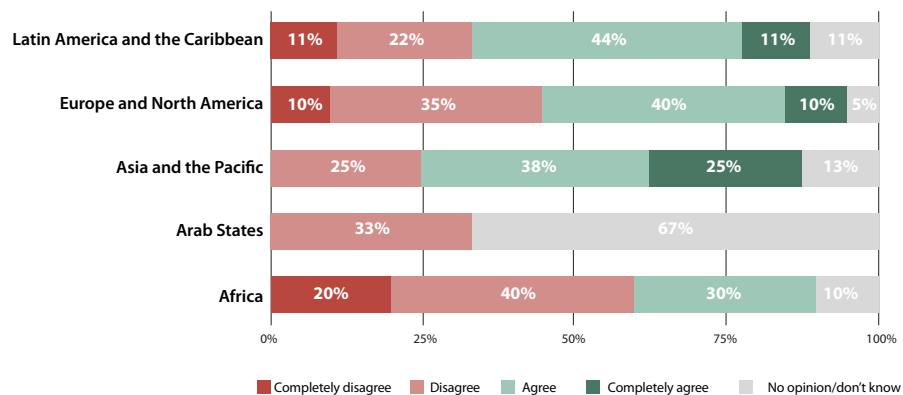
108. Nonetheless, it's important to note that some policymakers are still not aware of the UN WWDR. 42% of surveyed policymakers expressed disagreement with the statement that the UN WWDR *is well-known among policy decision-makers in the water field and that communication is sufficient*. This was particularly emphasised by respondents from Europe and North America (20 respondents out of 46 in all to this question) and Africa (10 out of 26 respondents from the region). This underscores the need to persistently continue communication efforts, despite the positive progress observed in communication metrics.

46. In collaboration with the UNESCO IHP global network of Water Museums and members and partners of UN-water

47. <https://www.watermuseums.net/media/news-archive/the-wow-the-contribution-of-wamu-net-to-the-2023-un-water-conference-in-new-yorknuova-news-detail-2/>



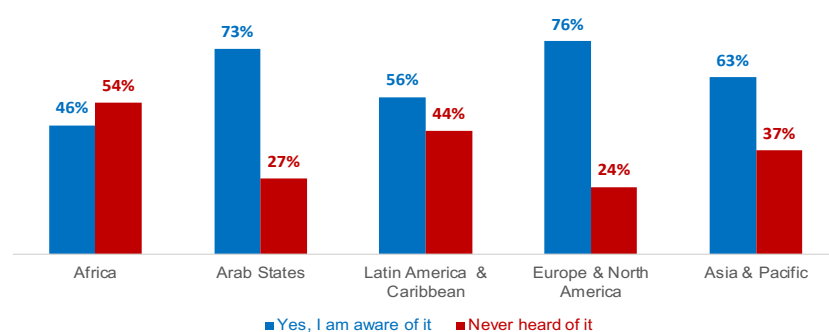
**Figure 8. Some 40% of respondents, particularly from Europe, North America, and Africa, felt that the report was not sufficiently well known among policy decision-makers, and that communication around it was insufficient**



Source: Evaluation survey (Question: Do you agree with the following statement: WWDR is well known among policy decision makers in the field of water. Communication around it is sufficient (n=50))

109. Regional differences in exposure to the UN WWDR were also observed with over half of policymakers from the African region<sup>48</sup> who did not know the UN WWDR. (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9. A large majority of respondents were aware of the report in most regions. However, over half of policymakers from the African region had never heard of the UN WWDR**



Source: Evaluation survey (question: Are you familiar with the UN WWDR? (n=73))

48. 25 policymakers from the African region responded to the question.

49. WWAP provided contributed to the development of the new Youth, Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy of the African Minister's Council on Water and participated in the validation workshop during the 9<sup>th</sup> Water Forum of Dakar

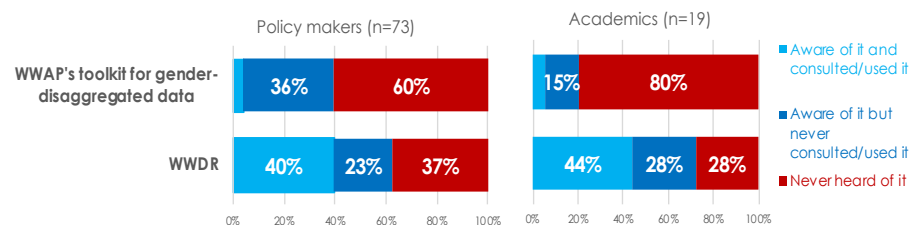
### Despite efforts, WWAP's gender-related activities have limited visibility.

110. WWAP's gender-related communication began in 2015 with the launch of the first edition of the gender Toolkit on sex-disaggregated water data. The Toolkit was presented in several international and regional events, meetings and workshops, including at the 6<sup>th</sup> Africa Water Week in 2017, the Regional Water Agenda for the Mediterranean in 2021 and the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum of Dakar in 2022.<sup>49</sup>

111. Gender-related communication gained momentum in 2021 with the launch of the Call for Action aimed at accelerating gender equality in the water domain, which gathered the support of 23 countries. A dedicated communication strategy and a package of communication materials were developed for the dissemination of the Call for Action, the gender Toolkit, and other water and gender activities.

112. Nonetheless, it seems these communication efforts have not yet yielded results. Some interviewed stakeholders, outside of WWAP, were not aware WWAP had a gender-focused component. Most survey respondents were familiar with the UN WWDR, but they had little knowledge WWAP's Toolkit for collecting gender-disaggregated water data. Less than 4% of policymakers and academics reported having used it. (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10. A majority of survey respondents are aware of the UN WWDR, but very few know about WWAP's toolkit for gender disaggregated data**



Source: Evaluation survey (questions: Are you familiar with UN-WWDR? ; Are you familiar with WWAP's Toolkit for collecting gender-disaggregated water data?)

## 5. Efficiency and sustainability: How well are resources being used? Will the benefits of WWAP's work last?

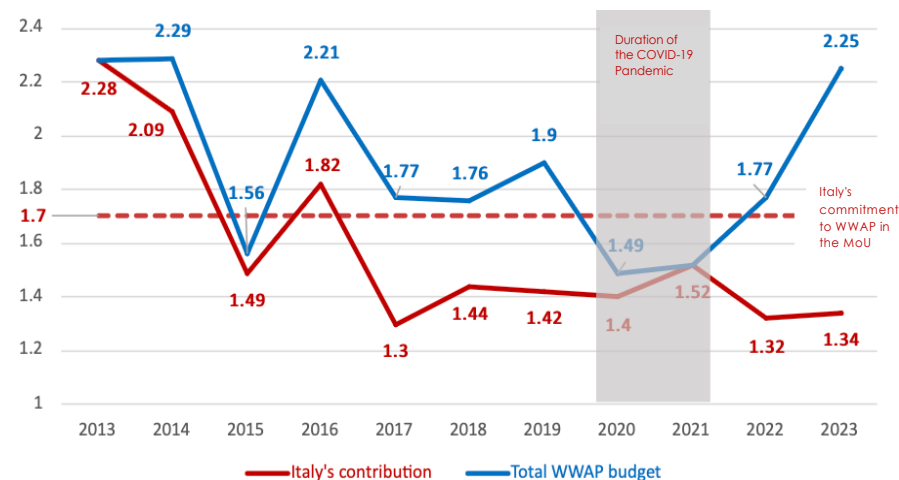
113. This chapter evaluates the extent to which WWAP's intervention delivers results in an economic and timely way, with sufficient resources. It also examines the financial sustainability of WWAP, which is crucial for the continuity of its operations and outcomes.

### 5.1 Despite successful fundraising for gender related projects, efforts to secure additional core funding have achieved limited success.

114. Since its creation, WWAP has been funded exclusively from voluntary contributions. WWAP has no financial support from UN-Water, nor does UNESCO allocate regular programme funding. UN agencies do not finance the production of the UN WWDR either, although they contribute in-kind through staff time dedicated to the drafting of the report.

115. Therefore, constant resource mobilisation is a core component of WWAP's work. In 2013, the Italian Parliament ratified a Memorandum of Understanding with UNESCO in which it attributed a fixed annual budget of 1.6 million euros (equivalent of 1.7 million USD) to WWAP. This arrangement guarantees WWAP a secure and predictable source of funding as its core budget is consistently foreseen in the Italian government's budget. Until 2016, WWAP received this amount. Since 2017, the amount has however been reduced to approximately 1.2 million euros because of horizontal cuts to the overall State budget<sup>50</sup>.

**Figure 11 WWAP's budget (in millions of USD) declined until 2021, when a new spike in voluntary contributions helped sustain the WWAP Secretariat's activities.**



Note: WWAP's total budget (in blue) includes both voluntary contributions received by the Secretariat in the form of 'letter of contributions and allocations from 'other budget codes from the Natural Sciences Sector'. The combination of both comprehensively reflects WWAP's resource mobilisation efforts. This was designed based on the financial data provided by WWAP.

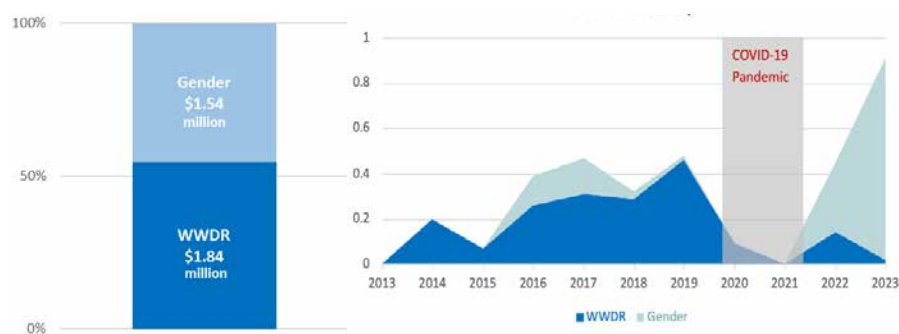
116. Approximately 80% of the funding from Italy is used to cover staff and Secretariat costs, while the remainder is allocated for expenses related to the UN WWDR. None of the water and gender activities are funded from the core budget. Significant efforts have thus been placed on raising funds for activities.

50. The Government of Italy's contribution has declined due to a law in 2017 in which all the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' budgets to international development were cut. In 2019 and 2022, Italy made specific *ad hoc* donations (221,044.00 USD and 107,526.88 USD) to the WWAP Secretariat in the form of letters of contributions to compensate for this loss and approach the target in the MoU. These have not been reflected as part of Italy's contribution in the graph (red line) as they were not disbursed at the same time as Italy's contribution under the MoU. They are accounted for in WWAP's total budget (blue line) as they are the result of additional resource mobilization efforts.



117. Despite the cuts, WWAP has managed to raise funds to maintain its total budget over the level of Italy's commitment. WWAP produced a fundraising strategy in collaboration with UNESCO's Bureau for Strategic Planning (BSP) and secured approximately 3.4 million USD in voluntary contributions between 2013 and 2023, of which 1.2 million USD during the 41C/5 biennium alone (2022-2023). These funds originated from different types of donors: countries (e.g. Germany, Italy, Spain, and Slovenia), financial mechanisms (GEF and ADB), international organizations (UN Women, UN Water's IMI) and the private sector. As shown in the figure below, these resources have been split relatively evenly between WWAP's two core areas of work.

**Figure 12. In 2013-23, the WWAP Secretariat mobilised 3,4 million USD to fund activities related to the UN WWDR and the Gender Toolkit**



Note: This figure does not include the budget allocated by Italy through the MoU. It was designed based on the financial data provided by WWAP.

118. In conclusion, while WWAP has been successful in raising extrabudgetary funds for specific activities or projects, increasing the core funding with additional contributions from new partners to enhance the sustainability of its Secretariat and mandate remains a challenge. For instance, the fact that gender-related activities are exclusively funded through voluntary contributions does not facilitate long-term planning. WWAP's need to secure additional core funding is vital to ensure its sustainability. Yet, finding an additional donor who is willing to cover the costs of the Secretariat has proven particularly difficult.

119. Interviewees pointed to two main challenges in attracting core funding to sustain the "operationalisation" of the Secretariat. Donors are more interested in funding *ad hoc* projects with limited duration (e.g. water and gender projects.) WWAP's current isolated location in Perugia also hinders opportunities for participating in fundraising and cooperation activities in international hubs.

120. Evaluation stakeholders identified some possible strategies to improve the funding scenario of WWAP. For example: integrating WWAP in UNESCO's regular programme budget to fund the position of the Coordinator and/or the Deputy coordinator; further involving the Division for Water Sciences and the Natural Sciences Sector management in finding partners for the core funding; enhancing communication strategies to underscore WWAP's added value (publishing an annual report with WWAP's activities and results, enhancing the website and further developing storytelling to demonstrate the effects of WWAP's work.)

