

With 2.1 billion people without access to safely managed water services, 4.5 billion still lacking safely managed sanitation facilities, and almost 1000 children dying daily due to water- and sanitation related diseases, we cannot afford vital resources to be misused, lost or squandered by corruption. It represents a major obstacle to sustainable development, not least in the water and sanitation sector. In order to contribute to the fight against corruption, Sida supports interventions that strengthen transparency, accountability, participation, and sustainable institutions in the water and sanitation sector.

WHAT IS SIDA'S POSITION ON CORRUPTION?

Corruption constitutes a concrete obstacle to reducing poverty, oppression, and inequality. Sida considers all types of corruption to be a central barrier to sustainable development and works on four levels to counter it, namely by: 1) contributing to international anti-corruption efforts; 2) supporting anti-corruption measures in our partner countries; 3) countering corruption in individual aid interventions; 4) promoting a high ethical level and strong integrity among Sida staff.

In the water and sanitation sector, Sida actively supports interventions that promote effective anti-corruption measures in the field, e.g. enhanced diagnostic- and analytical work, transparency, accountability, participation, as well as institutional capacity building and governance efforts.

SIDA'S APPROACH TO CORRUPTION AND OTHER IRREGULARITIES IS TO:

- ALWAYS PREVENT;
- NEVER ACCEPT;
- ALWAYS INFORM;
- ALWAYS ACT.



THE IMPACT OF CORRUPTION ON THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR

Water and sanitation services are indispensable to sustainable development and the impact of corruption on the sector is detrimental for human well-being, the effectiveness of allocation of resources, and the environment. Although there are no reliable estimates of the financial impact of corruption, the cost is believed to be substantial.

“Every 10 per cent of investments that is lost to corruption implies annual losses to the sector in excess of US\$ 75 billion; some guesstimates put potential losses many times higher”
(Water Integrity Network, 2016:26, Water Integrity Global Outlook report)

The poor are often dependent on informal water suppliers and are often forced to pay significantly more for water than more privileged groups. According to Transparency International (TI), at individual household levels, corruption is estimated to increase the price of attaining a water connection by as much as 30 per cent.

Furthermore, by indirectly affecting the access to safe water, proper sanitation and food security, corruption can have far-reaching health consequences. This includes the spreading of diseases, stunting, cognitive disabilities and hundreds of thousands of deaths annually. Women and girls are additionally at risk of sextortion, wherein sexual services are demanded in exchange for other services. As the group is typically expected to fetch water, cook, clean and help the elderly, women and girls are also often more exposed to petty bribery in informal water networks. They are also often excluded from water sector decision-making processes and have their interests ignored. Moreover, corruption also has a disastrous impact on the environment, pervading all aspects of water management, impairing irrigation, letting water pollution go unchecked, and enabling unsustainable usage of limited water resources.

By extension, it jeopardises the safety and well-being of people and complicates efforts to mitigate, adapt to, and counter climate change. Taken together, it is clear that corruption in the water and sanitation sector must be highlighted and addressed.



Photo: Sudipto Das, The River with White Scars, / WIN photo competition winner 2016/2017. Women performing their morning ritual in the deeply polluted Yamuna river. Corruption and malpractice have proven detrimental to the water and wastewater management in the area.

WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO PREVENT AND ELIMINATE CORRUPTION IN THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR?

Effectively countering the often complex and widespread corruption requires an array of different tools and approaches, which must be grounded in transparency, accountability and participation. More context-specific research and analytical evaluations are needed to better understand the scope and nature of corruption in the water and sanitation sector, utilising tools such as corruption impact assessments, risk-mapping and public expenditure tracking. For transparency to be promoted, documentation on plans, budgets and procurements should be publicly available, and the media encouraged to report on water issues. Integrity pacts between stakeholders, contract monitoring and strict financial and procurement rules are also essential tools to ensuring fair and transparent procurement processes.

Accountability measures need to be put in place to hold decision-makers and implementers to account. This includes the strengthening of monitoring and oversight mechanisms, improving human resource management practices, building stakeholder coalitions against corruption, expanding whistle-blowing protection and complaint management systems. These complaint systems can encompass citizen report cards, hotlines, and various other feedback mechanisms to monitor the quality of water services provided by public and private utilities. It is also necessary to install and enforce anti-corruption regulation with adequate and dissuasive sanctions as deterrence to uphold effective implementation of regulations.

Equitable and open means of participation should be provided to local communities and civil society through all the stages of the programme process, with means to conduct due diligence, audits, monitoring, report misgivings and provide feedback. Accountable and inclusive governance structures that include multiple stakeholders such as the poor and civil society organisers as well as public officials are therefore key in this regard.

SWEDEN'S ENGAGEMENT

Sida recognises that corruption in the water and sanitation sector is a complex phenomenon involving many different actors, strong interests, and nefarious opportunities for personal gain. Corruption is enabled by different power structures and norms and takes place in a multitude of different sectors. To address this challenge, Sida supports a range of different organisations, partnerships, and projects that either specifically target corruption in the sector or that promote anti-corruption elements such as improved governance, monitoring, transparency and accountability mechanisms. Below are a few examples of interventions that Sida supports:

The Water Integrity Network (WIN) is a global multi-stakeholder network of individuals and organisations that fights corruption and promotes integrity and improved performance in the water sector. The network has developed and documented an array of useful integrity tools, published case studies and briefs, shared good practices and provided support in turn to multiple different regional capacity-building events.

The Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET) is a national network association aimed to increase participation, knowledge and engagement in civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Kenyan water sector. In addition, KEWASNET promotes the direct involvement of citizens in demanding effective, equitable and accountable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) service delivery and resource management.

The Reall project Community-Led Infrastructure Finance Facility (CLIFF), which purpose is to provide people in informal settlements with access to affordable housing, water, sanitation and tenure finance, is implementing an **Integrity for Investment Initiative** that seeks to improve the standards and transparency of the network's decision-making to decrease perceptions of risk and increase investment. With targeted support from Sida, the initiative includes actions such as improving the access to information, developing procurement standards and setting up systems and technologies to strengthen managerial and monitoring capabilities.