

Markers for change: Monitoring criteria for climate resilience

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AES Conference
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Acknowledgement of country


In the spirit of reconciliation, the Water for Women Fund acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay respects to their elders and leaders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Overview

- Increasing need to **monitor climate resilience**: Australian Development policy (2023)
- Our understanding about **how to track finance for climate adaptation and monitor resilience** is still developing
- The main mechanism for monitoring climate finance are the **OECD ‘Rio Markers’**
- If we use the Markers bluntly there is **potential to distort investments**
- Nesting the Rio Markers as part of our **MEL system** can support a more holistic view of the investment
- We are exploring the value of a **‘twin-track’ approach to climate resilient inclusive WASH** via our Learning Agenda (building on our learning from GEDSI)



*A WASH committee in Buka District, PNG, develop their Water Security Improvement Plan
(Credit: Plan International)*



1. Background: Water for Women Fund (2018 – 2024)



Partnering with

10

Civil Society Organisations



40
Projects

16
Countries



Our progress

159.9 million over 7 years





Goal

Improved health, gender equality and well-being of Asian and Pacific communities through inclusive, sustainable and **climate resilient** WASH.

End of Program Outcomes (EPOs)

Strengthened national and subnational **WASH sector systems** with greater emphasis on **climate resilience**, gender, social inclusion, safely managed WASH and water security.

Increased equitable, universal **access to and use** of sustainable, **climate resilient** WASH services, particularly for marginalized communities and community members.

Strengthened **climate resilient gender equality and social inclusion** in households, communities and institutions.

Strengthened use of **new evidence, innovation and practice** in sustainable gender **sensitive, inclusive, and climate resilient** WASH by other CSOs, national and international WASH sector actors.

Intermediate outcomes

Increased **capacity and agency** of governments, private sector community-based organisations and communities, **in planning, investing and delivering** sustainable, inclusive and **climate resilient** WASH services.

Greater integration of climate resilient gender and socially inclusive approaches by governments, private sector, community-based organisations and communities.

Documentation and sharing of climate resilient, and gender and socially inclusive evidence and effective practices with other CSOs, national and international WASH sector actors.

Strategies

Funded **collaboration between multiple CSOs** (and strategic partners/financiers) **implementing projects** on agreed gender and socially inclusive, and **climate resilient** WASH priorities.

Facilitated **learning and exchange on climate resilient, gender and socially inclusive** WASH.

Targeted **research on climate resilient** gender and socially inclusive WASH and other sector research gaps.

2. Challenge

Australian Aid Policy

Increase our climate investments by ensuring that, from 2024–25, at least half of all new bilateral and regional investments valued at more than \$3 million will have a **climate change objective**, with a goal of reaching 80 per cent in 2028–29

Enhance support for gender equality by ensuring that 80 per cent of investments address gender equality effectively, and all new investments over \$3 million include **gender equality objectives**



Australia's International
Development Policy

FOR A PEACEFUL, STABLE AND PROSPEROUS INDO-PACIFIC

Adaptation & resilience monitoring

- Official **guidance is still being developed** on monitoring resilience and adaptation through WASH
- **WASH monitoring systems are well established** – WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (SDG6) – but these **do not address adaptation or resilience** (due for revision in 2024)
- The **contribution of inclusive WASH to climate resilience** is complex due to long-term pathways and uncertainty assessing resilience
- The guidance we have stresses the importance of **‘climate risk informed’** designs (GWP/UNICEF)



<https://www.gwp.org/en/WashClimateResilience/>

Rio Markers

- The main mechanism for **monitoring climate finance** commitments
- Arose from the UN '**Earth Summit**' (1992)
- Track shares of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to contribute to global environmental agreements
- Count activities as **climate adaptation** and **mitigation**
- Other markers have also been introduced; e.g. for Biodiversity and Gender



