

Sustainability Check of Inception Report 'Water for Eastern Equatoria State'

Desk study

SOUTH SUDAN



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Advisory Report by the Dutch Sustainability Unit

Subject: Sustainability Check of Inception Report 'Water for Eastern Equatoria State'

To: Mr Felix Hoogveld
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Juba, South Sudan

From: the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment, the Dutch Sustainability Unit
in collaboration with the Gender Resource Facility

DSU Technical secretary : Ms Ineke Steinhauer
DSU Quality Control: Mr Sibout Nooteboom
GRF Gender Coordinator
& Quality Management: Ms Saskia Ivens

Experts: Ms Kitty Bentvelsen, Gender Equality
Mr Niek Bech, Environment and Climate Change

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The Dutch Sustainability Unit (DSU) is hosted by the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Contact:

W: www.dsu.eia.nl

T: 030-2347653

E: vfortes@eia.nl

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.1 Request to the DSU	2
1.2 Context and background information.....	2
1.3 DSU approach	3
2. FOLLOW-UP OF 2012 DSU RECOMMENDATIONS IN IR.....	4
3. THE WATER FOR EES PROGRAMME COMPONENTS	7
4. DETAILED REVIEW OF SUSTAINABILITY ASPECTS IN IR.....	8
4.1 Sustainability general	8
4.2 Suggestions for improvement of sustainability aspects	9
5. DETAILED REVIEW OF GENDER EQUALITY ASPECTS IN IR.....	11
5.1 Gender equality general	11
5.2 Suggestions for improvement of gender equality aspects.....	12
5.2.1 Gender equality in the programme’s vision, components, results & indicators	12
5.2.2 Gender issues related to specific issues of the IR.....	13

1. Introduction

1.1 Request to the DSU

The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Juba, South Sudan, requested DSU support to review the draft Inception Report: 'Water for Eastern Equatoria State' and to make comments/suggestions to improve the quality of the document specifically related to the integration of sustainability aspects (defined in terms of environment, climate change and gender equality) in the programme, including in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) parts of it.

The review has been conducted as a desk study based on the following documents:

- Draft Inception Report – 'Water for Eastern Equatoria State' (ProWaS/SSN-EES), October 2014, NIRAS consortium
- Appraisal of 3 programme formulation and tender documents for the Water Sector between South Sudan and the Netherlands – DSU Advisory reports, 20 July and 31 July 2012
- Final draft Programme Formulation document ProWaS/SSN-EES – Royal Netherlands Embassy, Juba, 3 July 2012

The DSU has approached two experts (see colophon) to contribute with their specific expertise to provide suggestions for better integration of environment, climate change and gender equality aspects in the Inception Report, including suggestions for sustainability indicators for M&E. The gender aspects of the request are covered by an expert of the Gender Resource Facility (GRF).

1.2 Context and background information

In July 2012, the DSU advised on 3 programme formulation documents and on 3 tender documents for Lakes State, Eastern Equatoria State (EES) and PSGK (From Policy and Strategy to Governance and Knowledge, with Central Government of South Sudan). In June 2013, DGIS and the Embassy asked the DSU to look at the tender documents including ToR for Lakes and Eastern Equatoria, with the aim to better include sustainability aspects, especially in the award criteria. In August 2013, the Embassy asked to do a Gender review of the tender documents for PSGK. Late 2013, all 3 programmes had been awarded.

Currently the Inception Report (IR) for EES is ready, the one on Lakes State is expected later. The PSGK programme, implying direct contribution to the central Government is put on hold, as long as there is no clear progress towards peace in the country.

For EES, the Technical Assistance contract took effect in November 2013. The Inception phase was postponed due to the ongoing conflict in the country since December 2013, and has been conducted in the period May 2014 to October 2014. Field movements that are only possible in the dry season (typically in the period January – June) were not encouraged because of the security situation.

