



# USAID/SOUTHERN AFRICA RESILIENT WATERS PROGRAM – END-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Assessing the Design of a Transboundary Program

**January 2024**

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## ABSTRACT

Resilient Waters was a five-year (2018-2023), \$32 million U.S. Agency for International Development/Southern Africa activity implemented by Chemonics International with a consortium of partners including the Centre for Sustainability Transitions at the University of Stellenbosch, Genesis Analytics, JG Afrika, and Peace Parks Foundation (PPF). Aiming to build more resilient and water-secure Southern African communities and ecosystems in the Limpopo and Okavango River basins, Resilient Waters worked at the local, national, and transboundary levels to improve the management of natural resources and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation services.

Resilient Waters was designed as a highly ambitious program of work, building on the baselines, activities, and research of previous and concurrent programs, specifically the Southern African Regional Environmental Program (SAREP) and the Resilience in the Limpopo River Basin Program (RESILIM). This performance evaluation focused primarily on program design aspects, assessing the successes and challenges of working in an integrated way across different thematic areas of biodiversity; livelihoods; water, sanitation, and hygiene; and climate adaptation. A further query revolved around how best to work across basins and landscapes and vertically from regional to local levels in terms of governance, policy formulation and implementation.

Having interviewed over 50 stakeholders and reviewing internal and external documentation, the Evaluation Team noted that Resilient Waters made much appreciated and significant contributions to water resource management within the two water basins. While COVID-19 hampered Resilient Waters' efforts, the Resilient Waters approach succeeded in important ways: i) by strengthening the institutions mandated to oversee water and natural resources management; ii) by broadening the discourse to include other stakeholder groups; iii) by emphasizing the benefits of integrated approaches across sectors; and iv) by introducing a more meaningful gender equality and social inclusion lens than merely counting the numbers of marginalized participants engaged in activities.

Further conceptual framing appears to have been warranted to better reflect Resilient Waters' aims and how to understand and measure success through a resilience lens that is more nuanced geographically and thematically. Limited integration occurred across sectors at the community level, given that grantees often operated in silos with minimal geographic overlap among activities. Working with so many institutions, across two sizeable river basins and attempting to meet USAID expectations by working from the community to regional level was likely overly ambitious and did not allow the project to target support optimally. The contract indicators and targets were not sufficiently focused on resilience, integration, or sustainability and may have led to a business-as-usual approach instead of looking for more innovative processes, activities, and solutions. Despite being considered a "follow-on" to SAREP and RESILIM, few interventions directly built on these projects. Ultimately, the five-year project timeline, and the even shorter timeframes for grants, limited the potential for sustainability.

Key recommendations revolve around optimizing partner contributions and stakeholder ownership; ensuring that indicators and targets are resilience-oriented; overlapping activities more geographically to allow for more intentional integration; paying more attention to relational mapping to understand interdependencies and mutual accountabilities; and designing learning loops with partner interests more specifically in mind.

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## ACRONYMS

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| BUPUSA   | Buzi, Pungwe, and Save   |
| CISL     | University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership          |
| CST      | Center for Sustainability Transitions                                    |
| DFID     | U.K. Department for International Development                            |
| EQ       | Evaluation Question  |
| FGD      | Focus Group Discussion   |
| GEF      | Global Environment Fund  |
| GESI     | Gender Equality and Social Inclusion                                     |
| GIZ      | <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>           |
| GLTFCA   | Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area                          |
| IUCN     | International Union for Conservation of Nature                           |
| IWASP    | International Water Stewardship Program (GIZ)                            |
| KAZA     | Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area                          |
| KII      | Key Informant Interview  |
| LIMCOM   | Limpopo Watercourse Commission   |
| LSGA     | Limited Scope Grant Agreement  |
| LUCIS    | Land Use Conflict Identification System                                  |
| MEL      | Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning                                     |
| NGO      | Non-Governmental Organization  |
| NRM      | Natural Resources Management   |
| OKACOM   | Okavango Watercourse Commission  |
| PPF      | Peace Parks Foundation   |
| RBO      | River Basin Organization   |
| RESILIM  | Resilience in the Limpopo Basin Program                                  |
| RFP      | Request for Proposals  |
| SADC     | Southern Africa Development Community                                    |
| SADC-GMI | Southern Africa Development Community – Groundwater Management Institute |
| SAP      | Strategic Action Plan  |
| SAREP    | Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program                           |
| SDC      | Swiss Development Cooperation  |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| SOW      | Statement of Work   |
| SWFF     | USAID's Securing Water for Food Challenge Fund            |
| SWP      | USAID's Sustainable Water Partnership                     |
| TFCA     | Transfrontier Conservation Area                           |
| ToC      | Theory of Change  |
| USAID    | U.S. Agency for International Development                 |
| USAID/SA | U.S. Agency for International Development/Southern Africa |
| WASH     | Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene                            |
| WBR      | Waterberg Biosphere Reserve                               |
| WRM      | Water Resources Management                                |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Resilient Waters was a five-year (2018-2023), \$32 million United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Southern Africa (SA) activity implemented by Chemonics International with a consortium of partners including the Centre for Sustainability Transitions at the University of Stellenbosch, Genesis Analytics, JG Afrika, and Peace Parks Foundation. Resilient Waters aimed to build more resilient and water-secure communities and ecosystems in the Limpopo and Okavango River basins by working at the local, national, and regional levels across seven countries (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe).

USAID/SA has supported a range of initiatives over the past 15 years, partnering with key regional institutions, such as Southern African Development Community, river basin organizations (RBOs) including the Limpopo Watercourse Commission and Okavango Watercourse Commission, and Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) including the Greater Limpopo and Kavango Zambezi to address these challenges. Building on previous work under the Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program (SAREP) and the Resilience in the Limpopo Basin Program (RESILIM), also implemented by Chemonics International, Resilient Waters sought to blend different thematic responses around biodiversity; livelihoods; water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); and climate adaptation into a coherent and ambitious program of work.

The program had the following four integrated objectives:

- Improved transboundary water security and resource management;
- Increased access to safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services;
- Strengthened ability of communities and key institutions to adapt to change, particularly the impacts of climate change; and
- Conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Resilient Waters focused heavily on strengthening the regional institutions that are at the heart of the resilience agenda. This included embedding staff and providing significant technical assistance to both the RBOs and TFCAs active in the Okavango and Limpopo basins. Grants to non-governmental organizations (23 in total with an allocation of US\$5.6m) brought significant activity on the ground to support communities in their efforts to become more resilient to shocks and stresses.

### EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

USAID/SA requested that the Urban Resilience by Building and Applying New Evidence in WASH (URBAN WASH) activity, implemented by Tetra Tech and partners, conduct a performance evaluation of the USAID Resilient Waters activity. The primary purpose of this evaluation was to determine whether the assistance provided through Resilient Waters met its stated objectives and whether the design had been robust and effective and thereby the expectations realistic. USAID/SA will use the evaluation findings to inform future integrated natural resources management programming in the region.

The evaluation used a mixed methods approach including a desk review of Resilient Waters, partner, grey, and academic literature combined with primary qualitative data collection through interviews with over 50 key informants to answer the evaluation questions (EQs). The Evaluation Team conducted in-person interviews with grantees and beneficiary institutions in both the Okavango and Limpopo River basin areas. The primary limitation was the availability or responsiveness of around 10 percent of key informants identified as priority sources of information by either USAID or Resilient Waters.

The EQs listed below are an abridged version of those provided by USAID in the statement of work (SOW) (see Annex I for the complete SOW). These questions focus on gaining an enhanced understanding of the strategic and technical approach undertaken by Resilient Waters and any challenges faced as a function of the original USAID design:

1. Resilient Waters used a cross-sectoral/multi-earmark/integrated approach to building resilience by looking at water resources management, water and sanitation, climate change adaptation, and biodiversity conservation. How successful was this approach at horizontal integration across themes and approaches and what could be improved going forward?
2. Resilient Waters sought to build upon prior and existing investments at multiple scales in the Okavango and the Limpopo River Basins. How did operating across a multi-regional landscape affect the ability to meet Resilient Waters' objectives? How did the implementation at different governance levels affect the ability to build resilience? How effective was Resilient Waters at creating scalable activities that are ready for basin-wide or regional adoption/replication?
3. As an activity that builds on over 15 years of multiple prior interventions, what type or which interventions of Resilient Waters do stakeholders deem sustainable?

The Evaluation Team was not tasked with validating whether indicators and targets had been met, nor with assessing the performance of grantees or beneficiary institutions. The primary focus was on program design with interviewee perspectives forming a key part of the Evaluation Team's analysis.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Defining Resilience and the Implications for Resilient Waters

An instrumental part of this performance evaluation was to understand if the concept of resilience was understood in the same way by different stakeholders. Stakeholders expressed relative uniformity in the headlines – understanding resilience as primarily about “being able to bounce back from or persisting through shocks and stresses”. Beyond this, nuances emerged recognizing that shocks and stresses (and thus responses) are likely to be different across geographies, even within the same basin. The analysis of threats needs to be done in differentiated ways based on geophysical characteristics, socio-economic factors, and political/governance aspects.

Although related, potential threats for key thematic components of Resilient Waters (biodiversity, WASH, livelihoods, etc.) can play out differently. By way of example, a response to flooding may be quite different from a biodiversity, WASH, or livelihoods perspective. For WASH, resilience usually leads to discussions around ensuring both the durability and the financing of infrastructure. For livelihoods, discussions center around market factors, market links and market access. Similarly, resilience and the inherent threats in a basin may be viewed differently if the lens is from a conservation or development perspective. Several interviewees noted the different perspectives and subsequent responses of seeing resilience as a measurable target, an outcome, a process or journey, or a mindset.

Despite the overarching goal of building resilience, several interviewees noted that the Resilient Waters targets, which were not necessarily resilience-oriented, drove the approach. Most targets were more *business as usual* (like increasing access to WASH services). In contrast, resilience-oriented indicators or targets would emphasize absorptive and adaptive capacities (rather than assets and access), relationships and interdependencies, processes, context sensitivity, and complex causality (Reyers et al. 2022). This more exacting framing would likely have shifted the conversation within Resilient Waters and with primary partners quite dramatically. Thus, while there is significant appreciation for the wide range of Resilient Waters activities, the overarching vision of how best to move toward greater resilience, and how this should be differentiated across contexts, institutions, and sub-sectors, could have been clearer.



A key thread that emerged was around Resilient Waters' implicit framing around building resilient institutions, forging resilient relationships, and ensuring resilient communities. Significant effort went into the former with interventions to bolster policies, strategies, and capacities to deliver on regional institutions' mandates. While appreciated, these efforts could have been more partnership oriented rather than seeing the regional institutions as "beneficiaries." Efforts to support relationship building in the region were also appreciated but largely seen as coming too late in the process to make meaningful, sustained connections aimed at sharing information and learning. In terms of the work with communities, this was critical in terms of meeting the USAID-set targets, but with more needed to understand how these efforts fit into a wider resilience lens and more effort to extract and feed learning to policy and decision makers. Seeing resilience as a process or journey, it is unrealistic to expect that five-year programs (with implementation on the ground given significantly less time) will make lasting contributions – thus building on the work of the previous programs (SAREP and RESILIM) made sense.

### **Reviewing Integrated Programming**

It is widely recognized that water insecurity must be tackled through interventions that are integrated across different themes (resource management, access to WASH services, strengthened capacity of communities, and conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services). This means horizontally integrating considerations at the local level, for example, around elephant population management and wildlife corridors in relation to water access; where to site boreholes for human settlements; how best to safeguard livelihood investments; etc. However, per Resilient Waters staff, grantees were generally chosen for their contributions to specific objectives. Most grantees struggled to clearly articulate the interlinkages between sectors except in the most basic ways despite acknowledging that communities do not address problems in siloes but rather take a holistic approach to their development. Staff and consortium partners could articulate theoretical connections but were not able to speak to significant examples where activities were linked across Resilient Waters objectives. Overall, interviewees generally suggested that "there could have been a lot more synergies" particularly between biodiversity and livelihoods activities.

Improving cross-sectoral integration in the first instance means revisiting the indicators to ensure that they are not driving siloed responses. The indicators would then shape more intentional partnerships among consortium members and with other stakeholders with greater overarching ownership of the ways in which integration (through sequencing of interventions, for example) could most effectively be institutionalized. Navigating this complexity would benefit from robust data management and data sets.

### **Operating at Multiple Levels and across Multiple Geographies**

The stakeholder landscape across Southern Africa is complicated with significant power dynamics among member states that influence priorities, timeframes, and decision-making processes; and often overlapping delegations of authority, expertise, and spheres of influence among regional authorities and agencies. Needing to show results relatively quickly and without channeling funding directly to or through the regional organizations, a timebound project like Resilient Waters needed to design interventions aimed at strengthening these institutions that ideally did not need to wait for the infrequent regional riparian country working group meetings for approval. Even with the continuity of staff being carried over from previous interventions and thus familiar with the landscape, Resilient Waters' goals were formidable given the financial allocation (significant as a total but limited when spread across six countries and two sizeable river basins) and the timeframe of five years. Given such complications, the Evaluation Team expected to see updated contextual and institutional mapping to clearly pinpoint where interventions would have greatest impact.

Resilient Waters worked both with RBOs and TFCAs with the important aim of bringing together existing transboundary institutions, which are formally tasked with the management of natural resources and waters independently yet in the same geographies. Working across so many countries proved to be

*“a challenge because the program was so big, and it had so many political orientations within it, that we never really deeply invested in aligning”* (Resilient Waters consortium member). Working at all different governance levels, Resilient Waters was expected to make connections up and down the chain based on the priorities and workplans of the different levels. The aim was also to prompt cross-pollination and cross-fertilization among the different transboundary institutions. Based on interviewee feedback, this occurred only to a limited degree.

### **Assessing the Likelihood of Sustainability**

During stakeholder interviews, the Evaluation Team probed for Resilient Waters-supported activities and interventions that were most likely to be sustainable. Resilient Waters’ grants program admirably covered a wide range of complex issues. As noted in the Reflections Workshop Report though, there was a *“general sense that having a multitude of small projects, while appealing, dilutes impact.”* Resilient Waters activities needed more time to be successful or to determine how best to scale them within a geographic area or replicate them in different contexts. As one grantee noted: *“We usually talk about 6 years of adoption (by farmers) to achieve sustainability...”*

Resilient Waters activities will likely be sustainable if they were requested by “beneficiaries” and key decision-makers are engaged, i.e., that *“...the criteria [for selecting interventions] should come from the organizations that you are working with”* (Resilient Waters stakeholder). The Evaluation Team concurs with the sentiments of one Resilient Waters staff member: *“Some incredible things happened through the program that were filling a very specific need and getting these sharing agreements or new management structures or conservation areas more formalized. The program was very good at that, but maybe not enough around making sure that these things keep on going.”*

Interventions that could clarify incentives and risks and articulate clear short, medium, and long-term benefits were more likely to be sustained, such as the advances of non-timber forest product enterprises and the mitigation of human and wildlife conflict work aimed at improving incomes and yields of small-scale farmers. Indeed, through Resilient Waters, there was improved understanding at the local level of how to create sustained markets for sustainability-oriented products or indigenous market products. However, planned interventions had a short timeframe and were not always fully funded, (e.g., no construction of fencing aimed at mitigating human wildlife conflicts, or water points to enhance livelihood activities).

As noted by one stakeholder, *“In all the basins, nothing you can do is wrong, but are you doing the best thing? So, for example, someone will have to bite the bullet to put the monitoring in place – otherwise in 30 years’ time, you will have exactly the same problems.”* It will remain difficult to determine the likely sustainability without the data to understand the impact interventions are having, and any unintended effects that may negatively affect other communities, biodiversity considerations, water quality, or other issues.

### **OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Evaluation Team explored whether the concept of resilience was understood in the same way across the Resilient Waters team, partner organizations, grantees, and other stakeholders. The conceptual framing of resilience has been under debate for a number of years and so the Evaluation Team has been careful not to hold Resilient Waters accountable for the latest arguments and definitions. While the headlines of bouncing back from shocks was commonly understood, more could have been explored around the implications on resilience of working across different geographies and sectors.

In summarizing a response to the EQs specifically, greater conceptual framing for Resilient Waters appears to have been warranted to better convey the aims for the project and how to understand and measure success through a resilience lens that is more nuanced geographically and thematically. There was limited integration across sectors at the community level, given that grantees often operated in silos and there was minimal geographic overlap among activities. Working with so many institutions, across

two sizeable river basins and attempting to meet USAID expectations by working from the community to regional level was likely overly ambitious and did not allow the project to target their support optimally. The contract indicators and targets were not sufficiently focused on resilience, integration, or sustainability and may have led to a business-as-usual approach instead of looking for more innovative processes, activities, and solutions. Having numerous more sector-specific indicators focused on project outputs drove a lot of project decision making. Despite being considered as a “follow-on” to SAREP and RESILIM, there was not a direct follow-on to many interventions. The five-year project timeline, and especially the even shorter timeframes for grants, limited the chance of achieving sustainability.

Critiques notwithstanding, Resilient Waters made much appreciated and significant contributions to how water resources are managed and accessed within the two water basins of the Okavango and Limpopo. While COVID-19 hampered its efforts, the Resilient Waters approach has succeeded in important ways: i) by strengthening the institutions mandated to oversee water and natural resources management; ii) by broadening the water resource discourse to include other stakeholder groups; iii) by emphasizing the need to overcome the predisposition to operate in silos through a focus on the benefits of integrated water and natural resource management approaches across sectors; and iv) by introducing a more meaningful gender equality and social inclusion lens than merely counting the numbers of marginalized participants engaged in activities.