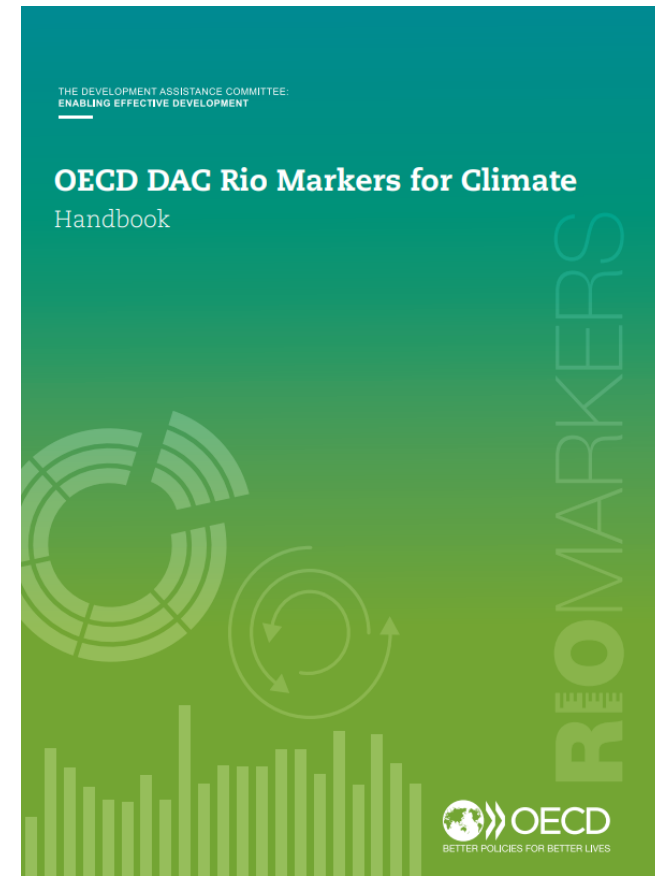
Rio Markers: ratings

‘Principal’

- Fundamental to the design
- Explicit in objectives: ‘targeted...’
- *‘the activity would not have been funded without the objective...’*
- 100% of investment committed

‘Significant’

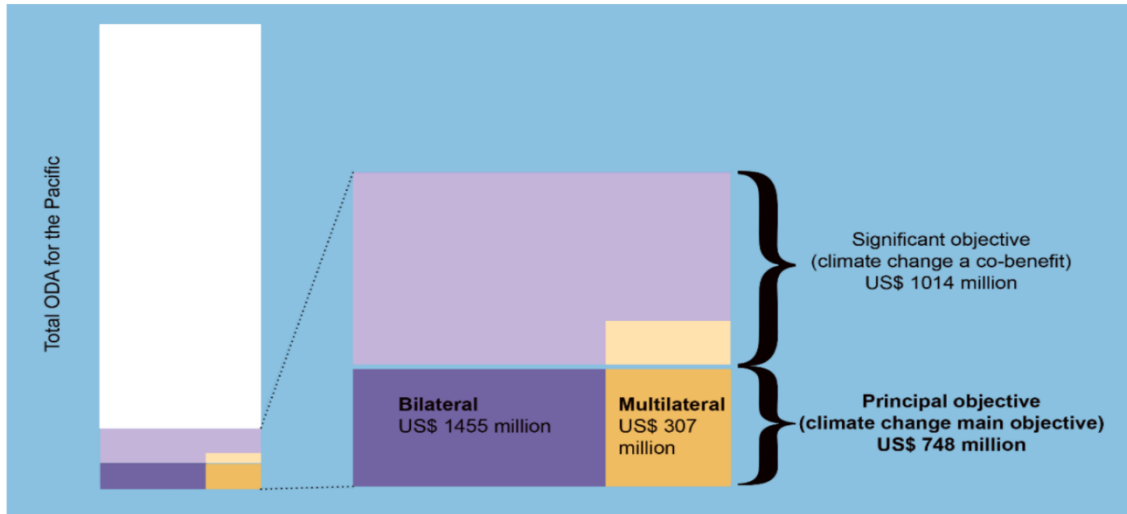
- Explicit but not fundamental to the design
- Climate ‘co-benefits’, ‘mainstreaming...’; e.g. may primarily focus on inclusion or health outcomes



[Revised climate marker handbook_FINAL.pdf \(oecd.org\)](https://www.oecd.org/development/indicators/rio-markers-for-climate/)

