

## Water Integrity Network:

# Final Report on a Mid-Term Review

4 November 2019

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# Water Integrity Network: Final Report on the Mid-Term Review

4 November 2019

## 0. Executive summary

### About the Water Integrity Network

1. The Water Integrity Network (WIN) supports and connects an open network of partner individuals, organizations, and governments promoting water integrity to reduce corruption, and improve water sector performance worldwide.
2. The goal of its current strategy is to reach measurable outcomes in increasing integrity and reducing corruption in the water sector so as to contribute to more efficient and effective processes to attain the SDGs and fulfil the human rights to water and sanitation.

### About this Review

3. WIN is two and a half years into the strategy it adopted in 2016. This Mid-Term Review provides a sense of what progress is being achieved in reaching its intended results and offers useful and practical recommendations.
4. The process of undertaking this review has included a document review, an online survey, interviews with key informants and workshops with staff and partners.

### Progress towards the achievement of WIN's overall goal

5. Overall, given its size and the resources it deploys, WIN is achieving good results. It is making inroads to raising awareness on the need and value for water integrity and stimulating integrity-related conversations and actions. It was noted that WIN's work with and country support related to integrity tools was critical in achieving impact.
6. However, while WIN's program is animated and lively, it hasn't gained traction at the impact level, and needs to be more clearly conceptualised, including (in particular) better defining how it is measured. Without better measures of performance WIN cannot make a case for itself or its work.

### Progress towards the achievement of Objective One: Effective action is undertaken within the international water sector to increase integrity and reduce corruption.

7. Targeting organisations that operate in the international sphere is a good entry point and influencing their agendas and processes is a good way to achieve systemic change but WIN's tactical approach is unconvincing and needs to be more explicit and better articulated.
8. This requires defining exactly who is being targeted and precisely what is to be achieved by working with them.
9. These intentions need to be formulated into a framework that allows progress to be tracked and performance to be measured.

Progress towards the achievement of Objective Two: Integrity is measurably increased and corruption reduced in the water sector within countries.

10. WIN is adding significant value in the countries where it works but exactly what it seeks to achieve in each individual country needs better articulation.
11. WIN needs to take better account of the cultural and power dynamics that arise when a Northern institution works in the South.
12. Efforts to achieve influence at the sub-regional, regional and network level should also be considered.

Progress towards the achievement of Objective Three: Necessary information, knowledge, and expertise to advance and measure water integrity action is available and used.

13. There is unanimous support for this work (and in particular the development of useful, practical tools) and WIN has made a lot of progress in this area, more so than in any of the other Objectives.
14. The absence of a coherent framework for measuring and analyzing corruption and integrity in the water sector is a major shortcoming
15. WIN should first and foremost be seeking to initiate and support knowledge work by others through “strategic collaborations” and should only undertake it itself where others are not stepping forward.
16. WIN’s materials need to be better packaged and made punchier and more compelling and the economic benefits of greater integrity need to be better highlighted.

#### Strategic challenges

17. The Mid-Term Review identified a number of strategic challenges that need to be addressed if WIN is to increase its effectiveness. These include
  - Its approach to partnerships and its operational model
  - The need for a more dynamic and targeted advocacy and communications strategy
  - Improving its own governance
  - Addressing its own sustainability and that of its partners and
  - The need to develop a coherent approach to gender issues.

#### Recommendations

18. The Draft Report provides a set of recommendations which are intended to support the achievement of the goal and the three objectives.

# Water Integrity Network: Final Report on a Mid-Term Review

4 November 7 2019

## 1. Introduction: About the Water Integrity Network

The Water Integrity Network was established in 2006 as a network of individuals and organizations that sought to increase integrity and reduce corruption in the water sector internationally. The Network was initially supported by a secretariat housed at Transparency International but it has since evolved into an independent organization based in Berlin. Since 2014 WIN has been registered in Germany as an independent association.

WIN is governed by its General Assembly (which comprises individuals and organizations) and its five-member Supervisory Board. WIN is headed by an Executive Director who took up her position in January 2019. The organization has a staff of 10 full-time equivalents and works with a range of counterparts in countries, governments and in other civil society organizations.

WIN has positioned itself as a leading facilitator of processes to increase water integrity and its intention in most instances is to work primarily through partnerships with other organizations and networks through whom results are to be achieved. WIN understands itself to be a value-based initiative, with integrity as the core value of its work. The organization bases its interventions on transparency, accountability, participation and an explicit anti-corruption orientation.

In 2017 WIN commenced the implementation of a new strategy which has its goal to reach measurable outcomes in increasing integrity and reducing corruption in the water sector so as to contribute to more efficient and effective processes to attain the SDGs and fulfil the human rights to water and sanitation. To achieve this goal, WIN has identified three objectives:

- Objective One: At the international level, effective action is undertaken within the international water sector to increase integrity and reduce corruption.
- Objective Two: At country level, integrity is measurably increased and corruption reduced in the water sector and

- Objective Three: The necessary information, knowledge, and expertise to advance and measure water integrity action is available and used.