Key recommendations revolve around optimizing partner contributions and stakeholder ownership; ensuring that indicators and targets are resilience-oriented; overlapping activities more geographically to allow for more intentional integration; paying more attention to relational mapping to understand interdependencies, competition, and mutual accountabilities; and designing learning loops more with partner interests in mind.

## EVALUATION PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Southern Africa (SA) mission requested that the Urban Resilience by Building and Applying New Evidence in WASH (URBAN WASH) activity,<sup>1</sup> implemented by Tetra Tech and partners, conduct a performance evaluation of the USAID Resilient Waters activity. The primary purpose of this evaluation has been to determine whether the design of Resilient Waters had been robust and effective and thereby the expectations realistic. USAID/SA will use the evaluation findings to inform future integrated natural resources management programming in the region.

This document provides the findings from the evaluation together with a set of recommendations for USAID and potential implementing partners going forward. USAID/SA is the primary intended audience for the report. The evaluation statement of work (SOW) provided by USAID/SA is included as Annex I.

## EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The Evaluation Team consisted of an expert in WASH governance and evaluation who served as the Team Lead, a transboundary water and natural resources specialist, a climate adaptation specialist, an evaluation specialist, and a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Specialist. Annex VII provides detailed information about the evaluation team.

The evaluation used a mixed methods approach including a desk review and primary qualitative data collection and analysis to answer the EQs. Primary data collection included key informant interviews (KIIs) and site observations. The evaluation started in June 2023, initial national-level interviews took place in June-July, field work occurred in August and September, and, having incorporated USAID/SA comments and suggestions, the Evaluation Team submitted this final report in January 2024.

### Resilient Waters Activity Overview

Resilient Waters was a five-year (2018-2023), \$32 million activity implemented by Chemonics with a consortium of partners including the Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST) at the University of Stellenbosch, Genesis Analytics, JG Afrika, and Peace Parks Foundation (PPF). Resilient Waters aimed to build more resilient and water-secure Southern African communities and ecosystems in the Limpopo River and Okavango River basins by working at the local, national, and transboundary levels to improve the management of transboundary natural resources and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation services. The program worked in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Resilient Waters built on more than 15 years of prior investments in strengthening transboundary cooperation through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other regional structures, such as river basin organizations (RBOs) including the Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM), Okavango Watercourse Commission (OKACOM), and Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) including the Greater Limpopo and Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) TFCAs.

The program had the following four integrated objectives:

- Improved transboundary water security and resource management;
- Increased access to safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services;
- Strengthened ability of communities and key institutions to adapt to change, particularly the impacts of climate change; and
- Conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services.

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<sup>1</sup> URBAN WASH is a centrally funded activity of USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. It supports USAID's goal of promoting impactful, sustainable, equitable, and climate-resilient water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and water resources management (WRM) policy and programming in urban and peri-urban areas through strengthening evidence-based decision making of partners and host governments at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

Prior to beginning field work, and to inform the Evaluation Work Plan, the Evaluation Team undertook a detailed desk review of documents and reports to understand the activity's progress as well as the context in which it was being implemented. Project-specific documents and sources of information reviewed by the Evaluation Team included:

- Resilient Waters Contract (Section C)
- Approved Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Annual Work Plans and Annual Reports
- Quarterly Progress Reports and any feedback received from USAID/SA
- USAID or project specific GESI assessments and/or action plans
- Country reports
- Success stories, case studies, presentations, snapshots, and other communication material
- Implementation strategies, technical deliverables, capacity assessments, and activity reports
- Training and/or capacity building materials
- Joint publications with partners (roadmaps, policy documents, etc.)
- Partner institution strategies, management plans, assessments, etc.
- End of project reports for the Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program (SAREP) and the Resilience in the Limpopo Basin Program (RESILIM),
- Grey, academic, government and other literature describing related development partner activities and wider analysis to provide context.

To complement the document review, the Evaluation Team identified key informants in close consultation with USAID/SA and the Resilient Waters team during initial planning meetings. The desk review guided an understanding of the EQs and a list of probing questions to include in the KIIs. Annex II provides a summary of data sources, data collection and analysis methods.

Primary data collection occurred through KIIs and observations during site visits. The Evaluation Team did not conduct household surveys or meetings with communities, as these were deemed not relevant to the task. The Evaluation Team conducted 41 interviews and focus group discussions with 55 key informants from USAID/SA [2], Resilient Waters staff including those present at the start of the activity [11], staff of each consortium partner [11], key partner and beneficiary institution staff [11], Resilient Waters grantee staff [14] covering almost half of the Resilient Waters grantee institutions, and consultants to Resilient Waters and wider stakeholders [6].

The Evaluation Team divided into two sub-teams with two team members visiting Botswana, traveling over seven days to Maun, Shakawe, Kasane, and Gaborone. The second team visited the Limpopo River Basin area traveling over five days to Watervaal, Tohoyandou, Hoedspruit and Skukuza (Kruger National Park). This provided the opportunity to speak in person with numerous stakeholders in both the Okavango and Limpopo River basins in Northern Botswana and in Northeastern South Africa, and for interaction with some of the grantee activities funded under Resilient Waters, like those of Pabalelo Trust and EcoExist. (In-person interviewees are noted in Annex IV.)

Interviews were semi-structured based on the EQs with planned sub-questions and areas for further probing depending on the familiarity with the topic of the interviewee (see Annex III). Interviews were recorded, with permission granted from the interviewees, for the purpose of capturing the discussions most accurately. Interview recordings were then transcribed for qualitative coding. The Evaluation Team

developed a coding tree and a set of two to four key codes for each of the EQs. The Evaluation Team used the cloud-based Dedoose software platform for qualitative data analysis.

The team used secondary data from the desk review to provide contextual background to help explain the results and to triangulate findings from the qualitative analysis. The Evaluation Team reviewed monitoring data collected by Resilient Waters to support findings and recommendations, but, as the primary focus was on the design of Resilient Waters, was not tasked with confirming the quality or accuracy of the data.

The Evaluation Team provided USAID/SA with a mid-point and pre-drafting briefing and regular updates describing progress, emerging findings, and upcoming evaluation activities.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The main limitation to conducting the performance evaluation was the lack of availability or responsiveness of some key individuals to requests for interviews. Scheduling interviews often took a number of attempts with several interviewees agreeing to a set schedule, but then not turning up or being unavailable at the last minute. In the end, speaking with over 50 people over the course of 41 interviews provided critical mass for the gathering of information sufficient to respond to the EQs in a meaningful way.

Although not the task within the Performance Evaluation SOW to validate their efforts, the Evaluation Team had limited in-person view of grantee activities, relying mostly on documentation and virtual interviews, to put the full Resilient Waters program of work into context. Given the evaluation's focus on the design of Resilient Waters, the Evaluation Team focused on how the Resilient Waters pieces fit together rather than delving into the details of specific activities. That said, probing questions were asked to obtain clear examples that backed up stakeholder views, but these were not always forthcoming, with many stakeholders gravitating towards more overarching responses.

For key partner institutions, the lines were often blurred between what occurred under Resilient Waters and what transpired in prior programs (like SAREP or RESILIM), as well as relations with other concurrent USAID-funded projects. Thus, the Evaluation Team was not always able to tease out the specifics related to Resilient Waters to ensure that responses reflected an accurate picture of the current program.

## **EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The EQs listed below were provided by USAID in the SOW and focus on gaining an enhanced understanding of the strategic and technical approach undertaken by Resilient Waters and any challenges faced as a function of the original USAID design:

- I. The Resilient Waters program used a cross-sectoral/multi-earmark/integrated approach to building resilience by looking at WRM, water and sanitation, climate change adaptation, and biodiversity conservation.
  - a. Compare and contrast the definition of resilience used by USAID, implementing partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries.
  - b. To what extent has the cross-sectoral, technically integrated approach been successful in building resilience in southern Africa among the Program's key beneficiaries (i.e., communities, national and subnational governments, regional institutions) and systems (e.g., ecosystems, governance systems, etc.) at various scales?
  - c. How could cross-sectoral integration have been improved?

2. The Resilient Waters program was required to focus on and build upon prior and existing investments, at multiple scales, in the Okavango and the Limpopo River Basins. There was also scope included for support and activities beyond these focus areas wherever feasible.
  - a. This was the first program to combine multiple river basin landscapes. Did the geographic scope of the Program enhance or negatively affect the ability to meet Program objectives?
  - b. In addition to multiple geographic scales, the Program engaged numerous/different levels of governance, implementing activities at regional, national, sub-national, and local community levels. How did the Program’s implementation at all these levels of governance allow for, enhance, or negatively affect the ability to build resilience and meet Program objectives in southern Africa?
  - c. One of the principles of implementation at the local level was the applicability of an intervention for the region or river basin. How effective was Resilient Waters at creating scalable activities that are ready for basin-wide or regional adoption/replication?
  - d. To what extent did the Program’s multiscale approach enable linkages that help achieve and articulate impacts across a regional landscape? (e.g., upstream-downstream relationship, etc.)
3. As an activity that builds on over 15 years of multiple prior interventions, what type or which interventions of Resilient Waters do stakeholders deem sustainable?

## **BACKGROUND TO RESILIENT WATERS’ CONTEXT AND APPROACH**

This section provides brief commentary on the context in which Resilient Waters was operating and an overarching set of findings on the Resilient Waters design and response. Undoubtedly, the impact of COVID-19 was significant for a project that was largely envisaged to involve significant travel and relationship building from the outset. COVID restrictions limited the ability to engage government departments in a regional approach, so most activities became de facto bilateral programs. With significant restrictions to face-to-face meetings, much of the program of work from the center switched to online and virtual engagements. This worked well for government interaction at national and provincial level (although perhaps less well for local municipalities), and Resilient Waters participated online or in-person in every SADC TFCA Network meeting since inception of the USAID-funded activity, including providing content and facilitating sessions on transboundary water management. Based on interviews, the travel restrictions limited the ability to reach community-level interventions for support and monitoring and to promote physical meetings between beneficiaries, especially across borders.

### **PUTTING RESILIENT WATERS INTO A WIDER CONTEXT**

Section C of the Resilient Waters contract aptly summarizes the context in the region as being:

*“...characterized by considerable inequality in the distribution of water resources, high vulnerability to climate change, extreme variability in seasonal rainfall, as well as in the unequal socio-economic, technical and adaptive capacity of countries to address water and climate related challenges... [p. 9-10] Water is a common thread connecting these diverse challenges; without sound and sustainable stewardship of water resources, the majority of the region’s development challenges will prove intractable.” (p. 11)*

Aligned with the initial design of Resilient Waters, academic literature notes the call for tackling issues of water insecurity *“from an integrated polycentric perspective, taking into account interdependent economic,*

societal, environmental, institutional and technological factors” (Mapaure 2021, 697). While competition for water is endemic across the region, Mapaure further notes that “With the exception of the high impact development scenario of hydropower schemes, the simulated impacts of climate change are considerably larger than those of the development scenarios.” Both the literature and many of the interviews note that more detailed research and, perhaps more importantly, data gathering and monitoring is needed to support the contribution of better water resource management to tackle water insecurity in the face of these climatic threats.

In response, USAID/SA has supported several initiatives aimed at improving:

...transboundary management and decision making for water, biodiversity and associated natural resources in order to promote the sustainable, equitable and rational use of natural resources to meet human development and ecological needs. USAID/SA has partnered with the Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM) through the Resilience in the Limpopo Basin project (RESILIM), the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) through the Southern Africa Regional Environment Program (SAREP), and the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM) through USAID’s recently ended partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). These in turn built upon USAID/SA’s Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Project (active from 2004 to 2009).” Chemonics Contract, (Section C, p.11-12)



**Figure 1: Resilient Waters Geographic Area**

Through its regional programs and direct funding, USAID/SA has also worked with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) to contribute to the study of groundwater resources in the region, specifically in the Ramotswa and the Okavango basins.<sup>2</sup> It also partnered with the SADC Groundwater Management Institute (SADC-GMI), the Water Research Commission of South Africa, IBM Research Africa, and the South African government to explore the potential of utilizing big-data analytics to better understand transboundary water resources and improve decision-making at basin scale.<sup>3</sup>

Resilient Waters was designed to build and expand on these efforts across Southern Africa, with the expectation that the Contractor would:

... support innovative, mutually-reinforcing and adaptive approaches..., [through a] strategic understanding of overlapping ecological, social, economic and political considerations. (Section C, p16)

<sup>2</sup> The information on the KAZA-Grow Project is available online <https://kaza-grow.iwmi.org/>.

<sup>3</sup> The Big Data and Transboundary Water Management Initiative was funded by USAID through the Sustainable Water Partnership (SWP), a global program implemented by Winrock International. More information is available online [https://winrock.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Big\\_Data\\_Case\\_Study.pdf](https://winrock.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Big_Data_Case_Study.pdf).



At the regional and national levels, this meant working within the different political and policy contexts of seven countries in two river basins:

- Okavango at 530,000 square kilometers (213,000 square miles)
- Limpopo at 415,000 square kilometers (160,000 square miles)

This involved a significant program of support to four and then six regional institutions<sup>4</sup> to develop or refine policies, strategies, and approaches, and to exchange learning. Funding was channeled from different USAID funding streams (WASH, biodiversity conservation, and climate change adaptation) to work towards:

- Objective 1: Improved transboundary water security and resource management;
- Objective 2: Increased access to safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services;
- Objective 3: Strengthened ability of communities and key institutions to adapt to change, particularly the impacts of climate change; and
- Objective 4: Conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Building on the baselines and research of previous programs, specifically SAREP<sup>5</sup> and RESILIM,<sup>6</sup> both implemented by Chemonics International, Resilient Waters sought to blend different thematic responses (biodiversity, livelihoods, WASH, etc.) into a coherent and ambitious program of work. Resilient Waters stressed this connectedness as a function of interlocking pieces with the need to “look up, look down, and look to the side,” as noted by a consortium partner interviewee, to understand adjoining influences, barriers, and opportunities. Resilient Waters’ overarching emphasis was on “the four I’s” of implementation, information, innovation, institutions.

## **CONSORTIUM MEMBER ROLES**

With Chemonics International as the lead implementing partner, the consortium consisted of several partners that were familiar with each other from RESILIM and SAREP. Consortium partners included:

- JG Afrika, an environmental engineering firm offering a wide range of services related to infrastructure design and delivery, with offices across South Africa and one in Mozambique, was largely responsible for the WASH component.
- PPF, with its main office in Stellenbosch, a satellite office in Mozambique and implementing projects in both the KAZA and GL TFCAs, was created in the late 1990s to “re-establish, renew and preserve large functional ecosystems that transcend man-made boundaries” (Peace Parks Foundation website, accessed 6 November 2023). PPF works closely with national governments (environment agencies) and the TFCAs, including funding positions within government departments. PPF largely led on activities with the TFCAs under Objective 4 aimed at conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services, with a primary focus on building elements of the Simalaha Conservancy in KAZA.

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<sup>4</sup> Four transboundary organizations formed the primary beneficiaries of Resilient Waters including LIMCOM, the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCAs), the Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM), and the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) TFCA, as well as the SADC-GMI. Subsequently one other regional transboundary organization was added as a primary beneficiary, namely the Buzi, Pungwe, and Save (BUPUSA) Tri-Basin Commission.

<sup>5</sup> Find the final report online at <https://chemonics.com/resource/final-report-usaid-southern-africa-regional-environmental-program/>.

<sup>6</sup> Find the final report online at [https://chemonics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/RESILIM\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://chemonics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/RESILIM_Final_Report.pdf).

- The University of Stellenbosch Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST) “brings together research on transdisciplinarity, complexity theory, sustainability, and social-ecological resilience to inform pressing national, continental, and global sustainability and development challenges.” (CST website, accessed on 6 November 2023). CST’s primary role was to inform and help shape conceptual and intellectual underpinnings for resilience building in complex socio-ecological systems, through the design of a robust Theory of Change (ToC); to develop, support, and help disseminate findings from the Resilient Waters research agenda; and to develop a scholarship program working closely with master and doctoral students, whose research aligned with and supported the objectives of Resilient Waters.
- Genesis Analytics, a global consultancy firm specializing in a range of development inputs with an office in Johannesburg, provided technical support related to monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL).

Given the overarching nature of this evaluation, the broad range of activities and contributions of each of these partners is not analyzed, as these are well captured in the Resilient Waters Annual Reports. It has also not been the task of the Evaluation Team to conduct a partnership review, analyzing the expected and actual contributions of the different partners, or reviewing the arrangements for ensuring partner accountability. That said, a few observations were made during the interviews that might be relevant.

## **RESILIENT WATERS DELIVERY MECHANISMS**

Resilient Waters deployed several mechanisms to deliver on the objectives of the project. The primary mechanism was through delegation to different consortium partners for specific themes and activities. Efforts were made early on to emphasize how these different objectives fit together into a coherent whole to promote resilience in the two basins. In later stages though, interviews with all consortium partners noted that their activities became more siloed in large part to meet the targets that had been set at the outset.

In terms of **engaging with the regional institutions**, Resilient Waters sought to differentiate its efforts with more technical inputs, often using embedded staff, for policy, strategy development and coordination support for the more advanced regional bodies, and management and administrative support for the more nascent organizations. This fits well into the institution building component of Resilient Waters’ work, as described in more detail below in response to EQ1b and ties into the vertical integration discussions in response to EQ2.