## 5.2 WWAP operates efficiently, yet its organization puts a significant amount of pressure on its staff, which poses potential risks for the programme's execution

121. In terms of management arrangements, WWAP is led by the Director of the Programme Office on Global Water Assessment, who also serves as the Coordinator of WWAP (D1). The role encompasses a wide range of responsibilities such as strategic planning, human resource management, fundraising, overseeing the production, content, and dissemination of the UN WWDR, supervising gender-related activities, promoting new communication expressions, and maintaining relationships with donors, UN-Water, UNESCO Headquarters, partners, and regional authorities in Umbria, Italy. Since 2021, due to reduced funding, the programme has been operating without a Deputy Coordinator (P5). The lack of this senior professional is a challenge and has become a burden for the Office.

122. WWAP's Technical Unit consists of three professionals and two assistants:

- A **senior programme specialist** (P4), based at UNESCO HQ in Paris, who is tasked with coordinating the production of the UN WWDR. This includes managing the report's production schedule, liaising with various divisions within UNESCO, and UN-Water management and members.
- An **editor** (P3) is responsible for the UN WWDR's content. Their role involves designing the outline of the UN WWDR, drafting some of its segments, and ensuring coherence of all chapters. They edit, quality control and publish the report, with the support of a **publication assistant** (G5) who oversees the publication of the UN WWDR and other WWAP publications. The Editor also participate in initiatives to disseminate key messages, with the support of a **communication assistant** (G4) who handles the UN WWDR communication campaign.

- A **gender and water programme specialist** (P3) is tasked with the development and implementation of all gender-related activities, including publications and trainings<sup>51</sup>.

123. Over time, WWAP has experienced a considerable reduction in its staff numbers. In 2009, the total staff count was 28<sup>52</sup>. As of 2024, just over half of the staff who were employed in 2015 (10 out of 19) continue to work at WWAP. Both the instability in funding and the overall decline in core funding between 2013 and the present have affected staff allocation. In addition, the location in Perugia, which is not appealing to international staff has affected staff retainment. In the last ten years, WWAP has operated with a budget shortfall of over 3.3 million Euros<sup>53</sup>, equivalent to two years' worth of core funding (based on the ratified MoU). In addition, inflation rates since 2013 have not been favourable. The reduction in staff has affected both the scope of its operations and the workload of the remaining staff.

124. Financial constraints have also limited opportunities for career advancement into more senior positions, and for WWAP to hire senior personnel. The 2015 evaluation had already emphasised the importance of enhancing the strategic focus of WWAP. However, 60% of the employees currently occupy G grade positions<sup>54</sup>. Additionally, less than 30% of the staff hold fixed-term positions. The remaining seven individuals are on short-term contracts, which has generated some stress regarding their job stability.

125. Staff levels declined drastically despite the change from a triennial to an annual report, which increased the workload with parallel production processes. The evaluation team noted significant staff frustration with this. Further, the evaluators observed that WWAP's staff are actively engaged in numerous tasks. However, their intense focus on meeting deadlines and deliverables leaves little time for reflection and internal collaboration. During interviews, several WWAP staff members expressed concern about their consistently high workload. Additionally, they emphasised that the team's structure is unsustainable, as each member is critical to the timely delivery of the UN WWDR. If a staff member falls ill just before the report launch, this could significantly jeopardise the entire production process. External stakeholders, during interviews, voiced their impression that the workload of WWAP staff is high and that coordinating a yearly publication is demanding.

51. About 5 external consultants supporting the work on gender, paid through voluntary contributions.

52. UNESCO-IOS, 2015, Evaluation of the World Water Assessment Programme: final report.

53. When comparing total funding received from the Government of Italy from 2013-2023 (14.9 million Euros) with the funding that should have been received based on the ratified MoU (18.2 million Euros)

54. The General Service Staff (G1-G7) in the United Nations (UN) system represents a range of non-professional support staff positions. These positions generally involve administrative, clerical, technical, and logistical support roles that are essential for the smooth functioning of the organisation.

### 5.3 WWAP operates from premises in Perugia which do not respond to the organisation's needs

126. During its initial seven years, WWAP operated from UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. In 2007, UNESCO reached an agreement with the regional government of Umbria in Italy to relocate WWAP to Villa La Colombella, situated outside the city of Perugia. This new location was designated as the WWAP Secretariat. Simultaneously, discussions between UNESCO and the Italian Government led to a financing arrangement for WWAP. After finalising the agreement, WWAP personnel moved to Villa La Colombella in Perugia in 2008, while one staff member remained at UNESCO Headquarters (i.e. the Senior Programme Specialist who also serves as the Liaison Officer).

127. Through direct observation and interviews, the evaluation team ascertained the challenges linked to WWAP's location in Perugia. Some of these concerns were already pointed out in the IOS evaluation of 2015. These are :

- Location and accessibility: Perugia is relatively isolated and poses challenges for accessibility. WWAP's premises themselves are in the countryside, outside of the city of Perugia, further complicating its access. Opportunities for mobility to UNESCO HQ or face-to-face interactions with other external partners is limited.
- Attractiveness for International Staff: The location lacks appeal for international staff as there are no international schools and few job opportunities for spouses.
- Inability to host events: In 2019, approximately three quarters of WWAP's premises were deemed unsafe and consequently unusable.

128. The effects of WWAP's financial situation and location in Perugia on its staff are concerning. Through interviews and observation, the evaluation team confirmed that isolation and job insecurity have increased stress among staff. Larger, better-connected cities in Italy with stronger ties with academic, science and research-oriented cities would be more suited to WWAP. Preference should be given to cities in which UNESCO or other UN science-related entities have offices. Viable options would include for example Venice or Trieste where UNESCO already has science-related entities (the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Culture and Science in Europe in Venice, the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) and the World Academy of Science in Trieste).

## 6. Impact: what difference does WWAP make?

129. This chapter seeks to assess the degree to which WWAP has contributed to the development and enhancement of water science policies in Member States.

### 6.1 The UN WWDR, a report recognised and used in the scientific community and in the international development sphere

130. To analyse the influence of the UN WWDR on the scientific community, the evaluation conducted a bibliometric analysis and an online survey targeting researchers and academics among the 29 UNESCO water related Category II Institutes<sup>55</sup> and 58 UNESCO water-related chairs<sup>56</sup>.

**The bibliometric analysis revealed that citations are on the increase.**

131. Between 2015 and 2023, the UN-WWDR was cited in 6003 articles and the trend is increasing: from 229 in 2015 to 1227 in 2023. Citations are expected to continue increasing if the current annual publication of reports is maintained. Each year witnesses not only the citation of newly published reports, but also a resurgence of interest in reports from previous years, contributing to a dynamic curve rather than a constant one.

**Figure 13 The visibility of the UN WWDR series has grown significantly: in 2023, reports are cited in 5 times as many documents as in 2015**



Source: based on data from Scopus

132. Between 2015 and 2023, the reports garnered citations from 4,720 principal authors (cited first in articles), with an average of 1.2 articles per author. The majority cited the report in just one article, while the most prolific author cited it in 14 different reports.

133. Within the top five affiliations<sup>57</sup> citing the report, three are based in China: the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, and the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences. On a global scale, the top 10 affiliated institutes citing the report include four Chinese and three Dutch entities. A total of 654 affiliations cite the report, averaging 9.1 documents per institution, reflecting widespread recognition within various research institutions.

134. The journals publishing the articles that cite the report are recognised in their field of expertise. Among the top 10 journals (representing 1 414 citations), six have a CiteScore Percentile above 10, indicating that for every publication, they are cited at

55. <https://www.unesco.org/en/ihp/centres>

56. <https://www.unesco.org/en/ihp/chairs>

57. Affiliation of authors citing the report

least 10 times. Two of these journals (Desalination and Agricultural Water Management) rank within the top 15 Cite Scores among the 248 journals focused on “Water Science and Technology.”

135. For the years 2022 and 2023, 87% of the articles referencing the report do so in their introductions. (202 out of the 232 articles analysed), Among these, 50% cite the report to highlight an overall trend (e.g.: “*It has been said that the water crisis is caused by poor water management and essentially by ineffective governance*”). Additionally, 27% cite the report to present specific figures (e.g.: “*on average, high-income countries treat around 70% of the municipal and industrial wastewater produced, and 38% in upper-middle-income countries, and 28% in lower-middle-income countries*”). Furthermore, 20% of articles cite the report to convey projections (e.g.: “*by 2050, water scarcity threatens to be a reality for almost 50% of the world's population for at least one month a year*”). A more detailed presentation of the bibliometric analysis is available in Appendix L.

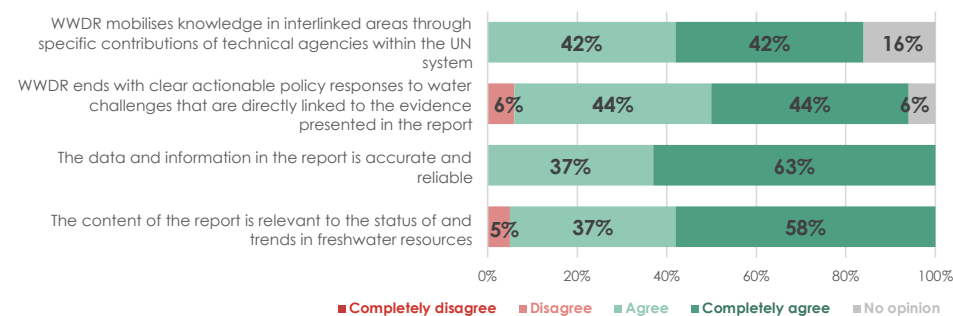
#### In the survey with academics, most are aware of the report but do not know much about WWAP's activities.

136. Most respondents are aware of WWAP, but do not know much about of its activities. However, almost half of respondents know and have used the UN WWDR. Most respondents said they had heard about the report via peers and colleagues (37%) or via events and communications linked to World Water Day (21%).

137. The main reasons why respondents consulted the UN WWDR were: to gain insights and new perspectives about a specific theme covered by the report, to use it as source material for research; and to access the latest global water-related metrics and statistics.

138. A large majority of respondents felt that the data and information in the report is accurate and reliable. Respondents also considered that the report mobilises knowledge in interlinked areas through specific contributions of technical agencies in the UN system.

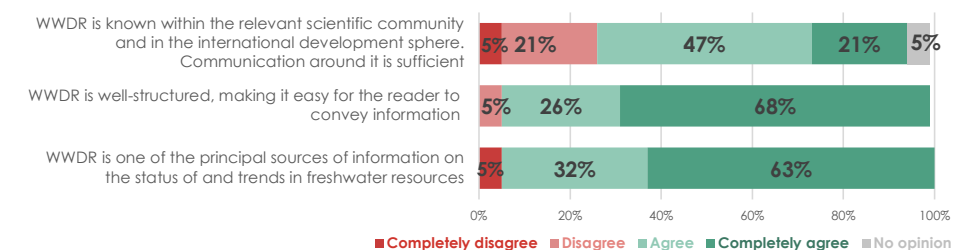
**Figure 14. Academics almost unanimously approve the content of the UN WWDR and its added value**



Source: Evaluation survey (question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?) (n=19)

139. On the other hand, one in four of respondents disagreed that the report is well known within the relevant scientific community and in the international development sphere.

**Figure 15. 95% of academics believe the UN WWDR is relevant and well-structured, but 26% believe it's not sufficiently known or visible**



Source: Evaluation survey (question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?) (n=19)

140. More than 70% of those surveyed said they have used or referred to specific findings from the UN WWDR to support their activity. Here are examples mentioned in the survey.

### Box 2. Examples of how the UN WWDR is used in the scientific community

- “Yes, the UN WWDR reports were used as a reference in lectures, in international and regional Conferences and as references in books that I wrote. The reports gave support (technical and scientific) to some of my consultancy reports”.
- “The UN WWDR Report has helped very much in my publications by providing adequate up to date information and also provided valuable information to my capacity development activity.”
- “I have repeatedly used WWAP content for teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels when it comes to water and climate change, etc. Further, WWAP contents have been referred to in detailed reports prepared for lagoon conservation, water resources development and national development programs for both the government and private sector projects.”

## 6.2 Quantifying the impact of the UN WWDR on policy is challenging. However, there is evidence that policymakers use the report

### Overton database analysis

141. According to the Overton database, UN WWDRs published between 2015 and 2023 have been cited 128 times in policy documents. The most frequently cited report is, by far, UN-WWDR 2021, with 47 citations, followed by UN-WWDR 2015 with 18 citations.

