



# Who we are & what we stand for:

## Community-Led Accelerated WASH (COWASH)

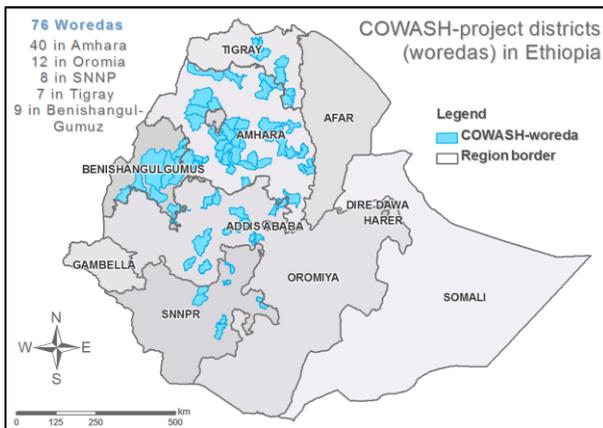
### Brief Overview of COWASH Ethiopia

COWASH is a bilateral water, sanitation and hygiene project between the Governments of Finland (GoF) and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE), led by the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy. The project started in July 2011 and is expected to be completed by the end of June 2020. The project has been implemented in three phases over the past 9 years. Technical assistance to COWASH is provided by Ramboll Finland Oy (lead consultant), Niras Ltd and IRC WASH. COWASH has been implementing the project in three phases as illustrated in the graph below.

2004 EFY	2005 EFY	2006 EFY	2007 EFY	2008 EFY	2009 EFY	2010 EFY	2011 EFY	2012 EFY	
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Phase I			Phase II			Phase III			



The COWASH Federal Technical Assistance Team (FTAT) is housed inside the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy (MoWIE). The team facilitates overall project implementation and capacity building of the overall project management function, while Regional Support Units (RSUs), whose staff is employed by the Regional Water Bureaus, facilitate planning and implementation at regional level and below. Woreda WASH Teams (WWTs) are responsible for COWASH implementation at community level.



COWASH implements its project in 76 woredas and 25 zones of Amhara, Tigray, SNNP, Oromia and Benishangul Gumuz regions.

### Our Objective

COWASH Phase III aims to achieve universal access to WASH in the rural areas of Ethiopia through the acceleration of access in-rural water, sanitation and hygiene service delivery employing the Community Managed Project (CMP) approach.

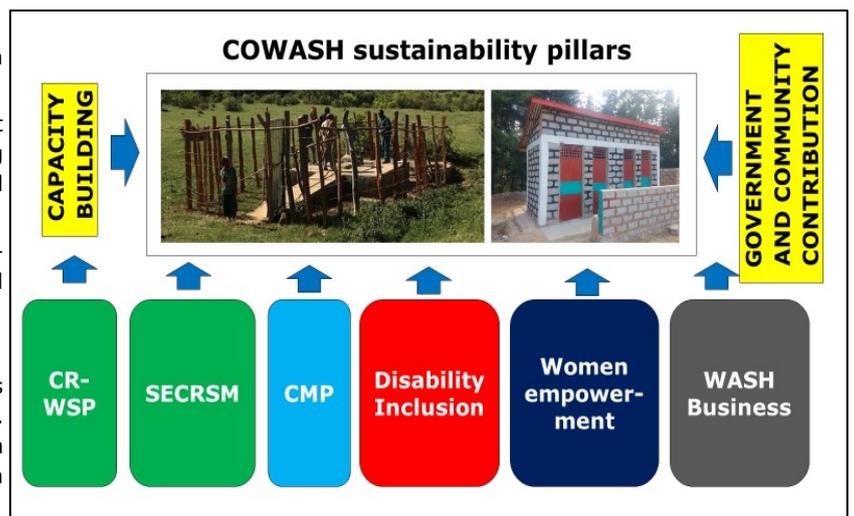
### Our Approach;

Community Managed Project (CMP) approach is our key project management approach in COWASH. In CMP, the community/the institution is the project manager who manages the project implementation, finance and procurement from the beginning to the

end. Woreda's role is to facilitate, capacitate the community or institution to do it. This is called CMP approach and is one of the approaches in the National WASH Implementation Framework.