With a total of US\$5.6 million available, a further Resilient Waters mechanism revolved around a series of **grants** (23 in total at a maximum of US\$200,000 each) to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop and deliver relevant activities in communities in the targeted basins. As noted, with COVID-19 impacting Resilient Waters’ ability to deliver field level activities, grants were appropriately seen as an ideal way of making a significant contribution while also helping to achieve the Resilient Waters targets. Grant activities were meant to cover all four Resilient Waters objectives and be spread out across the riparian states from Angola to Mozambique. In most cases, grants were provided to organizations to scale or expand work in which they were already engaged. Some extensions and follow-on grants were developed towards the end of the project, for example, to develop the Okavango Fisheries Management Plan with support from the Namibian Nature Foundation, or a program for mopani worm farming and harvesting in Zimbabwe with Sapphire.

**Scholarships** offered to 11 postgraduate students through the CST provided a further channel to advance knowledge and learning around resilience. With not a lot of resources in the region for this type of activity, the demand from post-graduate students was significant and this part of the program was highly appreciated.

## KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

### EQ 1A – DEFINING RESILIENCE AND HOW THIS SHAPED RESILIENT WATERS’ APPROACH TO INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

*[Compare and contrast the definition of resilience used by USAID, implementing partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries.]*

#### Understanding the Concept of Resilience

The SOW for the assignment asked whether the concept of resilience was understood in the same way across the Resilient Waters team, partner organizations, grantees, and other stakeholders. Indeed, resilience in the literature is not uniformly unpacked in the same way even if the headlines of “persisting through shocks and stresses” or “being able to bounce back” are commonly articulated. USAID’s own definitions and policy around the concept of resilience date back to 2012, and a draft policy document was released for consultation in early 2023. This draft policy defines resilience as “*The ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.*”

Given that the discourse and terminology has been advancing rapidly over the past five years, and are being used in a variety of sectors from WASH to Disaster Risk Reduction, with a wide range of concepts and definitions competing for primacy, evaluation exercises like this one need to be careful about making sure that the analysis is guided by reasonable expectations as based on the timeframes and context in which the project was designed and delivered. The analysis below seeks to position Resilient Waters appropriately while also seeking to determine how best to arrive at conclusions and recommendations that can advance USAID’s thinking.

*Resilience* is generally seen as a framing that revolves around the capacity to adapt as the threats to individuals, institutions, and/or systems evolve or shift. In moving past the overarching headlines, a few themes emerged from the interviews with a wide range of Resilient Waters stakeholders that reflect how the concept of resilience was understood across the activity. Firstly, shocks and stresses will likely be different in different geographies, even within the same basin. Putting this in the context of transboundary waters, the analysis of threats and capacities needs to be differentiated based on geographic and geophysical characteristics, socio-economic factors, and political/governance aspects.<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, although they may be related, the potential threats for key thematic components of Resilient Waters (biodiversity, WASH, livelihoods, etc.) likely play out differently. By way of example, a response to flooding (or the threat of flooding) may be quite different from a biodiversity, WASH, or livelihoods perspective. For WASH, resilience often leads to discussions around ensuring both the durability and the financing of infrastructure. For livelihoods, discussions center around market factors, market links

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<sup>7</sup> While the framing around disaster risk reduction is different from Resilient Waters’ more development-oriented focus, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction suggests elements worth analyzing include the following:

- Technological capacity
- Skills and education levels
- Economic status and growth prospects
- Quality of environment and natural resource management institutions
- Livelihood assets
- Political structures and processes
- Infrastructure
- Flows of knowledge and information
- Speed and breadth of innovation

It is worth noting that SADC, with a document published in 2020, has been moving towards an overarching Disaster Risk Reduction Framework with an agreed definition of resilience that applies across all sectors and Directorates.

and market access. Similarly, resilience and the inherent threats in a basin may be viewed quite differently if the lens is from a conservation perspective as opposed to a development perspective.

Several interviewees noted the different perspectives and subsequent responses of seeing resilience as a measurable target, an outcome, a process or journey, or a mindset. Given the gradual shift towards working more in siloes to meet the objectives and targets, looking back on the five-year activity, stakeholders did not see these differences in view or vantage point as posing significant tensions.

During the discussions around resilience as a guiding principle, several interviewees noted that the Resilient Waters targets drove the Resilient Waters approach. Most targets were not necessarily resilience-oriented but more *business as usual* (like increasing access to WASH services without a specific focus on technical durability or ongoing financial security). In contrast, resilience-oriented indicators or targets would emphasize absorptive and adaptive capacities rather than assets and access, relationships and interdependencies, processes (instead of outcomes), context sensitivity, and complex causality (Reyers et al. 2022). This more exacting framing would likely have shifted the conversation within Resilient Waters and with Resilient Waters' primary partners quite dramatically.

Indeed, efforts by the Evaluation Team to draw out stakeholder and context analysis from the Resilient Waters' early stages suggested that clear definitions, guidance, and strategies from a resilience lens had not been determined in any detail. While there is significant appreciation for the wide range of Resilient Waters activities, the overarching vision of how best to move toward greater resilience, and how this should be differentiated across contexts, institutions, and sub-sectors, could have been clearer. This seemed to be confirmed by several Resilient Waters staff, with one noting *"I don't know that we ever got to a consolidated vision of what progress looks like."* This is in part understandable given that the same partners and many of the same individuals were involved in previous iterations of Resilient Waters (SAREP and RESILIM), and thus certain assumptions appear to have been made about how to define the problems and how best to continue the program of work, with whom, and on what basis. According to some stakeholders, this proved problematic going forward as one interviewee noted: *"if you have a loose definition, it allows you to do most anything... and without clear criteria, you don't understand how it all fits together..."* Ultimately the pressure of meeting the targets may have led to a *business-as-usual* approach instead of looking for more innovative and integrated processes, activities, and solutions.

### **Resilient Institutions, Resilient Relationships, and Resilient Communities**

The Resilient Waters' ToC (see Figure 2) ultimately does not provide clarity on how the pieces fit together to galvanize partners and stakeholders around a resilience framing or narrative, how measurements would be taken, and what learning loops should be deployed to understand what was working and what was working less well. To the outside observer, the ToC brings some confusion with overlap on, and a lack of specificity among, activities, outputs, outcomes, and how they support the four program objectives and expected impact. Consortium partners and Resilient Waters staff expressed an opinion that much of the framing, the targets, and the approach had largely been predefined in the initial Request for Proposals (RFP). Ideally, given their specialty in these areas, the CST and Genesis Analytics should have had more prominent roles earlier on in designing the program and ToC using a more integrated complexity and resilience lens. While potentially challenging the funder, this might have led to more connections and cause-effect relations between interventions and programs of work, and the development of more relevant resilience-oriented indicators.

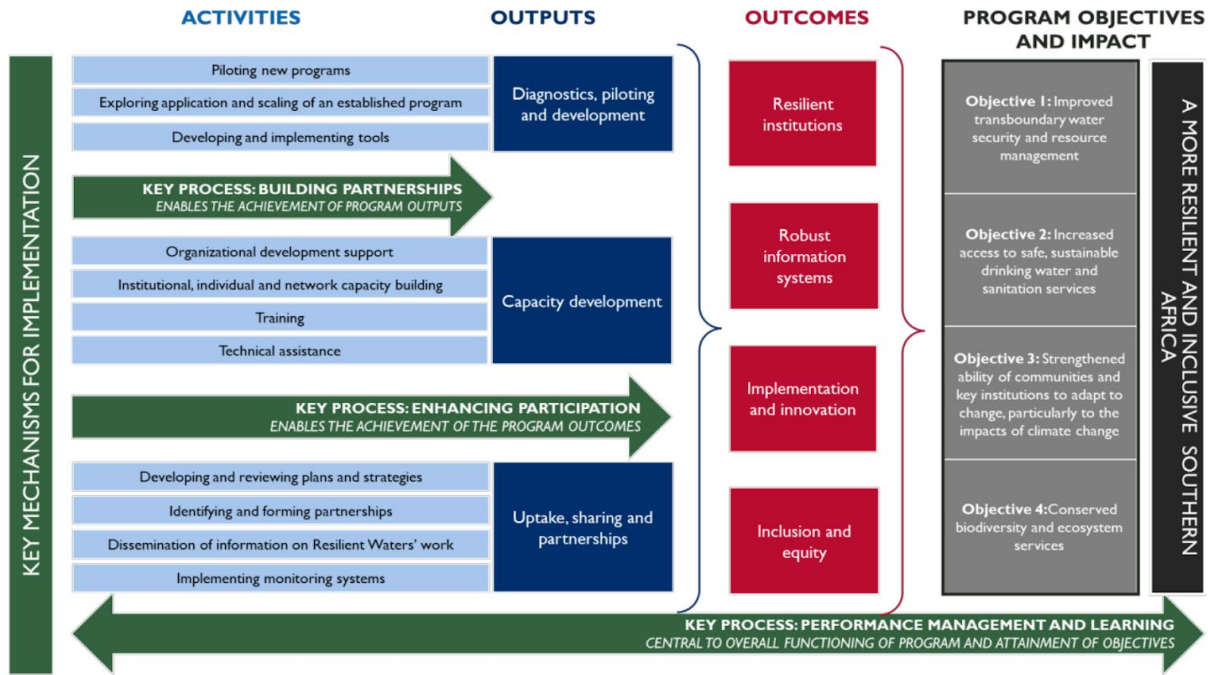


Figure 2: Resilient Waters' Theory of Change

Ultimately, in discussions with over 50 key informants, an implicit Resilient Waters framing started to emerge and was validated around an approach centered on forging resilient institutions, resilient relationships, and resilient communities.

### Supporting Institutions to Be More Resilient

Key informants articulated that **resilient institutions** were defined in a broad sense as having the ability to bounce back after shocks, to ensure that solid leadership was in place, that management and administrative practices (around human resources management and other practical aspects) were maintained, and viable or at least supportive funding arrangements and funding streams were developed and maintained. Being at different stages of development and fulfilling different functions, each regional institution needed tailored strategies to overcome their individual gaps and weaknesses. Such strategies would require analysis that reflected the political economy and positioning of these institutions – how they are viewed, funded, and deployed by the member states; on what issues they are sidelined and where they are consulted; and what they are really expected to deliver. By all accounts, perhaps due to assumptions from previous working relationships, this analysis was not developed in detail between Resilient Waters and the individual institutions. Without these conversations and without joint clarity around strategy, some individuals in these partner institutions expressed an expectation that Resilient Waters would deliver a far more comprehensive and individualized institutional capacity building effort that would drive the delivery of their Strategic Action Plan (SAP).

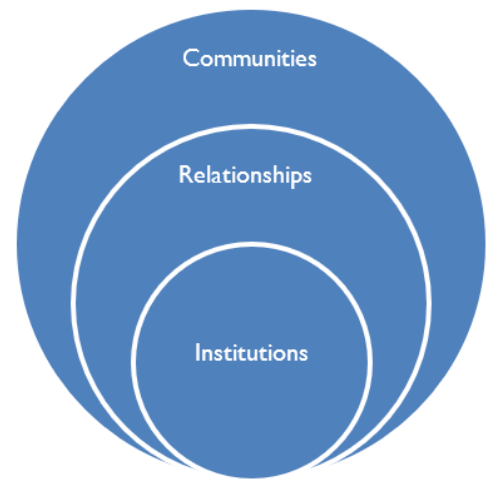


Figure 3: Framing Resilient Waters Activities

With the SAPs' considered by some as "a bit of everything under the sun," Resilient Waters certainly supported the delivery of aspects of the individual institutions' plans. For the more nascent institutions, Resilient Waters activities were clearly fundamental to the organizations' strategy and functionality going forward, like Resilient Waters' efforts to support the establishment of the GLTFCA as a legal entity and helping to develop a financing strategy for the GLTFCA Secretariat. For the more advanced institutions, with inadequate prioritization or notions of sequencing, Resilient Waters was viewed by some as *cherry picking* the easier activities to support, largely as a function of time and resources available.

A key mechanism used to build capacity aimed at more resilient regional institutions was through Limited Scope Grant Agreements (LSGAs), which allowed Resilient Waters to embed staff in target organizations and provide dedicated consultant support for specific tasks. Partner organizations provided mixed feedback on this. Embedded staff were highly appreciated for their contributions, with LIMCOM, for example, noting that embedded staff were instrumental in mobilizing significant Global Environment Fund (GEF) funding, "*which is now being used, in part, to further strengthen the institutional capacities of the LIMCOM Secretariat by filling key technical and administrative positions*" (Reflections Workshop Report). However, interviewees also noted that the process to develop, and then implement, the LSGA funding model took approximately two years of planning for what amounted to relatively small amounts of funding (at roughly US\$100,000 per institution).

Despite the appreciation for this expertise, embedded staff were funded and managed by Resilient Waters (from a distance), which did not allow for sufficient ownership over their work by the institutions themselves, with one partner noting that "*even if we appreciated what they did, [Resilient Waters] were in the driver's seat.*" Embedded staff thus created challenges for the institutions who had to dedicate unfunded human resources to support activities that were in their SAP but may not have been their main priorities. Partner institutions were not always involved in finalizing the terms of reference (ToR), the final selection of consultants, or monitoring of the work being undertaken. While seconding or embedding staff may be useful, the question of trust is bound to arise as to whether the person's allegiance is to the institution for which he/she works. Furthermore, the question of sustainability is raised as the institution may not be able to retain the activities, professional competencies, or the position beyond the funding of the program.

Partners did not know even the approximate amount of funding that had been allocated to their institution, or to specific areas within their institutional mandate. The report from the Reflections workshop noted that Resilient Waters "*needed to align processes with regional needs and objectives more strongly and with the priorities of the specific beneficiary/partner institutions.*" More transparency and negotiation were requested. Key institutions noted that Resilient Waters' approach, while supportive, was more that of a benefactor-beneficiary relationship than a partnership, where strategies, information, ownership, and benefits are more shared.

While the scholarship program was important in terms of building a knowledge base and the next generation of transboundary experts, partner institutions noted that they would have wanted to have more information and engagement with the research and to understand how the work could potentially contribute to their own agendas and strategies. Seemingly operating in a bit of a vacuum with some seeing insufficient strategies for sharing learning within and across the basins, it is unclear how this highly topical work influenced the thinking of key partners, as well as Resilient Waters staff and consortium partners. Thus, there was a need for the students to engage more regularly with regional partners to validate the findings and explore the policy and programming implications of the students' work.

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*"USAID support has been really valuable... It's really hard to get consistent long-term support and many of the things that we have been involved in are long-term strategies to address at policy level as well as implementation on the ground" (Resilient Waters grantee).*

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Smaller, more local grantees expressed significant satisfaction with the Resilient Waters inputs, particularly around support in developing a ToC, a monitoring, evaluation and learning plan, and other organizational strengthening tools. While not explicitly framed in this way, such mentoring efforts helped to prepare these NGOs to be more “donor-ready,” i.e., that they are more prepared to apply for and be successful in bidding for donor funding. From a regional perspective, as described by several informants, where there is so much need at all scales, in all sectors, and for so many, it is very difficult for a donor program to do something wrong or not useful. Hence, the financial support provided to small and growing local-level institutions was arguably one of the Resilient Waters activities that had the most important impact and planted the seeds for resilience building at both institutional and community levels.

### Forging More Resilient Relationships

Resilient Waters’ efforts to forge **resilient relationships** among a wide range of stakeholders were appreciated but seen by most to be a bit too little too late. Along with the webinar series organized by the SADC TFCAs Network and held in 2020, the workshops held towards the end of the Resilient Waters activity in early 2023 were mentioned by several interviewees as thought provoking and helpful. As much of the world learned to engage online due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, some interviewees expressed the view that Resilient Waters could have developed more virtual spaces for stakeholder engagement and exchange, fostering more of a sense of shared learning across the program of work. More could have been done throughout the project to forge greater information sharing, cross activity analysis, refining of conceptual frameworks, and programmatic linkages. In practice, the Evaluation Team did not gain a sense of sustained linkages among the different stakeholders involved in Resilient Waters or who would take on the facilitation role played by Resilient Waters after the project funding had ended.<sup>8</sup> As noted, some expressed a sense of missed opportunities to link the grantee and scholarship work more with the national and regional institutions.

While there was greater familiarity certainly among stakeholders as a result of being connected by Resilient Waters, there was little evidence of a thriving network with institutions keen to share information with others who might benefit from having it. In some sense, this speaks to the lack of a rallying cry around a common framing of issues, as mentioned earlier.

### Support to Biosphere Reserves

With the call for grant proposals, Resilient Waters funded two under-resourced institutions in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. The Vhembe Biosphere Reserve applied for a grant to create a new website for the Reserve that was able to present the vision of the Reserve and its institutionalisation, its past and current activities, and information on the future plans for the area in terms of ecological management and socio-economic development. It also wanted to have part of the website accessible in the two local languages, so the residents of the Reserve could access educational information on the benefits of protecting the Reserve and its ecosystems.

The Waterberg Biosphere Reserve (WBR) applied for a grant to conduct basic training in the management of rural community water provision systems, from tanks to boreholes and communal taps, to reduce the reliability on the local government, which increasingly fails to deliver on water security. Linkages could easily have been made with the efforts of Development Workshop Angola, another grantee focused on similar activities.

Resilient Waters in building a relationship with the WBR provided extra funds to help with the process of changing designation of the WBR to a novel UNESCO category. This process has not been yet concluded.

<sup>8</sup> A primary premise of good facilitation is to become gradually more invisible as the relationships begin to take off with less need of facilitated parties to speak through the facilitator and more evidence of them engaging more directly with each other.

## **Fostering Resilient Communities**

In terms of **resilient communities**, the work completed by Resilient Waters grantees was critical in terms of meeting the targets, but without much overarching discussion on how grantees' work at the community level fit explicitly into a resilience lens. The grant proposal template did not ask for any analysis from grantees around the expected contribution to resilience or, as noted below, around how their work was seeking to integrate across thematic areas, geographic areas, or governance levels.

