



WATER DIVISION
DIVISION FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
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A Short Version of Sida Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation

Pure Water



Pure Water

Water is fundamental to the existence of all forms of life.

Safe drinking water, sanitation and good hygienic conditions are essential for human survival, health and dignity. Adequate and reliable water supplies are critical in ensuring food security and reducing poverty as well as for raising livestock and cultivating crops. At the same time, careful management of water supplies and wastewater is vital to environmental safety and sustainability.

The diversity of situations related to water supply and sanitation ranging from the household to the national level, pose complex challenges for local inhabitants and for authorities on local, national and regional levels. A broad combination of knowledge, skills and resources is needed at all levels to ensure sustainable investments as well as operation and maintenance in water supply and sanitation. It is important that all investments are socially, environmentally, technically, financially and institutionally sustainable.

Sida has developed a detailed Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals of halving the proportion of the world's population without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by the year 2015.

The main responsibility for this vital task rests with the national governments. The strategy presents how Sida looks at its role and procedures for cooperation that supports processes within partner nations to fulfill the international goals.

Sida places special emphasis on improving the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable in partner countries. In its cooperation in the water supply and sanitation sector, Sida believes that this can best be achieved through investing in four key areas:

- ▶ Improved health
- ▶ Strengthening of democratic governance
- ▶ Environmental sustainability
- ▶ Enhanced incomes and economic development

Environmental protection is a major issue for Sweden. The water projects in Eastern Europe, supported by Sida, have led to environmental improvements affecting millions of people living around the Baltic Sea.





Improving Health

Lack of access to adequate safe drinking water and sanitation cause several severe health problems. These can be grouped into three categories:

- ▶ Water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera and typhoid, caused by contaminated water
- ▶ Water-washed diseases such as skin and eye infections caused by insufficient water for personal hygiene
- ▶ Water-based or other water-related diseases such as malaria, bilharzia, elephantiasis and river blindness, related to exposure to unsafe water situations

Most of these diseases cause, and are caused by, poverty and social exclusion. The most vulnerable groups are young children, the malnourished, and people with HIV/AIDS. In areas where the HIV/AIDS-prevalence is high, all activities should consider the impact and consequences of HIV/AIDS.

Experience and research show that improving access and quality of water supply alone has limited effects on

health. To have effect on health, water supply interventions must be combined with improved sanitation and hygiene practices. Sida places great emphasis on supporting activities that integrate water, sanitation and hygiene promotion. Methodologies and technologies that protect the water throughout the water chain, from source to consumption, are particularly encouraged.

Environmental Sustainability

Water use and sanitation practices have far-reaching effects on the environment. The negative effects pose direct and long-term threats to people's health and livelihoods and include:

- ▶ Water pollution due to poor wastewater management
- ▶ Water wastage due to deteriorating infrastructure and inefficient water utilities
- ▶ Ecosystem degradation and pollution through uncontrolled and unmonitored practices such as release of agricultural, industrial and human waste products

The complex mix of challenges requires a holistic approach to inter-

ventions in water supply and sanitation and take into account all actual and future users. Sida supports:

- ▶ Incentives to encourage environmental responsibility and accountability
- ▶ Establishing and strengthening institutional frameworks for regulating, monitoring and informing about unsafe environmental practices
- ▶ Development of environment-friendly industrial production
- ▶ Improved wastewater treatment methods
- ▶ Development and application of socially, economically and environmentally appropriate technologies

Examples of techniques that optimise water use and limit waste and pollution are urban leakage detection, rainwater harvesting, water demand management and ecological sanitation. Sida also strongly supports integrated water resources management (IWRM) within river basins. IWRM is an approach that stimulates holistic, participatory and sustainable water resources planning, development, distribution and management.

Enhancing Livelihoods and Economic Development

Improved water supply and sanitation leads to better health, dignity and a safe environment which improves the livelihoods of people, increases the opportunities and leads to economic development. Enhanced economic activities range from household-level projects such as soap making, market gardening, small-scale irrigation and industry, to large-scale agriculture, industry, mining or tourism. Potential economic spin-offs come from efficient recycling of waste and wastewater, and in the emergence of viable markets in sewage sludge, wastewater and dry excreta products used as fertilisers in agriculture. In some areas, the emergence of water vendors, private well diggers and toilet builders generates affordable solutions to service provision and local incomes for women and men. Water and sanitation facilities that support schools, clinics, markets and other infrastructure have broad and long-term effects on overall economic development.

The financing and institutional mechanisms that secure investments in water supply and sanitation shall promote efficient use of resources and ensure sustainability. Sida believes in market-oriented and demand-driven approaches to service provision. At the same time, it is important not to underestimate the political and social aspects of service provision. In every situation there has to be a balance between political, social, environmental and economic considerations.