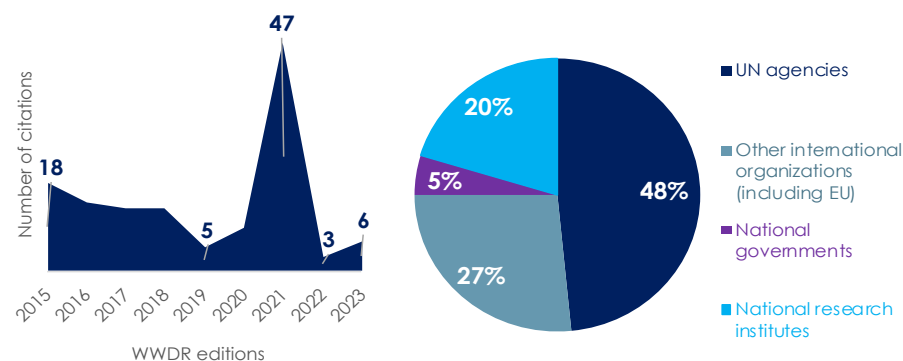
142. Intergovernmental organisations emerge as the primary contributors to citations, accounting for 96 out of 128 of them (i.e. 76%). Of these, UN organisations make up two thirds of the citations (62 out of 96), including entities such as UNESCWA, FAO, UNESCAP, UNECLAC, UNESCO, and others. National think tanks and research institutes rank second in terms of citations, contributing 26 out of 128 (i.e. 20%).

143. About 13 citations out of 128 come from national governments (6) and the European Union (7). These citations mainly come from the Global North, including: The Publications Office of the European Union, the European Investment Bank, the

government of Hungary, French Government Ministries, and the Congressional Research Service (USA).

144. The top three countries citing the report are the UK (6 citations), the USA (5 citations), and Austria (4 citations). Most of the citing institutions focus on water or biodiversity.

**Figure 16. Half of the policy documents that reference the UN-WWDR from 2015 to 2023 are published by the United Nations. Over this period, the 2021 edition was the most cited**



Source: data from Overton

### Backlink Checker<sup>58</sup> Investigation

145. For the year 2023, the evaluation used a backlink checker to determine who is linking to the 2023 UN WWDR page. The evaluators classified the backlinks to determine the types of organisations linking to the report. Although this analysis is not exhaustive due to the report being produced in various languages and formats, the evaluation specifically examined the links to the English version. This approach provides insight into the entities connecting to the UN WWDR and allows us to analyse their motivations for doing so.

58. A backlink checker is an online tool that connects the UN WWDR's webpages to all associated websites.

146. For the 2023 report, two links were analysed, both leading to the report<sup>59</sup>. The link to the full report<sup>60</sup> gathered a total count of 2,782 backlinks available on 100 referring domains;<sup>61</sup> the link to all available products linked to the 2023 report<sup>62</sup> gathered 136 backlinks available on 70 referring domains.

147. Over one-third of the report's referring domains exhibit robust domain ratings, highlighting the overall strength of the website's backlink profiles. This means that these websites have a high number of visits, and they give a higher visibility to the UN WWDR. The domain rating reaches a maximum score of 96 on a scale ranging from 0 to 100. The report contains numerous links to NGOs, UN agencies, and international higher education and research institutions, highlighting a robust connection with the international development sphere. The quantity of backlinks from online press sources and from NGOs and Civil society organisations can also play an indirect role in influencing the decisions of policymakers.

148. In terms of organic traffic<sup>63</sup> on these webpages, they receive approximately 500 searches each month. However, the impact of the sites referencing the report is much broader, as their domains collectively attract thousands of searches. For instance, for organisations with high domain ratings such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies (579,200 searches monthly), the European Union website (21,290,000 searches monthly) or NPR (10,269,000 searches monthly). The sites linking to the UN WWDR 2023 cover over 15 languages<sup>64</sup>.

149. The table below present the type of organisations that linked to the 2023 WWDR and displays the reasons why the report is cited (Appendix G).

**Table 2. Backlink checks on UN WWDR 2023**

| Type of organisation  | No. of backlinks                       | Reasons why they link to the UN WWDR   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Policy organisations or programmes and funding agencies</b>      | 43                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To convey messages of the UN WWDR and/or the World Water Day</li> <li>As a reference on the status or trend related to water in the context of policy dialogues</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Higher education and research organisations and think thanks</b> | 34                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To share current trends and main messages of the UN WWDR</li> <li>To update on progress on SDG6</li> <li>To publish a scientific article citing the UN WWDR</li> </ul>  |
| <b>UN Organisations</b>   | 16                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To disseminate the UN WWDR</li> <li>To highlight the contribution to a chapter of the report</li> <li>As a reference for a call for Action or other initiatives, e.g. the blueprint for action on economic, social and cultural rights</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Press</b>  | 66                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To share current trends, latest facts and figures, and main messages of the UN WWDR</li> <li>To relay information about the launch of WWDR events during World Water Day</li> </ul>   |
| <b>NGOs and Civil Society organisations</b>                         | 2583<br>70 if<br>excluding<br>the MEWF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise awareness about the global water situation</li> <li>To share the reports main messages about specific themes in relation with their mandate, e.g. sustainable management of water resources</li> <li>To cite latest facts and figures in campaigns to alleviate suffering, poverty, fight diseases, and promote just access to water and sanitation</li> </ul> |
| <b>Professional associations</b>                                    | 4                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To convey messages of the UN WWDR</li> <li>Advocacy</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Private sector</b>   | 94                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote environmentally conscious actions and strategies adopted by businesses and organisations to minimise their ecological footprint and contribute to sustainable development</li> <li>For marketing purposes</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Miscellaneous, blogs and civil society initiatives</b>           | 78                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise awareness about the global water situation</li> <li>To promote healthy and environmentally friendly practices</li> </ul>   |

Source: data from Ahrefs

59. Last update of the result done on 11 March 2024.

60. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384655>

61. A referring domain refers to the institutions and entities that have decided to cite the report with the link. Within these domains, several links can be incorporated, which explains the difference between the two figures.

62. Full report, Executive Summary and Fact and Figures document: [www.unesco.org/reports/wwdr/2023/en/download](http://www.unesco.org/reports/wwdr/2023/en/download)

63. Organic traffic refers to the natural, unpaid visits that a website receives from search engines (such as Google, Bing, or Yahoo) or other sources.

64. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Slovenian, Turkish.



150. The following policy organisations have used a backlink to the 2023 UN WWDR:

#### **National Authorities or international Organisations**

- The European Union (DR-96)
- The Global Water Partnership (DR-72)
- UNESCO National Commissions, or IHP National Committees: Slovenia, New Zealand, Hungary
- The Secretariat-General for the Environment (SGAmbiente), Portugal
- The National Assembly Library of Korea serves as a parliamentary and public library
- Gabinete de Planeamento, Políticas e Administração Geral (Office of Planning, Policies, and General Administration) Ministry of Agriculture, Portugal

#### **Local water authorities**

- La Cámara Insular de Aguas de Tenerife, Spain
- La Xarxa de Ciutats i Pobles cap a la Sostenibilitat an association of municipalities, Spain
- Funding agencies:
  - The Inter-American Development Bank (DR-69)
  - Finnova.eu

Source: data from Ahrefs

151. Although it is impossible to have a full view on the UN WWDR's influence on policy, it is possible to capture several examples that demonstrate that policy makers are aware of the report and are using it. Appendix M gives a detailed list of identified examples per country/region.

#### **Survey among policymakers**

152. Over 42% of the surveyed policymakers said they had already used a UN WWDR report to help formulate sustainable water policies or programmes. Here are a few examples mentioned in the survey:

“I used the ideas and perspectives from the last 4 reports when I contributed to the elaboration of our National Strategy of Water Management”.

“The Executive Summary was particularly helpful. Information contained there was used to ensure alignment with the national strategic direction for water resources management. The statistics are also useful as they provide scientific evidence for smaller countries that are not able to conduct these types of studies.”

“Used for the development of a national programme to preserve groundwater resources”.

153. The UN WWDR is considered well aligned to the needs of policy makers and its key messages are published in adequate readable formats. The report has a high potential to influence policy. The valuation provided evidence on how it is used as a reference on the status, or trends related to water in policy documents and dialogues. To enhance the impact on policy it is important to continue efforts to enhance the report's visibility, to advocate for actions and to engage with policymakers.



# 7. Conclusions and recommendations

## 7.1 Conclusions

**Conclusion 1: The UN WWDR and associated products are highly valued, relevant, and influence the work of many of its target users.**

154. The United Nations WWDR series focuses on critical development challenges that policy makers need to address urgently. This UN flagship report is considered by the international development sphere and the scientific community as credible and reliable. The report is relevant to the needs of its main target users. Policymakers who use the report, rely on this authoritative reference to facilitate policy decisions and policy dialogue at both domestic and multilateral levels. By providing comprehensive analysis, data, and recommendations, it equips member states with essential information to tackle urgent water challenges worldwide. The UN WWDR serves as a trusted resource for its users, contributing to informed decision-making and sustainable development efforts globally.

155. Assessing the impact of the UN World Water Development Report (UN WWDR) on water science policies at a global scale remains challenging, the evaluation gathered evidence that the report is referenced in strategic documents, policy papers, policy dialogues, commissioned studies, and government portals. It is important to approach expectations regarding the UN WWDR's influence on policy change with caution. Achieving such outcomes depends not only on the efforts of WWAP and the UN-Water family but also on various other factors within individual countries. The UN WWDR's unique value lies in its capacity to provide independent, high-quality, interdisciplinary, and policy-relevant data and analysis on relevant themes in the water domain.

**Conclusion 2: WWAP's current financial situation compromises WWAP's ability to fulfil its mandate and presents a risk for the sustainability of the programme.**

156. Despite facing significant budget cuts, the Italian Government has guaranteed continued financial support to the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP). However, simultaneously, reductions of financial support from Italy and higher inflation rates, have significantly impacted WWAP's operations. In response to these financial

constraints, WWAP drastically curtailed its expenditures, leading to reductions in staffing levels. This downsizing has necessarily affected both the breadth of its activities and the workload borne by the remaining staff. The programme's capacity development initiatives are implemented with additional funds leveraged for projects, reducing WWAP's ability to strategically steer this pillar.

157. WWAP's financial sustainability is assured by the core budget provided by Italy. It is sufficient to produce the UN WWDR but not to support its communication, outreach, and capacity development activities. The implementation of these activities, including work on gender equality, relies on project related funding attributed through voluntary contributions from various donors and lacks adequate long-term commitments. This persistent situation hinders more effective planning for WWAP's capacity development pillar.

158. WWAP's communication on its value added and results is insufficient and disconnected from its fundraising efforts. It should communicate more clearly on its mission, goals, and the value it provides, this includes sharing success stories and tangible results that demonstrate the programme's effectiveness. Fundraising initiatives should be closely tied to WWAP's value proposition. In addition, it would be beneficial for WWAP to upload its annual report, which is produced for its donor, on its website. This would enhance the visibility of its activities and achievements.

**Conclusion 3: As a result of ongoing financial difficulties, WWAP lacks sufficient permanent senior staff to support its strategic vision.**

159. WWAP's organisational framework deals with a notable shortage of senior personnel. The 2015 evaluation had already underscored the critical importance of enhancing WWAP's strategic focus. This observation remains relevant. The lack of a senior officer (P5) as Deputy Director has been a major challenge for WWAP. Senior staff are needed to ensure fundraising, a sound communication strategy and branding, and a vision for the future.

**Conclusion 4: WWAP headquarters in Perugia, Italy do not offer an adequate environment for the organisation's operational requirements.**

160. Perugia poses challenges on account of its isolation, the structure and the low incentives for international professional staff.

**Conclusion 5: Visibility of both the UN WWDR in Africa and WWAP's gender related initiatives could be strengthened.**

161. Recent communication and outreach efforts increased the visibility of the UN WWDR, resulting in coverage in 25,000 press articles in 2023. However, the current communication strategy of WWAP lacks targeted actions and messages tailored for different audiences. Policymakers in the African region have limited awareness of the UN WWDR, leading to its underutilisation. Additionally, both policymakers and the scientific community are insufficiently informed about WWAP's gender Toolkit. Addressing these strategic gaps is crucial for enhancing the programme's impact and expanding its reach.

**Conclusion 6: Synergies between WWAP and the IHP could be further enhanced.**

162. While WWAP and the IHP regularly work together and have identified growing opportunities for synergies in the gender domain, it remains paramount to strategically think the positioning of WWAP within UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences and in articulation with the IHP.

**Conclusion 7: Although the roles of WWAP and UN-Water have been clarified, some stakeholders still express concerns.**

163. WWAP is perceived by a few stakeholders as not sufficiently valuing the contributions of other UN-Water members and by-passing some decisions that should be taken collectively. Conversely, WWAP staff is frustrated over what they perceive as a lack of recognition over its substantial contributions to the UN WWDR. Caution must be applied in upholding open communication lines to ensure that the working relationship is not strained, and trust remains between all parties involved. Maintaining dialogue is essential to sustain the overall positive collaboration observed throughout the evaluation in the production of the UN WWDR report.