That said, grantees helped to deliver a wide range of interventions that certainly advanced individual communities' ability to forge more effective development strategies. These ranged from honey production in the far reaches of a national park in Angola, to community water supply also in Angola, to training for communal water delivery system maintenance in the Waterberg communities. While the Evaluation Team was not tasked with validating the specific outcomes of these efforts, as described by the NGOs, it is difficult to see how they can be anything but contributing positive advances for those particular communities and planting a seed for their resilience and water security. What was missing was the feedback loops that saw more analysis of how these activities could be scaled up or replicated to reach more communities.

The Evaluation Team also recognizes that it is hugely challenging and highly unlikely to achieve resilience at the community level in a five-year program of work. This timing challenge was further exacerbated as much of the community activity involved in fact less than two years of implementation time—barely more than one full cycle of farming—due to administrative challenges.

### **EQ 1B – UNPACKING RESILIENT WATERS' APPROACH AND SUCCESSES AT CROSS-SECTORAL, TECHNICALLY INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING**

*[To what extent has the cross-sectoral, technically integrated approach been successful in building resilience in southern Africa among the Program's key beneficiaries (i.e., communities, national and subnational governments, regional institutions) and systems (e.g., ecosystems, governance systems, etc.) at various scales?]*

Section C of the contract notes that the Resilient Waters Program “has four integrated objectives, which are intended to reinforce each other to improve overall water security and resilience of communities and ecosystems” (p. 9). Section C goes on to note that “water sits at the center of an interrelated set of pressing environmental and development challenges.” As per these key statements, the Evaluation Team sought evidence that there was an interplay among the different objectives, particularly through clear strategies, plans for sequencing of activities, and a set of stakeholder maps combined with contextual analysis that explored the contributions of different actors towards water security across different levels. Such integration would mean that interventions across the different themes (resource management, access to WASH services, strengthened capacity of communities, and conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services) would occur within the same geographic areas. At the local level, this suggests horizontally integrating considerations, for example, around elephant population management and wildlife corridors in relation to water access; where to site boreholes for human settlements; how best to safeguard livelihood investments; etc. Due perhaps to time constraints, any learning from such approaches stayed with the grantees and did not appear to materially influence wider policy making and government decision-making or investments.

Given the historical regional context of the lack of water security in the conservation discourse while creating transboundary institutions for the conservation of shared ecosystems, the Evaluation Team looked for natural resource management (NRM) activities that were using water as an entry point to prompt the planning for TFCA's away from species conservation and into sustainable socio-ecological system management. This approach would have also helped to frame activities in rural communities within a causal relation to being the path towards resilient waters. Besides bringing together the TFCA's and river basin governance institutions, and with the exception of the consultancy reports on ecosystem



flows and freshwater strategy for the GLTFCA, this did not happen and the NRM component, as well as most grants, made very little or no direct contribution to the overarching framing around integration to achieve resilience.

The Evaluation Team did not find clear and explicit linkages to water through much of the work supported by Resilient Waters. Indeed, many of the activities supported by Resilient Waters were aimed at strengthening RBOs whose primary mandate is to safeguard water sources and ensure access for thriving communities, economies, and environments. Strengthening those institutions to better deliver on their mandates is important. What was less clear to the Evaluation Team was the rationale for the range of grantee activities that had no meaningful links to water resources management. While grateful for the support that allowed them to expand their activities with communities, grantees themselves noted this disconnect.

In terms of sectoral or thematic integration, as per Resilient Waters staff, grantees were generally chosen for their contributions to specific objectives. Indeed, in the interviews, while noting that communities do not address problems in siloes but rather take a holistic approach to their development, grantees were not generally implementing in the same geographies. Thus, most grantees understandably struggled to clearly articulate the interlinkages expected within a Resilient Waters framing except in the most basic ways. Staff and consortium partners could articulate theoretical connections but were also not able to speak to examples where activities were linked across Resilient Waters objectives. Overall, interviewees generally suggested that “*there could have been a lot more synergies*” across the components.

Although grantees had limited time to implement their activities, a more robust debate was needed around the sequencing of interventions to best build resilience. Grantees often came at this from different angles, even if based on assumptions rather than measurable reality—“*without water supply, other activities are not going to last*” [or] “*if you focus on livelihoods first, the biodiversity and other aspects will fall into place naturally as communities seek to protect their resources*” [or] “*by focusing on inclusion first, your whole framing of resilience becomes more robust.*” Resilient Waters did not provide guidance or thought leadership to grantees around potential sequencing nor did any Resilient Waters activities seek to develop learning around what might be appropriate sequencing in different contexts. Again, the conversations suggest that, although they saw the potential linkages to other development imperatives, the work of the grantees was mostly siloed in relation to the four objectives.

Looking at integration from the perspective of national level priorities, the emphasis in the region regarding biodiversity is generally around sustaining wildlife species due to the high incomes derived from the tourism industry, but hardly ever realized by poor communities in a way that lifts them from the poverty trap. The Evaluation Team was looking for more evidence that, either in the conservation or the livelihood component, Resilient Waters promoted a co-existence approach supporting innovative activities leading to a resilient and sustainable relation between conservation and development objectives. Beyond a few examples (see box), little evidence emerged around such nature-based

### **Working in Elephant Corridors**

One clear example of integrated programming is the work of Pabalelo Trust and their relationship with EcoExist in northwest Botswana. Pabalelo Trust works in communities with a view that support to enhancing livelihoods leads to communities emphasizing other needed aspects like water supply, conservation, and managing biodiversity. EcoExist’s support in designing community programs that focus on elephant corridors and land management through the Botswana Land Board authorities has made them an ideal partner for Pabalelo Trust.

Through Resilient Waters, linkages between wildlife protection and livelihoods were forged. EcoExist provides science-based support to Pabalelo’s work in communities to determine how best to mitigate the problem of crop raiding elephants. Reducing human-elephant conflict proved the making of a solid partnership between the two NGOs based on determining appropriate responses to wildlife corridors that do not hinder and could even support income-generating activities for local communities.

solutions. Given that all rural areas in TFCAs are highly dependent on natural resources for survival and given the decades of mounting conflict between land use for conservation and land use for rural communities, greater evidence of this integration was expected with a view to reducing tensions between development and conservation objectives across the region.

Much of the community work was originally aimed at communities in conservation areas, with an alternative livelihood approach to project design, and a focus on “*creating sound sustainable economic revenues for communities in known climate exposed activities*” (Resilient Waters staff). Indeed, the Evaluation Team expected to see more analysis on the interlinkages at community level, particularly with an understanding, as one grantee noted, that pressures (or successes) on one aspect might have knock-on effects on another: “*If you have managed to address one natural resource, you might just shift the pressure to others*” and then community relationships as a function of vested interests could change as a result.

While the integration of biodiversity and livelihoods objectives was effective in some instances and certainly a much-needed type of cross-sectoral partnership in the conservation sector, the challenges to funding construction of fencing, water points, or other infrastructure hampered some grantees’ efforts. As one grantee noted, “...we were left with mobilizing and training farmers at community meetings,” but without the investments to build the needed infrastructure. In particular, efforts to introduce WASH services proved even more challenging without any construction activities. WASH efforts are very localized in terms of the specific responses required and the institutions involved and take significant time to organize. Beyond supporting water governance training at the local level, integrating access to water supply without any construction activities that could have also enhanced livelihoods interventions proved near impossible. The initial expectation early on in Resilient Waters was that governments would be convinced to find the funding directly or by appealing to other donors and funders for such construction. With the emergence of COVID-19, governments were stretched to engage even if WASH services were seen as a clear response to the pandemic.



**Figure 4: Fence posts for elephant corridor interventions, Shakawe, Botswana. Photo credit: Abbie Jiri**

The Evaluation Team noted that Resilient Waters was focused on traditional rural water supply infrastructure, even when faced with the imperative around access to WASH services brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the early 2000s, much cross-sectoral research has been developed for the Greater Limpopo TFCA on understanding disease spread at the human-livestock-wildlife interface, using a One Health approach, and shared watercourses were early on identified as the critical hotspot for disease spread in the landscape. Some of the Resilient Waters staff were exposed to this research through the annual meetings of the Animal and Human Health for Environment and Development (AHEAD) Working Group for the GLTFCA,<sup>9</sup> and would have had an important entry point

<sup>9</sup> The AHEAD-GLTFCA Working Group was founded at the Durban IUCN World Parks Congress in 2003 by the Wildlife Conservation Society with several regional partners and experts. The records of the meeting and research undertaken by the Working Group is available [online](#) and, while the AHEAD program has now moved to Cornell University Faculty of Veterinary Science, the work continues in KAZA.

with Resilient Waters and the WASH component to test some of the findings through action research. Exceptions included the projects funded with Kruger to Canyons and Waterberg Biosphere Reserve. However, both these activities were under the livelihoods component, rather than under the WASH objective.

### **EQ IC – HOW COULD CROSS-SECTORAL INTEGRATION HAVE BEEN IMPROVED?**

Few questioned the value of integrating approaches across the different themes of Resilient Waters. A key challenge of cross-sectoral integration is around intentionality and the forging of greater interaction (internally among the consortium partners and externally with wider stakeholders) and strategies that identify these scenarios and interlinkages early in the project. Partners like CST bring a range of tools aimed at navigating the contextual complexity described in earlier sections of this report. Robust data management and data sets would support these connections as well. Thus, optimizing the contributions of specialist partners and strengthening the spaces for robust debate (internally and then externally) would strengthen outcomes.

Grantees suggested that Resilient Waters could have played more of a facilitating role, connecting grantees and other stakeholders to highlight opportunities where implementation partnerships or partnerships that combined elements of policy targets, funding, capacity building, research and analysis, and implementation could be impactful. Going forward, this means ensuring more of a geographic overlap so that interventions link and potentially sequence effectively. This might also suggest incorporating more of a scenario-planning approach to the development of the ToC—within a particular set of contextual factors, it might make more sense to start with interventions to galvanize communities, address certain issues, or strengthen decision-making structures.

Some interviewees suggested that a more robust discussion of the indicators was needed at the project design and development stages with key stakeholders to i) respond more to their needs and priorities and ii) incorporate more of a resilience and integration set of lenses. The list of indicators under Resilient Waters was extensive and not always resilience oriented. The siloed approach to the targets did not necessarily reflect the extent to which vertical and horizontal integration could advance resilience in the region. This is where more of an emphasis on mutually supportive learning, to garner greater ownership not only within the consortium but more importantly with the partner organizations and grantees, would have been helpful.

Future programs should seek to integrate wider learning (for example, from USAID programs like Securing Water for Food [SWFF] on higher crop per drop innovations and SWP, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ] NatuRes/International Water Stewardship Program [IWASP] aimed at shifting farming practices to focus on less water intensive cash crops). Such programs have embedded resilience aspects particularly for water issues, helping to better understand the interface among resources, markets, and livelihoods, addressing biodiversity, reduced water use, and climate change pressures.

From an integration perspective, a few further observations can be made. Grantees did not see how they were contributing to the whole project design or how their work was feeding into wider discussions with the key regional institutions. Again, many of the grants were not necessarily water related. While not a problem as they were seen to be building up community resilience, the Evaluation Team expected more of a direct connection to water themes throughout, focused on water savings (higher crop per drop), water access for domestic use and livelihoods, preventing surface and groundwater pollution through a focus on safe sanitation service provision, and nature-based solutions that revolved around water resources management. Again, part of this challenge might have been that Resilient Waters could not easily fund construction of any kind, so water-related infrastructure, like the digging of boreholes or the construction of sanitation facilities, was deemed to be time consuming and cumbersome (i.e., not an effective use of resources) and required significant effort on the part of

grantees to find third party funding for these activities or to find ways to frame their activities in terms of procurement rather than construction. However, it can be argued that this was promoting a business-as-usual approach to water provision, instead of innovation, particularly as the groundwater resources are finite, and already being used without sufficient monitoring by extensive agricultural and mining industries in both the landscapes.

## **EQ 2 – OPERATING AT MULTIPLE LEVELS AND ACROSS MULTIPLE GEOGRAPHIES**

Resilient Waters was conceived as a follow-on program building upon prior USAID regional investment in Southern Africa with several interventions funded or managed by the Environment Office but, primarily, with two landscape-based programs. Both SAREP (2010-2016) and RESILIM-B (2012-2017) were implemented by Chemonics International, with overlapping permanent and consulting staff, as well as consortium partners and beneficiaries. Resilient Waters was created to combine the foci of interventions in both the Kavango-Zambezi and Limpopo River Basins, with the BUPUSA as an additional river basin.

To deliver on the program objectives, the expectation was that Resilient Waters would primarily work closely with key regional institutions. Academic literature notes significant challenges, however, including:

*“Institutional fragmentation across jurisdictions, unequal power among basin actors in different jurisdictions, the potential for high levels of political conflict, and differences in a culture of decision-making... that make the governance of transboundary water systems such a complex challenge.”* (Datla et al. 2023)

Indeed, academic literature further points out higher level challenges across the riparian states that have direct consequences for the transboundary institutions. For example, Botswana declaring the Okavango a Ramsar site has:

*“...impacts on decisions across the riparian states and the power dynamics among them... [noting that] the riparians are actually in a state of mistrust and are ‘in a habit’ of by-passing OKACOM, their own creation.”* (Mapaure 2021)

It is within the context described above that Resilient Waters was seeking to have impact and foster regional resilience building, but with key regional partner organizations that have challenged and often overlapping delegations of authority, expertise, and spheres of influence; and with priorities and timeframes for engagement, and decision making, that are largely set by the member states. Needing to show results relatively quickly and without channeling funding directly to or through the regional partner organizations, a timebound project like Resilient Waters thus needed to design interventions aimed at strengthening these institutions, that ideally did not need to wait for the infrequent regional riparian country working group meetings for approval. As noted by one interviewee, ultimately *“what USAID wants is functioning intergovernmental institutions, but doesn’t want to pay [directly] for that.”*

Even with the head-start and continuity of staff being carried over from previous USAID activities, the objective proposed under the Resilient Waters activity was formidable given the financial allocation (significant as a total but limited when spread across six countries and two river basins, each roughly the size of France) and the timeframe of five years. However, as noted above, the failure to update any existing institutional mapping in the landscapes at regional and national scale may have further complicated the implementation within the consortium not all understanding the opportunities and challenges in the context in the same way and thus approaching the relationships with the regional partners without a consistent voice.

The process of institutional mapping, especially using the Ostrom framework,<sup>10</sup> would have allowed also for initial identification of focal points for the program within each decision-making institution, thus reducing implementation delays with pre-validation of planned activities by the TFCAs and RBOs, as well as national government focal points, and thus reducing the waiting time due to internal agency bureaucracy. Several interviewees acknowledged that for *“the type of grant mechanism like Limited Scope, [which is] to government entities (six awarded to organizations like LIMCOM, GLTFCA...), regional bodies needed to consult with the member states which would delay agreements, the delivery of milestones, reporting, and so “Resilient Waters was stuck sitting and waiting” (Resilient Waters staff).*

By working with both RBOs (and, in the case of BUPUSA, Joint Management Committees) and TFCAs, Resilient Waters brought together transboundary institutions, which are formally tasked with the management of natural resources and waters independently, yet in the same geographies, but not being provided the forum to interact and collaborate, nationally and regionally. The vastness of geographies proved to also be *“a challenge because the program was so big, and it had so many political orientations within it, that we never really deeply invested in aligning” (Resilient Waters consortium member).* Hence interviewees expressed that the geographic area was too vast to have meaningful impacts on the ground (i.e., that these would remain as pilots or illustrative activities through the grantees), and thereby that it had to focus at a higher scale on institutional strengthening prior to cooperative governance to overcome the critical barriers to regional resilience building. Working at all different governance levels, the Resilient Waters consortium was expected to make the connections up and down the chain based on the priorities and workplans of the different levels. The aim was then to prompt cross-pollination and cross-fertilization among the different transboundary institutions and other stakeholders. Interestingly, Resilient Waters decided to hold separate reflection workshops towards the end of the project, rather than bringing the grantees together with the beneficiary institutions. Combining these might have helped generate greater understanding across the vertical levels that Resilient Waters sought to engage.

Based on interviewee feedback, this occurred only to a limited degree. In the case of WASH, it would have taken significant and sustained effort to foster meaningful communication channels from municipal to national to regional levels and back down again. While there were some successes at the national level with the Fecal Sludge Management Strategy in South Africa and the Sanitation Roadmap in Botswana, unless or until addressing sanitation pollution hotspots because of downstream impacts becomes a top priority for the regional institutions, such issues will not be easily integrated into regional transboundary programs like Resilient Waters.

As a follow-on from previous and concurrent USAID investments in the region, Resilient Waters was expected to continue working with institutional partners from SAREP and RESILIM, and, on the local scale, to prioritize prior and existing interventions in order to maximize the impact of the investment. This was, as understood by the Evaluation Team, also the rationale for selecting the consortium partners to ensure this continuity. Beyond working with familiar NGOs like EcoExist, the Evaluation Team agrees that the use of the grants mechanism was an effective way of opening up opportunities across the region. It helped to reach out to new entities that had not been beneficiaries of previous programs to expand impact at community level. The broadening of opportunities proved particularly necessary as, it turned out, only a few interventions clearly built on either of the previous regional programs, for example, with the municipal government of Xai-Xai in Mozambique at local level, and the institutional support to OKACOM and LIMCOM. While there were indications that relationships between the Resilient Waters team and other institutions in the landscape were following from SAREP and RESILIM-B, it did not necessarily translate into funding to specific activities that had started under previous programs and needed expansion or replication. Similarly, Resilient Waters had minimal contact to

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<sup>10</sup> Please find reference of the framework in Ostrom, Elinor. 2010. The Institutional Analysis and Development Framework and the Commons, 95 Cornell L. Rev. 807. Available at: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/clr/vol95/iss4/15>, as well as other Ostrom publications on Institutional Analysis and Development available on the web.

coordinate with existing USAID investments across the region, such as the Vukanow programme on wildlife crime (implemented in TFCAs), and the implementing agencies on wildlife crimes in both KAZA and GLTFCA.