## 2. Background: About this Review

### 2.1 Aim and purpose

WIN is now two and a half years into the strategy it adopted in May 2016 and has resolved to undertake a Mid-Term Review that will provide a sense of what progress is being achieved in its intended results and offer useful, practical recommendations for the remaining three years of the strategy period.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) is intended to assess the relevance and viability of WIN's objectives and approach, to identify successes and gaps and to make recommendations for amendments to the strategy moving forward. The contributions from the MTR have been used in a strategy revision process which is under way and will be completed by the end of November 2019. The MTR process is intended to benefit WIN's staff, partners and donors.

### 2.2 Guiding questions

The MTR is intended to provide responses to the following questions:

1. To what extent has WIN (together with partners) been able to meet the strategic objectives and how is that reflected in the specific sub-outcomes and indicators?
2. What were the main challenges faced in achieving the strategic objectives and how can these be effectively addressed? (Consider issues that relate to WIN's business model.)
3. What adjustments in terms of the mode of operation, specific objectives, outcomes, and indicators are necessary to better guide WIN's work? Take account of WIN's partnership model and its effectiveness and also consider gender mainstreaming.
4. What adjustments in approaches and priorities are needed for WIN to implement the strategy in an efficient way? Such adjustments could include those necessary so that themes relevant to WINs overall goal are included as well as those that may represent potential to support WINs fundraising strategy.

### 2.3 MTR process

Following an open tender process, a team of two consultants (a specialist in water and sanitation and an evaluation specialist) was contracted in March 2019 to undertake the MTR.

To complete the MTR the following process was undertaken:

1. An inception meeting was undertaken with the WIN team.
2. A desktop review of all relevant documentation, including plans, reports and a diverse range of articles was undertaken.
3. An online survey was distributed and completed by 28 anonymized respondents.
4. Interviews with 17 key informants were undertaken.

5. An initial response to the MTR questions was prepared and this was workshopped with WIN staff in Berlin at a one-day workshop and with WIN partners at Stockholm World Water Week.
6. A draft report was used as the basis for consultations with staff, members and other important stakeholders and revised into this final version based on their feedback.

## 2.4 This document

This document is the final report on the Mid-Term Review. It reviews WIN's progress and performance in achieving its overall intended goal and in each of the three objectives. This is done by:

- Explaining what is proposed in the strategy document adopted by the WIN General Assembly in May 2016;
- Providing an overview of the feedback gathered from the document review, the survey and the interviews, and
- Drawing conclusions on each component.

This document also provides an overview of seven major challenges facing WIN in implementing its strategy and suggests approaches to dealing with each. The final section of this document sets out recommendations.

A draft report was revised based on feedback received and advice was provided to the WIN team on how the strategy should be refined for the remaining three years of the strategy period.

# 3. Progress towards the achievement of WIN's overall goal

## 3.1 WIN's overall goal or intended impact

In terms of its 2017 to 2022 strategy WIN's overall goal (or impact, in the language used in this review) is to increase integrity and reduce corruption in the water sector. Its strategy document describes the goal as being "to reach measurable outcomes in terms of increasing integrity and reducing corruption in the water sector, so as to contribute to more efficient and effective processes to attain the SDGs and fulfil the human rights to water and sanitation. In particular, WIN will contribute and connect to the efforts towards achieving SDG 6 on water and sanitation and some of the targets under SDG 16 on governance, taking due account of SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." WIN states that to reach its overall goal, its main role is to "mobilize change agents and facilitate the support they need, including capacity development." Its high level target in impact terms is for "at least 10 strategic partners [to] be actively strengthening water integrity through their programmes around the globe".

The implication of its strategic choice is that WIN's main role should be "focused advocacy toward influential partners, to encourage them to take up and fund water integrity initiatives and mutual capacity development for strategic partners and WIN itself, including the development or adaptation of relevant tools and indicators to measure integrity, corruption, and outcomes of water integrity work."

The strategy document goes on to propose that "advocacy and capacity development will be buttressed by experience and learning from direct country engagement. WIN will execute long-term water integrity programmes with implementing partners, to achieve a measurable and significant improvement of water integrity in at least four countries, using deep country analyses and country-specific theories of change as a basis. WIN will also promote and support efforts by partners to deliver online and face-to-face capacity building for a wider audience of stakeholders".

### 3.2 Performance in achieving the overall goal

The 2019 Mid-Term Review (the MTR) of WIN's strategy asked WIN's country and international partners and donors the extent to which WIN was achieving its intended impact. Overall, respondents indicated that WIN plays an important role in foregrounding integrity in the water sector, but that it was difficult to measure and demonstrate its impact.