**Conclusion 8: WWAP has successfully leveraged funding for capacity building in relation to its gender toolkit but was not able to fully develop capacity development in relation to the WWDR series.**

164. The capacity development activities of WWAP rely entirely on designated extrabudgetary funding, which complicates longer term strategic planning for its objectives and actions. The capacity development programme of WWAP should be purposefully designed to enhance the influence of the UN WWDR and the gender Toolkit on policy. In addition, a well-defined strategy is necessary to enhance synergies between WWAP and IHP with regard to their capacity building mandates.

## 7.2 Recommendations

**Recommendation 1 – Clarify WWAP's strategic vision and objectives.**

**Addressed to: ADG/SC with the support of the Director of the Division of Water Sciences and the WWAP Coordinator**

**To be implemented by: June 2025**

165. Considering WWAP's current financial situation it is important to re-examine its pillars and activities and the strategy behind them. This includes assessing the environment in which WWAP operates, and the coherence of its mandate within UNESCO regarding capacity building.

166. The evaluators recommend formulating this vision by developing a robust theory of change for the programme, in collaboration with WWAP's staff, and having it validated by UNESCO, UN-Water, and its core donor.

167. The strategic vision ought to be reinforced through distinct branding that encapsulates WWAP's vision and objectives. This branding should be consistently employed across all communication channels, including the website, fundraising initiatives, publications, and social media. In addition, WWAP's vision for the future should:

- (i) Proactively consider the role of WWAP and of the UN WWDR following the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
- (ii) Strategically position WWAP within the production of UNESCO's science-based global water assessment report if this project is confirmed.

**Recommendation 2 – Develop a sound fundraising strategy to increase WWAP's core funding.**

**Addressed to: ADG/SC with the support of the Director of the Division of Water Sciences, the WWAP Coordinator and BSP**

**To be implemented by: June 2025**

168. Given the current financial challenges faced by WWAP, which have affected its operations, human resources, and threatened its sustainability, WWAP should revise and strengthen its fundraising strategy. In this regard, it is crucial to:

- (i) Identify and engage with potential new contributors, who are inclined to provide core funding.
- (ii) Continue the dialogue with the Government of Italy (the only core donor in the absence of which the programme would cease to exist) to elucidate the present difficulties and emphasise the significance of the commitments stipulated in the MoU.
- (iii) Initiate interactions with all current donors to monitor their satisfaction levels and comprehend their needs.
- (iv) Develop funding proposals for larger projects that secure multi-year sustainable funding.
- (v) Effectively communicate on WWAP's mission, success stories, visibility metrics, impacts, and needs. This includes the regular publication of WWAP's achievements in an annual report, and targeted communications to potential donors.
- (vi) Communicate on innovative approaches that are appealing to donors for example the arts and science initiatives and WWAP's gender toolkit.
- (vii) Liaise with UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences to collaborate on fundraising activities promoting the respective strengths and complementarities of WWAP and IHP.

**Recommendation 3 – Relocate WWAP's premises.**

**Addressed to: ADG/SC, with the support of ADG/ADM**

**To be implemented by: December 2025**

169. This relocation should take place in Italy to align with the core donor's demand. Ideally, it should be in a city where other UNESCO or UN science and research entities are present to foster opportunities for synergy and collaboration, and to mitigate the isolation of WWAP (e.g. Venice, Trieste or Rome) Additionally, it should facilitate seamless international connections and be appealing to international staff. For instance, it should have access to international schools and an international social environment.

**Recommendation 4 – Optimise WWAP's capacities and organisational structure.**

**Addressed to : ADG/SC, together with the WWAP Coordinator**

**To be implemented by: June 2025**

170. The human resources and organisational structure of WWAP need to be re-evaluated to maximise resource utilisation:

- (i) It's crucial to pinpoint roles that could be outsourced to external consultants, with the objective of cost reduction.
- (ii) Conversely, it's imperative to enhance the team of WWAP's high-level professionals to amplify its strategic insight and fundraising abilities.
- (iii) Collaborate with UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences to pool and maximize efforts around shared actions, joint events, and synergies on capacity development and gender equality.

**Recommendation 5 – Enhance the visibility of WWAP's work.****Addressed to: The WWAP Coordinator****To be implemented by: June 2025**

171. The evaluation suggests the development of a comprehensive communication strategy for the dissemination of the UN WWDR series and WWAP's gender toolkit. The strategy should distinctly identify target audiences (such as policymakers, decision-makers, civil society, youth, etc.), target regions, and appropriate communication channels and tailored messages for each group.

172. It is recommended to persist in the efforts to translate the report's executive summary into as many languages as feasible. Furthermore, WWAP should uphold the current annual periodicity of the UN WWDR. This enhances the UN WWDR's visibility and fosters a momentum coinciding with its release on World Water Day.

**Recommendation 6 – Enhance the synergies and complementarities with other UNESCO entities with the aim to amplify the impact of WWAP's work on water policies.****Addressed to: WWAP Coordinator, with the support of ADG/SC****To be implemented by: June 2025**

173. WWAP's work on capacity development and on gender equality should better link to other work at UNESCO:

- (i) WWAP should develop stronger synergies with other UNESCO entities that also have a mandate on capacity development in the water sector such as IHP and UNESCO field offices. WWAP could for example more proactively inform regional offices about possible areas of collaboration.
- (ii) To foster a transformative approach to gender equality within the Natural Sciences Sector, WWAP's work on gender equality must be interconnected with other parts of UNESCO:

- (a) All water-related projects initiated by a UNESCO entity that include an assessment should incorporate the gender toolkit. WWAP could be engaged to contribute to the gender component of the assessment proposal.
- (b) The application of the gender toolkit should be institutionalised within the Natural Sciences Sector Staff in IHP and UNESCO field offices should be initiated to the gender toolkit to enhance the visibility and impact of the gender toolkit.



## Appendices

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## Technical appendices

(available upon request at [ios@unesco.org](mailto:ios@unesco.org))

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# Appendix A.

## Terms of reference

### 1. Background

1. In 2000, UNESCO created the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) to serve as a coordinating and independent entity that would provide 'a wider range of policy-relevant, timely and reliable information in various fields of water resources developments and management, in particular through the production of the United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR)'. The goal of the WWDR is to provide up-to-date, consolidated data and policy advice to its readership, mainly policy and decision makers in the water domain. The report is produced by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water. UN-Water1 is a cooperation mechanism that brings together over 30 United Nations agencies with a mandate and activities relevant to water and sanitation as well as other prominent agencies that are outside the UN system.

2. WWAP is hosted in the UNESCO programme Office for Global Water Assessment located in Perugia, Italy. The Government of Italy is its primary funding entity.

#### Mandate

3. The World Water Assessment Programme's objectives are as follows:

- **Information-sharing and policy work** through the production and dissemination of the United Nations *World Water Development Report series*. This is a theme-based report that the WWAP of UNESCO publishes every year to mark the celebration of World Water Day on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. It provides fact-based knowledge on progress towards achieving SDG 6 on Water and Sanitation and hence supports Member States' efforts to enhance water-related policies through a periodic global reporting on the state and use of water resources. The WWAP Secretariat proposes a shortlist of potential topics for each report to the UN-Water Senior Programme Managers, who then collectively pick a topic during their bi-annual meeting. UNESCO's WWAP coordinates the preparation of the report, drafts a portion of it, consolidates, and quality assures its overall contents. Regional perspectives in the report draws attention to best practices at the regional level and share those. The latest editions of the World Water Developed Reports have covered various topics as seen in the table below.

**Table 3. Topics of the World Water Development Report series**

| Year | Title                                     | Year | Title                            |
|------|---|------|----------------------------------|
| 2023 | Partnerships and cooperation for water    | 2018 | Nature-based solutions for water |
| 2022 | Groundwater, making the invisible visible | 2017 | Wastewater, the untapped source  |
| 2021 | Valuing water                             | 2016 | Water and jobs                   |
| 2020 | Water and climate change                  | 2015 | Water for a sustainable world    |
| 2019 | Leaving no one behind                     | 2014 | Water and energy                 |

- **Capacity-building:** The UNESCO Programme Office for Global Water Assessment provides training to Member States based on the findings of the recent editions of the WWDR to inform decision making processes so they may better assess the effectiveness of their water policies and ensure the efficient use of their water resources.
- **Promotion of gender equality:** It supports the consideration of gender-related considerations and women's empowerment in water-related debates through the development and promotion of a [toolkit for sex-disaggregated data on water](#) initially published in 2015 and updated in 2019, that outlines gender-responsive indicators, conceptual framework and other tools designed to enhance the collection of sex-disaggregated water data at the national and international levels. In 2021, it further brought together a multistakeholder coalition of over 100 members and issued the [call for action to accelerate gender equality in the water domain](#).

## Situating WWAP in UNESCO Natural Sciences Sector's Programme and Budget

4. While the World Water Assessment Programme is a stand-alone programme financed exclusively by the Government of Italy, it is considered part of the UNESCO Natural Science Sector. In UNESCO's organigramme, it sits within the Division of Water Sciences of the Natural Sciences Sector and WWAP works in close collaboration with the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme. Indeed, as per UNESCO's Approved Programme and Budget documents, WWAP products are designed to contribute to the enhancement of water skills and policies.

5. Thus, in the 38C/5 (2016-17), WWAP contributed to the following main line of action (MLA) and associated expected results (ER):

### MLA 6: Strengthening freshwater security

**ER10: Responses to local, regional and global water security challenges strengthened.**

**ER11: Knowledge, innovation, policies, and human and institutional capacities for water security strengthened through improved international cooperation.**

6. In the 39C/5 (2018-19) and 40C/5 (2020-21), this changed to:

### MLA 3: Improving knowledge and strengthening capacities at all levels to achieve water security.

**ER7: Member States have strengthened their response to water security challenges towards the achievement of water-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, and other targets from relevant international water agendas.**

**ER8: Member States have improved policies and increased institutional and human capacities for water security through scientific cooperation.**

7. Finally in the 41 C/5 (2022-23), WWAP's activities contribute to the achievement of:

## OUTCOME 3: Enhance knowledge for climate action, biodiversity, water and ocean management and disaster risk reduction

**Output 3. SC.2: Water science, innovation, education, management, cooperation, and governance bolstered for a water secure world in a changing environment.**

**Output 4. SC.5: Institutional and human capacities in basic sciences, technology, research, innovation, and engineering enhanced to advance knowledge for sustainable development.**

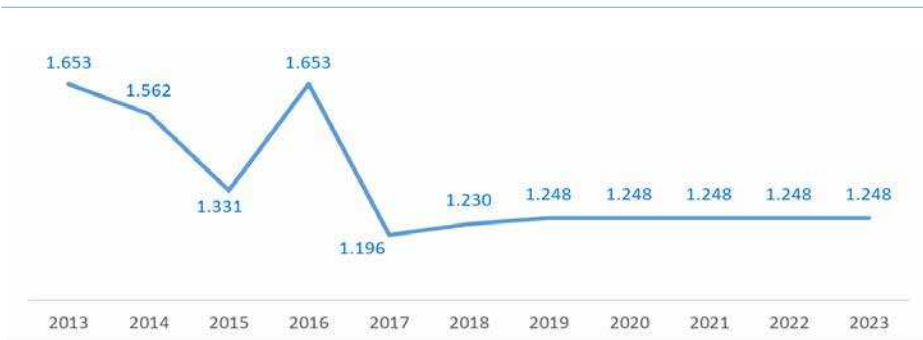
8. The Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) is the only intergovernmental programme of the UN system devoted to water research, water resources management, and education and capacity building. It was founded in 1975 with the objective of building Member States' technical and institutional capacities and encouraging them to further enhance and invest in their water research and management to ensure sustainable development and water secure societies. IHP is also a foundational part of the Division of Water Sciences within UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector and one of UNESCO's flagship programmes. It is governed by an IHP Council and Bureau. IHP and WWAP, through their mandates, are complementary to one another.

### Human and Financial Resources

9. In terms of human resources, the World Water Assessment Programme is headed by a director in charge of a core team of 10 staff members<sup>2</sup>, all funded through extrabudgetary contributions.

10. Programme implementation is exclusively funded through voluntary contributions. In its first years of existence (2000-2006), the programme was funded by Japan and located in UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris. Since 2007, WWAP is predominantly funded by the Government of Italy and accordingly, it moved from Paris to a dedicated unit in Perugia, Italy. In 2013, the Italian Parliament ratified a Memorandum of Understanding with UNESCO in which it attributed a fixed annual budget to WWAP worth approximately 1.6 million USD. However, since 2017, WWAP's annual budget has decreased to 1.2 million USD (see Figure 1 below). WWAP also secures additional ad hoc funding from various sources – including IHP - through resource mobilization efforts.



