French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development

FRANCE'S EXTERNAL ACTION IN THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR

STRATEGY



Directorate-General of Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships

2014

According to the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon "there is still enough water for all of us – but only so long as we keep it clean, use it more wisely, and share it fairly."

The world has adequate global freshwater resources used in part by humankind and by the natural environment. But water is a local public good, because freshwater resources are very difficult to transport, as they are unevenly distributed among the regions of the world and within countries. As freshwater resources are limited in quantity and badly managed, they are increasingly threatened by human, industrial and agricultural pollution.

Population pressure and urbanization are heightening these tensions. The impact of climate change on the water cycle is increasing its variability and complicating its management. Certain regions are badly affected, which brings about changes in habitat and demographic distribution.

Improving water resource management is a challenge for sustainable development, environmental protection and food and energy security. Water resource tensions arise from competing domestic, agricultural, industrial and energy uses and can be heightened where water resources have to be managed in a transboundary context. Respect of national sovereignty must therefore go alongside the concerted and responsible management of water resources and the benefits from their exploitation.

Investment in the water and sanitation sector entails strong economic and social externalities by furthering public health and economic and sustainable development.



Young girl filling a family water pot from a well that gives villagers from Korhogo in Côte d'Ivoire access to safe drinking water.
© UN Photo/Ky Chung

800
MILLION PEOPLE
without access to improved water sources.

2.5
BILLION PEOPLE
without access to basic sanitation.

263
RIVER BASINS
shared by two or more States.

GROWING NEEDS IN THE FACE OF A LIMITED RESOURCE

A third of the world's population is currently in a water stress situation. According to demographic prospects and should present consumption trend continue, between half and two-thirds of the world's population will be in this situation by 2025.

Unevenly distributed water resources

The water situation can differ widely from one country to another. There is a structural lack of water in more than 20 countries of the Middle East and North Africa: each inhabitant has less than 1,000 m^3 of freshwater a year, a situation known as "chronic scarcity". Yet water is vital for human life and the ecosystems on which humankind depends, whether for consumption, food, the home, agriculture, the economy or industry.

Water: a source of economic development and of welfare

Water resources management furthers sustainable development in many ways, by combating poverty, preserving public health, protecting the environment (soil resources, biodiversity, ecosystems), and ensuring food security (irrigation and agricultural productivity) and energy security (hydroelectric power). Population pressure and climate change (floods, droughts, melting glaciers and increasing water stress) are going to bring about major changes in habitat through urban concentration, in demographic distribution in certain parts of the world and in lifestyles (increased consumption of food and water). According to the World Bank, securing access to water could account for a quarter of total costs of climate change adaptation until 2050.

A major impact on health

On a world scale, the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation is one of the leading causes of mortality because it compounds the spread of diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, cholera, and so on. This has economic and social consequences: weakening of the workforce, disruption of schooling, threats to economic activities, including farming, fishing and tourism, and to the environment (fragile ecosystems).

THE AFD IS IMPROVING ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER IN DAKAR

The water and sanitation sector in Dakar, Senegal, is facing serious difficulties in terms of production, distribution, quality and financial profitability. Since 2002, the Agence française de développement (AFD, the French agency for development) has been supporting the Government of Senegal in implementing a large-scale investment programme known as the Water Sector Project (PSE). AFD funding (€6.25 million) is earmarked in particular for extending the safe drinking water distribution system by 41 km (25 miles) and building a pumping station in Dakar. It will extend water servicing to more than 360,000 people in Dakar's peri-urban districts and to increase the volume of distributed water by more than 15% and hence improve the financial situation of the water sector.

http://www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/pays/afrique/geo-afr/senegal/projets-sn/eau-potable-dakar

IMPROVED ACCESS TO WATER

This is the UN's leading indicator for assessing progress towards Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7, target 7.C.
People have access to improved water sources if their water comes from a well, a deep drill hole, a standpipe or a tap connected to a safe drinking water system.

IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES

This is the second UN indicator for assessing progress towards Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7, target 7.C.
People have access to improved sanitation facilities if they can use a manual or mechanical toilet flushing system connected to a sewer system or a septic tank, or if they have access to improved ventilated pit latrines, concrete-slab pit latrines or composting toilets.



Rehabilitated toilets at a school in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Access to improved sanitation facilities has progressed, but MDG 7.C is still far off. © UN Photo/Patricia Esteve

0.16%

OF GLOBAL GDP

According to a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) estimate, this amount would be enough to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

115

PEOPLE PER HOUR

die in Africa of diseases related to poor sanitation, poor hygiene and contaminated water.