Rio Markers: finance flows

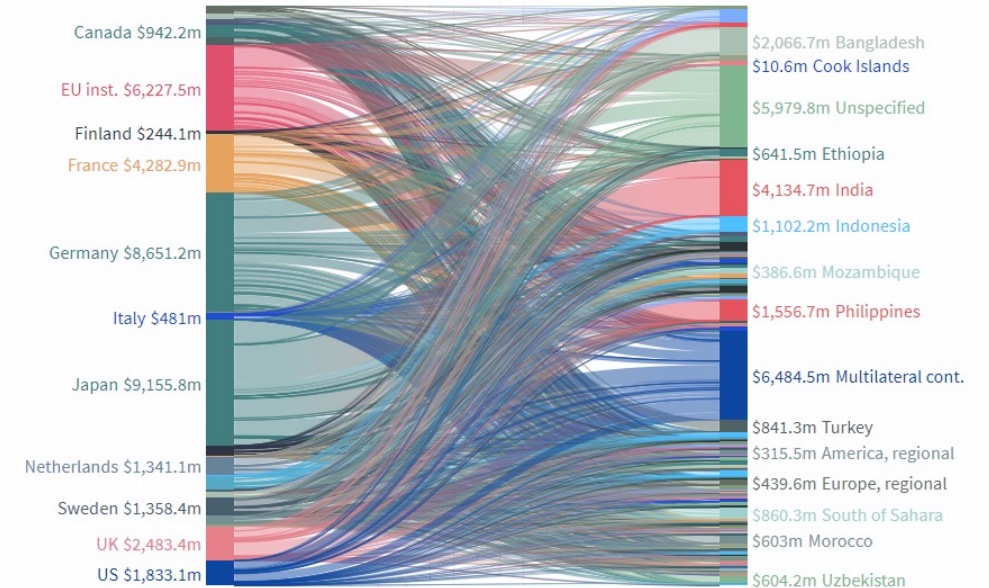
Figure 2: Climate finance to Pacific Island countries, 2010–2014



Stockholm Environment Institute (2017) Climate finance in the Pacific: An overview of flows to the region's Small Island Developing States

Climate finance flows


Yearly average in 2018 and 2019



Source: OECD 2019 • Climate finance flows from donor countries to recipient countries. Figures represent the yearly average over 2018 and 2019. Values are rounded to the nearest \$100k. Where values are below \$50k but above \$0 they will appear as \$0.0m in the Sankey. Figures are calculated as an average of country spending and may not combine to give the same total average spending in each chart.

A blunt instrument?

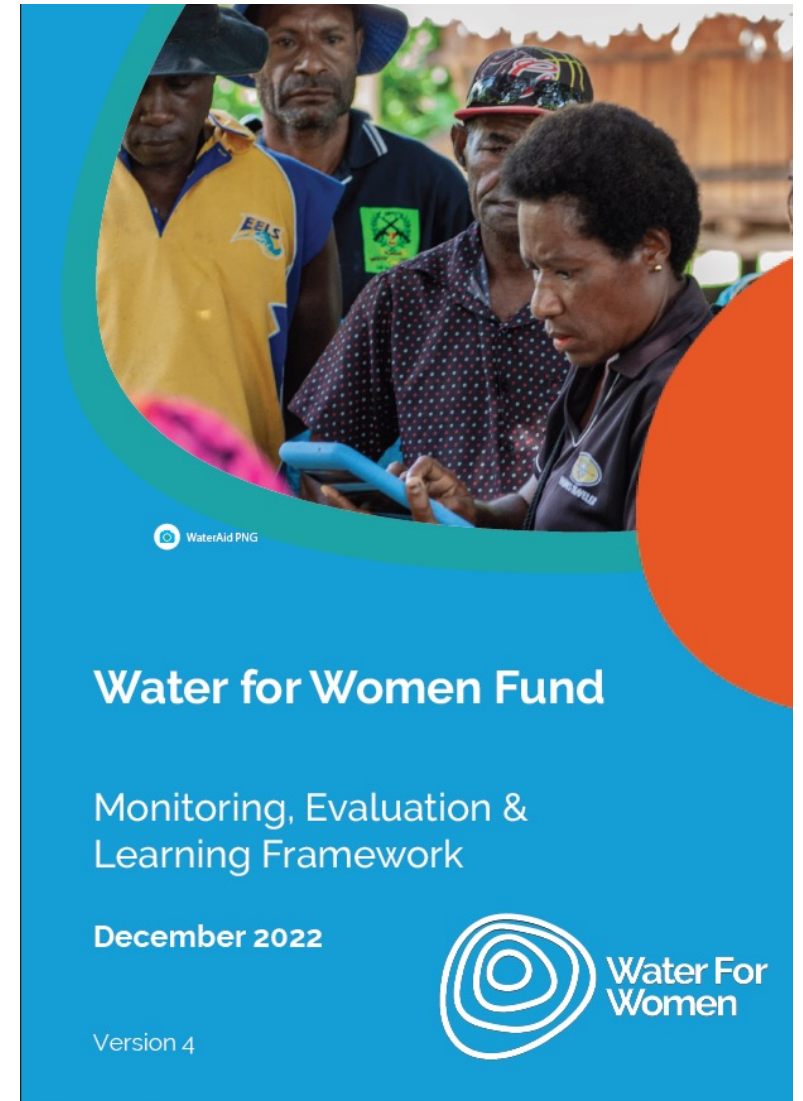
- With increasing investment there will be an **incentive to commit to 'principal'** to meet and maximise commitments
- Blunt application of Rio Markers can lead to **distorted programming** if investments are designed to address climate as principal focus when there are other needs
- If we use the Rio Markers prescriptively or bluntly there is potential for **unintended consequences**; not addressing underlying needs
- We know this from GEDSI: A **'twin track' approach** using 'targeted' & 'mainstreaming' strategies is required to address underlying issues