Sida supports the development of regulatory frameworks that enables both public and private sector financing and service provision according to sound economic principles. These include: mobilisation of domestic savings, international lending at favourable rates for investments that benefit the poor; public/private co-financing and delivery; and establishing tariff structures that gives incentives to investment without putting undue pressure on poor consumers. Sida also stresses that human-

itarian assistance, including water supply and sanitation, in emergencies should consider how the assistance influence long-term livelihood goals and sustainability, and not only on focus on short-term survival needs.

Deepening Democratic Governance

Access to water supply and sanitation is profoundly uneven between and within countries. There is a well-recognised relationship between poverty, insecure ownership and resource rights. Poverty leads to inadequate and unsustainable service provision that is worsened by unequal gender relations and the absence of democratic practices.

Water and sanitation are both public goods and private commodities. There is hence strong need to cooperate between neighbours and neighbouring settlements to be able to secure individual needs. Even in conflict-ridden societies, questions on sanitation and water supply constitute a platform to start dealing with common problems. Water is a finite resource and without common principles for its management everybody's loss rapidly becomes evident. Consumers have to be recognised as active citizens with rights and

entitlements on the one hand, and obligations and responsibilities on the other. Democratic participation of users, both women and men, in governance processes and service delivery is a pre-requisite for achieving institutional, technical, environmental, and financial sustainability, as well as for reducing and resolving competition and conflict amongst users and other stake-holders. Besides recognising women's traditional relationship to domestic water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion, Sida also supports initiatives that challenge fixed gender roles and encourages new and complementary roles for both men and women.

Sida supports participatory procedures that promote direct involvement of all in water and sanitation, with particular attention to the most marginalised. To strengthen such practices, Sida supports the development of democratic organisational structures and procedures within and among sector institutions, and encourages decentralisation of administrative, financial and technical responsibilities for water and sanitation services to the lowest appropriate levels. Sida is committed to supporting capacity building in all these areas.



Dialogue

The priorities and objectives of Sida's cooperating partners together with joint assessments and extensive dialogue determine the content of cooperation and support. Sida Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation is one of the instruments that will be utilised in such a dialogue.



Subsidise the poor not the water

About 1.1 billion people in the developing world do not have access to safe drinking water and in many regions the shortage of water resources is getting worse. Today much of the world's drinking water is heavily subsidised. Subsidies which are very often misdirected since most of the subsidised water goes to the rich or the urban middle class. The principle should be; subsidise the poor not the water.

Principles, Priorities and Approaches

Sida's Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation outlines the basis for dialogue and cooperation in a number of core principles, priorities and approaches. The principles are intended to make investments in water supply and sanitation more sustainable. The strategy also deals with industrial water use and waste-water.

Principles

Based on Sida's experience and engagement with many partners in the water sector, the strategy establishes core principles that will guide the cooperation within the sector. These core principles are consistent with broader international principles and approaches.

Sida's guiding principles include:

- ▶ Integrate water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion in all investments, both in rural and urban settings as well as in emergency situations.
- ▶ Integrate water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion strategies and activities with relevant social, economic, spatial and environmental planning.
- ▶ Link investments in water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion with national and local poverty reduction strategies.
- ▶ Increase democratic participation in planning and management processes by all actors, women as well as men, and ensure equitable access to water and sanitation.
- ▶ Develop and support the use of technologies that are socially, economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable.
- ▶ Support and strengthen institutional frameworks for public and private sectors.

Priority areas

Sida has identified five priority areas of support:

- ▶ Water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion in rural areas
- ▶ Water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion in urban and peri-urban slums
- ▶ Water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion in emergency situations
- ▶ Wastewater management in urban areas
- ▶ Industrial water and wastewater management

Approaches

Sida has defined a set of approaches to guide the cooperation in water supply and sanitation and to ensure appropriate and sustainable investments:

- ▶ Support and strengthen an enabling institutional and policy environment that recognises and implements an integrated approach to water supply and sanitation.
- ▶ Support capacity building of sector institutions and individuals at all levels in terms of equitable access to resources and services, health, social development, and technical, financial, institutional and environmental sustainability.
- ▶ Include marginalised citizens in all stages of service design, delivery, maintenance, management and monitoring.
- ▶ Develop financing and cost recovery mechanisms ensuring that investments lead to sustainable service delivery, operation and maintenance that is affordable to the poor.

Further details of the principles, priorities and approaches guiding Sida's support for water supply and sanitation development can be found in the Sida Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation (2004), available at www.sida.se.

Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.



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