International partners noted that WIN has:

- Successfully increased awareness of water integrity in the sector and has made a significant contribution in articulating what integrity means practically;
- Successfully emphasised the role to be played in pushing water and sanitation Ministers;
- Undoubtedly been responsible for stimulating awareness and actions at different levels, and
- Successfully placed water integrity on many international sector agendas. WIN's work with Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) was specifically noted in this regard.

Country partners noted the importance of WIN's work with providers and utilities, and felt that the range and combination of country partnerships WIN engages in was critical to effecting change. They also noted that the combined effect of working at multiple fronts with various kinds of stakeholders was particularly important to influencing water integrity knowledge and actions. Kenyan partners in particular felt that WIN had brought integrity into annual sector conversations and performance reviews, a significant achievement with respect to impact.

Partners in Benin and Kenya noted that WIN had helped position them internationally. One partner noted that "I'm also proud that the UN Special Rapporteur quoted our report in his report to the General Assembly, it's helped us grow fantastically". Country partners noted that WIN is known for specific integrity expertise and that its' work with and country support related to integrity tools was critical in achieving impact.

Specific limitations with respect to impact were widely noted. The first set of limitations were with respect to the measures of impact, which are seen as unclear and make it impossible to provide or communicate an objective view of WIN's impact. Respondents noted that they are aware of WIN's outputs but not of its outcomes or of its impact, and highlighted the need for

WIN to provide better evidence from evaluation, reflection and lesson learning. One staff member noted that “it is hard to see to what extent we are helping to increase integrity and reduce corruption... we cannot measure this accurately and it's difficult to get even a subjective appreciation of our impact. I believe we are somewhat successful in raising awareness about the issue and making corruption a part of the conversation but anything more than that is debatable. There is no concrete approach yet to measure the impact of our work.”

The second set of concerns relate to WIN’s own capacity limitations which, combined with sector transitions at country level, dilute the effects of WIN’s work. “The challenge of ongoing sector transitions [brings] new faces [who] repeat the conversation with new actors and this diminishes the speed at which we can gain success”.

A third set of concerns relate not so much to what WIN does as to **how** it implements its strategies. A common concern raised by respondents is the absence of a sense of dynamic interplay between what happens and is learnt at the country level, how this understanding and insight is (not) translated into knowledge products and then advocated for at the international, regional and sub-regional level.

A key strategic concern underlying much of the feedback on WIN’s performance is essentially that it does not operate as a network, triggering and supporting change amongst its member organisations. The need for it to shift into playing more of a facilitator and brokering role was widely noted and agreed upon.

### 3.3 Conclusions regarding WIN’s goal

Overall, given its size and the resources it deploys, WIN is achieving good results. It is making inroads to raising water integrity awareness and stimulating integrity related conversations and actions. Its work at country level and with integrity tools is valuable, credible and gaining traction. Its strategy is sound, but more dynamism and artistry is needed in its implementation, especially with respect to advocacy and communication.

However, while WIN’s program is animated and lively, it hasn’t gained traction at the impact level, and needs to be more clearly conceptualised, including (in particular) better defining how it is measured. Without better measures of performance WIN cannot make a case for itself or its work.

So, while WIN’s in-country work is a major area of strength and an asset that could be better leveraged, its measurement framework needs to be revamped if it is to generate evidence of its impact.

WIN needs to identify a long-term outcome (a result between its objectives and its goal) that is measurable and which it can use to reflect and report on its performance. Given what is contained in the strategy and the target provided it would seem that one possible formulation of this would be “institutions and systems that reduce corruption in the water sector are strengthened”.

## 4. Progress towards the achievement of Objective One

### 4.1 About Objective One

Objective One aims to advance water integrity by triggering increased engagement of organizations that are internationally active in the water sector. WIN seeks to provide leadership that provides energy to mobilize others involved in the broad efforts that are needed to significantly reduce corruption and increase integrity. WIN's focus is on stimulating action by encouraging and supporting international water sector organizations to become change agents, show leadership themselves and contribute to governance reform processes.

Organizations targeted could include funding agencies, sector and development organizations and potentially the private sector. The main activities intended as part of this area are raising awareness by highlighting the issues and the benefits arising from solutions; mobilizing change agents, energy and pressure; jointly analyzing and planning to integrate integrity components into broader programs; jointly developing tools, implementation modes and cost estimates and building the capacity of strategic partners' staff to implement contextualized tools.

The major challenge in this area was identified as overcoming the secrecy around corruption, which it was agreed should be tackled by addressing it explicitly but flexibly and through a multi-stakeholder approach. A very specific part of work in this area was meant to be the development of a monitoring or measurement system that would assess the effectiveness and performance of partners involved in this work. The intention was that the changes in partners would initially be at the level of the partners themselves and later at the level of what is described in the strategy document as "institutionalized in-country change" embedded into institutional and organizational policy, performance measures and or practice.