The background features a solid blue field. On the right side, there are two overlapping circular shapes: a larger teal circle and a smaller orange circle partially overlapping its top-right edge.

3. Adapting our MEL system and applying the Rio Markers

Water for Women Fund: Transition to Climate Resilience (2022 – 2024)

Apr 22	Climate resilient WASH principles
May 22	Project concepts submitted
Sep 22	Project designs begin
Sep 22	Guidance: MEL, climate, GEDSI etc.
Oct 22	Extension announced (\$36M AUD)
Dec 22	Designs submitted
Jan 23	Extension begins
Feb 23	'Kick Off' (Brisbane)
	Projects implementing...



Rubrics: assessing designs

- Developed to **operationalise** the Rio Markers
- Provided **transparency and consistency** for assessing designs
- We introduced criteria for **inclusion**
- Developed at three levels:
 1. **Problem analysis**
 2. **Objectives**
 3. **Strategies**
- A basis for **ongoing discussion...**

Rubrics for criteria 1: Risk assessment in problem analysis

Score	Description
0	Little to no analysis is included in the project design document (PDD) to demonstrate the nature, extent and underpinning causes of climate change risks affecting the WASH sector in the project context. Information that is included is not supported by robust evidence (i.e. supported by evidence reliable primary and/or secondary research and tailored for geographical area of project).
1	A good amount of analysis is included in the PDD to demonstrate the nature and extent of climate change risks affecting the WASH sector / system in project context – commensurate with the size of the investment - and is supported by evidence. However, the analysis on climate change risks is not the primary focus of the problem analysis included in section 2 of the document. Moreover, information is not included to confidently identify the underpinning causes and drivers of climate change risk aspects of the problem (i.e. barriers or limitations constraining adaptive and absorptive capacity; or root causes of vulnerability).
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2. Objectives

Goal

Improved health, gender equality and well-being of Asian and Pacific communities through inclusive, sustainable and climate resilient WASH.

End of Program Outcomes (EOPOs)

Strengthened national and subnational **WASH sector systems** with greater emphasis on **climate resilience**, gender, social inclusion, safely managed WASH and water security.

Increased equitable, universal **access to and use of sustainable, climate resilient WASH services**, particularly for marginalized communities and community members.

Strengthened **climate resilient gender equality and social inclusion** in households, communities and institutions.

Strengthened use of **new evidence, innovation and practice** in sustainable gender sensitive, inclusive, and **climate resilient WASH** by other CSOs, national and international WASH sector actors.

Intermediate outcomes

Increased **capacity and agency** of governments, private sector community-based organisations and communities, in **planning, investing and delivering** sustainable, inclusive and **climate resilient WASH services**.

Greater **integration of climate resilient gender and socially inclusive approaches** by governments, private sector, community-based organisations and communities.

Documentation and sharing of climate resilient, and gender and socially inclusive evidence and effective practices with other CSOs, national and international WASH sector actors.

Strategies

Funded **collaboration between multiple CSOs (and strategic partners/financiers) implementing projects** on agreed gender and socially inclusive, and **climate resilient WASH priorities**.

