

Accelerating WASH in Benin

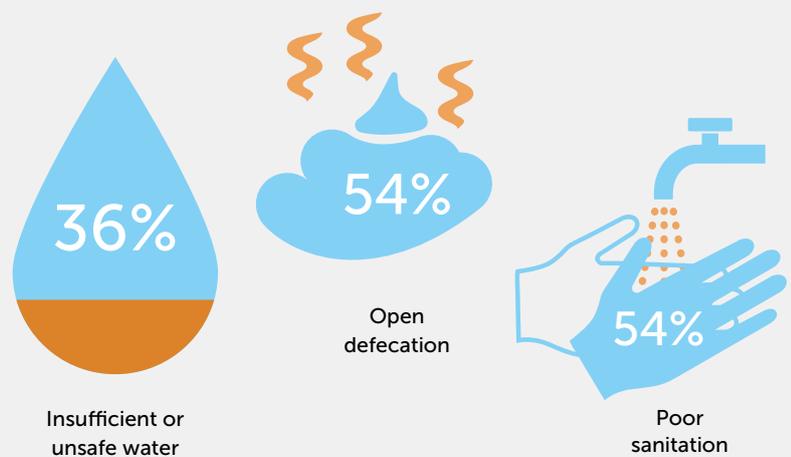
Country Programme 2016 – 2020

The WASH Alliance Benin envisions a world in which all people have sustainable access to WASH services. To realise this, we need to drastically change the way we approach this challenge. Traditional solutions with a major focus on building infrastructure are not sustainable and cannot meet the needs of a growing population.

It is our mission to change mindsets and create systems for sustainable and affordable WASH services that can accelerate. This is the only way to adapt to newly emerging challenges such as the fast population growth. A guiding principle in our work is therefore facilitating the development of a system in which all stakeholders, such as businesses, governments, citizens and NGOs work effectively together.

WASH in Benin

Access to clean drinking water and safe sanitation in Benin has been subject to considerable progress since the 1990s, in particular in rural areas, where coverage is higher than in many other African countries. New strategies to increase water supply in rural and urban areas have been adopted in 2005 and 2006. However, challenges remain. In Benin in 2014, half of the people lack access to improved sanitation facilities and more than 3.5 million people lack access to improved drinking water sources. This amounts to 33% of the total population. Many people have to drink unclean water from rivers and creeks.



Our work in Benin

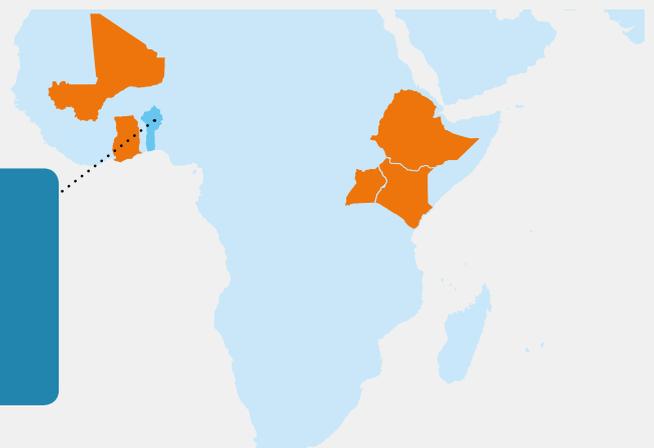
10,000 Additional persons have gained access to and are using improved water

20,000 Additional persons are using improved sanitation

€133 Reduced WASH costs from €178 to €133 per person

As a result of our work in Benin between 2011 and 2015, 21,000 people use improved sanitation facilities and 10,000 use improved water resources. The Benin WASH Alliance works closely with local authorities on the development of sustainable WASH services and on the alignment with national strategies. This is specifically important due to an ongoing process of decentralisation of financial and human resources from the central government to local governments in Benin. Focus areas in our work have been training entrepreneurs in WASH business development, linking them to Microfinance Institutions and making people aware of the importance of WASH via hygiene media campaigns. Lobby and advocacy and female inclusion in WASH committees have also been key elements in the programme. In a period of 5 years we have reduced the costs per person to get access to WASH from €178 to €133.

The main focus of our work in Benin in the future will be on the 2 municipalities of Tchaourou and Parakou. We will extend some activities in the municipalities of Kèrou, Sinendé and Kandi.



How we do this

To realise sustainable access to WASH services for all, we contribute to a shift from a hardware-construction approach towards a WASH sector development approach. This approach will not only sustain results after our programs stop, it will also accelerate to meet the needs of a growing population. Our work is built up in three areas:



Developing a functioning and enabling WASH market, in which businesses provide quality WASH products and services and financial institutions facilitate access to finance for both businesses and consumers.



Developing an enabling public sector for WASH, in which the government creates a supportive policy and regulatory environment for sustainable WASH services and allocates sufficient budget for WASH.



Empowering, informing and organising citizens for sustainable WASH. These citizens will demand and pay for sustainable WASH services, practice healthy behaviour and hold the government accountable for delivering quality WASH services.

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Water and food security

The supply of water for both consumption and food production are of major concern for many of the communities we work in. We will therefore focus on introducing multiple use systems. We will also make sure the existing water infrastructure will be repaired by local mechanics. They will be trained in low-cost technology and we will introduce innovative payment and maintenance models to local WASH committees.

Community Led Total Sanitation

Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is based on the collective will of communities to improve their hygiene and sanitation conditions. We will organize village meetings and awareness campaigns in each rural community in our focus areas so that they understand the need to carry on with constructing latrines, cesspools and washing devices. Our objective is to gradually bring open defecation to an end in our intervention area.

Faecal Sludge Management

In Benin, much of the solid and liquid waste produced by households is left behind in cities. We will keep organizing and training local communities to collect solid waste and to put in place a waste treatment and recycling system by turning it into co-compost for vegetables and other food production. Training masons in constructing 'SanPlat latrines' and laundry-sumps to collect water from showers and clean up the environment will be a standard procedure within our programme.

Public Private Partnerships

Developing a functioning WASH market is only possible with the active involvement of private partners. Actions taken in the past with private partners such as Microfinance Institutions and small private businesses will be continued. Bringing public and private partners together in Public Private Partnerships focused on waste management and the processing of waste into products such as co-compost will be our main priority.

Lobby and advocacy

Lobby and advocacy will be done at the local and national levels so that from the base, WASH actions are better integrated in the different development plans. Our partner NGOs will be trained in setting up municipal Budget Monitoring Devices and in policy influencing at municipal and national level.

Sustainability

Our work is always focused on achieving sustainable results. In order to realise these goals, we have developed the FIETS sustainability principles: financial, institutional, environmental, technological and social sustainability. Special attention within our sustainability approach is given to the recognition of the interdependencies between water, energy, food security and climate change.