**Figure A1. Evolution of WWAP's budget (in millions of euros)**

Source: WWAP unit

## 2. Purpose and Use

11. The UNESCO Division for Internal Oversight Services' (IOS) Evaluation Office, at the request of the Natural Sciences Sector, is conducting this evaluation on WWAP as part of IOS's corporate biannual evaluation plan. As 2023 marks the celebration of the WWDR's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this is also an opportune time to undertake an evaluation.

12. The evaluation of WWAP will specifically address:

- The relevance of WWAP's activities in addressing UNESCO Member States' needs
- The effectiveness and impact of WWAP's capacity-building efforts, including its Gender Disaggregated Water Data Toolkit
- The effectiveness and impact of its advocacy initiatives, especially the World Water Development Report, in raising awareness, promoting knowledge and providing policy support for better water resource management.
- The coherence of WWAP's activities with UNESCO's overall strategy in water sciences
- The efficiency of WWAP's administrative management

- The financial sustainability of WWAP's activities since the establishment of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Italian Parliament, including the suitability of its premises.

13. The evaluation will further explore relevant formative elements to assist the Natural Sciences Sector and the WWAP Programme unit in decision making and help strengthen the thematic area by making evidence-based and future-oriented recommendations to shape WWAP's vision and future programming.

14. In pursuit of the main evaluation purposes, indicated above, the evaluation team is expected to collect data, draw conclusions, formulate lessons learnt and articulate recommendations based on its assessment and analysis. It should provide evidence about the key achievements and added value of WWAP's work in water sciences.

15. The evaluation will adopt both a retrospective and a forward-looking perspective with action-oriented recommendations formulated on the basis of substantive findings.

16. UNESCO's work is also guided by two Global Priorities endorsed by the Member States: Priority Africa and Priority Gender Equality. The flagship programmes for Priority Africa are outlined in the UNESCO [Operational Strategy for Priority Africa](#) (2022-2029) as contained in Annex VII of the 41C/5. The ambitions for Priority Gender Equality, previously reflected in a standalone document - the [Gender Equality Action Plan](#) (2014-2021) – are now embedded in UNESCO's regular programming in the C/5. The evaluation shall assess the contributions made in this field to UNESCO's global priorities by collecting data on the gender dimensions and gendered impact of WWAP's actions in water sciences, as well as focusing, as appropriate, on the specific needs and challenges of the African continent.

17. The main target audiences for this evaluation consist of the following users: The WWAP unit, senior management of UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector and the Division of Water Sciences. The secondary users are UNESCO Member States, UN Water family members, UNESCO Water Family members and the general public.

## 3. Evaluation questions and Scope

18. IOS conducted both an evaluation and an audit of WWAP in 2015 which covered the periods from 2007 to 2014. This new evaluation will thus assess WWAP's activities over the past nine years from 2015 to July 2023 and cover the full spectrum of activities led by WWAP. The 2019 IOS evaluation of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme also included a dimension that further focused on WWAP.

19. The evaluation shall develop evidence-based and future-oriented recommendations concerning the World Water Assessment Programme's work. The evaluation will be based on the revised OECD/DAC Evaluation criteria<sup>3</sup>, namely relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

20. The evaluation will answer the following indicative list of questions:

#### **Relevance**

- To what extent does the World Water Development Report series address the needs of policy makers and decision-makers?
- How aligned is WWAP's work with UNESCO's strategic objectives as outlined in the 41C/4 and other UNESCO strategic documents?

#### **Coherence**

- To what extent does the work of WWAP complement that of UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences and vice-versa?
- To what extent does the work of WWAP support the goal of the UN to 'deliver as one' on water issues?
- To what extent does the work of WWAP support the goal of working on Gender Equality within the UN.
- To what extent does the UN World Water Development report showcase the complementarity of the different UN-Water contributors' mandates?

#### **Effectiveness**

- How effective is WWAP in coordinating the publication of the World Water Development Report?
- In what regards has the UN World Water Development Report contributed to a greater science-policy nexus? To what extent is it used by policy makers?
- To what extent does the Division of Water Sciences use findings stemming from WWAP's reports and research to support their own initiatives?
- To what extent do WWAP's products contribute to UN-Water's work on SDG 6?
- How are WWAP's capacity-building tools, including the gender toolkit, used at the country-level?
- To what extent has WWAP's work promoted the specific needs of Africa and women in line with UNESCO's global priorities?

#### **Efficiency**

- How well structured are the reporting mechanisms for WWAP? Are various roles and responsibilities clear?
- To what extent does the WWAP unit leverage the expertise within UNESCO's Division of Water Sciences and its networks?
- Are available human and financial resources sufficient to deliver WWAP's mandate? Are they used efficiently?
- How effective is WWAP's resource mobilization strategy? To what extent has it been able to diversify donors?
- How efficient is the UN-Water governance mechanism for the selection of the UN World Water Development Report themes and content development?
- How sustainable is the current annual frequency of publication for the World Water Development Report? Is this frequency appropriate?
- How visible are WWAP's activities in the scientific community and in the international development sphere?
- Are WWAP products and activities known within relevant stakeholder circles? Are communication efforts helping to make WWAP products more visible?
- Are available human and financial resources sufficient to address Gender Equality Priority through WWAP's mandate?

#### **Impact**

- To what extent has WWAP fostered the development and enhancement of water science policies in Member States?
- To what extent have WWAP's gender-responsive toolkits and indicators led to improved consideration of gender-related considerations in the management and design of water-related policies?

#### **Sustainability**

- Does WWAP have mechanisms in place to enable sustainable use of its resources and long-term impact of its work?
- How sustainable are WWAP's capacity-building and advocacy activities at the national and regional level?

These questions will be agreed upon and further refined, prioritized and validated during the inception phase. A set of further sub-questions may be identified guided by the following key dimensions.

## 4. Methodology

21. While the bidding evaluation team is free to propose their own methodologies, it is important that they be appropriate to answer the above-mentioned questions. It is expected that the overall design will include several of the suggested methods of data collection below:

- A **document review** of relevant documents pertaining to WWAP and UNESCO's work in the area of water sciences. These shall include a literature review of topical issues and global trends; mapping and review of UNESCO Programme and Budget (C/5), UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (C/4) project progress and monitoring reports, WWAP strategic documents, financial documents, previous self-assessment reports/evaluations and audits, UNESCO publications and communication materials, review and analysis of relevant national policy documents, advocacy materials, events, statistics and trends.
- **Semi-structured interviews** with key stakeholders and beneficiaries. These may include WWAP staff, UNESCO current and former staff members and consultants at Headquarters and in the Field Offices; relevant government officials from the Government of Italy; sister organisations within the UN Water family (for example based in Rome and Geneva), other relevant international organizations, research institutions and networks; NGOs; UNESCO Category 1 and 2 Institutes; UNESCO Chairs.
- **Online survey(s)** directed to groups of relevant stakeholders including UNESCO Member States. For maximum outreach, all surveys will be disseminated in English and French at least.
- **Field mission** to WWAP unit's premises in Perugia, Italy to conduct data collection and enable direct observation. Field missions to UNESCO HQ in Paris and to UN-Water in Geneva should also be considered. *(Please include travel costs in your financial proposal).*
- **Data analysis** based on triangulation of gathered evidence and **formulation of preliminary findings as well as evaluation recommendations.**
- **Participatory stakeholder workshop** to be held remotely to validate the findings and discuss the preliminary recommendations and lessons learnt as presented in the draft evaluation report, prior to the finalization of the evaluation report.
- **Other methods and evaluation approaches** that the evaluator(s) may propose.

22. Preference will be given to proposals that suggest innovative methods and analytical approaches. The specific methods will be further refined during the inception phase, in consultation with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) and the evaluation team.

23. The evaluation team will use a mixed method approach involving quantitative and qualitative data from multiple sources. Any findings require triangulation with more than one data source. The evaluation approach and data collection methods should also seek to be human rights-based, gender-sensitive and take into consideration the diverse cultural and social contexts in which the activities are being implemented. Whenever relevant and possible, data should be disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity and disability.

24. The evaluation team should submit an inception report at the end of the initial stage of the evaluation to agree upon the detailed methodological approach, evaluation matrix and workplan. This will have to be presented and discussed at an inception meeting with the evaluation reference group.

25. In line with [UNESCO's Evaluation Policy](#), the evaluation will have to comply with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) [Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#), [UNEG Guidelines for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#) and [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#). The evaluation team will also have to ensure that ethical, human rights and gender equality principles are duly integrated at all stages of the evaluation process.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

26. The evaluation will be managed by UNESCO's Division for Internal Oversight Services (IOS) and conducted with the support of a team of external consultant(s). The evaluator(s) is/are expected to contribute specific thematic knowledge of hydrology issues as well as evaluation expertise. IOS will be responsible for the quality assurance of the evaluation process and all deliverables. The final evaluation report will also be assessed against the UNESCO Evaluation Report Quality Checklist as contained in Guidance 13 of the [UNESCO Evaluation Manual](#). The evaluation team will be expected to develop a detailed evaluation methodology including an evaluation matrix and data collection tools, to enable data collection and analysis and to prepare the draft and final reports in English.

27. An evaluation reference group shall accompany the evaluation process and provide feedback on the inception report and draft evaluation report. The reference group will include representatives from different entities, namely, the WWAP Programme, UNESCO's

Natural Sciences Sector – more specifically the Executive Office and the Division for Water Sciences – the UNESCO Cabinet, the Division for Gender Equality, UN-Water, and the government of Italy. The reference group shall exchange/meet periodically and be consulted in the different stages of the evaluation, as appropriate.

28. The evaluation team will commonly be responsible for their own logistics: office space, administrative and secretarial support, telecommunications, printing, travel, etc. Suitable office space will be provided when the consultants are working in UNESCO premises. The evaluation team will be responsible for administering and disseminating all research instruments, e.g. surveys, with the support of the IOS Evaluation Office. The WWAP unit and Natural Sciences Sector will provide access to relevant documentation and contact details of relevant stakeholders and distribution lists. IOS will also facilitate access to UNESCO staff at both Headquarters and WWAP and provide contacts of representatives of external stakeholders and partners.

## 6. Required qualifications

29. The evaluation foresees a level of effort of around 60 to 70 professional working days. The recommended composition of the evaluation team includes at least two core members, i.e. one team leader and/or a senior evaluator and a team member with subject matter expertise. Note that alternative and larger team compositions will also be considered.

30. The assignment targets both individual consultants and companies. Individual professional consultants can also apply for this assignment, provided the proposal is submitted under the umbrella of a legal entity, i.e. at least one of the professionals would need to be registered as a company to enter into a service contract agreement.

### Mandatory qualifications

31. The applicant(s) should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience. Not meeting these mandatory criteria will disqualify a proposal.

#### The firm /legal entity:

- It must have been registered as a company for at least three years.
- It must have at least three previous contracts/references

#### The consultant(s):

1. Team Leader and/or Senior evaluator:
  - An advanced University degree at master's level or equivalent in social sciences, political science or areas relevant to the topic of the evaluation such as hydrology, natural sciences or any related field
  - Broad expertise in project/programme evaluation, with a minimum of 10 years of professional experience in this field demonstrating a strong record in designing, conducting and leading evaluations.
  - At least 7 years of working experience acquired at the international level or in an international setting.
  - Excellent oral communication skills in English
  - Analytical and demonstrated excellent drafting skills in English (demonstrated in sample of work)
2. Subject matter expert:
  - An advanced university degree in social sciences, political sciences, economics, hydrology or any related field or other related field
  - At least 5 years of professional experience in the area of water science, hydrology or water and sanitation.
  - Excellent oral communication skills in English
  - Demonstrated excellent report writing skills in English
3. The proposed team members should collectively have the following mandatory qualifications:
  - No previous involvement in the implementation of the activities under review
  - Examples of work demonstrating understanding and application of UN mandates in Human Rights and Gender Equality and/or of gender- and culturally sensitive approaches in evaluation

### Desirable qualifications

32. The following qualifications collectively across all team members will be considered an advantage:

- At least two work experiences leading studies, research and/or evaluations in the area of hydrology, water sciences, water and sanitation.
- Examples of conducting assignments for the UN
- Knowledge of WWAP thematic areas of work
- At least one member of the team having good working language skills in Italian
- Working knowledge of other UN languages (French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Chinese).

33. Firms/institutions are required to provide evidence that support the mandatory and relevant desirable criteria are met. According to the evaluation grid, proposals with additional references/proof of evidence to the minimum requirements shall receive higher scores.

34. Verification of these qualifications will be based on the provided curriculum vitae and may include a reference check. Names, titles and contact details of three references should be provided as well as a web link or an electronic copy of one recently completed report with relevance to the assignment. Candidates are also encouraged to submit additional references such as research papers or articles of relevance.