The following specific outcomes were planned as part of the work in Objective One:

1. Major international organizations active in the water sector should commit to a clear contribution to increase water integrity and fight corruption in the sector.
2. Major international organizations use sound policies and mechanisms to include integrity in their water related programs.
3. Major international organizations are effective in increasing integrity and reducing corruption in the water sector.

### 4.2 Performance in achieving Objective One

There is widespread consensus on the view that the objective is appropriate and relevant. There was little disagreement in this regard - more than 90% of the survey respondents and all the key informants agree on the value of this objective and note that targeting international organizations is the right way to go about driving change.

However, most respondents expressed reservations about **how** WIN is going about achieving this objective. The overall argument is that there is a lack of clarity on exactly which international institutions are being targeted and why they were selected, as well as concerns about which people are being focused on, and what issues are being prioritized. One respondent asked “What issues are [being] emphasized in this objective?” Another respondent asked “Who are the people they seek? The big decision is which people to target. This is a good strategy but have they identified the right agents?”

Many respondents argue that targeting donors (and in this regard the EU was mentioned several times) more explicitly and with a better understanding of their own agendas and the pressures they face would be an appropriate tactic in this area. There is also a strong view that a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of the politics and interests at play in the global environment and at the Africa regional level is needed, which is understood to be absolutely essential if any kind of purchase is to be gained in those spaces.

Feedback also centered on the need to disaggregate what is meant by the “international level”. For several respondents to be thinking of only global processes is to under-estimate the gains to be achieved continentally and at the sub-regional level, where there is in certain instances a good degree of momentum and processes are sufficiently coherent to allow for engagement and interaction. This would seem to be the case in particular in the African regional communities.

### 4.3 Conclusions regarding Objective One

There is consensus that targeting organizations that operate in the international sphere is a good entry point and that influencing their agendas and processes is a good way to achieve systemic change. However, the overall sense is that while the Objective is appropriate and relevant, the tactical approach is unconvincing and needs to be more explicit and better articulated.

This requires defining exactly who is being targeted and precisely what is to be achieved by working with them, and these intentions need to be formulated into a framework that allows progress to be tracked and performance to be measured. This should be done with a mind to focusing not only on global players but also those initiatives that have regional and sub-regional remits.

As previously noted in this document in relation to the other elements of the strategy, the specific outcomes and indicators proposed for this objective need to be refined and revised so that they are more helpful managerially and from an oversight perspective.

## 5. Progress towards the achievement of Objective Two

### 5.1 About Objective Two

WIN's second strategic objective is "Integrity is measurably increased and corruption reduced in the water sector within countries". Work in this area aims for change in "at least four countries" (presently Bangladesh, Kenya, Benin and some work in Latin America). This result is to be achieved through direct engagement together with implementing partners and efforts should include working closely with media and civil society, including consumers' and women's organizations.

This objective is intended to also contribute to objectives 1 and 3 by showcasing and testing what can be achieved and enabling practical learning for WIN and its partners. Engagement in this area is intended to comprise measures to strengthen transparency, accountability, participation and anti-corruption (TAPA) in the water (sub-) sector at country, local and organization level.

The specific outcome intended through work in this area is:

1. In selected countries, WIN's programme with implementing partners has resulted in measurable increases in integrity and reductions in corruption

### 5.2 Performance in achieving Objective Two

More than 90% of survey respondents indicated that the objective is relevant and appropriate but the overwhelming majority (70% of them) felt that only some progress had been made. Overall, respondents suggested that while the objective is strategically sound, progress is limited and again that the indicators used to measure performance need to be refined.

Examples were provided where WIN has actively contributed to improved integrity in countries but it was not clear that this had in fact led in turn to reducing corruption. The assumption that improved integrity leads to reduced corruption was questioned from a systems perspective by a number of respondents. Resolving this or at least putting out a hypothesis and testing it is key to an integrity index and WIN needs to take a clear stance.

Indicators that related to change in specific institutions and at a more modest scale were suggested: for example working with utilities and local governments to identify indicators and report on quick wins. This more realistic framing of the intervention is particularly appropriate given WIN's limited size and capacity. Procurement was cited as an example where a baseline could be established with a before and after intervention measure. The inclusion of sub-indicators related to advocacy was suggested.

While respondents pondered whether "measurable" implied qualitative or quantitative measures of success, a number of respondents noted that WIN had been working with country partners to improve integrity for many years, and that it should be better able to

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provide evidence about what works and what doesn't. In short, the argument made by many respondents is that WIN should be better able to provide evidence of its value proposition (although the term "proof of concept" was used several times during interviews). Kenya was cited as a country in which showcases could be built. One respondent argued that "demonstrable models would be useful".

The same point is made in relation to Objective 3, but it should also be noted here that the need for WIN to play a better knowledge brokering role in relation to country programmes was raised several times during MTR consultations. Several respondents argued that WIN should purposively develop an evidence base by assessing in-country efficacy and international influencing and the two levels of influence could be more effectively linked.