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (IWRM)

According to the Global Water Partnership, IWRM promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resulting economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.

Water is central to the Millennium Development Goals

In 2000, the international community adopted eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It set itself the goal of halving, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation (MDG 7.C).

In July 2010, the United Nations recognized access to safe drinking water and sanitation as a human right. Implementing this right presupposes going beyond the MDGs. The goal of access to safe drinking water has been achieved, but much remains to be done: sub-Saharan Africa and rural areas are lagging far behind. Moreover, the sanitation MDG will not be achieved before 2026.

Integrated water resources management

Water resources management is essentially a local concern, but it is also a global issue relating to various environmental, development and geostrategic problems.

Over half of the world's population lives in transboundary river basins accounting for almost 60% of global freshwater resources. Transboundary waters even account for 80% of surface water in Africa. Only 40% of shared waters are managed by an agreement between countries. With this in mind, promoting integrated river basin management and disseminating best practices and technical solutions to improve water management are key tools for crisis prevention and for development. These issues heighten regional tensions, particularly in the Middle East and Central Asia: due to the lack of concerted and responsible management, everyone is tempted to prioritize use of available resources for their own needs. Water-related issues are therefore strategic and involve international negotiations.

IMPROVING TRANSBOUNDARY WATER MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

The project on data management capacity building assesses and monitors transboundary water resources in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA). It is designed to produce and share information useful for transboundary waters management in those countries. It is supported by the French global environment facility (FFEM) and the Water Convention of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). It should be seen as one of the priorities identified by European diplomacy under the EU Strategy for Central Asia. The project, which was started in 2010, is supported by the FFEM in the amount of €800,000.

www.ffem.fr/site/ffem/accueil/projets/projets_ffem-par-secteur/Projets-eau-xinternationales/CZZ1505-EOCAC *(in French only)*

FRANCE IS A STRONGLY COMMITTED PLAYER IN THE WATER SECTOR

With the adoption of the G8 Action Plan on Water at the G8 Evian Summit in 2003 and the announcement that it was doubling its external aid, France made water a key focus of its development policy. In 2014, the AFD also adopted a new framework for intervention in the water and sanitation sector.

Focusing aid on priority areas

Sub-Saharan Africa remains France's geographic priority area, given that the region still lags behind in terms of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The political challenges linked to increasing water stress and to pollution in the Mediterranean and Central Asia have led France to extend its intervention to include technical, financial and diplomatic cooperation.

Promoting access to safe drinking water and sanitation for all

The effective implementation of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation should be integrated into national and local sectoral policies. The United Nations has recalled the primary role of public authorities in establishing an organization to help implement this right.

Given the urgency of the situation, it is necessary to use all available levers to promote sustainable access to water and sanitation services and to further target the most disadvantaged populations and schools and health care institutions. It is important to improve the quality of services and of the water consumed, as well as the collection and treatment of wastewater, by promoting hygiene.

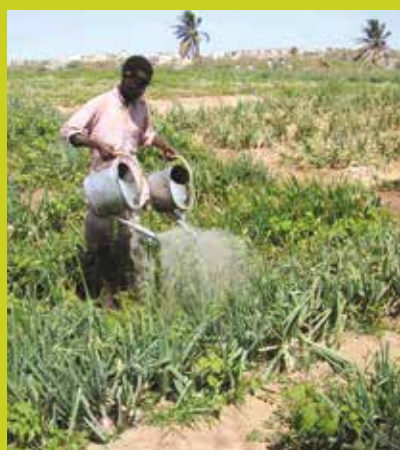
This is the meaning of the "Drinking-water, sanitation and health" resolution initiated by France and adopted by the World Health Assembly of May 2011.

Building on this commitment and within the framework of the Protocol on Water and Health, France is steering work on equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation. In 2011, a first document on best practices regarding equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the pan-European region was drawn up. In 2013, another was produced on the formulation of specific "equitable access" indicators and on the provision to national authorities of tools for their self-evaluation of progress on this theme.

Protecting and sharing water resources

Cross-border cooperation in the sharing of water resources must be encouraged as it contributes to regional security. France focuses its support on large water basins: the organization for the development of the Senegal river (OMVS), the Niger Basin Authority (NBA), the Volta Basin Authority (VBA), the International Commission of the Congo-Oubangui-Sangha Basin (CICOS), the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI).