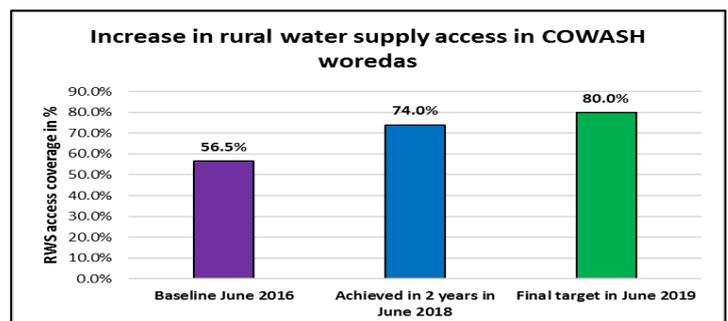
### Our sustainability pillars:

- Community Managed Project (CMP) approach ensuring the ownership,
- Social, Environmental and Climate Resilient Screening and Management (SECRSM) ensuring the technical, social and environmental sustainability,
- Climate Resilient Water Safety Planning (CR-WSP) ensuring the functionality and management,
- Disability Inclusion ensuring the service for all,
- Women Empowerment and WASH business development ensuring the women leadership. These pillars are strongly reinforced through capacity building and financing from communities themselves.

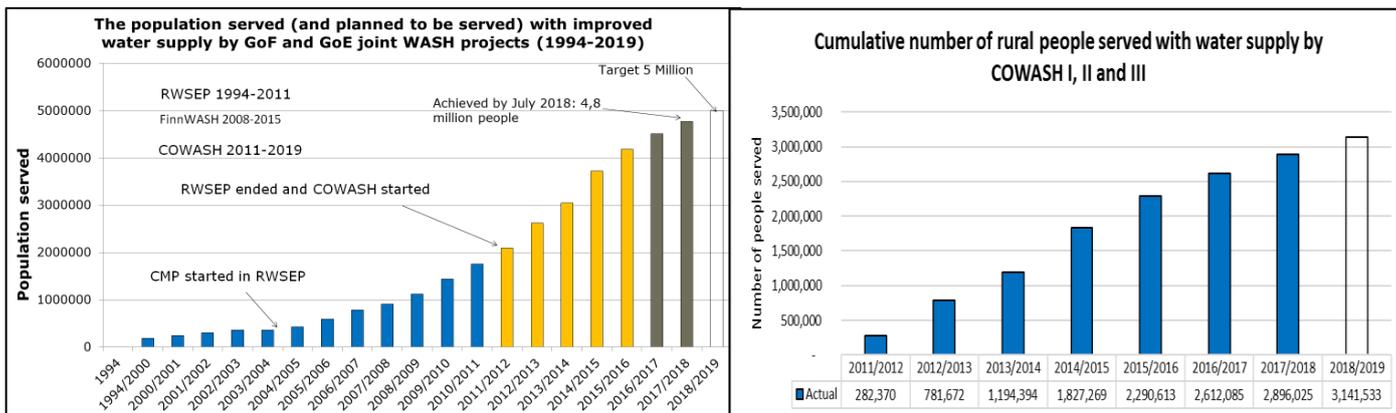


### Our Key Achievements and Successes

**Promote rural water supply access to achieve GTP II targets:** COWASH phase III strives to achieve its development targets in rural water supply. At the end of June 2019, the rural water supply access coverage as per the GTP II service level will be 80 % in COWASH woredas. This is the target set by the Government for rural water supply in June 2019. The side chart clearly stipulates this point.



**Reach new target beneficiaries of water supply to meet Phase III milestone:** COWASH largely contributes to the rural water supply in Ethiopia. The total cumulative number of rural water supply beneficiaries through the Government of Finland supported projects over the last 25 years will surpass nearly 5 million people in June 2019. This achievement was gained through the construction of 22,000 rural community managed small water schemes using CMP approach. The target of COWASH (Phases I, II and III) water supply beneficiaries is over 3.1 million rural people and this will be achieved by June 2019. COWASH Phase III contributes to this total COWASH achievement of 850,000 people. The two graphs below illustrate these achievements.



**Reduce the non-functionality of rural water supply**

Non-functionality of water supplies in 76 COWASH woredas is usually low. In 2016, non-functionality rate was in COWASH Woredas was 9.3 %. After two years of COWASH Phase III implementation, the average non-functionality rate in same woredas has dropped to 4.5 %. One reason for this achievement was the strong support for rehabilitation of broken water supplies. In order to institutionalize the proper and systematic maintenance management of water supplies COWASH assisted the Government of Ethiopia to develop comprehensive National O&M Strategic Framework and technical O&M manuals. Furthermore, COWASH developed together with the MoWIE the Climate Resilient Water Safety Planning (CR-WSP) process and guidelines, which ensure that water supply services provide good quality water with adequate quantity. CR-WSP addresses risks from the catchment protection to the water distribution systems and ends the risk assessment at household level water management.