Resource limitations amongst in-country partners were cited by most respondents as a binding constraint, along with the degree to which water integrity was under-prioritised in the sector and in light of competing country priorities. Overall it was felt that more sustained, longer term partnerships in countries are needed and that it takes many years to build trust and relationships (as WIN has been doing with a range of public, private and civil society actors in countries) before results and systemic change can be expected.

The capacity and will of all three categories of actors was noted as important to making systemic shifts. Specific limitations were noted in particular country programmes, speaking to the need for WIN to differentiate backstopping and support strategies in keeping with specific country contexts, partners and needs.

Some country partners held that smaller and more circumscribed scales such as water user associations provided a more ready entry point to not only introducing integrity measures but also to identifying and equipping champions and change agents. At the same time, scaling up nationally will require more partners and scaling up regionally or internationally may require WIN to work in more countries, or at least to engage the evidence from additional countries. Overall though, the feedback from MTR consultations is that a clearer sense is needed of what is intended through each specific country intervention and how work in individual countries advances this agenda.

It is important to note that WIN is widely credited with an increased willingness to acknowledge corruption in the water sector at country level and in many instances there was lively engagement on what this means moving forward. The majority of respondents indicated that, depending on country context, harder, more explicitly anti-corruption actions would have greater impact.

While one country and one international partner held that a softer approach is more effective in opening dialogue, collaboratively identifying gaps and strengthening good governance, this was not the dominant view. "The approach has previously consistently been non-confrontational but with corruption there is a point where you need to cross that line. There is a time to say, this is the standard, corruption is not acceptable, these are the people breaking the rules. People get used to hearing about good governance and integrity and there may be a time where we need to take a harder line."

The most widespread position is that “WIN has a niche in the sector and it should be bolder in calling out governments and companies who are found to be corrupt. This will come with a price - being kicked out of some countries - but WIN will be more credible and respected”.

Overall, the suggestion was to be guided by the degree to which country legal, policing and policy contexts enabled more confrontational anti-corruption approaches. “If an environment allows you to get into anti-corruption and take on the big man himself and CSOs and judiciary and police will step up then go for it. If not, then let that slowly permeate the system”.

Examples of adopting a more activist approach included working with whistle-blowers, investigative journalists and social movements to generate political pressure; engaging with forensic investigators and audits; undertaking exposure and legal enforcement or providing support to people whose services and access to resources have been negatively affected by corruption.

“WIN has to be bolder in calling out where corruption is pervasive and culprits held to account through national courts. WIN should be supporting those who have the training to go for live corruption cases and follow it to its final conclusions”.

Some international partners and donors suggested that consideration be given to country selection criteria that was more responsive to political shifts in the donor landscape. While building demonstrable models in higher capacity countries was important, it was equally important to consider that donors are increasingly investing in more fragile countries, for which resources could possibly be more easily mobilised.

Country partners noted that WIN’s staff engagement approach is respectful and supportive and also noted an inter-dependent relationship between WIN and country partners. It was acknowledged that it is challenging and time-consuming to work via partners and that different types of support and advocacy messages were needed at organisational, national and international levels, but all respondents supported the model of engaging with country partners rather than developing an in-country presence.

WIN competing with in-country partners for donor funds was mentioned on several occasions as a matter of concern. It was suggested that WIN could do more to support local partners to fundraise to undertake programmatic in-country integrity and anti-corruption work. It was suggested that WIN share work plans in advance in order to identify countries where international partners could work collectively for at least two years.

Both country and international partners suggested that WIN take steps to address its Euro-centricity and the race, gender and class dynamics arising from its being based in the global North. The lack of diversity (especially with regard to south and African people) in WIN’s secretariat and governing bodies was highlighted.

Country and international partners reflected on the potential potency of building networks and coalitions within and between countries at the African sub-regional and continental levels. Deepening partnerships and actions with AMCOW and ANEW presented clear

opportunities to mobilise CSOs and drive a continental community of practice, to build political will and commitment, and to influence and address integrity issues at country level. Broadening the range of partners beyond NGOs was noted as important.

## 5.4 Conclusions regarding Objective 2

WIN is adding significant value in the countries where it works but exactly what it seeks to achieve in each individual country needs better articulation. The intended results at the country level need to be better reported on using a clearer performance measurement framework, a key element of which needs to be the baseline analysis used at the outset to guide country interventions. An explicit, demonstrable model would strengthen WIN's in-country and international work and facilitate resource mobilisation considerably.

WIN needs to take better account of the cultural and power dynamics that arise when a Northern institution works in the developing South.

Efforts to achieve influence at the sub-regional, sectoral and network level should also be considered and intentionally designed and implemented, meaning that what is to be achieved through each engagement needs to be spelled out and managed for results.

# 6. Progress towards the achievement of Objective Three

## 6.1 About Objective Three

WIN's third strategic objective is "Necessary information, knowledge and expertise to advance and measure water integrity action is available and used". The objective is based on a recognition that "knowledge and information are key to developing quality work and building capacity in the sector" and that "better information and data are needed... to guide anti-corruption programs and to establish [their] impact".

