

»» Project Information

Implemented by:



Water supply and sanitation – Benin

Clean drinking water and basic sanitation for the Beninese population

In Benin there is a lack of hygienically safe water. Only about six out of ten Beninese people have access to clean drinking water. The "integrated management" approach to the existing sources available, as envisioned by the state, is faltering. Thus KfW Development Bank supports projects related to water supply, hygiene and sanitation in both rural and urban areas.

of clean water and the integrated management of water as a resource is underlined in several national strategies on urban and rural water supply for example, in an action plan on integrated water resource management or in the strategy on hygiene and sanitation. These strategies revolve around the national growth strategy to reduce poverty. A new water management law has also been adopted, but the implementation of the national approach for the integrated management of water resources has so far been inadequate.

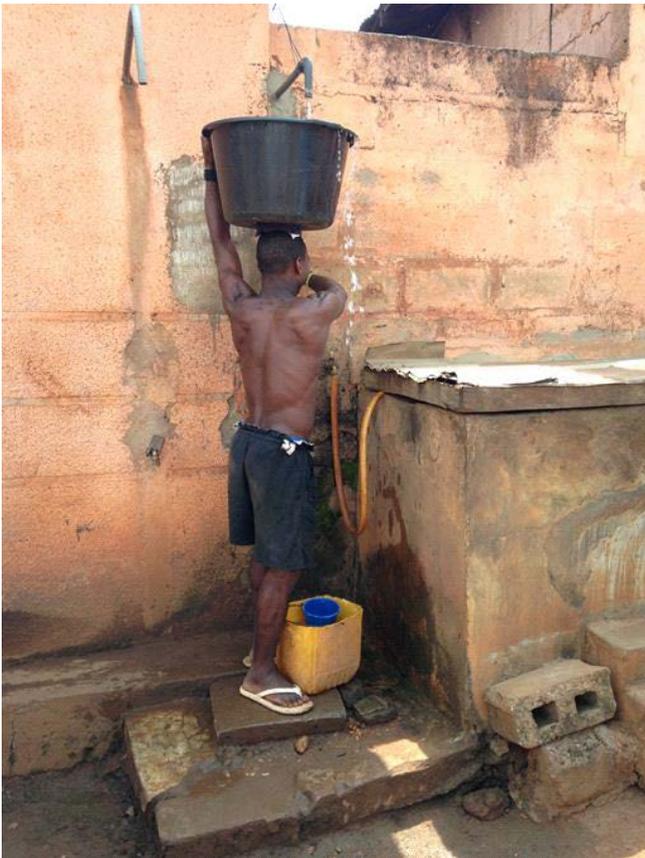
Context

Benin actually has sufficient freshwater resources: situated in western Africa, the country produces 4,000 cubic metres per capita per year – a healthy figure. It should not have to combat water poverty or water shortages. But the reality is different. In rural areas in particular, the supply of safe drinking water is insufficient during the dry season. There is a lack of modern pumping systems to reach the deeper water strata that carry water all year round. This means the people without access to a safe source of water – such as a modern drilled well with a foot-operated pump, a standpipe or a household connection – have to rely on "alternative" sources of water. Yet traditional wells or private drilled wells are generally very polluted, partly because there is often a lack of toilets. This results in the spread of water-borne diseases like diarrhoea, skin irritations and parasites. Children in particular are at risk.

This explains why improved access to drinking water is a key priority area for KfW Development Bank in its development cooperation with Benin, as resolving this development policy challenge is a priority for the government. The significance for the development process

Project name	Water programme (Programme Eau Potable)
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Country/Region	Benin
Lead executing agency	SONEB, DG Eau





A man collects water from his neighbour's KfW-funded house connection in Azové, Source: KfW , photographer: Laura Knierim.

Project approach

It is primarily people living in mid-sized towns and the rural population who have gained access to a sufficient quantity of clean drinking water thanks to the KfW project. Sanitary conditions have also been improved.

Water supply systems have been repaired, expanded and modernised in twelve towns. The national water utility SONEB as the project-executing agency has laid down roughly 180 kilometres of new pipes. Standpipes, reservoirs and chlorination installations have been built or renovated. This has not only boosted the connection rate for the urban population, it has ensured that existing infrastructure functions more efficiently, first and foremost avoiding technical water losses.

A total of 18 central supply systems (with conduits) have been financed in larger villages on the outskirts of urban areas, too. The project-executing agency was the water utility company DG Eau, assigned to the Ministry for Mines, Energy and Water, which using KfW funding installed roughly 200 wells with foot-operated pumps in rural areas. More than 180 latrines were installed in public places, like schools for example. This not only

means a better supply for the population, it also saves time that can be used for business activities. People are not exposed to the same risk of disease either.

Impact

Access to sufficient amounts of clean drinking water and to sanitation for the rural population and those living in mid-sized towns has improved. In 2006, when the water programme entered the construction phase, 44 % of the population in rural areas and around 50 % in urban areas had access to clean drinking water. The latest figures reveal that 63 % of people in urban and rural areas have clean water.

This means people are healthier, while girls and young women in particular spend less time collecting water – as this is traditionally their task. Consequently, the locals can increase their income, and it is easier for young boys and girls to attend school. More education and higher incomes reduce poverty, thus living conditions are improved in several ways due to a reliable supply of safe drinking water.



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