This said, it is also arguable that such connections should have been made by USAID both at the time of writing the RFP for the program and in finalizing the program design with the implementing partner. This would have helped to both better frame the meaning of resilience and the expectations of the role of Resilient Waters in a vested regional landscape for USAID.

Overall, the large geographic scope would have been more suited to a program specifically tasked with building institutional resilience at regional scale across landscape actors, as well as creating and sharing relevant knowledge from the region and elsewhere in the world. The negative impact of the geographic scope with an expectation of local level impact is the difficulty of developing meaningful, scalable on-the-ground interventions that build resilience in a coherent way through a sustainability lens with the time and resources available. This was somewhat exacerbated by the fact that the partner responsible for the WASH component was perhaps originally expecting to focus more on resilient infrastructure from an engineering perspective, leveraging funds from other sources for construction, than regional institutional strengthening regarding an issue that is not generally perceived to be regional, but more national and local in nature. A related disconnect, the partner responsible for NRM in the TFCAs is only beginning to look at resilience in relation to conservation, with only one such project in the region: the Simalaha Conservancy (KAZA TFCA).

The broad approach given to Resilient Waters in implementation enhanced resilience building at regional scale through institutional support and, before the COVID-19 travel restrictions, the participation in relevant networking opportunities at international policy events. While these are considered soft interventions, difficult to quantify, they have proven to be essential over the last decade to create a greater familiarity across government agencies, NGOs, community members and individual practitioners. Similarly, the direct support to relevant cross-border institutions has been beneficial with a special mention to the work undertaken with LIMCOM in drafting a proposal for GEF funding, which was approved thereby ensuring operational sustainability for a five-year period.

### **EQ 3 – ASSESSING THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUSTAINABILITY**

*[As an activity that builds on over 15 years of multiple prior interventions, what type or which interventions of Resilient Waters do stakeholders deem sustainable?]*

While the significant USAID support to building resilience in the two basins over several program cycles was clearly appreciated by interviewees and pinpointing pockets of success was relatively easy, the Evaluation Team struggled to determine a wider narrative of progress that was directly attributable to USAID programming. This in part is due to the contextual complexity with under-capacitated regional institutions that find themselves navigating a difficult path with riparian states that are not shy about using national and international instruments to advance their different objectives. Given this context, some suggested that USAID could have leveraged greater influence by having a more direct presence in regional forums, speaking up on behalf of the work of the implementing agencies, and introducing expertise and experience from across USAID's wider resilience-oriented network.

The continuity in staffing (both of the implementing partner and the key regional institutions), while helpful certainly in forging strong relationships and solidifying a level of trust, may have led to a familiarity that was overly polite in not revisiting and challenging assumptions. As a result, the reporting across the programs reflects a wide range of activities but is less forthcoming on what has been learned about approaches that most meaningfully challenge the status quo to move the resilience agenda in a more systemic way.

In this light, there appeared to be limited continuity in terms of activities across program cycles. Indeed, Resilient Waters annual reports provide few mentions of RESILIM and SAREP and efforts to build on previous successes, with a few notable exceptions. Among others, these include significant effort to replicate assistance to GLTFCA to develop Livelihoods Diversification Strategies with KAZA, where TFCA are actively setting out “how they will support the social development objectives set-out in their TFCA Treaties” (USAID Resilient Waters Program 2022, p. 23), and the effort to build on consultations from SAREP to finalize the Land Use Conflict Identification System (LUCIS) maps of three sub-landboards (Gumare, Nokaneng, and Shakawe). Such LUCIS maps show promise of success and replication, with sub-landboards allocating new land for agriculture and efforts to locate homes away from wildlife corridors (USAID Resilient Waters Program 2022, p. 32). While individual policy development efforts, building in particular on SAREP support (related to transboundary fisheries in the Okavango, sanitation with the Government of Botswana, etc.) have made important contributions, time and resources were not available for Resilient Waters to assist in putting these into practice with the relevant authorities.

While institutional assessments were not part of the Evaluation Team’s SOW, by all accounts, the regional institutions are certainly stronger than they were 15 years ago. Several factors (including an increasing recognition of the current and potential impacts of climate change) and donor programs have contributed to this, including USAID support. USAID’s own positioning is stronger and can be leveraged further to promote cross-border solutions that meaningfully advance the resilience agenda.

Regarding Resilient Waters specifically, during stakeholder interviews, the Evaluation Team probed for activities and interventions that were most likely to be sustainable. As noted, Resilient Waters’ grants program admirably covered a wide range of complex issues. However, as noted in the Reflections Workshop Report, there was a “general sense that having a multitude of small projects, while appealing, dilutes impact.”

Generally, while Resilient Waters had initiated many valuable activities, these needed more time to execute to be successful or to determine how best for them to be scaled up within a geographic area or replicated in different contexts. As one Resilient Waters grantee noted regarding the adoption of new technologies: “We usually talk about 6 years of adoption (by farmers) to achieve sustainability...” (Resilient Waters grantee).

The grants program was initiated late in the program, which did not give grantees a lot of time for implementation. Most of the grantees had a maximum of two years, and some less, while also dealing with heavy compliance issues (like frequent invoicing for small amounts of the total amount awarded). Furthermore, there was a general sense from the stakeholders interviewed that Resilient Waters had created awareness, particularly with smaller grantees, around theories of change (see example in Figure 5) and the value of MEL that will be sustained and likely lead to greater sustainability of interventions at

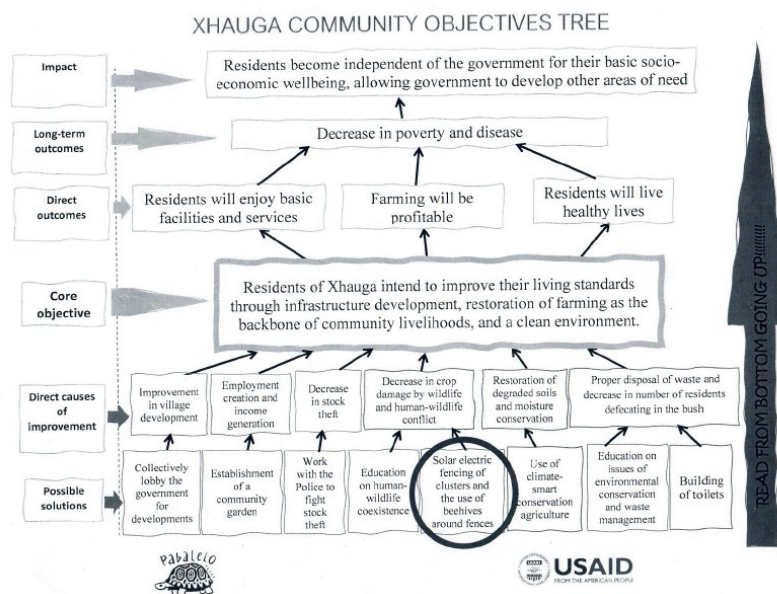


Figure 5: Xhauga Community Objectives Tree

the local level: *“We owe our monitoring and evaluation process to this project... And the learning aspect is what informed the visioning...”* (NGO grantee). Smaller grantees, which received valuable training and technical support from the Resilient Waters’ team, noted that this would be useful in their work going forward, even outside the Resilient Waters funding cycle and could help them compete more effectively for funding from USAID or other donors.

Some suggested that, in terms of scaling and sustainability, more emphasis and connection should have been made through the grants program to the key partner institutions’ own interests and priorities. The RBOs were not involved in the grant selection with these partner institutions confessing to not really knowing *“who is doing what and where under the Resilient Waters.”* There was a need to increase ownership of the Resilient Waters objectives and approaches among partner institutions, wider stakeholders, and grantees. This requires co-creation of activities between the partners and grantees alongside the Resilient Waters team. Activities developed in such a huge program like Resilient Waters will likely be sustainable if they were requested by “beneficiaries” and key decision-makers are engaged: *“...the criteria [for selecting interventions] should come from the organizations that you are working with”* (Resilient Waters stakeholder). *“I always thought it was a technical output, but [now think it is] more about the investment that beneficiaries make into what you are doing. That is true sustainability – where we spend that extra bit of time to explain, there is a higher level of and chance for sustainability”* (Resilient Waters consortium member). This also needs to come with the intentionality of Resilient Waters staff and consortium partners to forge that ownership and gradually cede more and more responsibility to partners.

Key partner institutions noted their sense of being in a benefactor-beneficiary relationship rather than a true partnership. Ultimately, as noted by one Resilient Waters staff, *“Some incredible things happened through the program that were filling a very specific need and getting these sharing agreements or new management structures or conservation areas more formalized. The program was very good at that, but maybe not enough around what it means to make sure that these things keep on going.”*

From a learning perspective, interventions that could clarify incentives and risks and showed clear short, medium, and long-term benefits were more likely to be sustained, such as the non-timber forest product enterprises and the mitigation of human and wildlife conflict work aimed at improving the incomes and yields of small-scale farmers. Indeed, through Resilient Waters, there was improved understanding at the local level of the requirements to create sustained markets for sustainability-oriented products or indigenous market products. However, as noted above, planned interventions had a short timeframe and were not always fully funded (e.g., no construction of fencing to complete activities aimed at mitigating human wildlife conflicts, or water points to enhance livelihood activities), thus requiring the need to create synergies with other funders. Grantees further noted that they often struggled to achieve all that was expected of them, using their internal resources to be able to meet the targets agreed with Resilient Waters. This was specifically the case for activities in remote locations with difficult access. Activities, thus, may not all have had the desired impact.

Ultimately, as noted by one stakeholder, *“In all the basins, nothing you can do is wrong but are you doing the best thing? So, for example, someone will have to bite the bullet to put the monitoring in place – otherwise in 30 years’ time, you will have exactly the same problems.”* It will remain a struggle to determine if activities are likely to be sustainable without having the data to understand the impact that interventions are having, and whether there are any knock-on effects that may be negatively affecting other communities, biodiversity considerations, water quality, etc. Related to data being at the essence of understanding sustainability, several interviewees mentioned the need to protect water at the source and groundwater above all other starting points.



## **FURTHER OBSERVATIONS**

### **Administrative Aspects**

Resilient Waters staff and consortium partners noted that for various reasons it was not always possible to optimize the strengths and contributions of each of the consortium partners. Given that the partners and many of the individuals in the partnership had worked together in the past, some key assumptions around robustness of strategy and approach were not revisited, and partners were not given sufficient opportunity to constructively challenge each other on their underlying rationales for taking certain actions. Some of this lack of integration resulted from COVID-19 forcing more of the work on the ground into the hands of the grantees, where original expectations were that the Resilient Waters technical team and consortium partners would be more involved in, or actually doing more on the ground implementation. According to several interviewees, this resulted in a lack of clarity internally around which partners were doing what, with what resources, and towards what ends. Regional partner organizations expressed some confusion on this as well. Again, a key challenge appeared to be around the setting of the indicators, many of which “seemed to already be locked in” before partners came together early in the program for a three-day workshop to develop Resilient Waters’ ToC. Thus, some interviewees questioned whether Resilient Waters was indeed measuring the right (relevant) things and to which end (effectiveness). Some suggested that this resulted in a program of work that was “less exploratory, in terms of debating and understanding internally what was really contributing to resilience and what was working less well, in terms of the Resilient Waters broad set of activities.

While appreciating the funding, grantees noted the heavy administrative processes with requirements for regular submission of invoices for what amounted to small payments of their overall grant. Given that payments were usually exchanged into local currencies, the payment times could be quite long with grantees fronting the costs for several months at a time. Resilient Waters staff and consortium partner interviewees suggested that having a small administrative office in each country, although potentially expensive, would have been more efficient and time-saving as a way of monitoring grant activities and finding a way around these reimbursement challenges. Furthermore, grant funding amounts were seen as quite low and not necessarily covering the staffing and expenses requirements for the projects. Indeed, a few grantees noted that they were keen to get the funding and thought that keeping their bids as low as possible would help in this regard.<sup>11</sup> This meant grantees effectively co-funding the activity by sustaining a combination of internal costs and costs related to travel expenses, particularly for projects in remote rural areas. That said, some grantees were quite small without absorptive capacity for larger grants. The timeframes proved a challenge as well with what amounted to 15-24 months of funding to deliver significant numbers of people to be reached. As noted by one grantee, “*The two-year project for me doesn't sit well - it's impossible really. We can do more damage if you have a short period. Expectations are raised and you leave the community with more frustration... then all of a sudden, it's gone...*”

### **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**

Although not a specific topic within this evaluation’s SOW a few comments on gender equality and social inclusion are worth noting. Inclusion was added to the Resilient Waters ToC towards the end of the second year of program implementation. While gender disaggregated data was provided to USAID, GESI-specific impact indicators were not included in any modifications to the contract and strategic objectives related to GESI remained understandably high level and largely focused on supporting the basin organizations to more actively consider GESI aspects in their programming. As noted in the Resilient Waters GESI Plan (April 2019), “*Activity recommendations for Resilient Waters are thus focused on moving beyond simple participation targets to address implicit systems biases that limit true gender parity*” (p. 6).

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<sup>11</sup> Admittedly, this comes from emphasis in both government and international donor funding using an arguable cost-benefit ratio, which ends up often awarding funds to less expensive proposals, regardless of the technical expertise or content of the proposal.

The GESI Plan further and helpfully highlights some of the unique GESI considerations within different contexts across the region. But it is not clear how effectively this analysis was incorporated into Resilient Waters programmatic thinking going forward. There is reference to GESI activities in grant documentation, but without information on what these actually were, the degree of implementation of a GESI strategy at the grantee level, or the impact of GESI integration on project outcomes. Grantees noted that much of their work was already around women’s livelihoods and, in many rural contexts, women are key contributors to community decision-making regarding resource management.

Thus, at a more macro level, Resilient Waters successfully put in place some key elements of GESI mainstreaming through the inclusion of GESI in strategy, training efforts, assessments, and working with GESI focal points and champions, which all created increased awareness. In terms of implementation, a significant policy contribution of Resilient Waters to mainstream GESI in transboundary water planning was the preparation of the GESI Strategy for the Limpopo Watercourse Commission, “to guide all programs and activities” (Resilient Waters beneficiary) designed and implemented. Grantees presented a mixed response to the incorporation of GESI considerations with some grantees still seeing this as a “donor imposition,” while others found the introduction of GESI-based analysis as helpful in gaining a better understanding of the communities in which they were working. An initial understanding on the part of numerous interviewees of GESI from an equity perspective in terms of aiming for equal numbers of male and female participants or beneficiaries seems to have shifted over the life of the project to a more nuanced view due to training efforts for staff and grantees. However, no clear evidence emerged of how that might have impacted Resilient Waters outcomes with a lack of qualitative data or analysis to provide context for any disaggregated data that was collected.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)**

The monitoring framework for Resilient Waters consisted of 30 indicators divided across the four project objectives. As noted elsewhere in this report, it is unclear that all indicators were framed in a way that adequately reflected the concepts around resilience in complex socio-ecological systems, and more such discussion might have been warranted up front on this aspect. Given that the funding sources were varied for the project, undoubtedly these impacted on the design of the indicators—with the aim to contributing directly to USAID’s wider goals and reporting requirements.

Such an expansive list of targets was seen by some as too complicated for a small MEL team to manage, especially as the MEL partner was not involved in the initial identification and finalization of indicators. While the management approach was seen to be helpfully adaptive in terms of activities and mechanisms, it was unclear that the indicators themselves were the result or a source of any significant reflection over the life of the project and there did not seem to be a lot of latitude to shift them, apart from increasing or reducing the actual target numbers. One particular conversation that a few interviewees noted would have been helpful is around the value placed on policy engagement work, which can take years of engagement and relatively significant amounts of funding to achieve, versus, say, directly providing WASH services to X number of people.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Resilient Waters was designed as a highly ambitious program of work, building on the baselines and research of previous programs, specifically SAREP and RESILIM, to blend different thematic responses (biodiversity, livelihoods, WASH, etc.) into a coherent and consequential whole. Resilient Waters initially stressed this connectedness as a function of interlocking pieces with the need to look up, look down, and look to the side to understand adjoining influences, barriers, and opportunities. It is unclear to the Evaluation Team whether the Resilient Waters team was able to build on prior programs in all intervention areas to move the investment from project implementation to resilience building.

The Evaluation Team explored whether the concept of resilience was understood in the same way across the Resilient Waters team, partner organizations, grantees, and other stakeholders. While the headlines of bouncing back from shocks was commonly understood, more could have been explored around the implications on resilience of working across different geographies and sectors.

In response to the EQs specifically, greater conceptual framing for Resilient Waters appears to have been warranted, so as to better understand the aims for the project and how to understand and measure success through a resilience lens that is more nuanced geographically and thematically. There was limited integration across sectors at the community level, given that grantees often operated in silos and there was minimal geographic overlap among activities. Working with so many institutions, across two river basins (each about the size of France) and attempting to meet USAID expectations by working from the community to regional level was likely overly ambitious and did not allow the project to target their support optimally. The contract indicators and targets were not sufficiently focused on resilience, integration or sustainability and may have led to a business-as-usual approach instead of looking for more innovative processes, activities, and solutions. Having a large number of sector-specific indicators focused more on project outputs drove a lot of project decision making. Despite being considered as a “follow-on” to SAREP and RESILIM, there was not a direct follow-on to many interventions. The five-year project timeline, and especially the even shorter timeframes for grants, limited the chance of achieving sustainability.