The strategy document states that the priority in this area will be the "development and implementation of methods to measure integrity and corruption (including indicators)" and research on the extent of corruption. The strategy notes that work in this regard will be undertaken with "relevant knowledge institutions" and that care will be taken to link its work on indicators to existing frameworks... such as SDG monitoring and the OECD Water Governance Initiative. The strategy proposes that the work undertaken in this area will be used for advocacy and to develop WIN's own programs. It also proposes that an international reference group be established "to provide advice and stimulate new developments".

The following specific outcomes for this Objective are proposed in the strategy:

- Integrity and corruption in the water sector are being measured and analyzed.
- Organizations use WIN's tools and methodologies to increase integrity and reduce corruption.

- Water integrity change agents exchange knowledge and experience through global and regional communities of practice on water integrity and related approaches.
- Interested stakeholders access knowledge and develop their capacity on water integrity.
- Work and knowledge on water integrity are enhanced through advice from an international reference group.

## 6.2 Performance in achieving Objective Three

There is unanimous support for this work and it is recognized across the board by all MTR respondents as being an essential ingredient in the strategy. Also, a third of respondents indicated that WIN has made a lot of progress in this area, more so than in any of the other Objectives.

However, as noted repeatedly in this document, the absence of a coherent framework for measuring and analyzing corruption and integrity in the water sector is a major shortcoming, and in this Objective it is particularly visible. The strategy foregrounds and prioritizes the development of methods to measure integrity and corruption and these are intended as the conceptual foundation for everything else done in this Objective. Without the proposed measurement methods the work done in this area lacks a guiding framework and therefore addressing this matter is critical and urgent.

As with the other Objectives, there were suggestions that WIN should be seeking to initiate knowledge work by others, and should not seek to undertake it itself. There seemed to be a consensus view that WIN should be establishing “strategic collaborations” that entail initiating or commissioning work on the development of tools and practices and brokering the use of the outcomes as part of its own advocacy efforts and those of others.

Part of this approach should be to implement an adaptive management approach that is based on an understanding that there are no “best practices” and instead “best fit” should be sought.

Financial issues also arose in the feedback received on this issue. Several respondents indicated that WIN should be seeking to ensure that its partners in the global South also benefit financially from the development of appropriate tools and other kinds of knowledge generation as this would help them with their own sustainability and demonstrate a commitment to more equitable kinds of partnerships. It was also noted on several occasions that guidance on the practical application of tools is more helpful than simply providing theoretical instruments and that WIN could be doing more to deploy the experience and expertise of its partners when supporting utilization.

Despite these concerns, the overwhelming feedback is that WIN’s performance in this Objective has been good, and the “Integrity Management Toolbox is particularly valued and appreciated”.

One point made repeatedly is that the materials needs to be better packaged and made punchier and more compelling. There also was consistent feedback about the need for work

in this area to be more explicit about the socio-economic benefits of greater integrity and that the “value for money” aspect of the WIN value proposition needs to be consistently foregrounded and emphasized.

It was also repeatedly noted that WIN should be actively and intentionally engaging with partners not in the water sector in order to collaboratively generate knowledge and tools that could be adapted to the water integrity agenda.

## 6.3 Conclusions regarding Objective Three

WIN’s work in the creation and sharing of knowledge and tools is widely recognized as making a substantive contribution to the field. However, the key element, which is a robust and evidence-based framework for assessing integrity and corruption is a major shortcoming that needs to be addressed as a priority.

WIN should also apply a consistent networking approach to its work in this area and be ever-mindful in emphasizing its role as a facilitator and initiator (rather than an implementer) and make better use of its partnerships to generate material while WIN itself undertakes more visible, punchier advocacy.

# 7. Challenges facing WIN

## 7.1 Partnerships

WIN has nurtured and engaged a range of excellent partners such as among others, Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), the Global Water Partnership (GWP), Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET) and the Centre for Water and Sanitation (CEWAS). WIN’s partners have multi-layered and overlapping roles, including as allies, targets, change agents, funders and contractors. Different strategies are required to engage different partners at different levels. This is complex and demands specific capacities and resources. It is critical that WIN and country partners maintain collaborative rather than competitive relationships, and that WIN continues to define complementary roles with country and international partners.

Country and international respondents suggested that WIN could do more to reach the European Union, an important partner in Africa particularly, as well as the African Ministers Council for Water (AMCOW), the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-water (GLAAS), specifically in relation to advocating for integrity-related targets in Declarations and commitments linked to implementing the SDGs. It was also suggested that WIN revitalize its collaboration with Transparency International (TI) and develop links with the World Bank Institute (WBI), especially in relation to the WBI’s social accountability work.