Facilitated **learning and exchange on climate resilient, gender and socially inclusive WASH**.

Targeted **research on climate resilient gender and socially inclusive WASH and other sector research gaps**.

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'Risk-informed...'

1. Problem analysis

Rubrics for criteria 2: Risk-related objectives

Score	Description
0	The objectives of the project include little to no reference to concepts of climate change risk / resilience. Where references are included, it is not clear how these align with the climate change risk problem(s) outlined in the Context and Analysis section (Section 2) of the PDD.
1	The objectives of the project make references to concepts of climate change risk / resilience. However the climate change risk / resilience related objectives are secondary, and are not the primary objectives. Moreover, there is only a moderate alignment of objective statements with information included in Section 2 of the PDD on climate change risk-related problems.
2	The objectives of the project make clear references to concepts of climate change risk / resilience and vulnerabilities. These climate change risk / resilience related objectives are also the primary objectives of the project. The primary objectives of the project including those for GEDSI, are climate risk informed. However, there is only a moderate alignment of objective statements with information included in Section 2 of the PDD on climate change risk-related problems – or this aspect is unclear.
3	The objectives of the project make clear references to concepts of climate change risk / resilience. These climate change risk / resilience related objectives, explicitly integrated with GEDSI related concerns, are also the primary objectives of the project. There is an objective that integrates or targets the differential impacts on vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Further, there is strong alignment of objective statements with information included in Section 2 of the PDD on climate change risk problems.

Rubrics for criteria 3: Activities clearly link with risk-related objectives and understanding of problem

Score	Description
0	The activities and strategies included in the PDD do not clearly align with the climate change risk / resilience objectives. Moreover, it is not clear how the activities and strategies link with aspects of the climate change risk problem(s) outlined in the Context and Analysis section (Section 2) of the PDD.
1	Activities and strategies included in the PDD do appear to align with climate change risk / resilience-related objectives, but for some (relevant) activities this is not fully clear. For some or all activities, insufficient information is included in the PDD to clearly show the linkages between activities and the climate change risk problem analysis (outlined in Section 2 of the PDD: Context and Analysis). It is thus unclear how and why some activities are expected to lead to the end-of-project change (i.e. objectives) that is intended.
2	The large majority of activities and strategies included in the PDD clearly align with the climate change risk / resilience objectives, with integrated GEDSI. However, for some or all activities, insufficient information is included in the PDD to clearly show the linkages between activities and the climate change risk problem analysis (outlined in Section 2 of the PDD: Context and Analysis). It is thus unclear how and why some activities are expected to lead to the end-of-project change (i.e. objectives) that is intended.
3	All activities and strategies included in the PDD strongly align with the climate change risk / resilience / GEDSI objectives. It is also clear from the information included the linkages between activities and the climate change risk problem analysis (outlined in Section 2 of the PDD: Context and Analysis). Strategies that address increased inequalities due to climate risks, as well as supporting capacities to manage them, are well articulated. There is thus good information to explain how and why all activities are expected to lead to the end-of-project change (i.e. objectives) that is intended.

3. Strategies

Criteria and values

- **Rio Markers** are one **'lens'** best complemented by other **criteria** if we want to understand the **value** of the investment
- Using the **OECD DAC criteria** draws our attention to the importance of not only tracking performance (effectiveness); but **the model** of the Fund in addressing needs and balancing priorities (**relevance**) and it's fit in the wider context (**coherence**)



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Intermediate outcomes

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Relevance: are we doing the right things?

Impact: what difference are we making?

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Effectiveness: how well are we doing it?