As PSGK has been under temporary suspension, this will influence Component 1 (IWRM) of the EEA programme because of the various inter-linkages.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the State Project Advisory Committee (SPAC) still need to be established to convene their first meeting amongst other things to approve the IR and the Six Month Activity Plan (SMAP).

The project area in EES is an extremely difficult region to operate in, due to its geographical size and conditions, the absence of all-weather roads, the general lack of development, the political volatility, the security situation including banditry, tribal and inter-clan violence, the lack of functional government institutions, the traditional and conservative culture of self-subsistence agro-pastoralists, the humanitarian aid dependency that has developed over the years, the recurrent outbreaks of epidemic diseases, the occurrence of droughts and flooding, amongst others.

It must be acknowledged that the majority of the population is living in a “survival mode” and that the project objectives, including issues of sustainability, environment, climate change and gender equality are not amongst their first priorities. These substandard implementation modalities have a negative impact on the envisaged achievements and the sustainability of the programme.

1.3 DSU approach

In Chapter 2, the DSU summarizes its main recommendations that were given for EES, while conducting an appraisal of the Tender Documents in July 2012. For each of these recommendations, the DSU gives its first impression on whether, and how, these recommendations have been met in the IR.

Chapter 3 gives a short description of the main components of the Water for EES programme.

Chapter 4 subsequently provides a detailed review of the IR and elaborates on the appraisal of sustainability issues.

Chapter 5 does the same, applying a gender lens, paying special attention to:

- Gender sensitive interventions that can contribute to more equal gender relations, thereby improving the performance and sustainability of the programme.
- Gender related requirements, such as the need for a gender strategy, gender indicators, and gender disaggregated monitoring.

Chapter 4 and 5 also contain recommendations for each of the DSU observations made.

2. Follow-up of 2012 DSU recommendations in IR

The DSU conducted an appraisal of the Tender Documents in July 2012. The following recommendations were made with respect to sustainability, environment, climate change and gender equality¹. The DSU has reviewed whether the recommendations are addressed in the IR. In case the recommendations have not (yet) been met, the DSU gives recommendations how to remedy this lacking information.

Biodiversity

EES shares various areas of high biodiversity value: the Boma-Jonglei landscape, Kidepo complex and Imatong Mountain. Interventions in water management may influence wildlife habitat in these areas and changes in land use patterns, particularly when related to water holes and cattle, and therefore need to be considered.

The IR mentions that the project will cooperate and coordinate with AWF (African Wildlife Foundation) in the upper Kenetti Catchment to enhance biodiversity conservation, forest inventory, land cover and mapping, agro-forestry, soil erosion, etc. The DSU finds this recommendations sufficiently addressed.

Coordination

The Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach adopted by this programme forms a good basis to include and frame environmental sustainability in South Sudan's development strategy of the water sector. However, the success of this approach leans very much on coherence with other development initiatives and close consultation and tuning with the various partners and stakeholders of all sectors involved.

The IR reports on Planning Workshops held in Torit in October 2014 that brought together all major stakeholders for the Project, and allowed for a collaborative effort to explain project modalities, and receive advice and directions from the actors present in EES. The DSU finds this aspect sufficiently covered by the IR.

Lands Policy and Environmental Policy

Water resources management, development, utilization and provision of sanitary services are part of the Economic Development Pillar of the South Sudan Development Plan. Two policy frameworks are expected to be adopted, the Lands Policy and the Environmental Policy. Both policies are significant for the development of IWRM. The current Lands Act and Environmental Bill are in fact anticipating these policies, but amendments are expected following the endorsement of the policies. Particularly in EES it is recommended to align development of IWRM with the landscape approach which is presently adopted to develop land use planning and to match biodiversity conservation and economic development in larger areas which can be considered as more or less continuous landscape units covering specific ecological functions, such as catchments and mountain complexes.

¹ Annex 1 to the IR, 'Documents reviewed' however does not make mention of these DSU advisory reports, so therefore it is unclear whether the consortium was aware of the DSU recommendations.

