

Water for the Poor Initiative

Recent Results of the United States Signature Action



Throughout Africa: Increasing access to clean water enables women and children to spend time earning income rather than hauling water.



India: Improved water supply and sanitation enhances child survival.



Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia: Provision of water supply and sourcewater protection are integral components of drug eradication efforts.

The United States announced an initiative to improve sustainable management of water resources at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg last August, 2002. It will accelerate and expand international efforts to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals and implement the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation including halving, by 2015, "the proportion of people who are unable to reach or afford safe drinking water," and "the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation." The U.S. will invest \$970 million over three years (2003-2005). It is anticipated that these investments will mobilize a total amount of more than \$1.6 billion for water-related activities globally. Results to date have proven the effectiveness of the interventions undertaken by the initiative, and underscore the commitment of the United States in working with other government and non-governmental partners in three key areas:

- Access to clean water and sanitation services.
- Improved watershed management.
- Increasing the productivity of water.

Enhancing Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services

The United States will invest \$510 million through USAID programs worldwide, concentrating on investments in countries where water authorities are undertaking the reforms necessary to enable viable partnerships that engage local governments, water utilities, the private sector, NGOs, communities and families. For example:

- **In South Africa**, USAID spends \$6 million annually to provide sustainable water and sanitation services to municipalities through public-private and public-public partnerships. Fifty-three water and sanitation projects have been completed to date, and many of the recipients are the urban poor. USAID's Development Credit Authority (DCA) provided loan guarantees that enabled municipalities to finance high priority infrastructure projects for the provision of water and sanitation to poor areas not being served or served inadequately. This enabled the Vlakkfontein Outfall Sewer District to initiate a \$2.5 million project to provide sanitation to approximately 100,000 poor people previously lacking access. The Mission has begun talks on a new facility.
- **In Ghana, Mali, and Niger**, USAID is a partner in the West Africa Water Initiative, a new alliance of twelve organizations worldwide announced at WSSD. The United States provided \$4.4 million, complementing over \$36 million in total resources, to invest in small-scale potable water supply and sanitation, hygiene, and water management, primarily in poor rural and periurban communities. Since WSSD, drilling equipment has been ordered, and hydrologic studies have begun for boreholes in Mali.
- **In India**, USAID spends over \$4 million annually to support the Finance Institutional Reform (FIRE) project to demonstrate innovative financing for water partnerships. Since WSSD, DCA private sector financing raised a total of \$6.4 million in Indian rupees for six projects in the state of Tamil Nadu including a \$403,000 project in the township of Valasaravakkam to lay underground water pipes from a safe drinking water source to serve 26,000 people.

U.S. Agency for International Development
USAID Water Team

<http://www.usaidwater.org>



Water for the Poor



Mali: Support for environmentally sustainable irrigation will boost economic growth and alleviate hunger and poverty.



Worldwide: Strengthening water user associations promotes conflict resolution and shared management of common water resources.



Tanzania: Enhancing national policy on mariculture protects water quality while promoting food security.



Philippines: Devolution of government authority empowers local community groups to take action through a water alliance.

- **In the Central Asian Republics**, USAID has launched several activities in the water sector, including a large program on potable water in the Karakalpakstan region of Uzbekistan, an area hit hard by the Aral Sea Disaster. The project will bring water to over 500,000 people in the region through new wells, purifying equipment, and delivery systems.

Improving Watershed Management

The United States is investing over \$400 million over the next three years to integrate surface water, aquifer, and coastal zone issues to better manage water resources and to protect watersheds. For example:

- **In Morocco**, USAID has spent \$30 million over the past ten years to promote improved water resources management in the Souss-Massa River Basin and in other important basins in the country. These activities have resulted in improved decentralized management of water resources through the formation of operational basin water authorities.
- **In Jamaica**, the \$15 million Ridge to Reef Program focuses on reducing the impact of contamination from agricultural run-off and nutrient-rich sewage flowing from informal settlements in the watershed and along rivers. This is accomplished through interventions for improved agricultural practices and watershed management, education and enforcement. The project has resulted in the strengthened capacity of Jamaica's National Water Commission to effectively create public partnerships for wastewater treatment and involve the tourism industry in Environmental Management Systems.
- **The Geographic Information for Sustainable Development Initiative (GISD)**, a USAID-U.S. State Department-led international alliance announced at WSSD applies a new generation of geographic information systems technologies to watershed management and other sustainable development issues in the developing world. Through a recent investment of \$2.2 million, \$150,000 of which was obligated since WSSD, the United States has leveraged more than \$60 million from the private sector and governmental donors, including at least \$50 million in research and development from data imagery producers.
- **The Philippines Integrated Water Resources Alliance** was formed in September to help cities implement a model, basin-wide approach to urban water resources management. This public-private sector alliance will work to replicate efforts of selected cities in other local governments and their watersheds.

Increasing the Productivity of Water

The United States is investing \$60 million over the next three years to ensure that agricultural and industrial water use is as productive as possible. For example:

- **In Bangladesh**, the \$12 million Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry (MACH) project encompasses a multi-disciplinary, multi-sector participatory process of planning and monitoring to enhance the productivity of fisheries and farmlands, sustainably managing water resources.
- **Since WSSD**, USAID/Mali initiated a \$10 million Irrigated Agriculture Development Program to support intensification and development of the irrigated agriculture sector, thereby increasing economic growth and alleviating poverty.
- **In Colombia**, USAID helps farming communities adopt sustainable aquaculture practices as an alternative means of income generation to help eliminate reliability on illicit coca production.