Critiques notwithstanding, the Evaluation Team noted that Resilient Waters made much appreciated and significant contributions to how water resources are managed and accessed within the two water basins of the Okavango and Limpopo. While COVID-19 hampered Resilient Waters’ efforts, the Resilient Waters approach has succeeded in important ways: i) by strengthening the institutions mandated to oversee water and natural resources management; ii) by broadening the water resource discourse to include other stakeholder groups; iii) by emphasizing the need to overcome the predisposition to operate in silos through a focus on the benefits of integrated water and natural resource management approaches across sectors; and iv) by introducing a more meaningful GESI lens than merely counting the numbers of marginalized participants engaged in activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

While Resilient Waters’ achievements have been many, and these are well documented in Resilient Waters quarterly and annual reports, some gaps in the approach as highlighted in this report suggest aspects that could be strengthened going forward.

In framing any future programs, if the focus on resilience-building is maintained, USAID should consider the following as informing documents to promote internal and regional alignment, particularly with SADC, as well as an approach that is founded on complexity:

- Draft 2023 USAID Resilience Policy
- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction – Sendai Framework Terminology and related documents

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*“...nothing is constant, everything is dynamic. We just need to keep on working towards that elusive goal to improve our effectiveness over time... so that we respond much better to complex shocks or stresses as a region, so that the stakeholders are also well placed to anticipate and respond better to increasingly complex shocks or stresses...” (Resilient Waters staff).*

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*“In all the basins, nothing you can do is wrong, but are you doing the best thing?” (Resilient Waters stakeholder)*

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- SADC Resilience Strategy
- SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan

**Determine a clear strategy with regard to focus institutions and geographies.**

The Evaluation Team largely found that activities were less strategic and insufficiently connected than would be optimal to enhance the capacity and resilience of regional institutions. By attempting to work with so many institutions, with widely varying levels of need, Resilient Waters was less impactful than if the program had been strategically designed to work with a smaller subset of institutions. Going forward, there is an argument to be made that USAID programs should focus primarily on those regional institutions that are most in need of support (as opposed to more advanced organizations like OKACOM), because they are relatively nascent and lacking in capacity (like LIMCOM), or failing and unable to prioritize, or otherwise. With its wealth of global experience working with regional institutions, USAID clearly has much to offer to such institutions. In contrast, there is also an argument to be made to focus on those more advanced institutions that can be an example to other institutions. This would mean ensuring their resilience and robustness, but then clearly and methodically teasing out the lessons learned from those institutions and developing methods to share knowledge with those more in need. Future programs should have a clear strategy that is framed around the specificities of these multi-member institutions, their governance and accountabilities, leverage points, and staffing and resource requirements for them to develop (or revisit where necessary) and successfully deliver on their SAPs.

Recognizing Resilient Waters’ wide geographic target area, the same could be said for geographies – a clear strategy is needed as to whether it makes more sense to focus on those geographies that show promise in terms of incorporating a clear resilience lens that can then become models, or to focus on those geographies that are seeing or will see the greatest resilience-related challenges in the near term.

Both strategies for institutions and geographies (focusing on the exemplars or the most in need) have merit. Regardless of the strategy chosen, all activities should be able to show a well-defined, well-connected and meaningful contribution towards those ends. This also means when designing community-level activities, future programs should ensure significant geographic overlap such that activities feed-off of each other, linking and sequencing more effectively, with clearer resilience-oriented lessons emerging. Such learning then requires dedicated support to facilitate debate (through partner dialogues, learning visits, etc.) to distill the implications for policy making at the national and regional levels. This would help overcome the finding that Resilient Waters was (perceived to be) spread too thinly across multiple sub-geographies with disconnected activities and thus not able to clearly demonstrate impact that could be sustained over time.

**Invest in understanding capacities and relationships to ensure that partner institutions (at regional level in particular) have ownership over programmatic and policy support, and resultant partnerships are strategically designed and tailored for optimum effectiveness.**

USAID should maintain frequent dialogue with partner institutions in the design phase of any future programs to ensure optimal ownership and understanding around the framing of a program of work that could best fit into their priorities. Such dialogue should capture what issues are most critical for them, what authority they have over the issue (and who might compete for that authority), where are the difficulties

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*“...a follow-on project may not be for a year or two and that affects the flow of activities as momentum has been lost... so every time the project is reconceptualized, you lose institutional capacity and stakeholders shift their focus...”*  
*(Resilient Waters staff).*

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in dealing with those issues, and then focus in to avoid spreading resources too thinly. USAID/SA should lead this dialogue to avoid losing momentum between funding cycles and to maintain the relationship with assigned Focal Points from the institutions as well as other donors active in this type of support.

Member states should be asked to contribute to these dialogues to ensure that support aligns with emerging regional and national water allocation mechanisms and highest priority societal objectives, such as economic efficiency, sustainability, and equity.

This means investing time in organizational mapping aimed at understanding the capacity and data needs in relation to regional (and national) organizations' ability to deliver on their strategic plans. Such exercises should be conducted with the institutions to ensure agreement and joint ownership over the strategies and criteria for institution-building supported by USAID. This would counteract the sense that regional institutions expressed of being “beneficiaries” rather than partners. In future programs, partners should play a larger role in selecting strategic priorities on which to focus USAID support, the consultants hired to support them, the grantee selection process, and the higher education themes supported through scholarships.

This also means investing time in relational mapping that shows understanding around mutual data requirements, interdependencies, competition (for resources, primacy of ideas, or otherwise), and any mutual accountabilities, i.e., clarity around roles, expectations around information/data sharing, and how partners might be expected to take account of new information as it becomes available. This kind of relational analysis should be updated on a regular basis (say, every 18 months).

To optimize effectiveness, programs like Resilient Waters need to work with a wide range of institutions through partnerships created to achieve specific objectives. In terms of partnership design, numerous frameworks exist that help think about different types of relationships and how they can best be shaped. An example is to categorize partnerships based on whether they are aimed at policy influencing, institution building, or expanding markets and product and service delivery at the local level. Thus, design needs to reflect purpose. So for example, partnerships that are aimed largely at introducing innovations can be expected to behave differently than those aimed at reinforcing accountability. These partnership types are not mutually exclusive but should keep in mind the different incentives, risks, expected contributions, and timeframes of each partner. Thus, a clear and well delineated partnering strategy and partnership framing are essential.

In developing partnerships with local grantee organizations, emerging USAID guidance on localization will be instrumental. As a start, future programs should enlist the support of USAID's Partnership Incubator to provide tailored tools and resources on how best to get grantees “USAID-ready.” It is time consuming to build the capacity of local institutions, helping them meet donor compliance systems and processes for funding, and thus dedicated resources will be needed.

***Ensure that project indicators and targets are well-designed to capture multi-sectoral changes in resilience and to inform project and partner/stakeholder learning and adaptation.***

Challenges related to country and regional institution data needs and data collection were mentioned by a number of stakeholders as a key barrier to developing policy and designing interventions that meaningfully advance resilience in the region. Future programs should contribute to meeting these needs through a reduced number of indicators and targets that are firmly grounded in a resilience framing, rather than simply reporting on sector-specific USAID standard indicators for each sector (like expanded access to WASH services). With guidance from the resilience community (starting with USAID ResilienceLinks), examples could more effectively reflect absorptive and adaptive capacities, and relationships and interdependences, and, at the sector level, the dynamics of seasonal water cycles, durability aspects of sanitation infrastructure, shifts in agriculture from water intensive to less water intensive crops, etc. Incorporating a scenario-planning for resilience approach to the development of the ToC would enable more debate around appropriate metrics and how best to sequence interventions.

Future projects should make use of learning loops, emphasizing targeted learning for different stakeholder groups that feeds analysis of what works where. This should start by systematically capturing the learning from previous programs, followed by designing a learning platform that uses

project data to support diagnostics and debate across different levels of governance and basins to influence implementation as well as policy. As part of this learning process, USAID should revisit indicators and targets a year into the program to understand whether they remain the right fit and capture the right information, how well they are owned by partners and other stakeholders and are seen as most impactful for a program of this nature.

***Integrate learning from other USAID programs, donors, and other basins into program implementation.***

USAID should stay abreast of what is happening in other basins in the region that might inform the way forward. By way of example, this could include understanding the challenges of recent initiatives with ZAMCOM supported by the World Bank to develop a full watercourse pollution strategy.

USAID/SA should also encourage greater connection among USAID programs and those of other donors, such as:

- Exploring the applicability of the higher crop per drop innovations supported by USAID, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Swedish Sida through the SWFF grand challenge fund and the follow-on Water and Energy for Food (WE4F) innovation lab;
- Revisiting learning from the USAID-supported SWP;
- Connecting more closely with USAID-supported programs on stemming wildlife crime;
- Understanding GIZ's efforts to bring other water commissions in the region to share learning; and
- Exploring synergies and share learning with GIZ's NatuRes/IWASP aimed at better understanding the interface among and developing partnerships that integrate initiatives around markets and livelihoods, biodiversity, reduced water use, climate change pressures, etc.

Forging such links across multiple initiatives will allow USAID/SA to integrate wider learning that can sharpen the framing around future programming and to speak more effectively with one voice (as USAID and as a donor group) to national and regional authorities.

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this purchase order is to conduct a performance evaluation of USAID/Southern Africa's (USAID/SA) Resilient Waters Program:

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Activity Name:                        | Resilient Waters  |
| Contract No:                          | AID-720-674-18-C-00007  |
| Project Dates:                        | June 22, 2018 - June 2023   |
| Agreement Value:                      | \$32.3 Million  |
| Place of Performance:                 | Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia |
| Implementing Organization:            | Chemonics International -- Prime                                      |
| Contracting Officer's Representative: | Graham Paul   |

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the assistance provided by USAID/Southern Africa through the Resilient Waters program is meeting its stated objectives, including whether the program is meeting its expected results within the expected timeframe. In addition, in answering several specific evaluation questions, the evaluation will test the critical assumptions that supported the initial program funding and assess the different implementation models and approaches used. Evaluation findings will be used by USAID/Southern Africa to provide a better understanding of the relevance, impact and cost-effectiveness of the Resilient Waters program, and to inform future integrated natural resources management programming in the region.

### II. BACKGROUND

In southern Africa, water sits at the center of an interrelated set of pressing environmental and development challenges. The health of the region's biodiversity, communities and natural landscapes requires the sound stewardship of shared river systems and the natural resources. Moreover, water-related risks "cascade through food, energy, urban and environmental systems."<sup>12</sup> Risks related to water security will have profound consequences for regional economic productivity, community health, poverty, migration, inter- and intra-national conflict and political stability, among other pressing development challenges.

The majority of countries in Southern Africa are water scarce or water stressed, and nearly half of all humans globally who remain without access to an improved water source live in sub-Saharan Africa. Approximately 40% of the human population across the region does not have access to adequate safe drinking water, while 60% does not have access to adequate sanitation.<sup>13</sup> The region is also characterized by considerable inequality in the distribution of water resources, high vulnerability to climate change, extreme variability in seasonal rainfall, as well as in the unequal socio-economic, technical and adaptive capacity of countries to address water and climate related challenges. All major

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<sup>12</sup> World Bank, High and Dry, Climate Change, Water and the Economy. 2016.

<sup>13</sup> SADC, RSAP IV.

rivers in the region<sup>14</sup> – as well as most of the known large aquifer systems – flow across national boundaries, making cooperative transboundary decision making and management of shared waters necessary to conserve biodiversity and ensure equitable and efficient use of natural resources.

The region's natural resource challenges call out for an integrated development approach. Resilient and sustainable environmental systems demand a holistic, multi-sectoral and multi-scaled approach. In a complex and interconnected development landscape, USAID believes that complementary initiatives – and the adoption of systems thinking approaches - can play a mutually reinforcing role in creating resilient communities and ecosystems. Past and current USAID environmental programs in the region have integrated climate change adaptation; biodiversity conservation; water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and integrated water management initiatives toward a goal of sustained environmental stewardship.

USAID/SA's five-year, \$32 million Resilient Waters program builds on of more than 15 years of prior investments in strengthening transboundary cooperation through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other regional structures, such as River Basin Organizations (RBO) including the Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM) and Okavango Watercourse Commission (OKACOM) and Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) including the Greater Limpopo and Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) TFCAs, to build more resilient and water-secure southern African communities and ecosystems across the Limpopo and Okavango River Basin landscapes. The program builds the capacity of and enhances cooperation between people and institutions at the community, national, and regional levels and across eight countries in southern Africa to improve management of transboundary natural resources and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation services. Chemonics leads a consortium of partners including the Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST) at the University of Stellenbosch, Genesis Analytics, JG Afrika, Peace Parks Foundation (PPF).

The program has the following four integrated goals:

1. Improve the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services in southern Africa
2. Improve the management and security of transboundary water resources
3. Increase access to safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services
4. Strengthen the ability of key institutions and communities to adapt to climate change

### **Existing Project Monitoring Documentation**

Project data is available from annual, quarterly and monthly reports, and the indicator performance data tables, as well as grant milestone reports and various communications products.

### **III. EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The final evaluation of the Resilient Waters program must answer the following evaluation questions:

1. The Resilient Waters program used a cross-sectoral/multi-earmark/integrated approach to building resilience by looking at water resources management, water and sanitation, climate change adaptation, and biodiversity conservation.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> SADC identifies 15 river basins shared by at least two countries in the region. SADC, 2016: Regional Strategic Action Plan (RSAP) IV.

<sup>15</sup> The goal of the USAID/Southern Africa Resilient Waters activity is to build more resilient and water secure Southern African communities and ecosystems through improved management of transboundary natural resources and increased access to safe drinking water and sanitation services. For selected geographies in Southern Africa, Resilient Waters will result in:



- a. Compare and contrast the definition of resilience used by USAID, by implementing partners, by stakeholders and by beneficiaries.
  - b. To what extent has the cross-sectoral, technically integrated approach been successful in building resilience in southern Africa among the Program’s key beneficiaries (i.e. communities, national and subnational governments, regional institutions) and systems (e.g. ecosystems, governance systems, etc.) at various scales?
  - c. How could cross-sectoral integration have been improved?
2. Resilient Waters was required to focus on, and build upon prior and existing investments, at multiple scales, in the Okavango and the Limpopo River Basins.<sup>16</sup> There was also scope included for support and activities beyond these focus areas, wherever feasible.
- a. This was the first program to combine multiple river basin landscapes. Did the geographic scope of the Program enhance or negatively affect the ability to meet Program objectives?
  - b. In addition to multiple geographic scales, the Program engaged numerous/different levels of governance, implementing activities at regional, national, sub-national and local community levels. How did the Program’s implementation at all of these levels of governance allow for, enhance, or negatively affect the ability to build resilience and meet Program objectives in southern Africa?
  - c. One of the principles of implementation at the local level was the applicability of an intervention for the region or river basin. How effective was Resilient Waters at creating scalable activities that are ready for basin-wide or regional adoption/replication?
  - d. To what extent did the Program’s multiscale approach enable linkages that help achieve and articulate impacts across a regional landscape? (e.g., upstream-downstream relationship, etc.)
3. As an activity that builds on over 15 years of multiple prior interventions, what type or which interventions of Resilient Waters do stakeholders deem sustainable? How can future activities best sustain and grow success of the Resilient Waters program? The evaluator should target interviews with stakeholders long running experience, but is not tasked with evaluating past projects.

These questions may be refined during the evaluation design process in consultation with the Evaluation Contracting Officer’s Representative and USAID REED Office.

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Objective 1: Improved transboundary water security and resource management;  
 Objective 2: Increased access to safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services;  
 Objective 3: Strengthened ability of communities and key institutions to adapt to change, particularly the impacts of climate change; and  
 Objective 4: Conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services.

<sup>16</sup> The river basin scale continues to serve as a useful frame for USAID engagement. While the region’s RBOs serve as important players in regional transboundary water management, organizations operating at a variety of scales – both above and below the basin scale – will also be critical partners to achieving project objectives. Over the past five years, USAID has supported work at regional, basin, sub-catchment and local scales, as appropriate, and anticipates continuing to do so via Resilient Waters. As laid out in a recent analysis, “there is a need to complement basin-scale focus with focus on scales inside the basin,” and to consider “diversity in the scale of transboundary water cooperation.” Smaller scale, catchment level approaches, tailored to specific local challenges and opportunities may constitute a more effective approach to certain transboundary challenges. Different scales may be appropriate for different challenges.

#### **IV. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The performance evaluation should reference and leverage best practices and principles described in [USAID's Evaluation Policy](#), including the fulfillment of two primary overarching purposes for evaluation: to ensure accountability to stakeholders and to learn to improve development outcomes.

At minimum, the contractor must produce the deliverables including:

1. Evaluation Work Plan
2. Mid-point Briefing to USAID
3. Draft Evaluation Report
4. Final Evaluation Report
5. Briefing to USAID on the final evaluation with slides

The evaluation design must meet the requirements, including with regard to:

- Review of existing project documentation. USAID will ensure that this documentation is available to the team at the commencement of work.
- Conduct Interviews and Focus Group Discussions with relevant stakeholders (i.e, government counterparts from the Department of Water and Sanitation and Environment from each country, stakeholders from the Limpopo River Basin Commission (LIMCOM), Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM), relevant local communities and non-government organizations, and program staff).
- Visits to partners and communities in at least South Africa and one other country (preferably Gaborone, Botswana to access SADC and OKACOM, as determined in consultation with USAID/Southern Africa).
- Analysis of pertinent reports, assessments, and laws/bills/regulations associated with the activities.