The need to engage partners outside of the water sector was mentioned repeatedly, and it was suggested that WIN strengthen relations with the judiciary, parliamentarians, auditors, regulators, human rights organisations and other institutions that work in governance outside of the water sector, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Insights from anti-corruption actors would help WIN to gain intelligence and understand nested gains which would in turn enable more tactical efficiencies. It was suggested that WIN and country partners request governance and anti-corruption actors outside of the water and sanitation sector review its plans, strategies and programmes in order to help hone and sharpen them.

Engaging organisations in the wider anti-corruption and governance space such as forensic auditors in how to identify corruption problems from a review of utility performance management systems for example, was noted as relevant whether or not WIN took up the strategic decision to adopt a more confrontational anti-corruption approach at country and or international level.

Engaging and influencing monitoring targets through sub-regional bodies (such as ECOWAS) and regional partners (such as AMCOW) would provide clear opportunities to influence senior policy makers, monitoring systems and spending priorities.

## 7.2 Operational model

MTR respondents reiterated the need for WIN to maintain its strategic focus and to do a few things well. WIN should continue to be known for its expertise in integrity tools. Project-based funding, working at a distance and integrating into the work of other organisations were noted as challenges in relation to its operational and business model. It was maintained that WIN has a high profile considering its size, and that this could be better systematised.

The current strategic focus on three distinct objectives is generally considered valuable in that it has helped WIN to articulate discreet clusters of activities and indicators. It has also helped to differentiate operational areas between WIN's staff, but an unintended negative consequence is that the linkages between the three objectives are not properly addressed in the way WIN undertakes its activities, reports as part of its performance management or in its operational procedures and systems.

In this regard, fewer indicators and less ambitious targets would enable WIN to measure its progress more effectively, provide an experience of success and contribute to the development of a demonstrable model. As one staff member noted: "The term corruption is seen as massive monster but if you break it down into small bits and give data about what happened and what works and what doesn't work, this helps you to see the change that is possible".

Given its size, it is critical that WIN does more to analyse and package lessons and evidence from its country and international work in order to support its advocacy work. There is a need for clearer links between "research" and "advocacy", between the evidence that can be generated from learning, reflection and evaluation, and how this can be used to influence change at different levels. More concerted reflection and learning across objectives would also strengthen WIN's adaptive management ability.

## 7.3 Advocacy strategy

On the whole, WIN's advocacy work is seen as ad hoc and feedback clearly indicates that a coherent advocacy and communication strategy, differentiated by audience, media platform and dissemination strategy needs to be developed through a careful mapping of both international and country audiences and advocacy opportunities. As noted earlier in this report and one respondent put it: "If WIN wants to achieve a global impact it would be better if it played the knowledge broker role." One partner suggested that a focus on one flagship publication (Water Integrity Global Outlook) was excellent, and that it would make sense to develop fewer outputs more consistently and in a more strategically targeted manner.

Country partners feel that more, better targeted media and social media advocacy is essential. One respondent noted that "Politicians listen to the media and civil society can use it to hold governments accountable. We sometimes forget about the media but they have a big role to play. Even just releasing data on what has been funded can be mobilising".

## 7.4 WIN's own governance

Overall it is felt that WIN's governance and membership structures are opaque and difficult to understand and explain, and there is little consensus on what it means to be a WIN member. Questions were raised about the extent to which WIN is operating as a membership or network-based organisation or as a conventional international NGO (with partners in focus countries and an international influencing activity area). If WIN more effectively pursued a networking strategy that focussed on supporting a broader range of partner organisations, it could reduce its involvement in project implementation.

The point was made repeatedly that there is an acute need for greater representation of the global South on WIN's governance structures, and a need for Supervisory Board members to be selected based on their potential contribution to WIN's mission.

## 7.5 Sustainability

The point was widely made that WIN needs to develop specific value propositions for different target groups, including donors, with respect to aid effectiveness. A linked suggestion was that WIN gather the information needed to define a comprehensive package for 'clients' at country, regional and intentional levels that comprises advocacy/networking, training and capacity development, and the application of integrity tools.

Respondents argued consistently that better indicators that did more to demonstrate progress would support the argument for increased funding support, and that a demonstrable integrity model would also facilitate fundraising efforts.

The strategic choices relating to WIN as a network or as a more conventional INGO each hold different opportunities and risks. On the one hand, a wider range of funding opportunities open up with a larger network, but this also takes more effort to maintain. On the other hand, deeper experience with government and other partners can be more convincing. Both country and international partners believe that WIN could improve its support to country partners' fundraising efforts and raise funds in partnership with their country and

international partners. Overall, respondents supported WIN staying lean and building country support, tapping into expertise and resources within and outside of the water and sanitation sector, and developing a pool of expertise in different organisations.