The IR proposes to change IWRM into Integrated Land and Water Resources Management, thereby fully linking the landscape approach with IWRM. This implies that the DSU recommendation is given follow-up.

Environment

Strategic environmental assessments (SEA), and environmental impact assessments (EIA) must be conducted during implementation of the project.

The IR does not mention this aspect. "Environment" is a cross cutting issue in the South Sudan Development Plan, and all development programmes and projects must be subject to (strategic) environmental and social impact assessments in accordance with the Environmental Protection Bill (2010). Therefore DSU **recommends** to include in the final IR a paragraph elaborating on how the consortium plans to assist EES in application of SEA or EIA for interventions which are expected to impact the (socio-economic) environment.

Indicators for monitoring

The monitoring and evaluation protocol requires the development of specific indicators for monitoring of impacts related to environment and climate change such as vegetation cover, water river discharge versus precipitation, and biodiversity related indicators. Indicators and baseline for environmental monitoring will be determined during the inception phase.

The IR mentions that data will be collected and a baseline will be established, but it does not mention the specific (robust) indicators. The DSU therefore **recommends** to include at least the above mentioned environment and climate change related indicators in the Final IR (currently specified in Annex 6). Templates and guidelines for monitoring are said to be developed immediately after the Inception phase. These should therefore also pay attention to these indicators.

Decentralization

The relation between Central and some State governments is not very strong. States (and lower level governments) have very limited resources and a limited number of experienced staff. These limitations constitute a risk with regard to the mainstreaming of policies and strategies at the lower administrative levels. To cope with this barrier, intensive collaboration should be sought with the Ministry of Local Government and the UNDP programme to support this ministry with the governance and decentralization process.

The IR does not mention the UNDP decentralization programme. The DSU therefore **recommends** to still establish these contacts or justify in the final IR why this has not been done/was not considered relevant.

Supervision

At national level (PSC) participation is required of the Lands Commission and the Ministry of Environment. At State level (SPAC) participation is required of the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife & Tourism. Coordination with other donor initiatives will be achieved through the

participation or liaison with the various coordination and exchange platforms such as the WASH Cluster Group, the Environmental Cluster Group, the Natural Resources Working Group.

The IR Report states that these mechanisms are being put in place with the above (and other) mentioned institutions (e.g. p.14). The DSU recommendation thus received good follow-up.

Exit strategy

The elaboration of an exit strategy is required to enable smooth taking over of project achievements by beneficiaries, including financial arrangements, maintenance arrangements, reliable filing of activity results, shift of responsibilities, monitoring and activity review procedures, etc. Sustained results depend on a well elaborated exit strategy based on realistic assumptions with regard to technical, financial and institutional sustainability.

The IR does not make mention of any exit strategy. The DSU **recommends** to indicate in the final IR when and how this will be addressed.

Climate change and deforestation

South Sudan is subject to risks due to climate change, which is manifested by (1) desertification, (2) extreme flooding and (3) irregular rainfall resulting in periods of drought. Deforestation (mainly caused by overstocking, forest fires, cultivation and charcoal burning) results in flash-floods, reduction of infiltration, erosion, siltation of rivers and hence a reduction of water availability. Hence, combined impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are a threat to water infrastructure. It is recommended to integrate a strategy to address factors causing erosion and siltation in catchment areas dealing with risks related to climate change and deforestation.

The IR does not make specific mention of a strategy how to deal with the risk and impacts of possible climate change. In the absence of baseline data, this may be premature at this stage, but the DSU **recommends** to indicate in the final IR how this topic will be addressed.

Gender equality

It was recommended to propose a gender strategy for the programme, particularly in the SWIS component.

The IR has not developed a gender strategy. The IR states that a project-specific gender strategy was planned for the inception phase. It was to be prepared by a national consultant. However, the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) could not identify a suitable candidate as qualified national consultants are few and in high demand. The DSU therefore **recommends** to include in the final IR information on alternative solutions, e.g. by engaging a regional gender consultant. Moreover, the final IR should elaborate a gender strategy, or foresee its development just after the inception phase (see also Paragraph 5.2.1).