Maintenance



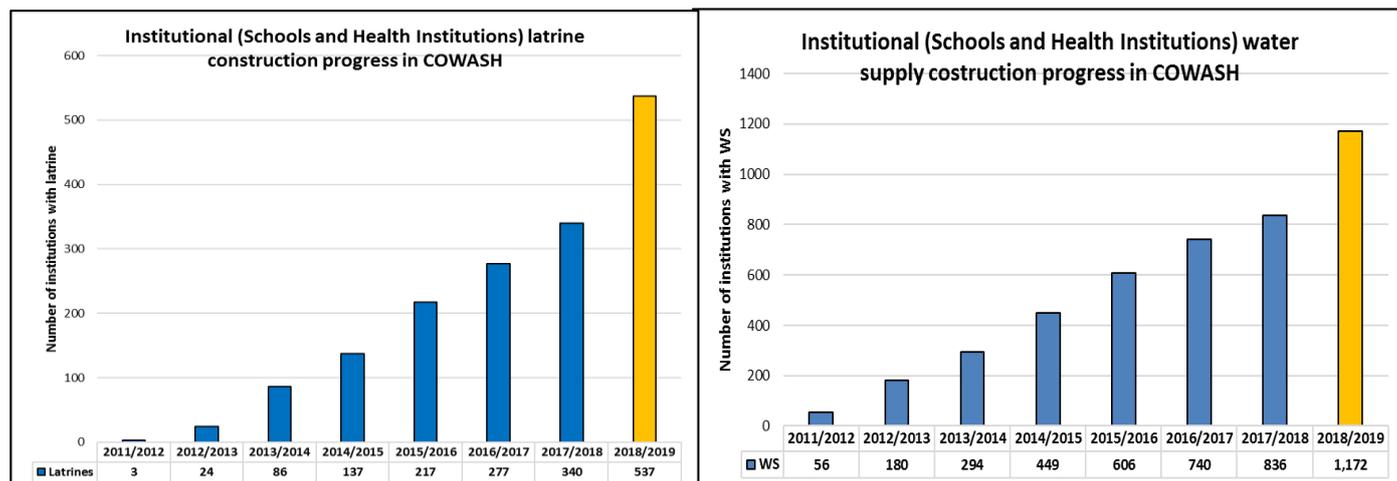
Before CR-WSP



After CR-WSP

**Increase the access of institutions to safe water supply:**

COWASH supports schools and health facilities to have accessible, inclusive and sustainable WASH services (water, sanitation and menstrual hygiene management). So far 836 schools and health institutions have been served with water and 340 with improved latrines by COWASH. There is still lot of work to be done as only 2,745 schools and health institutions out of total 7,116 institutions in COWASH woredas have water supply and only 3,404 have improved latrines separated for boys and girls.



## Promote women-led WASH business development

COWASH Ethiopia plays a pioneer role in promoting Women-led-micro- and small- enterprise (MSE) development, in addressing climate resilience. COWASH empowers women through ensuring women leadership in community-led WASH management and in establishing women-led businesses (26) in sanitation marketing, water supply construction and maintenance and in spare parts supply. COWASH has also developed an approach which addresses the possible risks of climate change to water supply and ensures service continuity of all its water supplies at all times in case of drought or flooding. COWASH is also supporting the establishment of woreda level spare part stores in all five regions so that women-led micro- and small- enterprises established in the regions would start the supply and selling of spare parts for community and institutional water schemes.

## Promote inclusive WASH

### DISABILITY INCLUSION PROGRESS IN 2010 EFY

Increased awareness and capacity of WASH experts and stakeholders on disability issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developed a disability inclusion guideline and guidebook and related training materials</li><li>Trained all COWASH FTAT and Regional Support Unit experts; and regional, zonal and woreda and kebele WASH experts, in total 7,692 people</li><li>Organised awareness raising to office heads from regions down to woredas, in total 3,636 people</li><li>Training has also gone beyond COWASH in cooperation with WaterAid and Bridging the Gap/ CARE Ethiopia</li><li>Member of Gender and Inclusive WASH platform at MoWIE</li></ul>
WASH facilities constructed are accessible for all	
Persons with disabilities benefit, participate and contribute in an equal way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Practical inclusion activities on the ground are now starting:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Construction of accessible WASH facilities</li><li>Identification and inclusion of persons with disabilities at the community level into the CMP cycle and WASHCOs</li><li>MSE development (PwDs in 8 out of 24 MSEs established)</li></ul></li></ul>

Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) as primary beneficiaries as well as in empowering them to take leadership and management positions in WASH programming is one of COWASH's key distinctive features and a unique success underscored and pioneered by COWASH Ethiopia in the past few years. COWASH developed the inclusive approach in WASH implementation. Through this approach persons with disabilities are taken into the development process from the beginning and that they have an access to the services provided and same time become active and contributing members of the community. Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are included into COWASH water supply and sanitation implementation. PwDs are consulted in the design and construction of water supply

and/or latrine. COWASH also makes sure that water point and latrine designs are accessible for PwDs. To spearhead the advocacy work on inclusion, COWASH works in close collaboration with Federal and local Disability Organizations and encourages that PwDs are also part of established committees, management units and entrepreneurs. COWASH also strongly promotes disability inclusion into the national WASH policies, strategies guidelines. No-one is left behind in COWASH implementation.

## COWASH Midterm Evaluation highlights

COWASH Phase III Mid-Term Evaluation was conducted in mid-2018. These are the major findings of the evaluators:

**COWASH Relevance:** "The relevance of COWASH III to beneficiary communities is confirmed by the level of demand for community water supply schemes in targeted woredas and the community contributions made towards investment costs." (MTE 2018).

**COWASH cost efficiency:** "On cost efficiency, the review was able to validate most COWASH cost data as accurately reported, reasonable compared to other agencies providing similar services and within the range of international benchmark costs" (MTE 2018).

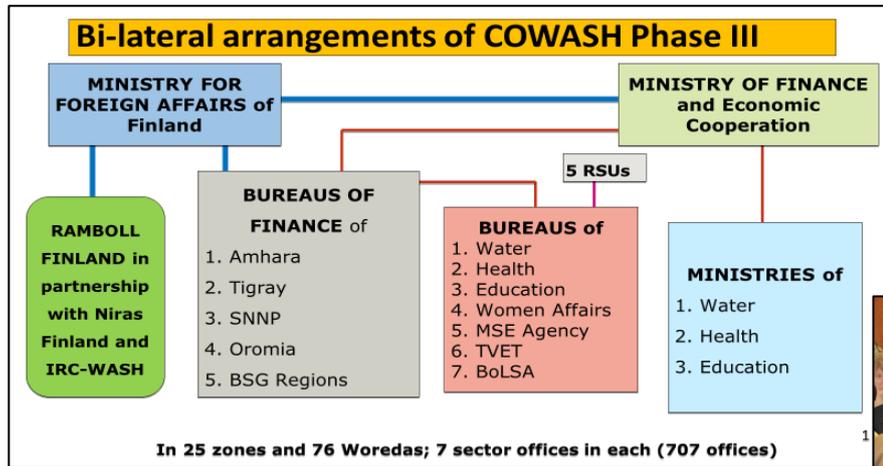
**COWASH Effectiveness:** "Overall progress is on track for new community water supply schemes, with substantial over-achievement in Amhara Region. COWASH also sets functionality targets and here the picture is very positive" (MTE 2018).

**COWASH sustainability:** "Sector stakeholders independent of COWASH confirm that the sustainability of schemes developed under the project has generally been good. The process of social, environmental and climate risks screening and management, whereby the WWTs assess the social, environmental and climate risks associated with a proposed water supply scheme and adopt a sub-catchment action plan to address them, is well established. Furthermore, the CMP approach is predicated on community groups (WASHCOs) becoming motivated and capable to develop and manage their new water supply schemes. A standard WASHCO training package, developed in COWASH, is therefore integral to the CMP approach. Some respondents outside of COWASH's suggested that the project's most important legacy will not be the investment model per se but the lessons generated on sustainability." (MTE 2018).

In addition to the above findings, individual testimony indicates that COWASH's intervention has also transformed individual lives. Ato, Minibel Delagn, a farmer (65) in Amhara region, Bahir dar Zuria, Enesa Sostu Kebele, stated that COWASH's intervention has changed the fate of his family through construction of water scheme closer to his house. He said "we used to fetch drinking water from a nearby river and we were suffering from different kinds of water borne diseases like Amoeba and Diarrhoea. But after construction of the hand dug well, we have become healthier". He added "The construction of the hand dug well has saved time for girl children who are responsible to fetch water and now my girl children are able to focus on their school as the water scheme is next door". (A case story about Minibel family is found on our website).