France is a Party to the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. As it is convinced of the need to strengthen the international legal framework, France has also been a Party to the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses since 2011. France promotes these two Conventions to further an innovative international legal architecture, considering that they will be tools for the peaceful management of water resources at regional level thanks to their consultation mechanisms. France also supports creating a framework for European water diplomacy.



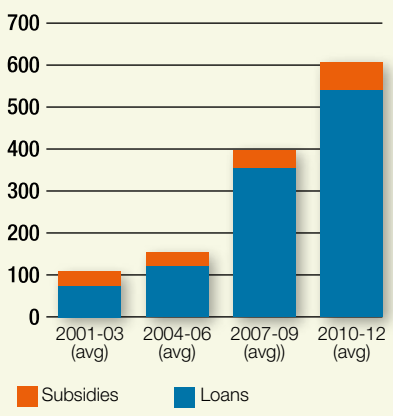
More than two-thirds of water intakes worldwide are for farming purposes. Watering of crops in the Niayes region, north-west Senegal.
© Ezékiel Baudouin/IRD

2.5
MILLION MORE PEOPLE
have improved access to safe drinking water and 800,000 people gain access to safe drinking water each year thanks to projects funded by the AFD.

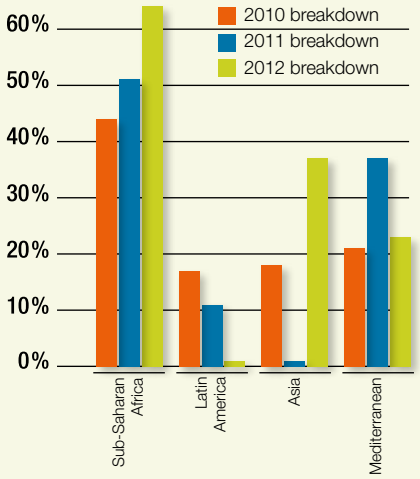
1.5
MILLION MORE PEOPLE
have improved access to sanitation and 500,000 people gain access to sanitation each year thanks to projects funded by the AFD.

600
MILLION EUROS
With this level of funding in 2011, France has doubled its commitments to the water sector since 2003.

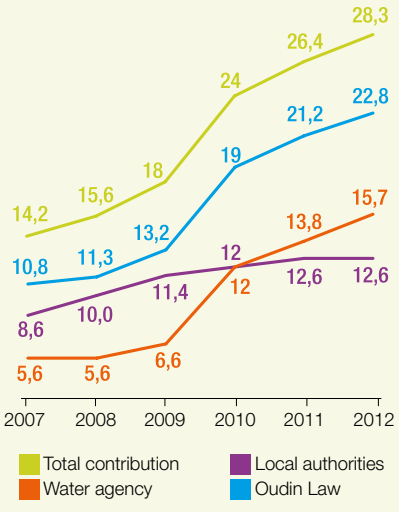
Changes in AFD commitments in the water and sanitation sector
(in millions of euros)



Changes in the geographic breakdown of AFD budgetary resources devoted abroad to water and sanitation



Changes in the funding of decentralized cooperation projects for water and sanitation
(in millions of euros)



The Oudin-Santini Law, adopted on 9 February 2005 by the French National Assembly, allows French local authorities, intercommunal public agencies and joint water and/or sanitation entities to mobilize up to 1% of their water and sanitation budget resources to finance international cooperation actions in these sectors.



Porce III Dam in Colombia. Hydroelectric facilities are crucial for sustainable development and enable many countries to ensure part of their energy security. © Stéphane Ledoux, AFD

Guaranteeing sectoral funding

France mainly works through the AFD, its pivotal operator in the field of development. The water sector accounts for 10% of the AFD's total budget. In 2010-2012, its commitments to the sector doubled, with more than 50% dedicated to Africa and a third to sanitation. The French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) also intervenes via its programme for international waters, and the Ministries of Finance and the Economy support studies for preparing projects (FASEP, private sector aid fund) and building infrastructure in emerging countries.

France also contributes to multilateral institutions' programmes. In particular, it supports the World Bank, the European Commission through the ACP-EU Water Facility in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, and the African Development Bank (AfDB). France also supports the African Water Facility and the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative.

Strengthening water sector governance is a strategic priority

International governance of the sector appears fragmented at this stage, both under the United Nations system where a common stand is being devised through UN-Water (a coordination mechanism of the 28 UN agencies and programmes involved in the water sector), and under regional and international initiatives.