The general feedback from MTR respondents is that WIN needs “to sell themselves better. They need to have a high profile person that people refer back to, who makes them visible and is represented on panels with ministers and donors and who speaks to the value of integrity interventions. Their technical competence is important but they mustn’t be seen as **so** technical. They are getting better at raising their profile but they need to have more glamour”. It was also noted that “it is really important to show how what they are doing aligns with their partners’ priorities. They do really good work so it’s a matter of framing it in a way that is relevant to the donor. And generally, quantitative evidence of how many people are being affected would help to show their impact.”

Other donors suggested that WIN needs to develop an “elevator pitch” and be clearer about what it does and why. Improving the Theory of Change and its performance indicators would make it easier to understand how WIN believes change happens. One donor suggested that WIN needs to improve its political antenna and develop a mixed portfolio of work in fragile and more developed countries, which donors would be more likely to support. All respondents agreed that WIN needs to showcase its work better and show results from the funds and efforts invested.

## 7.6 Gender

It is well established that corruption and mismanagement disproportionately affect women. Respondents were mixed in their advice on a gender focus, with roughly half holding that mainstreaming gender into all integrity and anti-corruption activities, tools, methods, processes and products was essential. Others asserted that mainstreaming makes gender issues and dynamics invisible and that a distinct gender focus with specific strategies and efforts are needed to advance the role of women in decision-making; that clear evidence was needed about how the women in power can help to drive improved integrity. A focus on the gendered aspects of corruption, e.g. sextortion, was suggested.

Most respondents believe it is important for WIN to champion the cause of women and to partner with influential women in its international and country activities and advocacy. It is felt to be important to gather and communicate evidence about the links between the participation of women and integrity. Others felt that a focus on gender was important, but that an inclusive, pro-poor focus and an extension to other marginalised groups, was equally important.

That gender be considered within sector recruitment strategies was highlighted, together with the need to expand the notion of what constitutes unfairness and corruption to incorporate gender discrimination and inequality. It was suggested that WIN devise specific tools and methodologies for countries to mainstream gender and social inclusion e.g. gender responsive budgeting, and that WIN should specifically promote women and youth leadership in community groups, private providers and in government.

## 8. Recommendations

### **Recommendations to enhance impact**

- 8.1 WIN should improve its monitoring and reporting framework (and base it on a more helpful elucidation of the intervention logic) so that it makes clearer what WIN is achieving and is more useful from an oversight and managerial perspective as well as a resource for fundraising. This is unquestionably the biggest priority.
- 8.2 WIN should clarify the role of partners and become more intentional about operating as a network by focusing more on capacity strengthening and advocacy and play less of an implementing role.

### **Recommendations in relation to Objective One**

- 8.4 WIN should create a defined and finite list of international partners and determine exactly what is sought from each, with a specific ratio of Northern to Southern partner institutions.
- 8.5 WIN should determine what success would look like in generating global political buy-in to combat corruption in the water sector and set targets that would guide and drive performance in achieving this.

### **Recommendations in relation to Objective Two**

- 8.6 WIN should clarify the criteria used to select countries and consider the value of working in fragile states, given donor priorities.
- 8.7 WIN should develop a standard template for undertaking detailed country situation analyses and use them to develop medium-term country strategies that clearly indicate which institutions are to have their capacity built and how this will be achieved.
- 8.8 WIN should place greater emphasis on building partner capacity in countries (away from engaging in interventions) by developing a coherent partner capacity strengthening strategy and prioritize strengthening their resource mobilization capacity.
- 8.9 In each country in which WIN is active, it should identify and collaborate with partners outside the water sector (and prioritize institutions that have strengthening integrity and combating corruption as their core mandate).

### **Recommendations in relation to Objective Three**

- 8.10 WIN should distil its model into a compact, coherent change model and incrementally build a persuasive evidence base that proves its efficacy.

- 8.11 WIN should refine its advocacy strategy so that it directly communicates clear messages to specific audiences in more compelling ways that can compete in the social media era.

**Recommendations to address strategic challenges**

- 8.12 WIN should review the composition of its Supervisory Board, General Assembly and staff to ensure greater representation from the South.
- 8.13 WIN should mainstream gender and devise specific strategies and efforts to advance the role of women in decision-making and generate and communicate clear evidence about how the women in power can help to drive improved integrity.
- 8.14 WIN should maintain a pro-poor focus by addressing social inclusion wherever feasible and appropriate.

## Appendix: List of people interviewed for the Mid Term Review

Organization	Name
African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEWS)	Sareen Malik
CEWAS	Janek Herman Friede
CESPAD Kenya	Asha Shaban Jane Mbevi Jacob Baraza
DORP Bangladesh	Mohammed Zobair Hasan
GIZ	Maren Kapp-Schwoerer
IRC	John Butterworth
KEWASNET CSO Network - Kenya	Samson Shivaji
OECD	Hakan Tropp
Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)	Alejandro Jiménez
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	Hanna Capeder
Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)	Heloise Chicou Virginia Roaf
Transparency International (TI)	Donal O'Leary
World Bank	Steven N. Schonberger
WIN Chair	Ravi Narayanan