3. The Water for EES programme components

Overall, the IR provides a clear understanding of the local situation and makes maximum effort to plan for implementation of the envisaged activities in line with the specific project objectives. The IR prioritizes the three different components as follows.

Component 1 – Integrated Land and Water Resources Management (IWLRM)

This is a new concept in EES. Therefore, the IR proposes that initially the emphasis will be mostly on raising awareness, training and “marketing” the concept among all stakeholders at all levels. There is currently no Ministry or Directorate that deals with this concept. This means that this component will have to start at the beginning, including its entire institutional setting, and including the communities. The temporary suspension of the PSGK programme will have an impact on this component. In addition, it was found that there are no reliable historical records on water resources for Kenneti Catchment (except for 19 rain gauges in the entire EES recently installed by FAO) and setting up the hydrological network remains a priority to be established in the next dry season (2015). Such hydrological and other land use data are a key input for the IWRM planning and subsequent implementation of activities.

Component 2 – Water for Productive Use

The IR puts less emphasis on component 2 (Water for Productive Use) which is justified pending the preparation of an overall IWRM plan and the complexity of the topic. This component can only start in a meaningful way when reliable data is available on water resources, as well as on other agricultural and livestock parameters (e.g. soils, inputs, storage, markets, livestock numbers, applicable designs, etc.). Water for agricultural use (irrigation) is practically non-existent at the moment, and to embark on such an initiative would require a major long term agricultural development programme. Water for livestock use does exist in the form of hafirs, however, before any expansion or improvements can be considered, intensive engagements are required with the pastoralist communities. In all cases, the pre-condition is an IWRM plan to provide guidance and ensure sustainability for any activities and investments.

Component 3 – Water Sanitation and Health

The IR puts most emphasis on component 3, which is fully justified considering the dire situation in which most of the population lives, with very low coverage of access to safe drinking water and sanitation and the recurrent outbreak of diseases like cholera, typhoid and diarrhoea. This component will be able to move directly to activities on the ground based on the County strategic plans for WASH 2011–2015 that were updated in October. This is also the component that is currently addressed by most NGOs operating in the State, although there is much room for improvement in terms of community participation in planning, contribution, ownership and maintenance. The timing seems opportune for the project to take over a leading coordinating role in this component from UNICEF, which appears to be scaling back from the WASH sector, where it played a dominant role with respect to the contracting of NGOs and the supply of hand pumps.

4. Detailed review of sustainability aspects in IR

4.1 Sustainability general

The IR demonstrates a thorough understanding of sustainability issues in all three components. Below some quotes from the IR are given to illustrate this.

“The project concept is that water points should be community managed and maintained in the interests of long term sustainability. This implies communities should contribute financially or materially to the construction of new boreholes with hand pumps as well as to maintenance of existing facilities. Having a centralized team repair the hand pumps for the community is merely perpetuating the emergency oriented approach which has been the norm for the last 20 years whereby NGOs funded by UNICEF drilled and installed hand pumps with little or no involvement of the community the facility is meant to serve. The State Government has agreed that this approach can no longer continue given the large number of broken down hand pumps and the inability of the centralized maintenance team to function given that their vehicles are broken down for long periods and UNICEF is refusing to pay for repairs” (page 31).

“It is to be taken into serious consideration that technical development interventions alone will never be effective in terms of sustainability within the context of the project area in EES. Development will have to be based on a foundation of change of mind-set at all levels of society. Capacity building through practical training programmes and exposure at all levels, with close and regular follow up will eventually achieve this over time. However, it is to be recognized as a long-term process while development projects are relatively short-lived and their success often measured in terms of the tangible achievements and their quantity” (page 46).