In COWASH, we believe in building the capacity of individuals and institutions and provide opportunities for all. Among many, the testimony of Guade Demeke is worth mentioning. Guade (37) is a visually impaired and he is COWASH's disability inclusion resource person in Amhara region. He said "as a person he is grateful for getting the opportunity to work with COWASH" and added "I'm grateful because I got the opportunity to demonstrate my abilities despite my disabilities, visual impairment". He also appreciates COWASH's inclusive programmes in his region. For Guade the most impeccable outcome of COWASH's inclusion programme is its pioneer effect to influence other stakeholders and government bureaus to include disability inclusion in their own programmes. Guade mentions; "Bureau of Health now is mindful of persons with disabilities in the construction of toilets". He argued: "All those changes are results of COWASH's pioneer role in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities". He further supplemented that the newly constructed accessible water points in Debark and Dembia are physical proof for community ownership of COWASH's disability inclusion programmes on the ground. (Full story of Guade is also found on our website).

## Partnership



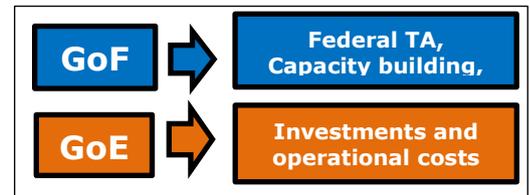
COWASH believes in partnership and works closely with institutions at Federal, region, zone and woreda levels. The project is implemented by the Regional Governments through these government organs. COWASH is implemented by over 700 organizations at different levels. Annually 2,000-3,000 WASH projects' implementations are facilitated by these organizations.



COWASH is well known by the Government and by the people: COWASH actively contributes to the WASH sector development and coordination. COWASH is a member of many forums, groups, task forces and committees. COWASH plays important role in annual WASH sector Joint Technical Reviews, Annual Multi-Stakeholder Forums, Water Sector Working Groups, Sanitation Marketing Platform, and gender and disability inclusion committees and platforms.

## COWASH Funding and Management

The Government of Finland (GoF), funds in EURO and channelled by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland as per the separate regional financing agreements directly to the regional Finance Bureaus. Finance Bureaus channels GoF funds (in Birr) for regional bureaus, zones and woreda offices where funds are used mainly for capacity building. Investments and operational costs are financed by the Regional Governments. Investment funds are channelled to the users (communities and institutions) for the construction and rehabilitation of WASH facilities. Investment funds to the users are channelled through Micro-Finance Institutions, which are easily accessible for each community in the regions. GoF budget for the 9-years of COWASH is 35.4 million Euros and the GoE budget for the same period is over 1.1 billion Birr. COWASH is the only WASH project in Ethiopia, which is leveraging the major part of project's funding from the coffin of the Regional Governments.



## Call to action

From our vast experience in the sector, we recommend all WASH sector stakeholders and partners at different levels to consider the below;

- COWASH promotes proper and systematic maintenance and management of water supply schemes. In COWASH we have found out that O&M is cheaper, sustainable and significantly reduces non-functionality rate. COWASH has been supporting (MoWIE) and will continue availing its support in providing guidance on comprehensive National O&M Strategic Framework and technical O&M issues.
- COWASH promotes micro- and small- enterprise (MSE) development, in addressing climate resilience, women leadership and disability inclusion.
- COWASH promotes women empowerment in WASH and calls upon partners and the wider WASH stakeholders to ensure women leadership in community-led WASH management and in establishing women-led businesses in sanitation marketing, water supply construction & maintenance and in spare parts supply.
- COWASH promotes inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) as primary beneficiaries and assume them to take leadership positions in management of WASH. We call upon all WASH sectors to see the abilities of person with disabilities than the mere disability. We are an ardent advocate of "Disability is not Inability" notion.
- Finally, we call upon Regional Governments to continue supporting the work started by COWASH and strengthen the best practices at the ground and improve what has been highlighted here. We also call upon all the wider WASH actors to share experiences and best practices through formal and informal opportunities.

## Contact us

For more information about COWASH and/or want to access one of the most up-to-date information about WASH programmes in Ethiopia, please join us at [www.cmpethiopia.org](http://www.cmpethiopia.org) website. This website includes up-to-date information of other Finland funded WASH projects as well as National One WASH Program and Water Resource Management. Several case stories of different COWASH issues can be found from the web-site: <https://www.cmpethiopia.org/page/120>. Please also follow us on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/cmpethiopia>. COWASH facilities can also be found from the web at <https://cowashdb.org/>, accessible for the public at large. For more information contact [arto.suominen@cmpethiopia.org](mailto:arto.suominen@cmpethiopia.org).

**COWASH is grateful to the Federal Government of Ethiopia and its Regional Counterparts and appreciates the support of the Embassy of Finland and Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in COWASH implementation.**