35. If there are several team members, preference will be given to a gender-balanced and culturally diverse team. The evaluator(s) should make use of collaboration with national and / or regional evaluation experts where possible and appropriate, in particular for country case studies and/or in-country data collection.

## 7. Deliverables and schedule

### Deliverables

**The assignment will consist of the following main deliverables:**

36. The **inception report**, which should be presented at an inception meeting. This report will outline the detailed methodological approach to take on the assignment and outline when and how the activities for this will be undertaken (work-plan) (*max. 15 pp. excluding annexes*);

37. The **draft evaluation report**, which should be presented at a stakeholder workshop. This report should include (a) the evaluation background, including a description of the evaluand and the evaluation methodology; (b) the evaluation findings; (c) conclusions and lessons learnt and (d) recommendations. In addition, it will include an executive summary of 2-4 pages (*max. 30 pp. excluding annexes*).

38. **The final evaluation report** should be developed according to UNESCO IOS Evaluation Office template and quality guidelines, which will be provided at the onset of the evaluation. The final report will then be formatted by UNESCO to match the IOS Evaluation Office layout and branding for UNESCO corporate evaluation reports.

### Schedule

The evaluation is expected to start in October 2023 and be concluded by February 2024. The overall indicative timetable of key activities and deliverables is shown below. Those in bold are the deliverables associated with payments:

| Activity / Deliverable                              | Indicative date               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Desk review and scoping interviews                  | October 2023                  |
| Inception workshop                                  | Early November 2023           |
| <b>Final inception report</b>                       | <b>Mid-November 2023</b>      |
| Data collection (including mission to Perugia)      | Mid-November to December 2023 |
| Data analysis & write-up of draft evaluation report | January 2024                  |
| <b>Draft evaluation report</b>                      | <b>Late January 2024</b>      |
| Stakeholder workshop (review of draft report)       | Mid-February 2024             |
| <b>Final evaluation report</b>                      | <b>Late February 2024</b>     |

## 8. References

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- UNEG (2010). *UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports*. New York City: United Nations Evaluation Group. Retrieved 29 May 2020 from: <http://uneval.org/document/detail/607>
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- UN-Water: <https://www.unwater.org/about-un-water>
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## Appendix B. Bibliography

### Background information

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- Signed Memorandum of Understanding between the UNESCO and the Government of the Republic of Italy on "Operation of the UNESCO Programme Office on Global Water Assessment Hosting the Secretariat of the World Water Assessment Programme in Perugia, Italy. (2012).

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## Appendix C.

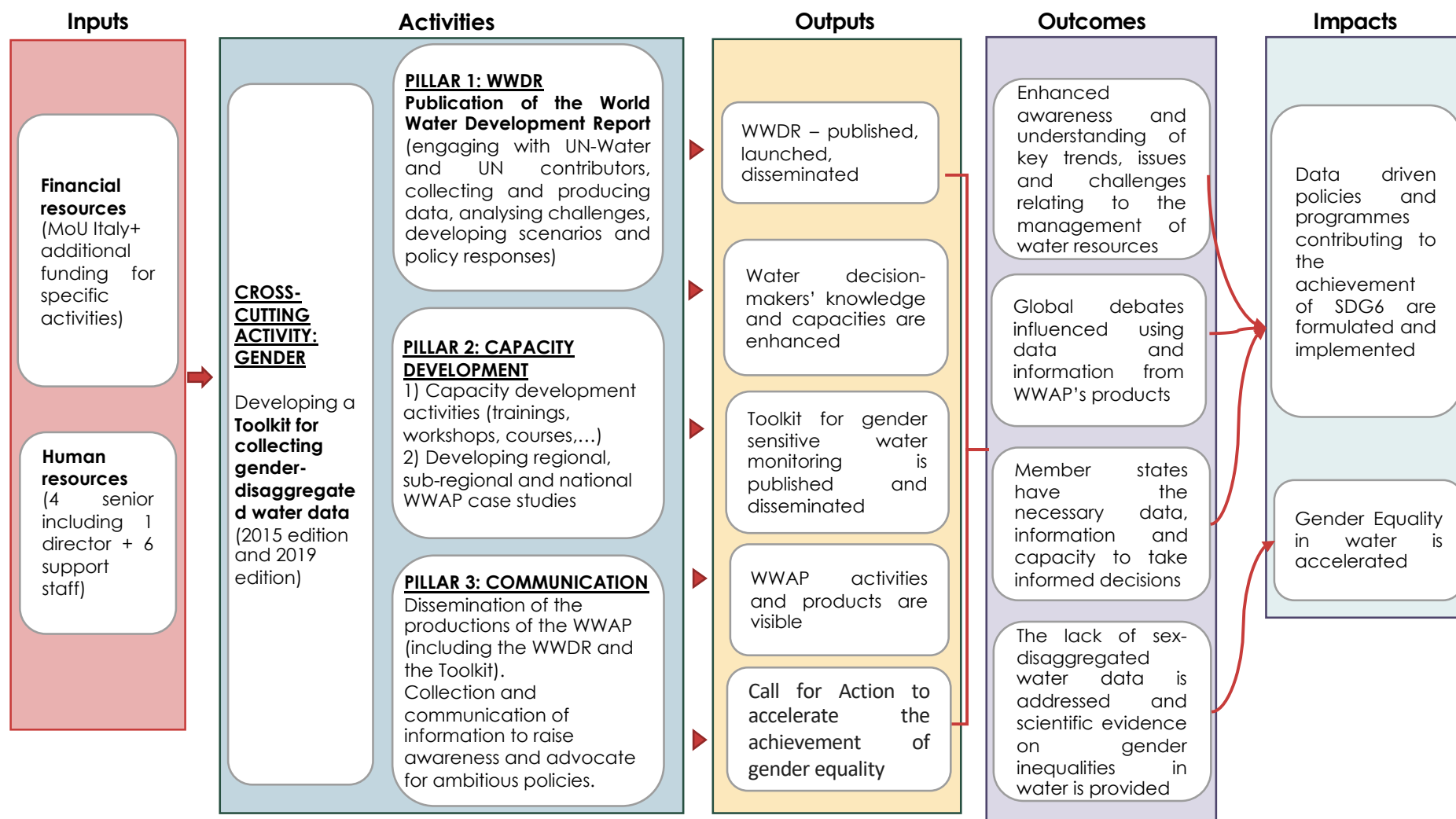
### List of interviewees

| Name                      | Gender | Institution/organisation   | Role/position   |
|---------------------------|--------|--|---|
| Lidia Brito               | Female | UNESCO   | Assistant Director General of the Natural Sciences Sector   |
| Michela Miletto           | Female | UNESCO   | Coordinator and Director of UNESCO WWAP   |
| Alessandro Garbellini     | Male   | Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy | Counsellor, Country Promotion General Directorate,  |
| Maria Begona Lasagabaster | Female | UNESCO   | Director of the Gender Equality Division in the Office of the Director-General  |
| Engin Koncagul            | Male   | UNESCO   | WWAP Senior Programme Specialist  |
| Arturo Frascani           | Male   | UNESCO   | WWAP Administrative Assistant   |
| Jean Paul Ngome Abiaga    | Male   | UNESCO   | Adviser to the Director General of UNESCO, Responsible for the Natural Sciences Sector & the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, Office of the Director General |
| Alice Ochanda             | Female | UNESCO   | Programme Coordinator and Evaluation Focal Point, Executive Office, Programme Coordination and Evaluation.  |
| Jong Chol LI              | Male   | UNESCO   | Chief Administration and Finance Office of the Natural Sciences Sector,   |
| Abou Amani                | Male   | UNESCO   | Director, Division of Water Sciences; Secretary, Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP)   |
| Simone Grego              | Male   | UNESCO   | Programme Specialist-Groundwater Sustainability and Water Cooperation-UNESCO IHP. Division of Water Sciences  |
| Jessica Jeavons           | Female | UNESCO   | Chief of Section, Section for Strategic Partnerships and Donor Relations, Bureau of Strategic Planning  |
| Simona Gallese            | Female | UNESCO   | WWAP Communications Assistant   |
| Richard Connor            | Male   | UNESCO   | WWAP Editor   |
| Laura Imburgia            | Female | UNESCO   | WWAP Gender & Water Programme Specialist  |
| Valentina Abete           | Female | UNESCO   | WWAP Publications Assistant   |
| Michele Brensacchi        | Male   | UNESCO   | WWAP IT & Security Assistant  |
| Lucia Chiodini            | Female | UNESCO   | WWAP Administration   |
| Barbara Bracaglia         | Female | UNESCO   | WWAP Senior Programme Assistant/Executive Assistant   |
| Lucio Ubertini            | Male   | UNESCO   | Director of the UNESCO Chair on Water Resources Management and Culture, University for Foreigners (UDEALR)  |

| Name                       | Gender | Institution/organisation  | Role/position  |
|----------------------------|--------|---|--|
| Giulio del Federico        | Male   | Permanent delegation at UNESCO of Italy   |  |
| Takahiro Konami            | Male   | Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Tourism of Japan   | Director, International Affairs Office, Water and Disaster Management Bureau   |
| Tanja Miskova              | Female | Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs   |  |
| John Rowan                 | Male   | Centre for Water Law, Policy and Science (CWLPS) University of Dundee, Scotland, United Kingdom                                     | Director of UNESCO Centre for Water Law Policy and Science in Physical Geography Energy Environment and Society, School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law |
| Hakan Tropp                | Male   | UNESCO Category II Center i-WSSM, Republic of Korea<br>(International Centre for Water Security and Sustainable Management(i-WSSM)) | Chief Operating Officer of the International Centre for Water Cooperation  |
| Miguel Doria               | Male   | UNESCO Regional offices responsible for Natural Sciences in Montevideo  | SC Programme Specialist  |
| Francesca Bampa            | Female | UNESCO Regional offices responsible for Natural Sciences in Venice  | SC Project Officer   |
| Alexandros Makarigakis     | Male   | UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Nairobi   | Director (a.i), Former SC Programme Specialist   |
| Enang Efiom Moma           | Female | UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Abuja   | SC National Programme Officer  |
| Bisher Imam                | Male   | UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Cairo   | SC Senior Programme Specialist   |
| Carlos Fernandez Rodriguez | Male   | AECID   | Head of Cultural and Scientific Relations Coordination Area  |
| Hezekiah Otieno Pireh      | Male   | UN Habitat  | Leader of the water and sanitation team at UN-Habitat. Member of the ERG.  |
| Patricia Mejias Moreno     | Female | FAO   | AQUASTAT <sup>1</sup> Coordinator, Land and Water Division   |
| Giuseppe Di Duca           | Male   | UNIVERDE Foundation   | Director   |
| Endro Martini              | Male   | Stakeholder coalition of the River Contracts (RC)   | Former president   |
| Frederico Properzi         | Male   | UN-Water Management Team  | Chief Technical Adviser  |

1. AQUASTAT is the Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Global Information System on Water and Agriculture.

## Appendix D. WWAP's Intervention Logic



# Appendix E

## Mapping of WWAP's mandate and activities against UNESCO's strategic objectives and priorities

| UNESCO's Approved programme and budget (41C/5)                           | Results Framework under Strategic Objective 2  | Alignment WWAP objectives and functions <sup>2</sup>  |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Major Programme II - Natural sciences</b><br/><b>Outcome 3</b></p> | <p>Output 3.SC2- Water science, innovation, education, management, cooperation, and governance bolstered for a water secure world in a changing environment</p> <p>Through its water programmes, including WWAP, UNESCO will focus its work on contributing to the achievement of the SDG 6 and other water related SDGs and international and regional agendas, including the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework on Disaster risk reduction, the New Urban Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063, through water science, innovation, education, management, cooperation and governance</p> <p>Stakeholders and Members States will be supported to use and apply the UN WWDR findings and highly relevant policy recommendations through stakeholders' policy-dialogues and trainings</p> | <p>WWAP's overall objective "to meet the growing requirements of UN Member States and the international community for a wider range of policy relevant, timely and reliable information in various fields of water resources development and management in particular through the production of the UN WWDR is aligned with the objectives of Output 3 SC.2</p> <p>WWAP's main functions as described in ARTICLE 4 of the signed MoU with the government of Italy are also aligned to Output 3 SC.2</p> <p>However, the scope of WWAP's mandate has its constraints (refer to the section on efficiency). Consequently, Member States can only benefit from the UN WWDR findings through stakeholder policy dialogues and training if supplementary budgetary resources are accessible.</p>                       |
| <p><b>Major Programme II - Natural sciences</b><br/><b>Outcome 4</b></p> | <p>Output 4. SC.5: Institutional and human capacities in basic sciences, technology, research, innovation, and engineering enhanced to advance knowledge for sustainable development<sup>3</sup>.</p>  | <p>The production of the UN WWDR values collaboration between different stakeholders in tackling the water crisis. The collective production of the UN WWDR series with contributions from various Members and Partners of UN-Water strengthens the trust and value of the information and data published in the report. Further it provides an interdisciplinary lens that leads to the definition of recommendations that aim to be holistic, using the full spectrum of competencies provided by the various contributors.</p> <p>In addition, WWAP's capacity development mandate is aligned to the objectives of Output 4. SC.5. However, this mandate is limited to available funding and has concentrated on capacity development in relation to the use of its toolkit for gender disaggregated data.</p> |

2. Memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the Government of the Republic of Italy on Operation of the UNESCO Programme Office on Global Water Assessment Hosting the Secretariat of the World Water Assessment Programme in Perugia, Italy.

3. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380868/PDF/380868eng.pdf.multi>

| UNESCO's Approved programme and budget (41C/5) | Results Framework under Strategic Objective 2   | Alignment WWAP objectives and functions <sup>2</sup>   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Global Priority Africa</b>                  | The UNESCO Water Family and UN-Water Family will be mobilized for coordinating action on the African continent toward accelerated improvements in water resources management, advancing knowledge on water resources, particularly on groundwater, and substantially increasing the number of skilled water professionals on the continent. | <p>WWAP's functions as described in ARTICLE 4 and ARTICLE 5 of the signed MoU does not mention any specific geographical priority, but the opportunity to focus on regional and country needs through :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing geo-referenced water-related global data bases</li> <li>Developing regional, sub-regional and national WWAP case studies with Member States</li> <li>Organizing major regional and national WWAP capacity-building and training programmes</li> </ul> <p>In its work WWAP makes sure that the UN WWDR series offers regional chapters including one on Sub-Saharan Africa, in addition several boxes throughout the reports offer a focus on the African region.</p> <p>Regional/national events are organised in African countries for the launch of each WWDR. The 2022 WWDR covered the topic of Groundwater, particularly relevant for the African Continent. Launched at the UN World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal, before the President of Senegal, other heads of States from Africa and thousands of participants in the audience. In addition, events were organised in 5 African countries to celebrate the Launch of the 2022 WWDR.</p> <p>The UN WWDR 2021 on Valuing Water organised a presentation of the Arabic edition at the 4<sup>th</sup> Cairo Water Week in October 2021<sup>4</sup>; and national events in 12 African countries<sup>5</sup></p> <p>WWAP's Call for Action Initiative for accelerating the achievement of gender equality in the water domain includes several African stakeholders: the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), the Pan-African Women's Organisation (PAWO), Women in Water and Sanitation Association Kenya (WIWAS) and Members States from 5 African countries (22% represented Member States)</p> <p>In 2016, WWAP has produced a series of national case studies with 8 African countries (Botswana, Tanzania, South Sudan, Mozambique, eSwatini, Cabo Verde, Nigeria, Ghana)</p> |

4. UNESCO WWAP 2021 Report to donors

5. Alexandria, Bamako, Kaduna, Abuja, Nairobi, Accra, Kampala, Brazzaville, Kinshasa, Harare, Windhoek, Maputo



| UNESCO's Approved programme and budget (41C/5) | Results Framework under Strategic Objective 2  | Alignment WWAP objectives and functions <sup>2</sup>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Global Priority Gender equality</b>         | <p>There is a clear divide between men and women in their ability to access, manage and benefit from water and sanitation. It is paramount to understand the root causes for these inequalities, and quantify them through the gathering and use of sex disaggregated water data so that appropriate remedial actions will be implemented in the governance and management of the water resources through the development of gender transformative policies, reforms and plans. The set of 105 gender-responsive indicators developed by UNESCO WWAP will be widely shared in supporting Members States to effectively address water related gender challenges. Members States will be supported to apply gender responsive indicators in their mechanisms, policies and plans mainstreaming the effect of global changes to strengthen inclusive water management and governance.</p> | <p>WWAP's objectives and functions as described in the MoU with Italy do not mention gender equality. However, gender equality is a priority for other donors of WWAP, for instance Slovenia or the Asian Development Bank.</p> <p>WWAP's work on gender equality is aligned with its core mandate as it contributes to the production sex-disaggregated data on the state, use and management of freshwater resources.</p> <p>Gender equality is a cross-cutting topic present in the UN WWDR series. The report highlights challenges and opportunities for the empowerment of women and girls in the water domain. It aims to provide decision makers with tools to formulate and implement sustainable water policies.</p> <p>WWAP has produced a tool kit for the collection of gender disaggregated data including 105 gender responsive indicators. WWAP implements operational projects and capacity development for Member States that would like to use the toolkit. For example, its work on Gender-Specific Data for Water Policies in the Pacific's Small Island Developing States (SIDS).</p> <p>WWAP launched a Call for Action to Accelerate Gender Equality in the Water Domain that aims to raise awareness, dismantle stereotypes, and urge government institutions and funding agencies to commit concrete support to advance gender equality in the water domain.</p> |
| <b>Partnerships</b>                            | <p>In addition to the mobilization of the UNESCO water family, partnership will be strengthened and sought with UN-Water and its members, particularly with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), FAO, UNEP and UNECE, especially within the framework of the UN SDG 6 Global acceleration framework and the UN Water Action Decade, water related academic and scientific organisations and associations, intergovernmental, regional and national organisations, non-governmental organisations, global funds and the private sector</p>  | <p>The UN WWDR is a report of the United Nations family. It is a collective product with contributions from Members and Partners of UN-Water. Its production is coordinated and led by UNESCO's WWAP.</p> <p>Therefore, the production of the UN WWDR Series is fully aligned with UNESCO's objectives in terms of Partnerships.</p>   |

## Appendix F

# WWAP's capacity development outputs

**Table 3 Gender-related capacity development outputs over the period 2015-2023**

| Output   | Output description  |
|--|---|
| <b>Project on the Mekong Transboundary Aquifer</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded by GEF/FAO and was approved by the GEF Secretariat at the end of 2022 and led by UNESCO IHP.</li> <li>In this project WWAP was responsible for designing a comprehensive water and gender component. This component, valued at 800,000 USD, focuses on building capacity around the indicators and methodology of WWAP's gender toolkit.</li> <li>It also includes its practical application in the area of the transboundary aquifer shared by Vietnam and Cambodia.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Capacity development programme "Water, Gender and Climate: Better data for better adaptation strategies"</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A capacity development programme has been developed for the period 2020-2023 targeting West-Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, and Pacific Small Island Developing States with the theme: "Water, Gender and Climate: Better data for better adaptation strategies":</li> <li>In 2023, WWAP has trained representatives of 29 countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region<sup>6</sup></li> <li>In 2022, 84 individuals (including 48 F) have benefitted from face-to-face and on-the-job trainings in Belize and Jamaica and online trainings with Pacific SIDS</li> <li>In 2021 technical webinars: in West Africa (29 persons – 17 F), Central America (23 persons) and a three-day face-to-face training delivered in Nigeria (49 persons – 26 F)</li> <li>In 2020, four high-level Advocacy webinars have been carried out (616 people, including 324 women, from 47 different countries)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Project "Accelerating sanitation for all in Asia and the Pacific" (2022-2023)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2022, the ADB and WWAP started the project "Accelerating sanitation for all in Asia and Pacific" targeting 14 Pacific SIDS for capacity development activities over a period of 18 months, addressing water and gender knowledge, and data gap in water and sanitation management in a context of climate change. It includes an assessment and training modules.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Project: "Mapping of water access, usage, and management for food production by rural women farmers in Belize" (2022)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2022, WWAP and the UNESCO Field Office of Kingston, Jamaica, in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Transformation and the Ministry of Agriculture of Belize, conducted the project: "Mapping of water access, usage, and management for food production by rural women farmers in Belize. This involved a field survey and the production of a video documentary.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Training on the methodology for collection of sex-disaggregated water data (Jamaica, 2022)</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2022, training of 26 staff members from the Rural and Agriculture Development Authority of Jamaica on the "Methodology for collection of sex-disaggregated water data" (gender Toolkit)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Training on the methodology for collection of sex-disaggregated water data (Thailand)</b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity development activities on Sex- Disaggregated Water Data Collection Analysis, including 2-day training "introductory training on gender analysis applied to water management and governance" in Bangkok, Thailand<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>   |

6. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay; Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama; Belize, Jamaica; Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

7. With institutionals from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam

| Output   | Output description   |
|--|--|
| <b>Activities carried out under the GGRETA project (Governance of Groundwater Resources in Transboundary Aquifers) under UNESCO-IHP's coordination<sup>8</sup></b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainings on sex-disaggregated water data collection in Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, El Salvador, Uruguay, France, Guatemala and Honduras, involving local governments and institutions, water research centres, international, regional and transboundary organisations and NGOs.</li> <li>• A regional workshop addressing Southern Africa countries was held in Gaborone (Botswana)</li> <li>• Publication of a paper on groundwater governance and gender considerations (following the field surveys in Botswana and Namibia)</li> <li>• WWAP executed two house-hold field surveys in Botswana and Namibia in 2017</li> </ul> |
| <b>Activities carried out at the 9<sup>th</sup> GEF IW Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco (2018)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the 2018 Conference, WWAP led the Workshop "Towards a Gender Guideline for the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme (TDA-SAP)" and co-led two round clinics "How do I mainstream gender into my international water project in light of the new GEF Policy on Gender Equality?"<sup>5</sup> (31 participants – 61% women; 39% men).</li> <li>• Learning exchanges with GEF IW projects were organized in 2017</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Gender seminar at the Stockholm World Water Week 2018</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WWAP was co-leader of the gender seminar at the Stockholm World Water Week 2018.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Other gender trainings delivered in 2018</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the FAO MENA Regional Office (Cairo) for FAO staff</li> <li>• At the European Development Days (EU-SDD) in Brussels</li> <li>• At the African Water Week in Gabon, involving local governments and institutions, water research centres, international, regional and transboundary organisations and NGOs</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Session during the International Forum "Rules for Water, Rules for life" (G7, 2017)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Organisation of a one day-session on water and gender of the International Forum "Rules for Water, Rules for life", organized in Milan under the auspices of the Italian G7 Presidency 2017.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Trainings on sex-disaggregated water data collection and analysis</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organised in Montevideo in 2017</li> </ul>  |

Source: UNESCO WWAP Reports to donors and SISTER WWAP Extracts

8. WWAP since 2015 has been executing a water and gender component for the IW:LEARN project. This project seeks to introduce systematic consideration of gender equality, woman empowerment and social inclusion in GEF's international water portfolio approach for the improved management of transboundary waters and for more integrated water resources management initiatives. In the framework of the IW:LEARN project, WWAP with the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) organized the webinar series 'Engendering International Waters'. The series consists of 6 webinars that aim to provide GEF IW projects with the elements and tools for training project staff and client country experts on water and gender issues and how to incorporate gender considerations into water policies.

**Table 4 WWDR-related capacity development outputs over the period 2015-2023**

| Output   | Output description  |
|--|---|
| <b>Training on the UN WWDR in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 2022</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2022, a training on the UN WWDR knowledge was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (about 100 water professionals participated) - Training material and videos of the sessions disseminated in Arabic and English</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Online training on WWDR 2021 and 2020</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2021, about 100 water professionals from the Arab States benefited from an online training on WWDR 2021 and the UN WWDR 2020</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Technical workshop with the Union for the Mediterranean on how to support the achievement of the SDG 6 (2019)</b>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-organisation of a technical workshop with the Union for the Mediterranean in 2019, to foster discussion among Mediterranean countries and international experts on how to support the achievement of the SDG 6 in the Mediterranean Region through the strengthening of countries' cooperation, knowledge exchange, policy setting and coherence</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Event "Strengthening coordinated water and climate action" in Accra, Ghana</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisation of an event at the Climate Chance Summit in Accra "Strengthening coordinated water and climate action", with a focus on Africa. Key outcomes were presented at the Africa-EU Innovation Alliance for Water and Climate (AfriAlliance) event in 2019</li> </ul>  |
| <b>In-person training on the UN WWDR edition in 2018</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on the nature-based solutions discussed in the 2018 UN WWDR edition. Training organized in Lebanon.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Participation to activities and dialogues in the framework of the programmatic areas of the Regional Water Agenda for the Mediterranean</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led content-wise capacity-building workshops for WEG members</li> <li>Developed interventions that improved the understanding of the different roles/position of women and men in relation to water resource<sup>5</sup></li> <li>Assessed vulnerability of representative communities to climate induced water stress and the lack of opportunities for education, employment, etc., that could lead to migration-</li> </ul> |
| <b>MOOC module on Global Water Issues and Solution<sup>5</sup></b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution to a MOOC module on Global Water Issues and Solutions of the SDG Academy from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.</li> </ul>   |

Source: UNESCO WWAP Reports to donors and SISTER WWAP Extracts

## Appendix G

### WWAP's other publications

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- Publication of the joint analysis "Taking Stock of Progress Towards Gender Equality in the Water Domain". Presentation of the publication at the World Water Week
- Publication of the multi-stakeholder Position Paper "Accelerating Gender Equality in the Water Domain: A Call for Action".
- Co-publication with UN Women of "Designing gender-responsive water policies that support climate resilience and sustainable development.
- Collaborative project with the Government of Argentina: publication of the research paper "Methodological approach for the implementation of WWAP Gender and Water indicators: An example from Argentina"
- Agreement with UN Women for the production and publication of the policy paper "Designing gender-responsive water policies that support climate resilience and sustainable development" (publication planned in 2021)
- Production of an analysis of the progress made and the gaps remaining in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the specific sector of water and sanitation. It has been included in a paper "Beijing+25: Taking stock of the progress towards gender equality in the water domain". It has been done in the view of the Call for Action".
- Regional Policy Papers on the critical role of water to achieve the SDGs under review at the 2019 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2019 (SDG 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17), based on the UN-WATER SDG 6 Synthesis Report. The papers were developed for: Africa, Arab States, Latin America, and the Caribbean.
- "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality" (Marrakesh, under the framework of the HLPF Regional preparatory processes in Africa and LAC)
- "The Value of Water in the 2030 Agenda: Situation and challenges" (Santiago de Chile)
- Water, crucial to achieve the SDGs under review" (New York)
- Joint development of the Water Europe Publication "Water in the 2030 Agenda: How can Europe act?"; presented at the Water Innovation Europe 2019 held in Brussels.
- Research pilot on the water scarcity, migration and employment nexus.