“Continuous inclusion of sustainability aspects relates to both the better known WASH principles, where new and environmentally, economically or socially more sustainable alternative technologies will be introduced and piloted, as well as to the ILWRM and Water for Productive use components, where awareness raising and sensitization must be used to create a platform of knowledge, understanding and acceptance of ILWRM approaches and practices to be implemented. This is the only way to develop a sustainable land and water management system, where communities have the most important role to play” (page 58).

“The ultimate aim of the project is to build the capacity of Government institutions at state and county levels, and at the community level and to create a well-organized and sustainable implementation network with partners” (page 60).

“New strategies will have to be developed so that implementing partners prioritize the software aspect of interventions, like explaining the need to form WASH committees, how these committees should be formed, training and supporting them, before any hardware is built. This should be done together with the technical people at County level to build their capacity” (page 63).

“Most important is to incorporate the “software” for projects, such as community awareness, ownership, cost recovery and subsequent self-sustainability of the project activities. This is still a weak link in the existing development concept of most partners” (page 68).

4.2 Suggestions for improvement of sustainability aspects

Notwithstanding the above, the IR is also clear in the various challenges the project faces in terms of sustainability. Most important sustainability topics are:

Governance

The national policy and regulatory framework is in place (Water Policy of 2007; WASH Strategic Framework of 2011) and the Lands and Environmental Policies are under preparation. These provide a solid support to the improvement of the institutional setting, and thereby also to the project aims. The Draft Water Bill has a focus on water resources management and water supply & sanitation. This Bill is still under review, but once adopted it will facilitate the creation of organizational and administrative institutions to be developed under the project.

Recommendation: The DSU recommends to pay due attention to translating these policies down to implementation at local government levels.

The State Ministry of Public Infrastructure

The State Ministry of Public Infrastructure (SMoPI) is the lead agency in which the TAT is embedded, that must take ownership of the project and its objectives. So far, the SMoPI has not shown much ownership and has been rather passive. The TAT will be housed within the Ministry (the offices will be rehabilitated) and is confident that it will be possible to impact the SMoPI in a positive way by capacity building and frequent interaction.

Recommendation: Experience has shown that sustainability and ownership correlates to own contribution of beneficiaries. The DSU recommends to closely monitor the issue of ownership in project implementation.

Counties

The Counties are the implementing agents of the SMoPI and as such also the main implementing partners of the project. The weakness of the County level administration is a major challenge to the sustainability of the project – they are extremely weak in terms of staffing (quantity and quality), operational capacity (transport) and financial resources. In addition, the counties are overwhelmed by tens of NGOs and UN Agencies that are implementing WASH projects. Several NGOs and UN Agencies are involved in capacity building of the Counties, but staffing and operational capacity is sub-standard.

Recommendation: The DSU is of the opinion that in these latter two areas the project should play an important role. It is positive to note that the Counties are now receiving about Euro 3.000 per month for operations in WASH. The project could consider targeted budget support to the Counties.

Counterparts

There is a huge skills shortage and it has proved very difficult to recruit three counterparts at the State level. Further 9 qualified counterparts are needed at County level, which is not very realistic to be achievable. Thus the project is faced with the dilemma how to improve this unacceptable situation if progress is to be made, while maintaining the concept that the County level is actively implementing and following up on project activities and provides services to the communities as required. The project has made 3 alternative proposals for consideration by the PSC, but remains unclear on who should decide on the preferred alternative.

Recommendation: From a sustainability perspective, the DSU recommends alternative 2- to appoint community facilitators (with a bicycle for transport and a modest incentive scheme) to assist with operational and monitoring activities. With weak (local) government institutions and difficult transport/terrain conditions, this alternative permits the project to have access to the communities and build their capacity.

Implementation modalities

The project provides technical assistance and funding, whereas the Counties, NGOs/CBOs and private sector are contracted for implementation.

Recommendation: The DSU suggests that the project can set specific pre-conditions to the contractors such as community involvement and can oblige NGOs that receive finance to fully incorporate County staff in their activities. In addition, it is recommended to ensure that the guidelines for these calls for proposals for grants include a requirement for a gender approach, requiring translation into practical steps and measurable targets. It is expected that with the pulling back of UNICEF, the project will be able to gain a leading role in Component 3 WASH, to ensure that all implementing agents are following a similar approach that shifts away from humanitarian aid towards sustainable development.

