

Program Brief



Rural water supply and sanitation

Scenario

The Philippines, known for its abundant water resources, is presently confronted with an alarming crisis of sustainability in its water sector. Ensuring the long-term availability of adequate supplies of clean water at reasonable cost is one of the greatest challenges facing the country. Rapid population growth, economic development, urbanisation and industrialisation have taken their toll on water resources resulting in increased competition for water. Furthermore, rising levels of water pollution, degradation of watersheds and inadequate government support to sector programs has aggravated the situation. Hence, the need for the implementation of an integrated, coherent and sustainable water resources management program.

Problems in the water sector are due mainly to institutional fragmentation, resulting in: the ambiguous definition of roles and responsibilities; overlapping tasks; lack of a comprehensive database; lack of a sustainable water management policy; and a weak regulatory authority.

Currently, there are more than 20 different government institutions directly or indirectly involved in the water supply and sanitation sector in the Philippines. Unclear responsibilities and poor coordination between these institutions, as well as a lack of funds and qualified staff,



Improved water supplies directly translate into productive activities especially by women and children.

Partners: Department of the Interior and Local Government, Water and Sanitation Program Management Office (DILG-WSSPMO); National Water Resources Board (NWRB); National Anti-Poverty Commission-Water and Sanitation Coordinating Office (NAPC-WASCO).

Target Groups: National government agencies; provincial and municipal local government units (LGUs).

Duration: October 2003 - September 2006

hinder the implementation of laws, recommendations and strategies. The planned expansion of private sector involvement, for instance, is only progressing slowly.

Description

The GTZ Water and Sanitation Program is one of the focal programs of Philippine-German cooperation. This cooperation plays a key role in supporting the economic, social and political development of the Philippines. The program is designed to improve the living conditions of the rural poor population in selected areas of the country, through the strengthening of government organisations at the national, provincial and municipal levels of administration. Drawing valuable lessons from almost 10 years of experience in the sector, the Program promotes sustainability by enabling partnerships and active local participation.

Core activities include: technical advice on strategic planning for the sector; capacity building; knowledge management; pilot demonstration activities on low cost sanitation options (ecosan); and support to local associations. Collaboration with other German institutions, foreign donor agencies, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions has achieved a high level of synergy and ensures the optimum use of limited resources in program areas.

The implementation of the Water and Sanitation Program follows the guiding principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), which promote efficiency and sustainability at all levels of intervention.



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At the macro level, the Program extends technical assistance to its national partners such as the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Water and Sanitation Program Management Office (DILG-WSSPMO), the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), and the newly created Water and Sanitation Coordinating Office under the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC-WASCO).

With the DILG acting as the main program partner, capacity building activities for local government units (LGUs) can be carried out effectively and efficiently. The Program supports NWRB in its decentralization plan and in the development of a raw water pricing model at pilot sites in the Visayas. The principle of integrated policy and institutional frameworks is advocated through the Program's support to WASCO. This aims to define the levels of integration of various government agencies, support policy formulation and improve the coordination of sector programs and activities. Advisory services are extended to selected Provincial Planning and Development Offices (PPDO) to promote integrated planning with all sector stakeholders.

Basic training courses are offered to enhance the understanding of IWRM within the legal framework governing the Philippine water sector.

Partner agencies are assisted to formulate plans for the integration and mainstreaming of IWRM into their respective water and sanitation programs. At the micro level, the Bantayan Island Water Association is a classic model demonstrating both an island-wide ecosystem approach and inter-sectoral and participatory-based management of water resources.

Impact

The Program has been influential in promoting policy and institutional reforms resulting in the drawing up of a sector roadmap. This roadmap clearly defines the strategic roles of key water agencies and enhances the coordination of water-related programs and developments. Setting the strategic direction of the sector has facilitated the development of financing and incentive structures. These allow the systematic and transparent allocation of resources and infrastructure to water projects (funded by foreign donor agencies and local financing institutions).

Management and planning tools such as the Geographic Information System, Knowledge Management, and Benchmarking have been applied to strengthen and



Community organizer working at the household level to identify domestic sanitation needs.

upgrade the sector database and to ensure the efficient exchange of information among agencies.

The Provincial Water Supply, Sewerage and Sanitation Sector Plan (PW4SP) has been formulated and serves as the main framework for future implementation of water and sanitation projects in the four provinces of Central Visayas. The plan includes arrangements and logistics for local implementation and measures to strengthen operational frameworks and institutional capacities.

Overall, the advisory services extended by the Program at all levels of intervention have considerably strengthened water sector institutions. This will support them in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal for water i.e. by 2015, to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water; and the goal of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan i.e. to provide potable water to the entire country by 2010.

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