The contractor must disaggregate project data by gender and other relevant categories. The contractor will have access to routine project data but may need to collect additional primary data in order to get the most objective evaluation possible.

The evaluation will be carried out by a team of external consultants and include multiple qualitative and quantitative methods (for a non-representative small sample). One or more USAID staff will join the evaluation team during the team planning meetings and in briefings, site visits, debriefings and report preparation. While maintaining independence, the evaluation team is expected to carry out its work in a participatory manner seeking the views and assessments of all stakeholders.

#### **V. DELIVERABLES AND DELIVERABLES SCHEDULE**

The contractor will be responsible for all off-shore and in-country logistical support, including international and in-country travel (including vehicle rentals), hotel bookings, working/office space, computers, printing and photocopying. The evaluation team, in collaboration with USAID/Southern Africa and the Resilient Waters implementing partners, will arrange all meetings, interviews, site visits, and in-briefing and out-briefing presentations. In all other respects, the evaluation team should be self-sufficient.

## Deliverables:

The Contractor shall deliver the following items to the COR:

- I. Evaluation Work Plan, to include:
  - a. Preliminary analysis of project reports, products and data in relevance with the scope of work for the Final Evaluation;
  - b. Evaluation methodology that will be applied to provide evidence (findings) to support each question, including questionnaires and data analysis methodology; and
  - c. Evaluation schedule, list of people/ groups to be interviewed, timeframe and draft schedule of field activities.
2. Mid-point briefing to USAID: Statement of progress, preliminary findings, problems encountered and resolutions.
3. Draft report: A draft report of the findings and recommendations is to be submitted to the USAID COR, clearly describing findings, conclusions, and recommendations. USAID will provide comment on the draft report within one week of submission.
4. Final Report: The Evaluation Team will submit a final report of not more than 25 pages excluding annexes that incorporate the responses to Mission comments and suggestions. The format will include an executive summary, table of contents, methodology, findings related to the evaluation questions and specific areas of interest (above), and recommendations. The report will be submitted in English, electronically in MS Word format and compliant with USAID Communications Standards.
5. Briefing to USAID/Southern Africa on the Final Evaluation Report with PowerPoint slides.

## Deliverables Schedule:

The schedule for completion of the deliverables is as follows:

|                                     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Field data collection complete:     | 15 July 2023      |
| Draft report submitted to USAID:    | 15 August 2023    |
| Final report submitted to USAID:    | 15 September 2023 |
| Final report presentation to USAID: | 30 September 2023 |

## **VI. TEAM COMPOSITION & QUALIFICATIONS**

The Evaluation Team shall consist of individuals with a mix of expertise that covers the following capabilities:

- A minimum of 5 years of experience in monitoring, evaluation and learning in at least one of the technical areas in which Resilient Waters worked or capacity building; institutional development; GESI.
- A mix of regional and bilateral experience across SADC and in the focus area countries of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Angola.
- The personnel proposed by the Contractor are considered to be essential to the work being performed. The personnel and their position title(s) should be designated.

If appropriate, the Evaluation Team should plan on identifying and funding a small local team to provide support for field work for easy access and communication in the local language.

## **VII. USAID Management of Evaluation**

The USAID/Southern Africa Point of Contact for the evaluation will be Graham Paul with Alternate Point of Contact Gina Choquehuanca, with support from Program Office colleagues. The USAID team will assist the Evaluation Team in their work by reviewing draft deliverables, responding to questions from the team and resolving administrative or logistical obstacles.

## **VIII. Budget**

The budget for this evaluation shall not exceed \$200k.

## ANNEX II: INITIAL PROPOSED DATA SOURCES, DATA COLLECTION, AND ANALYSIS METHODS

*Table A2.1: Proposed Data Sources, Data Collection and Analysis Methods*

| Questions   | Suggested Data Sources   | Suggested Data Collection Methods  | Data Analysis Methods   |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Assessing the Resilient Waters cross-sectoral / multi-earmark / integrated approach to building resilience | <p>USAID, academic, partner and grey literature to understand key concepts and definitions as well as the basin contexts</p> <p>Quarterly and annual progress reports, program descriptions and case studies, indicator and target list, grantee applications, Resilient Waters workshop reports and webinar content</p> <p>Key informants</p> | <p>Key informant interviews using semi-structured format – with regional and national institutions, USAID and other donors, Resilient Waters staff and consortium partners, grantees, wider stakeholders and Resilient Waters consultants</p> <p>Validating emerging findings with USAID and subsequent interviewees</p> | <p>Qualitative data analysis using coded excerpts from interviews (as well as literature), including context and pattern analysis</p> |
| 2. Working across multiple basins and governance levels   | <p>USAID, academic, partner and grey literature to understand key concepts and definitions as well as the basin contexts</p> <p>Quarterly and annual progress reports, program descriptions and case studies, indicator and target list, grantee applications, Resilient Waters workshop reports and webinar content</p> <p>Key informants</p> | <p>Key informant interviews using semi-structured format – with regional and national institutions, USAID and other donors, Resilient Waters staff and consortium partners, grantees, wider stakeholders and Resilient Waters consultants</p> <p>Validating emerging findings with USAID and subsequent interviewees</p> | <p>Qualitative data analysis using coded excerpts from interviews (as well as literature), including context and pattern analysis</p> |
| 3. Activities that were most likely to be sustainable   | <p>Evaluations from Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program (SAREP) and Resilience in the Limpopo Basin Program (RESILIM) – discussions with stakeholders on SAREP and RESILIM experience</p> <p>Quarterly and annual progress reports, case studies and success stories</p> <p>Key informants</p>                                      | <p>Key informant interviews using semi-structured format – particularly with regional and national institutions, and grantees and wider stakeholders.</p>  | <p>Qualitative data analysis using coded excerpts from interviews (as well as literature), including context and pattern analysis</p> |

## ANNEX III: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (KII) DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The semi-structured guide below was followed more or less identically for all different categories of key informant. The idea was to prompt a free-flowing discussion that aligned quite closely with the Evaluation Questions.

This Guide is intended for use in terms of data collection from Resilient Waters stakeholders. This evaluation assessed the effectiveness of Resilient Waters to structure a set of integrated interventions that blended the themes of biodiversity; water, sanitation and hygiene; livelihoods; and climate adaptation. There were also efforts to forge closer links (vertical integration) among regional, national, and local actors. The evaluation is also designed to inform USAID's future decisions on transboundary programming in Southern Africa. It should be followed as closely as possible to guide key informant interviews with these respondents. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.

### Introduction (~10 minutes)

1. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview.
2. Introduction to the researcher and the research below:
  - a. **Introduce yourself:** I am a consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Tetra Tech, a Washington DC-based firm that has been contracted by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID/Southern Africa Resilient Waters Program. I am joined by \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ who are also part of the Evaluation Team. (Round of introductions)
  - b. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a final performance evaluation of the Resilient Waters Program to assess the effectiveness of the program design in terms of achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to assess are the design strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments, and best practices, but also any obstacles and shortcomings faced and how it could be more effective.
  - c. Ultimately the evaluation will be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future transboundary water programming by USAID/Southern Africa.
3. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity:
  - a. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to attribute a quote directly from the respondent in the final report.
  - b. Explain how collected data will be stored and destroyed after 6 months of finalizing the evaluation report.
  - c. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
  - d. Explain recording, length, and nature of discussion.
  - e. Check whether respondents have any questions.

### Guiding Questions

**Transition:** I would like to spend some time speaking with you about your knowledge of transboundary water challenges in the region and the USAID-supported Resilient Waters program.

1. What are your overarching impressions of the challenges around water security across the river basins in the region with which you are most familiar?

2. What are your overarching impressions of the USAID-funded Resilient Waters Program and its contributions towards and impact on resilience? What notable achievements and milestones would you say were made by Resilient Waters?
3. Would you say that Resilient Waters staff, consortium partners, USAID, and wider stakeholders have a consistent understanding of the term *resilience*? (Probe for definitions, differences in opinion, why this might matter in terms of differences in strategy and approach, etc.)
4. The Resilient Waters Program was designed with a view to integrating various themes including biodiversity, WASH, livelihoods, and climate adaptation. In your opinion, how effective was the Resilient Waters' approach to this kind of horizontal integration? (Probe for actual examples of integrated programming, any considerations around sequencing of interventions, what guidance was given to grantees and other stakeholders, what challenges were faced in terms of integrated programming and what lessons were learned, etc.)
5. The Resilient Waters Program operated at multiple levels – working with regional, national, and local level institutions. How well did Resilient Waters make the links among these different levels – from policy to implementation? (Probe for Resilient Waters' ability to influence key institutions and processes, efforts to share learning across the levels, efforts to forge more effective relationships up and down as well as across from basin to basin, etc.)
6. What would you say is likely to be sustained as a result of Resilient Waters' efforts? (Probe for policy change, attitude and behaviour change, shifts in investment environment, shifts in levels and nature of conflict around water or other natural resources, ownership of these shifts and this learning, etc.)
7. Around halfway through the program, Resilient Waters introduced a greater emphasis on social development from a Gender Equity and Social Inclusion lens. How effective would you say Resilient Waters was at introducing or reinforcing GESI aspects into attitudes, behaviours and capabilities of different stakeholders with which it worked? (Probe for interviewee shifts in attitude, interviewee observations around shifts in others' attitudes and approaches to GESI, etc.)
8. If USAID/Southern Africa were to design a new follow-on program to Resilient Waters, what recommendations would you make in terms of geographic focus? Institutional focus? Thematic focus? Design more generally?
9. Do you have any questions for the Evaluation Team?

## Conclusion

1. Thank the respondent for their time.
2. Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.
3. Suggest that you may be in contact to follow up on specific issues.
4. Let interviewee know that you will contact them to seek permission if you want to quote him / her directly in the report.

## ANNEX IV: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### KEY INFORMANTS *(In-person interviews noted in italics)*

#### Resilient Waters Staff

- Brian App Senior Director, Evt & Natural Resources, Chemonics International
- Chris Brooks Team Leader, Nature and Environment (OPM)
- Farai Mavhiya Biodiversity Advisor
- Joseph Urban Deputy Chief of Party
- Kule Chitepo Chief Partnership Advisor
- Maria Olanda Bata Chief of Party
- Mayford Manika Senior Grants Manager
- Nkobi Moleele Chief Technical Advisor
- Steve Collins Livelihoods / Adaptation Advisor
- Suvritha Rampal Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Specialist
- Vimbai Chasi Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Advisor and Senior Program Coordinator

#### Consortium Partners

- Caitlin Blaser Mapitsa Genesis Analytics – Resilient Waters Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Advisor
- Johalize Koch Peace Parks Foundation
- Kate Ohlhoff
- Lizelle Leroux
- Loraine Bewsher
- Kristi Maciejewski Panthera (former consultant to Resilience in the Limpopo Basin Program, Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program & Resilient Waters)
- Lindsay Harris Genesis Analytics – MEL specialist
- Mark Schapers JG Afrika
- Nadia Sitas Formerly of Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST)
- ReINETte Biggs CST South African Research Chair (SARChI): SES & Resilience
- Robyn Tompkins Resilient Waters WASH advisor

#### Grantees

- Amilcar Salumbo Development Workshop
- Allan Cain
- Britta Hackenberg Namibia Nature Foundation
- *Diposo Maitiyo* Pabalelo Trust
- *Willemien le Roux*
- *Eddie Riddell* Limpopo Basin GEF7-IW Program (previously SANParks)
- *Graham McCulloch* Eco Exist Trust
- *Lesibe Masibe* Waterberg Biosphere Reserve
- *Leticia Mahlathi*
- *Rerani Ramaano* Vhembe Biosphere
- *Tonderai Makoni*
- *Nicolas (Nick) Theron* Kruger to Canyons
- Peter Wirsiy Pan Africare (non-governmental organization)
- Simba Mandota SAFIRE



## Key Partner and Beneficiary Institutions

- David Molefha Botswana Department of Water and Sanitation  
Wendy Seones  
Ireen Madilola  
Gilbert Gwati
- Vongani Maringa South African Dept of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)
- Gwinyai Muti Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area
- James Saurumba Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Groundwater Management Institute (GMI)
- Nyambe Nyambe Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area Secretariat
- Phera Ramoeli Okavango River Basin Water Commission  
Casper Mbonnyongo
- Sergio Siteo Limpopo Watercourse Commission

## USAID/Southern Africa

- Graham Paul USAID COR
- J. Gina Choquehuanca USAID Environment Officer

## Resilient Waters Consultants and Wider Stakeholders

- Belynda Petrie OneWorld
- Charles Reeve Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF)
- Dave Still Partners in Development
- Dieter Nill GIZ Climate Resilience & Natural Resource Management
- Patrice Kabeya SADC Water, Directorate of Infrastructure and Services  
Dumisani Mndzebele

## KEY DOCUMENTS

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## ANNEX V: RESILIENT WATERS GRANTEES

### RWP Fixed Amount Awards

### OBJECTIVES

1 2 3 4

| Organisation  | Activity Title                     | OBJECTIVES |   |   |   | Geographic Area   | Implementation Timeframe | Type of action (research/desktop analysis; policy/planning; implementation/pilot; advocacy/influencing) |                            |
|---|------------------------------------|------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|
|   |                                    | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 |   |                          |   |                            |
| Kruger to Canyons (K2C)                             | Nick Theron                        | X          | X |   | X | A Partnership Model for Improved Water Security and Local Livelihoods through Integrated Catchment Management   | Hoedspruit, South Africa | 2019-2022   | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Waterberg Biosphere Reserve (WBR)                   | Lesibe Mahlathi / Lesibe Masibe    | X          | X | X | X | A Strategic Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) for the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve  | South Africa             | 2020-2021   | Policy/ Planning           |
| Dabane Trust (DT)                                   |                                    | X          | X |   | X | Building Resilient Communities through Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) in the Mzingwane Catchment of the Limpopo Basin  | Zimbabwe                 | 2022-2023   | Advocacy/ Influencing      |
| Mahlatini Development Foundation (MDF)              |                                    |            |   | X | X | Community Based Climate Change Adaptation for Increased Water Productivity and Food Security for Improved Rural Livelihoods In The Lower Olifants Basin                   | South Africa             | 2020-2021   | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Socio-Economic Impact Management Advisory (SIMA)    |                                    | X          |   |   |   | Community Training on Water Source Protection in the Lower Olifants River Catchment   | South Africa             | 2022-2023   | Advocacy/ Influencing      |
| Development Workshop Angola (DWA)                   | Allan Cain / Amilcar Salumbo       |            | X |   |   | Community-Managed Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Services - Bié Province, Angola  | Angola                   | 2020-2021   | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| International Water Management Institute (IWMI)     | Inga Jacobs-Mata                   | X          |   | X | X | E-flows for the Limpopo River - building more resilient communities and ecosystems through improved management of transboundary natural resources                         | Limpopo Basin            | 2020-2022   | Research/ Desktop Analysis |
| The Nature Conservancy (TNC)                        |                                    | X          |   |   | X | Expansion of tools and capacity to support science and evidence-based decision making for development and long-term resilience of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) | Okavango Basin           | 2020-2021   | Policy/ Planning           |
| Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources (SAFIRE) | Simba Mandota                      |            |   | X |   | Harnessing the Mopane Worm Value Chain for Biodiversity Protection, Ecosystem Services and Resilient Communities.   | Zimbabwe                 | 2021-2022   | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| PanAfricare (PAC)                                   | Peter Wirsly                       |            |   |   | X | Honey Production Improvement & Beneficiation Project  | Angola                   | 2021-2023   | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| WaterLife   |                                    |            |   |   |   | Integrated Water resources Management Training for BuPuSa Communities   | Mozambique               |   | Advocacy/ Influencing      |
| Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)                     | Britta Hackenburg                  | X          |   | X | X | Kavango the Aqueduct of Life: Supporting People Securing our Common Waters  | Namibia                  | 2020-2011   | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Marico Biosphere (MBR)                              |                                    | X          |   |   |   | Limpopo Basin Biosphere Learning Exchange   | South Africa             | 2022-2023   | Policy/ Planning           |
| Pabalelo Trust (PT)                                 | Diposo Maitiyo / Willemien le Roux |            |   | X | X | Live, Grow and Protect: Restoring and managing environmentally responsible subsistence livelihoods in the Okavango "Panhandle" area in Botswana.                          | Botswana                 | 2020-2022   | Implementation/ Pilot      |

|   |                                 |   |   |   |  |                     |           |                            |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---|---|--|---------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Agência Nacional para o Controlo da Qualidade Ambiental, Delegação de Gaza (DPAQUA) |                                 |   |   |   | Mangrove Restoration and Livelihood Support through Community Participation in Limpopo Estuary   | Mozambique          | 2020-2022 | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Maru CiberConnect (MCC)   |                                 | X |   |   | Maru Community based Integrated Water Resource Management  | South Africa        | 2022-2023 | Advocacy/ Influencing      |
| JG Afrika (JGA)   | Robyn Tompkins                  |   | X | X | Pilot Implementation of Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) in Polokwane Local Municipality and a National FSM Conceptual Framework   | South Africa        | 2021-2022 | Policy/ Planning           |
| Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)                        |                                 | X |   | X | Securing wildlife and strengthening institutional resilience in Bwabwata National Park   | Namibia             | 2020-2022 | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Emanti Management (EM)  |                                 | X |   | X | Strengthening and facilitating water security by creating awareness and capacitating affected local communities within the Waterberg District Municipality (Bela Bela, Modimolle, Mogalakwena, Thabazimbi, Lephalale and Mookgopong) | South Africa        | 2020-2021 | Policy/ Planning           |
| International Water Management Institute (IWMI)                                     | Inga Jacobs-Mata                | X |   |   | Sustainable Groundwater Development and Management for Humans, Wildlife, and Economic Growth in the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA-GROW)  | KAZA TFCA Landscape | 2021-2022 | Research/ Desktop Analysis |
| Dambari Wildlife Trust (DWT)  |                                 | X |   |   | Towards resilience in the Matobo Hills High-Altitude Catchment in Zimbabwe through participatory assessments, rehabilitation and capacity development  | Zimbabwe            | 2020-2022 | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Ecoexist Trust (EET)  | Graham McCulloch                |   |   | X | Upscaling 'Elephant Aware' farming in the Okavango Delta   | Maun, Botswana      |           | Implementation/ Pilot      |
| Waterberg Biosphere Reserve (WBR)   | Lesibe Mahlathi / Lesibe Masibe | X | X |   | Waterberg Biosphere UNESCO Application and WASH Community Governance Training  | South Africa        |           | Implementation/ Pilot      |