Coordination, supervision and monitoring

Government has had a strong reliance on NGOs for implementation of WASH projects, since it has no financial means for capital investments. Reporting back from NGOs to Government on projects is not always done hence the Counties do not have a reliable database on the WASH activities in their region. This is further aggravated by the fact that there are no or few funds available either for operation & maintenance, including monitoring. SNV has been (and is) working to establish a database, and the project has already established cooperation with SNV on this topic.

Recommendation: The DSU suggests to give high priority to strengthening County level's coordination, supervision and monitoring tasks.

Community ownership

Over the last decades, many development partners including the Government have implemented WASH project activities with minimal community involvement resulting in minimum sense of ownership, especially after handing over. It is generally acknowledged that this is not sustainable and that a mind shift is required. This is the biggest challenge for the project, since the communities are rather conservative and have become used to humanitarian aid.

Recommendation: The DSU considers capacity building of the WASH sector especially at the community level an important part of the sustainability of water and sanitation systems, which is one of the main objectives of this project. The Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) concept is a good example of such community based awareness and capacity building and is applauded. The (pilot) introduction of the Afridev hand pump that can be maintained by women users with only one spanner, is also encouraged in this context. The IR emphasizes the need to change the “software”.

5. Detailed review of gender equality aspects in IR

5.1 Gender equality general

The purpose of adequately integrating gender issues into the ProWaS/SSN-EES would be to ensure that the programme contributes to more equal gender relations thereby:

- enabling men and women to benefit more equally from the programme interventions in terms of increased food security and livelihoods, reduced conflicts related to natural resources and improved health due to safe water and improved sanitation;
- improving the programme’s performance and increased likelihood of sustainability by involving both men and women.

To achieve gender balanced development, gender issues need to be addressed such as the different roles and responsibilities of men and women, their unequal access to and control over resources and gender differences in decision-making, including the unequal power relations between men and women.

Because South Sudan is a highly patriarchal society where women are often seen as inferior to men², achieving gender balanced development is quite a challenge, which needs to be based on concrete insight in local gender relations as well as best practices of other projects and programmes. The following quote demonstrates the existence of specific gender roles that locally may prevail and can change over time. These roles and related issues such as land ownership and women’s and men’s decision making power may require attention in the design of the programme:

² See: Challenges to Security, Livelihoods and Gender justice in South Sudan. The situation of Dinka agro-pastoralists in Lakes and Warrap States. Ingrid Kircher, Oxfam Research Report, March 2013. See: <http://www.oxfam.org/en/research/challenges-security-livelihoods-and-gender-justice-south-sudan>

Gender relations in South Sudan are complex: the roles and responsibilities of women, men, boys and girls are clearly delineated but can and do alter. Women and girls have responsibilities for farming, collecting water and firewood, cooking, cleaning, childcare, and brewing beer. Men and boys have responsibilities as decision-makers for the communities and their families, cattle (boys in particular tend to be cattle herders), hunting, fishing and charcoal making³.

The IR contains several references and commitments to gender issues, gender balanced development and/or women as target groups. Such statements are rather haphazard and are seldom operationalized into concrete actions. The report does not contain references to the consultation of existing gender studies for the inception phase. No such studies are listed in Annex 1 ("Documents reviewed").

There is a tendency in the IR that gender issues are equated with women's issues. Gender balanced development should also pay attention to the roles, responsibilities and decision-making of men, for example, in sharing responsibility for a family's hygiene condition, or in giving space for women to play a meaningful role in Water or WASH Committees.

South Sudan apparently is not yet a member of AMCOW, the African Ministers' Council on Water, and hence not yet a signatory of AMCOW's 2011 Policy on Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector in Africa. Considering that it is not unlikely that South Sudan will join AMCOW, it seems opportune that donor supported water projects in South Sudan already adhere to this gender policy⁴.

