

PROJECT FACTSHEET

Tajikistan July 2018

ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER: A CHALLENGE IN TAJIKISTAN



Water user associations provide access to drinking water in public places such as medical centres and schools.
© SDC

In Tajikistan, the poorest country in Central Asia, half of the 8.5 million inhabitants do not have access to drinking water. In mountainous and rural regions, the figure reaches 80%. This situation poses a serious risk to public health. The SDC's project on 'Safe drinking water and sanitation management in Tajikistan' (SWSMT) focuses on access to drinking water and sanitation in the east of the country.

Access to drinking water and sanitation facilities is one of the main basic conditions for socio-economic development. While the percentage of people with access to clean water globally is growing, the opposite has been happening in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although Tajikistan is endowed with abundant water resources, its rural and mountainous populations are facing serious difficulties in terms of public health. The civil war, which ended in 1997, had a major impact on eastern Tajikistan's population and its infrastructure, in particular the Eastern Khatlon region and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) where the SDC is focusing its activities.

AN OBSTACLE TO DEVELOPMENT

Compounded by substantial population growth, the following problems are increasing in eastern Tajikistan:

1. Spread of waterborne diseases such as typhoid and diarrhoea;
2. Significant amount of time invested by women and children in order to fetch water, to the detriment of time that could be spent on income-generating or educational activities.

The state commits few resources to build new facilities. 60% of the existing infrastructure does not function and there is no money for maintenance. Expanding and improving the infrastructure remains a financial and technical challenge for the future. The government's reform programme for 2016–2025 aims to decentralise the water sector and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the different actors involved.

DECENTRALISING WATER MANAGEMENT

Water user associations assume responsibility for day-to-day operations and maintenance at local level. The SDC's programme helps these actors gain the know-how they need to make sure supply systems function properly and are well maintained. It also promotes effective sanitation methods, which are key to preventing contamination of water sources and aquifers. This in turn helps maintain the public health benefits of access to clean drinking water.

The overall goal of the project is to improve the quality of life of 70,000 people in Eastern Khatlon and the GBAO by implementing sustainable water management and sanitation mechanisms. The project includes an equal representation of women and young people in managing and operating the infrastructure and enables them to address their specific needs. Another element is to disseminate good hygiene practices in order to reduce water-related health risks.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

PROJECT TITLE

Safe drinking water and sanitation management in Tajikistan

BACKGROUND

In Tajikistan, half of the 8.5 million inhabitants do not have access to drinking water. For mountainous and rural populations, this figure reaches 80%. This situation poses a serious risk to public health.

OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the project is to improve the quality of life of people in Eastern Khatlon and the GBAO by implementing sustainable water management and sanitation mechanisms.

TARGET GROUPS

70,000 people in Eastern Khatlon and the GBAO, water user associations, medical centres and schools.

PARTNERS

The Aga Khan Foundation (main agency) Mountain Societies Development Support Programme and Republican Institute for Professional Development of Educators in GBAO.

DURATION

01.03.2017 - 28.02.2021

BUDGET

5,300,000 Mio. CHF

IMPRINT

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Freiburgstrasse 130
3003 Bern, Switzerland
www.sdc.admin.ch