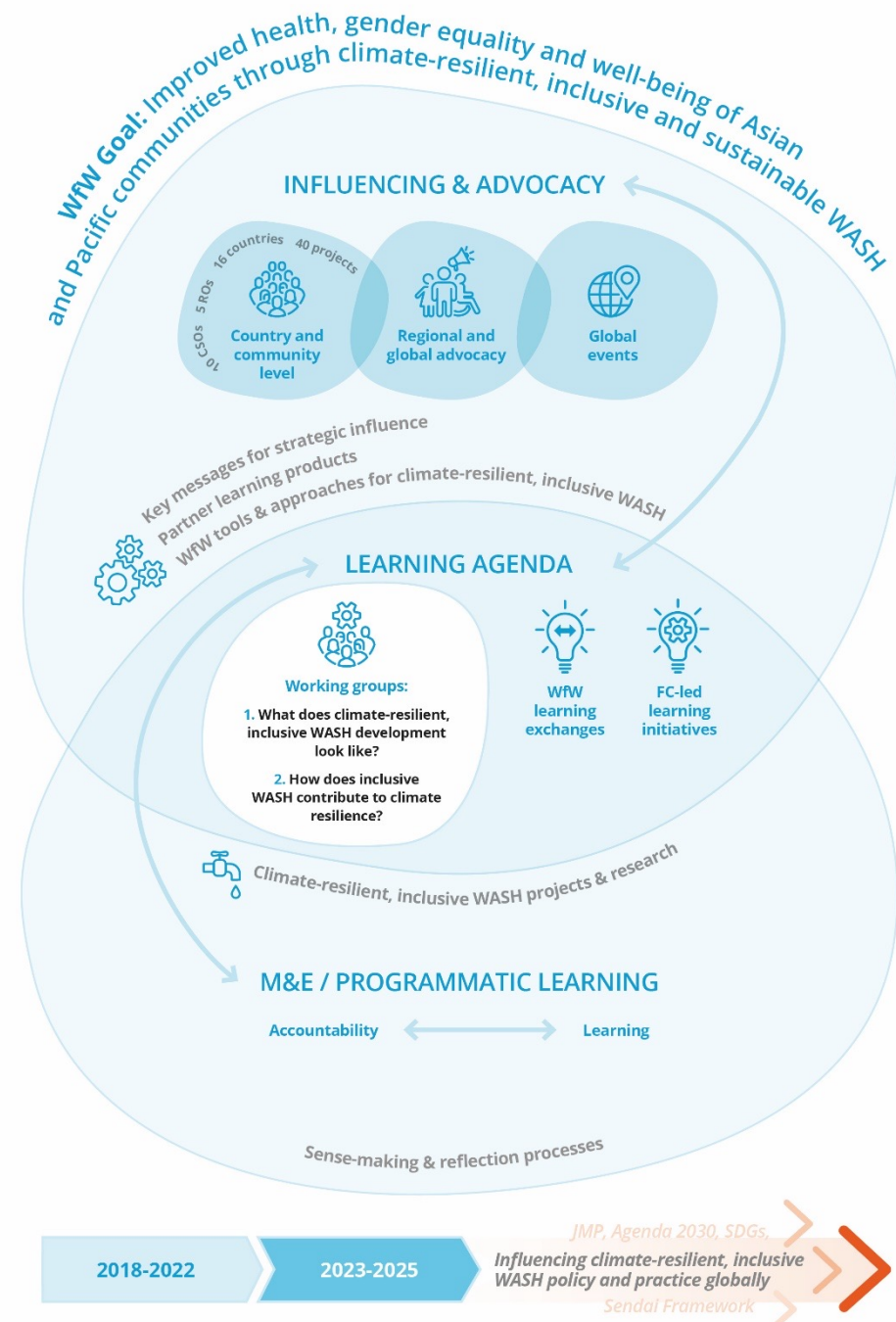
Adapting our MEL and K&L

‘Exploring...’

- Refreshing our shared Learning Agenda
- ‘Seeking surprise’ (Gujit, 2008): looking for unintended consequences
- Learning from project experience – locally led adaptation
- Understanding problem framing: how and what is valued as ‘risk’ and ‘vulnerability’

‘Explaining...’

- Providing accountability for investment
- Ongoing monitoring: process & outcome



Summary

- Gap between climate **commitments** and **action**
- Potential for **distortion** if we apply the Rio Markers bluntly
- Nesting the markers in our **MEL Framework** helps provide a more holistic picture
- Rio Markers are **the start of an ongoing discussion**
- Understanding **climate risk and vulnerability** is **dynamic not static**
- We are exploring **what locally led climate resilient inclusive WASH looks like** via our Learning Agenda together with our partners
- Fund is a **test case** – we are **learning as we are doing**
- Importance of us **documenting process** as well as outcomes



Women collect water during the dry season in Lao PDR (Credit: SNV / Bart Verweiji)

<https://www.waterforwomenfund.org>



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