5.2 Suggestions for improvement of gender equality aspects

This section provides comments on specific issues or sections of the IR, especially those related to gender equality.

5.2.1 Gender equality in the programme's vision, components, results & indicators

Project vision and logical Framework (Annex 6)

The Overall Project Vision mentions that "Development will be equitable in the sense that presently marginalized groups like women, youth and poor will take influence on the choices shaping their livelihood options". The project goal also refers to "equitable development". An indicator at goal level reflecting the commitment to increased gender equality is missing. Besides, this principle of equitable development is hardly elaborated in concrete terms at result or activity level. At output level women are sometimes mentioned as (part of the) target group.

³ South Sudan Gender in Brief, CARE (not dated), see <http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender%20in%20Brief%20South%20Sudan%20.pdf>

⁴ See: http://www.amcow-online.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=274&Itemid=143&lang=en

Recommendation: The DSU suggest to develop a gender strategy before the start of the intervention and adoption of the logical framework, including (i) a project specific analysis of the gender situation in the project area, (ii) an analysis of best practices from gender related interventions by other similar projects, (iii) concrete recommendations and an action plan for integrating gender concerns in planned activities (or adjusted activities, if needed) and (iv) gender sensitive and gender specific indicators for the log-frame, including at goal, result and output levels. The AMCOW's Policy on Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector in Africa can be used as a source of inspiration for developing the gender strategy.

Gender disaggregated data

The IR mentions the commitment to gender disaggregated data collection (see page 46). However, in the reporting of the achievements during the inception period, this principle is not (yet) applied, e.g. when reporting that in Kapoeta North 30 CLTS workers were trained, it is not mentioned how many of them were men and how many women.

Recommendation: Ensure that the natural resources and socio-economic baseline study (planned for the period November 2014 - mid 2015) includes the assessment of the baseline values of the gender indicators and address other gender issues that are relevant for the 3 programme components. Disaggregate baseline study data for men, women, boys and girls instead of only using the household as unit of measurement (e.g. related to food security status, access to land, water and other resources, etc.). Seek the help of the gender expert in designing the survey and analyzing and interpreting the data.

Gender issues in all components

Relatively most attention to gender issues (or women) is found within Component 3 (WASH). This is certainly relevant. Considering that South Sudanese women are usually responsible for agriculture/horticulture, it is also important to ensure that women be involved in Component 2, Water for Productive Use. Equally for Component 1, ILWRM in the Kenneti Catchment, women need to be involved as community members -together with men-, due to women's and men's usually different roles in relation to the use of natural resources and biodiversity.

Recommendation: The DSU recommends to ensure that the to be developed gender strategy cover the three components of this programme: not only the WASH component, but also ILWRM and Water for Productive Use.

5.2.2 Gender issues related to specific issues of the IR

Water Committees

There is some confusion on the committees that will be formed. The IR refers to four kinds of committees: Water and NRM Management Committees (in LF); WASH Committees (in LF); Sanitation Committees (in Annex 5); and Water Management Committees (page 42). It is not clear whether these are different committees or different names for a same committee. In addition the target for women members is not clear: the main text of the IR states that at least 50% of WASH committee members will be women; the log-frame refers to at least 25%. No

targets exist for women in other committees (if these are indeed different). Especially given that women are responsible for agricultural production, they should be represented in Water Users Committees dealing with crop irrigation.

In addition, the 10% target for women in managerial or executive board positions in WASH committees seems too low. Not only does experience in other countries learn that a proportion of about one third or 30% is desirable to better ensure that women are heard and listened to, also South Sudan's Transitional Constitution and Bill of Rights (2011) sets a target of 25% for women in legislative and executive bodies⁵.

