

Learning by Sharing

Philippine Portal on Water Supply and Sanitation (WATSAN)

GTZ promotes knowledge sharing among key stakeholders to facilitate better coordination and decision-making within the water supply and sanitation sector.



The Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation (WATSAN) Portal will be launched in 2008.

The KM Portal for the WATSAN sector is a virtual platform which aims to facilitate the sustainable exchange of knowledge and information on water supply and sanitation. To make this happen, GTZ anchored its strategies on the principles of capacity development and sustainable development.

The Journey is the Destination

In April 2006, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), the National Anti-Poverty Commission–Water Supply and Sanitation Coordinating Office (NAPC-WASCO), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), along with other government agencies and the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), agreed to jointly establish a knowledge management portal for the water supply and sanitation sector.

The portal will provide a single point of access to a variety of up-to-date content on water and sanitation (WATSAN) managed and updated by the collaborating agencies themselves. More than this, the portal will improve coordination and networking among the agencies by facilitating the sharing of information on the various projects and activities being pursued by the stakeholders.

However, it was soon clear to all involved that the rewards to be gained from the portal need not start after its construction. The experience of planning, designing, and constructing the portal offer an equally important opportunity for capacity development at both professional and organizational levels.

To make this happen, GTZ made sure that the activities truly espoused participation and ownership.

Success Signposts

The collaborating agencies, together with GTZ, pursued the following strategies to ensure that the portal will truly serve the needs of the stakeholders:

- ◆ Representation of all agencies involved. A Technical Working Group (TWG), composed of representatives from the collaborating agencies, was formed in August 2006. The TWG members were tasked to determine and gather the content, as well as design the portal based on their own agencies' needs and preferences.
- ◆ Formal agreement among all agencies. Last December 12, 2006 the following agencies signed a



Memorandum of Agreement on the development of the portal.

1. National Water Resources Board (NWRB)
2. Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)
3. Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA)
4. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
5. National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)
6. National Anti-Poverty Commission –Water Supply and Sanitation Coordinating Office (NAPC-WASCO)
7. Department of Agriculture–Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA)
8. Department of Health (DOH)
9. Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)
10. Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)
11. German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)– Water and Sanitation Program

The agreement legitimized the development of the portal as a priority activity of all collaborating agencies making it possible to put in much needed resources to the effort.

- ◆ Venue for learning and sharing. The TWG held various workshops to ensure that the WATSAN portal remains responsive to the needs of the agencies involved. Worth highlighting is the Gender Orientation Workshop held last September 17-19, 2007 which sought to help the TWG integrate the gender perspective in relevant aspects of the portal.

Beyond capacity development, these workshops also provided opportunities for the TWG members to work side by side as a team, making it easier for the collaborating agencies to come into agreement on important decisions that have to be made. This in fact paves the way for more sustainable collaboration between the agencies.

Accelerating Speed

The portal is scheduled to be launched in 2008. System enhancements and content build-up are ongoing

and the TWG has made concrete steps leading to an executive order that would ensure the sustainability of the portal. The portal will showcase the following data and information on the WATSAN sector:

- ◆ Overview of the watsan sector/sector assessment
- ◆ Integrated statistics on watsan–watsan coverage, data on morbidity and mortality cases, among others
- ◆ Project updates of watsan agencies
- ◆ Capacity development programs for LGUs
- ◆ Relevant policies/guidelines, standards, mandates on watsan
- ◆ Research and development
- ◆ Sharing of best practices and/or lessons-learned
- ◆ Forum/discussion among participating agencies and other relevant institutions
- ◆ Other related information e.g. directories of experts, events/news updates/issues, list of donor networks and list of members and participating agencies

Plans are also underway in integrating data and information from local government units (LGUs). Hence, from knowledge users, LGUs can transform themselves into active contributors to knowledge sharing.

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