1. Improved transboundary water security and resource management
2. Access increased to safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation services
3. Strengthened ability of communities and key institutions to adapt climate change and its impacts
4. Conserved biodiversity and ecosystem services

Virtual Interview  
In-person Interview

### Limited Scope Grant Agreement

| Organisation |                   |   |   |   | Activity Title                  | Geographic Area |
|--------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| OKACOM       | Phera Ramoeli     | X |   |   | Institutional Capacity Building | Okavango        |
| LIMCOM       | Sergio Siteo      | X |   |   | Institutional Capacity Building | Limpopo         |
| KAZA         | Nyambe Nyambe     | X | X | X | Institutional Capacity Building | KAZA            |
| GLTFCA       | Gwinyai Muti      | X |   | X | Institutional Capacity Building | GLTFCA          |
| SADC-GMI     | James Saurumba    | X |   |   | Institutional Capacity Building | Limpopo         |
| BUPUSA       | Elisha Madyamombe |   |   |   | Institutional Capacity Building | BUPUSA          |
| DWS          |                   |   |   |   | Institutional Capacity Building | Botswana        |

**ANNEX VI: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name</b>  | <b>Kenneth (Ken) Caplan</b>  |
| <b>Title</b>   | Director   |
| <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Partnerships in Practice</b>  |
| <b>Evaluation Position</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team Leader<br><input type="checkbox"/> Team member  |
| <b>Evaluation Award Number</b><br><i>(contract or other instrument)</i>  | (URBAN WASH) project, under the GSA's OASIS Unrestricted Indefinite IDIQ, contract number GS00Q14OADU138 and order number 7200AA21M00012 |
| <b>USAID Activity(s) Evaluated</b><br><i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>  | USAID Resilient Waters, Chemonics International, Contract No. 720- 674-18-C-00007  |
| <b>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No   |
| <b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b><br><br><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.</li> </ol> |  |


**CONTINUED**

**If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:**

*Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:*

- 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.
- 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.
- 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.


|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Date      | 1 July 2023  |
| Signature |  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Clara Bocchino</b>   |
| <b>Title</b>  | Dr  |
| <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Independent consultant</b>   |
| <b>Evaluation Position</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member   |
| <b>Evaluation Award Number</b><br><i>(contract or other instrument)</i>   | (URBAN WASH) project, under the GSA's OASIS Unrestricted Indefinite IDIQ, contract number GS00Q140ADU138 and order number 7200AA21M00012  |
| <b>USAID Activity(s) Evaluated</b><br><i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>   | USAID Resilient Waters, Chemonics International, Contract No. 720-674-18-C-00007  |
| <b>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</b>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No  |
| <p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.</li> </ol> | <p>3. As a transboundary natural resource management and governance consultant in Southern Africa, I have been working alongside and in some instance for the programme being evaluated and previous iterations, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAREP, drafting of a White Paper on the role of IUCN in the Southern African region in the last few decades, to inform a facilitated workshop with the IUCN member organisations in East and Southern Africa, in preparation for the Hawaii IUCN World Conservation Congress of 2014.</li> <li>• RESILIM-O, received a grant from the implementing agency, AWARD, to prepare a Legal Atlas on International, African and Regional Law and Policy on Biodiversity Conservation applicable to the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area. At the time I was the Coordinator for the Animal and Human Health for Environment and Development – GLTFCA Working Group, under the University of the Pretoria.</li> </ul> |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>CONTINUED</b></p> <p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resilient Waters, with the brokerage of USAID Regional Office for Environment, received a minor contribution to the launching event, hosted by IBM Africa, for the Big Data and Transboundary Water Management Collaboration for Southern Africa, which I was coordinating under the Sustainable Water Programme, funded by USAID (Washington, D.C.), through Winrock International.</li> <li>• Whilst I have known many of the people involved in Resilient Waters and previous iterations, as experts in the region on the same sector, I believe this has not affected my objectivity during this evaluation process.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|


I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Date      | 16 November 2023   |
| Signature |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name</b>  | <b>Abbie Jiri</b>  |
| <b>Title</b>   | Consultant – Climate Adaptation Specialist   |
| <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Tetra Tech</b>  |
| <b>Evaluation Position</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member  |
| <b>Evaluation Award Number</b><br><i>(contract or other instrument)</i>  | (URBAN WASH) project, under the GSA's OASIS Unrestricted Indefinite IDIQ, contract number GS00Q14OADU138 and order number 7200AA21M00012 |
| <b>USAID Activity(s) Evaluated</b><br><i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>  | USAID Resilient Waters, Chemonics International, Contract No. 720-674-18-C-00007   |
| <b>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No   |
| <b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b><br><br><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.</li> </ol> |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>CONTINUED</b></p> <p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</li> </ol> |  |
|---|--|

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Date      | 16 November 2023   |
| Signature |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Lianda G. Dzikiti</b>   |
| <b>Title</b>  | Consultant –Evaluation Specialist  |
| <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Tetra Tech</b>  |
| <b>Evaluation Position</b>  | Team member  |
| <b>Evaluation Award Number</b><br><i>(contract or other instrument)</i>   | (URBAN WASH) project, under the GSA’s OASIS Unrestricted Indefinite IDIQ, contract number GS00Q14OADU138 and order number 7200AA21M00012 |
| <b>USAID Activity(s) Evaluated</b><br><i>(Include activity name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>   | USAID Resilient Waters, Chemonics International, Contract No. 720-674-18-C-00007   |
| <b>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</b>  | No   |
| <p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the activity(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose activities are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the activity(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the activity design or previous iterations of the activity.</li> </ol> |  |

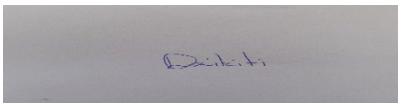
**CONTINUED**

**If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:**

*Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:*

4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.
5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose activity(s) are being evaluated.
6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular activities and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Date      | 11/21/2023   |
| Signature |  |

## **ANNEX VII: EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS**

The Evaluation Team will be comprised of an experienced expatriate Team Lead and three Subject Matter Experts, supported by a remote GESI Advisor and the URBAN WASH home office staff. Collectively, the team possesses relevant and complementary experience in the areas of water and sanitation, transboundary water resources management, climate adaptation, conservation, and GESI. They also bring experience in both bilateral and regional engagements across the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Evaluation Team members have experience in qualitative inquiry and research, conducting key informant interviews (KIIs) using semi-structured tools, facilitating group and focus group discussions (FGDs), and analyzing and interpreting qualitative information.

The Evaluation Team will be self-sufficient in terms of in-country logistics, with the Transboundary Water and Natural Resources Specialist providing local support for in-country travel (including vehicle rentals), hotel bookings, and other needs with the support of the URBAN WASH Director of Operations. The composition of the Evaluation Team and level of home office support proposed will offer flexibility during data collection (i.e., coverage for weeks when certain team members are unavailable) and allow the team to split up to collect data in different locations simultaneously. Most KIIs and FGDs will be conducted by a two-person team—one person conducting the interview and the other taking notes—although the team will conduct initial interviews jointly to ensure alignment on techniques.

Candidates proposed for each of the team positions, along with a summary of their role during the evaluation, are presented below.

**Team Lead/Evaluation Specialist - Ken Caplan:** An internationally recognized partnerships and evaluation specialist, Mr. Caplan brings over 20 years of experience in the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector. Mr. Caplan's experience in the WASH sector is comprehensive, having supported programs across a wide range of contexts and sub-thematic areas in urban, peri-urban, and rural contexts. He has led numerous strategic and programmatic mid-term and final evaluations and learning reviews for multiple organizations, most recently having led USAID WASHPaLS' evaluation of the USAID Transform WASH activity in Ethiopia. Mr. Caplan was also the team lead on the Performance Evaluation of the USAID- and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)-funded Kenya RAPID activity in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of northern Kenya, the mid-term performance evaluations of the USAID-funded \$18M five-year Global Communities WASH for Health Project in Ghana, and the \$51M five-year USAID Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Project. He also participated in the final evaluation of the USAID-funded Securing Water for Food Grand Challenge Fund and has worked on evaluations for other donors, including the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, U.K. Department for International Development (DFID), and SDC. Mr. Caplan has experience with both remote and in-person qualitative data collection, strong analytical skills, and familiarity with USAID's evaluation policy and requirements.

During his time with Building Partnerships for Development, Mr. Caplan has worked on WASH issues in South Africa, including work on water supplies in Durban/Pietermaritzburg and Eastern Cape. He reviewed the German Development Agency's (GIZ) International Water Stewardship Program in South Africa, which focused on water stewardship, and on GIZ's water source protection in Zambia. He also evaluated a non-governmental organization (NGO) program in Angola, implemented by Care, Save the Children, and Development Workshop, which undertook different approaches to WASH service delivery in Luanda.

Throughout his career, Mr. Caplan has worked with complex partnerships at the global, national, and local levels. Mr. Caplan was the team lead for two partnership reviews for Plan International UK and Unilever under their DFID Payment for Results WASH funding and School WASH partnership. He led a sizeable remote team of local consultants on the global partnership and project review of the

USAID/The Coca-Cola Company Water and Development Alliance and partnered with AguaConsult to deliver a similar assignment for USAID-Rotary Foundation's H2O Partnership in three countries.

With a Master's in International Development, Mr. Caplan brings a public policy/social development background to his work with an emphasis on institutional coherence, change management, and partnership approaches. As a Senior Associate of the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), Mr. Caplan has served as faculty on bespoke courses for senior officials from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and other organizations. He continues to serve as a CISL faculty member on the Post-Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Business and as an occasional speaker for other CISL courses.

The Team Lead will be responsible for the overall management of the Evaluation Team, including coordinating evaluation activities, ensuring the production and completion of all contract deliverables, including the draft and final Evaluation Work Plan and draft and final Evaluation Reports in conformance with this statement of work and timelines, and ensuring high quality analysis, writing, and reporting. He will lead the data analysis and final reporting. He is based in the United Kingdom and will travel to Southern Africa for the data collection. He will serve as the primary point of contact for USAID and Resilient Waters throughout the assignment.

**Transboundary Water and Natural Resources Specialist – Clara Bocchino:** Dr. Bocchino brings nearly two decades of fieldwork experience in rural areas across Southern Africa, including through work with regional and national institutions, USAID and other donors, and researchers. She has worked across South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola. As the Coordinator of the Big Data Analytics and Transboundary Water Collaboration for Southern Africa for the USAID-funded Sustainable Water Partnership, Dr. Bocchino facilitated regional convening mechanisms, provided strategic advisory services leading to the development of the Data Storage Solutions Workshop, developed partnerships, and developed a COVID-19 contingency plan.

Dr. Bocchino has worked extensively on issues related to Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), developing the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the TFCA Program of the SADC, supporting analysis and recommendations on the Legal Alignment Strategy for the five partner countries of the Kavango-Zambezi TFCAs, supporting in the design of recommendations for the Kavango Zambezi Secretariat and the Peace Parks Foundation, and researching transboundary collaborative mechanisms to combat wildlife crimes and illegal wildlife trade. Dr. Bocchino has worked at the nexus of water, conservation, and climate, including leading a team conducting a One Health Assessment of the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique. She also supported the development of a Climate Change Adaptation program for transhumant communities in the Kunene River Basin (Namibia-Angola border) and the development of the European Union-funded NaturAfrica Programme for Southern Africa, which supports biodiversity conservation in Africa through an innovative, people-centered approach. Dr. Bocchino is a skilled researcher with a Ph.D. in Environmental Quality and Regional Economic Development, and speaks English, Italian, French, and Portuguese.

Dr. Bocchino is also experienced in organizing and facilitating workshops, training events, and other activities in Southern Africa. She has coordinated two regional networks—the Great Limpopo TFCA Working Group of the Animal and Human Health for Environment and Development Network (formerly WCS), and the SADC TFCA Network including the facilitation of Steering Committee meetings with the Member States and the establishment of the donor working group to coordinate funding and harmonize interventions with the SADC agenda. She is based in South Africa.

The Transboundary Water and Natural Resources Specialist will participate in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, document review, in-person data collection, analysis, and drafting sections of the final report. She will support the development of data collection instruments for

activities related to her technical area of expertise. In addition, due to her extensive experience in coordinating sector events in the region, she will provide coordination and logistical support.

**Climate Adaptation Specialist – Abbie Jiri:** Mr. Jiri brings over a decade of experience working in Southern Africa on nature-based solutions for climate mitigation, adaptation, and land management. He has worked in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, and Botswana. In his current role, he is responsible for developing carbon offset projects through agriculture, forestry, and other land use. He has worked on the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of emission reduction projects, such as reforestation, sustainable forest management, and wildlife management projects that also aimed to create income generation activities for vulnerable households and poor rural communities. For example, in a feasibility study of communal game ranching in Zimbabwe, Mr. Jiri worked with local communities to assess how communities could best participate in wildlife-based enterprises. This assessed both forestry and non-forestry solutions and the potential of carbon markets with the aim of developing mechanisms to climate proof and secure livelihoods of marginalized communities.

Mr. Jiri has extensive experience with community-based participatory methods, including leading the design of community engagement protocols and training activities for a sustainable integrated land management project in the South-East Lowveld of Zimbabwe. He has also led participatory identification of innovative climate smart agriculture and sustainable forest management practices with farmers in Zimbabwe's TFCAs. Mr. Jiri has experience in designing and conducting socio-economic surveys, interviews and FGDs. Mr. Jiri has a Bachelor of Environmental Science degree from Bindura University of Science Education, where he majored in Wildlife and Rangeland Management, and is based in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The Climate Adaptation specialist will participate in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, document review, in-person data collection, analysis, and drafting sections of the final report. He will support the development of data collection instruments for activities related to his technical area of expertise.

**Evaluation Specialist – Lianda Dzikiti:** Ms. Dzikiti is an evaluator with experience conducting both quantitative and qualitative studies across a variety of sectors in South Africa. She has worked on studies related to small scale farming and pastoralism, including consideration of youth and women, an evaluation of a sugarcane agricultural project, and an assessment of the impacts of COVID-19 on livelihoods and food security. For this work, Ms. Dzikiti has conducted desk research, developed inception reports and data collection instruments, and conducted both online and in-person interviews and FGDs. She has conducted both quantitative and qualitative analysis and published results in journal papers. Ms. Dzikiti has a Master of Science in Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies from the University of the Witwatersrand and is based in South Africa.

The Evaluation Specialist will participate in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, document review, in-person data collection, analysis, and drafting sections of the final report. She will support the development of data collection instruments and analysis methods across all activities.

**Senior Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) & WASH Advisor – Mary Kincaid:** Dr. Kincaid is President at Iris Group and a gender specialist and health policy advisor, with 30 years of experience in international development. Dr. Kincaid provides strategy and program design, capacity building, and research services on gender integration and social inclusion across multiple sectors. She is a trained researcher with extensive experience using qualitative and mixed methods research in diverse contexts, particularly for use in assessments and to inform strategy and policy development. Her research methods have included policy implementation analysis, economic modeling, in-depth field interviews and focus groups, and evidence reviews. She has worked throughout Latin America and Africa to design and implement country and regional programs as well as leading gender integration, research, and capacity building activities. Recently, Dr. Kincaid has completed a critical review of gender



analysis tools and gender integration metrics currently used by multilateral development banks, bilateral donors, the United Nations system, and large international NGOs. She currently supports GESI integration across the research streams of the URBAN WASH project. Dr. Kincaid has a Doctorate in Public Health and a Master's degree in Economics, both from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Davidson College.

The GESI & WASH Advisor will provide remote support to the Evaluation Team throughout the planning, analysis, and reporting phases. She will conduct document review of gender action plans and other relevant documents, provide inputs into the sampling strategy and data collection tools, and ensure analysis and reporting appropriately incorporate GESI considerations.

**Local Support:** If the Evaluation Team requires local support for facilitating community engagement or providing translation services during KIIs or FGDs, URBAN WASH will hire a local consultant from the specific region.

**URBAN WASH Home Office Support:** Various URBAN WASH Home Office staff will contribute to the evaluation, including:

- **Chief of Party** – Liz Jordan will participate in the kick-off call with USAID, have bi-weekly check in calls with the Team Lead throughout the evaluation, and provide quality assurance/quality control and approval of all deliverables.
- **Director of Operations** – Jess Melton will oversee the execution of consultant agreements with the Evaluation Team, approve final invoices and payments to the consultants, and support the local team with any unforeseen problems during the assignment.
- **Finance Manager** – Mahlet Dessalegn will support the Director of Operations with administrative tasks, including review of subcontractor invoices and ensuring timely payment, and will also manage budget monitoring and adherence.
- **Contracts and Procurement Specialist** – Gema Aragonés Novoa will contribute primarily by providing contractual compliance support through the issuance and close-out of activity subcontracts.

Summary information about evaluation team members, including qualifications, experience, and role on the team.

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