Recommendation: The DSU recommends to ensure that the IR provides clear and consistent information on which water related committees will be established, including applying consistent targets for women's participation throughout the IR. For membership, a target of 40 or 50% women is proposed; for women in managerial positions/executive committees 25 or 30%, also given South Sudan's Transitional Constitution and Bill of Rights. If different water committees will be established for Water as a Productive Use (i.e. separate from WASH committees) targets for women's membership and representation in executive boards need also to be set for these committees. Targets should not only require that a certain percentage of the members are women; the project should rather aim for the meaningful participation of both men and women, resulting that both actually participate in the decision-making of the committees.

Sustainability of Committees

Section 7 of the IR on Sustainability does not adequately address the sustainability of the Water or WASH Committees after the project has ended. Experience has learned that such committees often become inactive after the project's field staff has been withdrawn, resulting in drinking water supply and/or sanitation facilities becoming dysfunctional. This may disproportionately affect women. It is not clear whether a (government) body exists in EES (or South Sudan) that could provide support to Water/WASH Committees after project completion in case conflicts or other problems would emerge.

Recommendation: The DSU recommends to ensure adequate attention from the start of the programme to the sustainability of newly established committees to promote that the new WASH facilities (or other water infrastructure such as for irrigation) remain properly operational, benefiting men and women also after the project. This will include proper training on operational aspects of the committees and may require bodies or mechanisms that could provide certain support to such committees after the project has ended. See also recommendation on exit-strategy in Chapter 2 above.

⁵ See South Sudan Gender in Brief, CARE (not dated), see <http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender%20in%20Brief%20South%20Sudan%20.pdf>

Working with Communities

The IR often refers to “communities” (e.g. in “strengthen the capacity of the communities”) without elaborating which categories of community members will be targeted. If this is not clearly elaborated at an early stage of the project, there is a risk that mainly the easy-to-reach community members may become involved, leaving out the more marginalized groups as women and poor men.

Recommendation: The DSU recommends to better clarify in the IR which categories of community members will be targeted when referring to communities (e.g. in activities that will strengthen communities or build their capacities), possibly also identifying mechanisms how they will be reached.

Sanitation/CLTS approach

It is very commendable that the project has begun applying the Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach and intends to cooperate with SNV, an organization with good expertise on this approach and in gender issues.

Recommendation: As the project intends to align its sanitation/CLTS approach with that of other WASH stakeholders, the DSU recommend to also address the following issue: the approach to trigger demand for latrines is sound and has proven its effectiveness in many other countries. Constructing demonstration latrines (apparently for free) in households, however, can be counterproductive, as other community members would like to have the same treatment and delay latrine construction. Some organizations therefore construct demonstration latrines free of charge for institutions only. Ensure alignment with other WASH stakeholders on this issue.

Pro poor approach and alignment with similar initiatives

A pro-poor policy needs to be applied. The poorest households may not have any means to construct their own latrine, in particular to purchase construction materials that are not available as a free resource (such as slabs). To achieve 100% Open Defecation Free (ODF) status, these poor households (among whom female headed households may be overrepresented) need to get a proper latrine as well. It should be avoided that social pressure leads to poor households forego meals in order to purchase materials for latrine construction.

Recommendation: The DSU stresses the importance of the sanitation approach being well aligned with approaches of other WASH stakeholders in the region (or country) such as SNV. Special attention for alignment includes, apart from the already mentioned (free?) demonstration latrines, includes issues as possible mechanisms that support the poor (including female headed households) in constructing their latrines, gender approaches within CLTS, and the approach to sustainability of sanitation committees.

Final recommendations for TAT and staff recruitment

The DSU recommends to ensure that gender expertise is in place within the TAT, not only for the elaboration of the gender strategy, but also to support the proper implementation of the gender strategy. Regarding staff recruitment the DSU recommends that both male and female field staff be recruited, such as CLTS workers, preferably in about equal proportions, whenever possible. The engagement of both male and female community members for monitoring should be encouraged, not only to create equal opportunities for men and women, but also to ensure that issues that are relevant for men and for women are more likely to be reported.