France encourages implementation of strategies in which sectoral needs should be adjusted to the three sources of funding: payment by users, taxes and international transfers. It supports water sector institutions at the local, national, regional and basin levels. France intends to innovate in financial engineering in order to provide better adapted responses to sectoral needs. It is working with the other bilateral and multilateral donors according to the principles of aid effectiveness set out in the Paris Declaration adopted in 2005. It encourages the mobilization of all financial resources and expertise. In parallel, it supports the development of Decentralized Solidarity Mechanisms (DSM).

France is participating in donor coordination in countries where it is involved and in international forums for strategic dialogue. Besides being active within the European Water Initiative and the G8 to strengthen the partnership with the African Ministers' Council on Water, France has joined the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) partnership, a multi-stakeholder platform for access to sanitation and safe drinking water. France also supports the work of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, and of UN-Water.

Bringing together all relevant stakeholders

France is developing an enhanced partnership policy with all sectoral stakeholders with recognized expertise, such as the private sector, research groups and development and emergency aid NGOs, via the Waters Advocacy Coalition (WAC) platform. These stakeholder networks can help gather and disseminate information, e.g. the Water Solidarity Programme (pS-Eau) or formulate joint statements to promote French know-how, e.g. the French Water Partnership (FWP).

LA FRANCE UNDERTAKES TO :

1 STRENGTHEN ADVOCACY IN SUPPORT OF INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES

by recalling their contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and making the post-2015 international development agenda a main focus.

2 CONTINUE ACTION TOWARDS THE UNIVERSAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

particularly with a view to achieving MDG 7.C for sanitation by promoting hygiene. France would like each individual to have a decent life with good health, in particular the most disadvantaged groups, schools and health care institutions.

3 PROMOTE INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AT BASIN LEVEL AS A TOOL OF DIPLOMACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

to contribute to peace and security by strengthening the international legal frameworks provided by the New York and Helsinki Conventions, as they promote the equitable management and sharing of water resources.

4 MAINTAIN OUR PRIORITY FOCUS ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, THE SAHEL, THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THOSE IN CRISIS

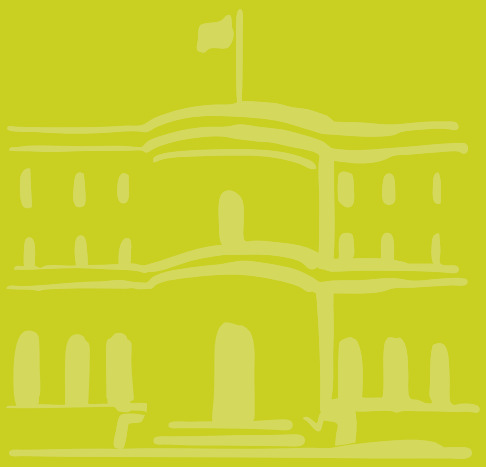
and adapt French interventions to specific regional challenges, especially in the Mediterranean and in Central Asia.

5 ENCOURAGE THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SECTOR'S MONITORING AND EVALUATION TOOLS

at the national and world levels, notably through the competent United Nations agencies and programmes, to analyze developments in access to safe drinking water and sanitation as well as remaining challenges more accurately.

6 PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE SOLIDARITY MECHANISMS FOR FUNDING THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR

including the Decentralized Mechanisms that help implement actions that are distinct from, yet supplement, those led or funded by bilateral government cooperation, such as: forging partnerships, mobilizing specific expertise and know-how, and conducting actions with a strong local presence.



FRANCE'S EXTERNAL ACTION IN THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR

Water is central to sustainable development and the fight against poverty. Water scarcity often strongly reduces food and energy security. Floods, droughts and the consequences of climate change weigh on economies and population flows.

Dirty water kills more than AIDS. Water-related diseases are a major cause of infant mortality: on average, 115 people die hourly in Africa of diseases related to poor sanitation, poor hygiene and contaminated water. This is why the universal implementation of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, recognized by the United Nations in July 2010, is a priority for France.

Water has been a reference sector for French cooperation since the Action Plan on Water adopted at the G8 Evian Summit in 2003.

Through its diplomatic and cooperation action, France promotes the integrated management of water resources, notably transboundary ones, in Africa, Asia, Central Asia and Europe. Through this commitment, France helps reduce tensions between riparian States and protect the water resource with a view to its proper use for all (in industry, farming and for people's daily needs).

France is a major global stakeholder in the water sector, given its extensive know-how and experience at national level, its economic assets linked to French water sector companies, and its effective research and development sector.

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