Source: WWAP's annual reports to the donor

## Appendix H

# WWAP's Communication

**Table 5 WWAP's communication metrics over the period 2015-2023 related to the UN WWDR**

| Year        | WWDR series                               | Events   | Downloads   | Hard copies distributed                                     | Articles generated   | Other   |
|-------------|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b>2023</b> | Partnerships and cooperation for Water    | Launched on March at the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York + 50 events organised  | 87,127 downloads of the report  | 1,170 hard copies of the full report distributed            | WWDR 2023 generated 25,000 articles (mainly from Brazil, USA, Germany, Italy, India)   | WWDR 2023 generated 318 tweets, 500,000 impressions on WWAP's social media  |
| <b>2022</b> | Groundwater: Making the invisible visible | Launched at the UN World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal, before the President of Senegal, other heads of States from Africa and thousands of participants in the audience.<br>20 regional and national launch events, including 5 in Africa and 1 in a SIDS.<br>Presentation at the plenary session of the UN-Water Summit on Groundwater hosted by UNESCO (4,000 participants) | Overall, the UN WWDR, the Executive Summary and Facts and Figures were downloaded 81,947 times  | Hard copies sent to 30 different locations around the world | 3,400 articles released worldwide. Top countries are India, USA, Germany, Italy, Indonesia, Spain  | Between March and December 2022, the dedicated website received more than 130,000 visits.<br>More than 25,000 views for the short video <sup>5</sup><br>139,156 twitter impressions |
| <b>2021</b> | Valuing Water                             | Launched globally at the World Water Day online celebration (1,300 participants)<br>Presentation of the Arabic edition at the 4th Cairo Water Week in October 2021<br>40 regional and national events including 12 African countries and 1 SIDS (overall 5,000 people reached)   | 70,000 views and downloads of the Report. Overall, the UN WWDR, the Executive Summary and Facts and Figures were downloaded 90,744 times  | 3000 hard copies distributed                                | 236 newspaper articles and 3,154 online articles generated after the UN WWDR launch; The visibility report 2016 – 2022 reports around 1500 articles mentioning the UN WWDR | 155,240 WWDR-related Tweets. The engagement rate averaged 2.26%.<br>The video of the Report has been viewed over 17,000 times   |
| <b>2020</b> | Water and Climate Change                  | Online national and regional launch events in Almaty, Cairo, Jakarta, Montevideo, Nairobi, and Venice<br>Presentation of the UN WWDR in a virtual event with the University of Pisa (Italy)  | 73,000 downloads and views of the report in its English, French and Spanish versions. Overall, the UN WWDR, the Executive Summary and Facts and Figures were downloaded 120,027 times | 3,000 copies distributed                                    | 89 articles released on the report and 585,000 twitter impressions   | 19,800 views for the video of the report  |

| Year | WWDR series                       | Events   | Downloads  | Hard copies distributed                                    | Articles generated  | Other   |
|------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| 2019 | Leaving No One Behind             | WWDR released on March 19, during a special session of the Human Rights Council at the Palais des Nations in Geneva<br>Over 40 regional launches, including 11 in Africa and 2 in SIDS | 65,000 downloads and views of the report in the English, French, Spanish and Italian versions. Overall, the UN WWDR, the Executive summary and Facts and figures were downloaded 124,112 times | 5,000 hard copies have been distributed in 8 languages     | 406 articles were released on the Report. Highest levels in Germany, France, Italy and the US                                   | WWAP Twitter account in March 2019 had 32 Tweets, 137,000 Tweet Impressions, 3,567 Profile visits, 234 Mentions and 250 New Followers   |
| 2018 | Nature-based solutions for water  | Global launch event during the 8th World Water Forum in Brasilia <sup>a</sup><br>Until Mid-May 2018, about 30 events to present the Report (including 10 in Africa and 2 in SIDS)      | Overall, the UN WWDR, the Executive Summary and the Facts and Figures were downloaded 134,370 times <sup>e</sup>   | 2,600 hard copies of the report were distributed worldwide | The report generated more than 864 news articles, with top localisations being Brazil, Germany, USA, France, Spain <sup>n</sup> | After the launch of the Report, WWAP entered in the Climate and Energy top 500 on Twitter, on place 345 <sup>e</sup><br>WWAP Twitter account in March: 108,000 impressions, 3,249 profile visits, 314 mentions and 198 new followers <sup>e</sup> |
| 2017 | Wastewater: The Untapped Resource | Over 1,000 people attended the global launch event<br>About 30 events under the theme wastewater (including 8 in Africa and one in the SIDS)   | 80,000 report downloads, 105,657 downloads of all WWDR written material overall  | Distribution of 5,000 hard copies of the report            | 450 articles generated on the Report, mainly in France, Spain and the USA   | 270,000 page views registered on the UN WWDR webpage throughout the year.<br>58 tweets in March 2017, with more than 165,000 impressions, 3,108 profile visits, 117 mentions and 157 new followers  |
| 2016 | Water and Jobs                    | Launched in Geneva<br>Parallel events took place in 30 countries around the world.<br>Information meetings were held, including at the Africa Water Week                               | 82,431 downloads of the report and its side communication materials.<br>68,483 downloads of the report only  | Distribution of almost 2,500 printed copies                | Generated nearly 300 articles   |   |
| 2015 | Water for a Sustainable World     | Launched in India, in March 2015<br>16 parallel launches around the world, including the World Water Forum in Korea  | Report's downloads reach more than 41,000<br>Case studies and related publications' downloads: about 19,000  | 2,300 hardcopies were distributed                          | The launch of the report generated nearly 600 articles  | 4,350 CDs were distributed  |

Sources: Technopolis compiled this data from SISTER WWAP Extracts, Report to donors, WWAP visibility reports and WWDR media coverage



**Table 6 WWAP's communication metrics over the period 2015-2023 related to gender**

| Year             | Metrics linked to the gender toolkit   | Metrics linked to the Call for action   | Other  |
|------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>2023</b>      | More than 100 copies of the Toolkit in English and Spanish were distributed, approximately 300 Toolkit's QR-Code (on bookmarks) distributed  |   | 1,948 downloads and 10,867 consultations on Water and Gender publications including their translations |
| <b>2022</b>      | 11,766 downloads, in both English and Spanish versions (cumulative)<br>Over 100 USB Keys and hardcopies distributed<br>50,000 views for WWAP social media posts on gender-related activities<br>More than 5,000 people attended events on WWDR and gender activities | Participation to 17 key regional and global events (online and physical) including one in Dakar (launch of the Initiative in the African Continent – about 80 participants), the 2nd Asia International Water Week, one in the Regional Water Dialogue in the Latin American and Caribbean region, the Dushanbe Water Process Conference in Central Asia – about 145 participants), the African Regional Consultations on the Mid-Term Review of the International Decade of Action 2018-2028 online, the "UN-Water Summit on Groundwater"<br>Dedicated communication strategy to promote the advocacy initiative including a dedicated webpage |  |
| <b>2021</b>      |  | Package of communication materials for dissemination of the Call for Action   |  |
| <b>2020</b>      | /  | /   | /  |
| <b>2019</b>      | Launch of the Second edition of WWAP Toolkit on sex-disaggregated water data in May 2019 at the UNESCO International Water Conference and at the 2019 World Water Week   |   | 32 Tweets in March 2019  |
| <b>2016-2018</b> | /  | /   | /  |
| <b>2015</b>      | WWAP Gender Toolkit: first edition<br>Presentation in 3 events<br>700 hard copies were distributed<br>763 downloads  |   |  |

Sources: Technopolis compiled this data from SISTER WWAP Extracts, Report to donors, WWAP visibility reports and WWDR media coverage

**Table 7. WWAP's communication metrics over the period 2015-2023 related to activities other than gender and WWDR-related activities (including activities targeting the youth)**

| Year             | Communication metrics   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>2023</b>      | Participation in the water hackathon organized by the Italian Ministry of Education at the Festival of Contemporary Thinking (Sept 2023), involving 500 Italian students  |
| <b>2022</b>      | A joint meeting with the Water for Youth Network and the World Youth Parliament for Water, and to other youth audience at the Expo 2020 in Dubai<br>271,000 impressions, all WWAP activities and topics<br>UNESCO WWAP's Twitter follower base reaches 10,181<br>Website was viewed 133,000 times in 2022 |
| <b>2021</b>      | Collaboration with Water Science Policy (WSP), a youth-led multilingual multimedia platform for water journalism: 2 videos were produced, disseminated on both WWAP and WSP social media<br>The website registered 93,000 pageviews in 2,021<br>Redesign of WWAP website                                  |
| <b>2020</b>      | Presentation of the UN WWDR to Youth on occasion of a water hackathon and a webinar organised by Water Youth Network  |
| <b>2015-2019</b> | /   |

Sources: Technopolis compiled this data from SISTER WWAP Extracts, Report to donors, WWAP visibility reports and WWDR media coverage

## Appendix I

# Evaluators' short biographies

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### Soheir Dani, Project lead

39. Soheir Dani is Principal Consultant for Technopolis Group. For the last 19 years, Soheir has been providing policy advice, evaluation, and research services to decision makers. She has a long track of complex evaluation assignments in the field of STI policy, global health, and sustainable development for various international organisations including the European Commission, UNESCO, the World Bank, UNTB, the European Investment Bank, the African Development Bank, and several bilateral donors.

40. Soheir's work concentrates on evaluating international cooperation programmes in African and MENA countries. Soheir has substantial experience in project and team management (12 years). She has sound experience managing programme and portfolio-level evaluations in water cooperation, water conservation and management. Additionally, Soheir has demonstrated experience conducting gender responsive evaluations.

41. Before joining Technopolis, Soheir worked for UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service - Evaluation section (2004-2005). She has also worked for the Arts Council England (2009-2011).

### Pauline Pasquier, Consultant

42. Pauline Pasquier is a consultant who joined the Paris office of Technopolis Group in spring 2022, where she further developed her expertise in topics related to sustainable development, with a specific focus on the nexus ecological transition and international cooperation. Pauline is currently contributing to the evaluation of the French Development Agency to the SDGs in Indonesia. Pauline has also participated to the evaluation of 12 funds financed by ProAdapt for the Inter-American Development Bank, with a focus on SIDS.

43. Pauline obtained a master's in applied geo-economics at the Bordeaux Institute of Political studies and post master's degree in international environmental management delivered by the Mines ParisTech engineering school.

### Kenza Delclaux, Consultant

44. Kenza Delclaux joined Technopolis France in September 2021 as a consultant specializing in public policy evaluation. She has developed strong evaluation skills through her various experiences. At Technopolis, she works on topics in the field of international cooperation, territorial development and innovation. Kenza recently participated in the Assessment of France's external action for education, vocational training and integration in developing countries 2017-2020 for the MEAE. She also participated in the evaluation of the implementation of the France-Comoros Development Plan on behalf of AFD. She also works regularly on regional projects in overseas France. Kenza has a degree in economics from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne and a Master's in international relations and Action Abroad from the same university. She is fluent in French and English and has an intermediate level in Mandarin and Spanish.