



Topicsheet

OVERVIEW

Section: Water and Sanitation

Water – a Key for Sustainable Development

Context

The central problem within the water sector is the lack of adequate access to safe water supply and basic sanitation. This is intensified through rapid population growth; at the same time the amount of available water decreases due to pollution, overuse and climate change. Additionally, inefficient public utilities and ineffective institutions are an obstacle for the development of a clear and coherent sector policy. Appropriate laws and regulations need to be established, implemented and monitored. In many cases this is impeded through unclear responsibilities and an overlap of regulatory and operational functions. Furthermore, reform and decentralisation processes often proceed slowly.

There is a need of improvement in the management of water resources; competition between different users on local, national and international level (drinking water – industry – agriculture) is increasing.

Our Experience

GTZ is currently involved in water-related projects in 34 countries and one region (SADC). Water is a priority area in our projects in 23 of these countries (8 in sub-Saharan Africa, 6 in the Middle East/North Africa, 3 in Latin America, 3 in Asia and 3 in Central and Eastern Europe).

In these countries we support our partners in the following key areas:

- **Water supply.** Setting up water supply providers, improving operation and management, human resources management, curriculum development, implementing economic management (improving efficiency and cost recovery)
- **Sanitation.** Cost-efficient sanitation solutions, promotion of ecological sanitation concepts (ecosan), hygiene education, and awareness campaigns on the links between water and health
- **Reform of the water sector.** Developing and implementing water poli-

cies, water laws, organisational restructuring of relevant ministries, setting up regulatory bodies, decentralising water supply

- **Water resources management.** Developing and implementing sustainable water management strategies, water master plans, monitoring systems, water permits for withdrawal of water and discharge of waste water, water rights, raw water management
- **Transboundary water management.** Establishing and strengthening of river basin commissions, information exchange, network building, conflict prevention, harmonisation of water policies within a region

Other areas of activities include waste water management and reuse, irrigation management and establishing of water user groups.



Hygiene education for nurses

Motto: *Water is Life, Money & Development*



Water kiosk

Mission and Approach

Reducing poverty and safeguarding the health of people in developing countries are key aims of German Development Cooperation. The water sector plays a fundamental role here. The proportion of the population without sufficient water supply and sanitation is to be halved by 2015 as part of the MDGs and the German Government's Programme of Action 2015 on poverty reduction. Our water projects do target poverty reduction by securing access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation systems, especially for the poor, at socially acceptable prices. This also helps to stem waterborne diseases.

Participation is a fundamental element of our work. Especially women have to be involved. Usually they are responsible for water supply and sanitation and therefore important intermediaries. The availability of water is indispensable for economic growth (industry, agriculture etc.). To assure the environment for an economic and social development, prevention and avoidance of conflicts over water resources are essential.

A sustainable management of water resources contributes to the protection of environment and conservation of ecosystems. This also improves the quality of life. We develop and implement our water-sector projects in line with the principles of *Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)*. The coordinated management of water, land and other relevant resources is designed to improve both economic and social wealth, while taking into account the vulnerability of vital ecosystems. This requires concerted cross-sectoral activities at all levels in order to bring about structural changes.

Waterless rural villages commonly rely on water peddlers



Achieving the water related *Millennium Development Goals (MDG)* is a big challenge. Worldwide, 1.1 billion people do not have access to *safe drinking water*, 2.6 billion people are lacking *adequate sanitation facilities*.

Our Services

Over many years we have gained a *wealth of experience* in the water and sanitation sector and have at our disposal a range of *proven concepts*. Our projects tackle the key bottlenecks in the water sector. GTZ supports *complex reform and change processes* by advising partners on shaping and implementing modern water-policy principles.

In cooperation with our partners we create appropriate institutional and legal frameworks, efficient organisations, companies and effective administrative structures at macro, meso and micro level. For us, it is essential to incorporate social, cultural and environmental aspects into these activities.

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