



Water, Environment and Sanitation (WES)

Benin

Country Setting

- The country has been politically stable since 1990. However, poverty remains widespread due to inflation and disparities.
- High child mortality is mainly attributable to malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections and malnutrition.
- The adult HIV prevalence rate is 3.6 per cent.
- Primary school enrolment is 83 per cent for boys and only 57 per cent for girls.

WES Sector Setting

- There has been some progress over the last five years, but water supply coverage and access to sanitary means of excreta disposal are very low.
- Benin has achieved a remarkable reduction in guinea worm transmission over 12 years, from 37,414 cases in 1990 to 181 in 2002.
- Since the decentralization process initiated by Government in 1992, demand-driven approaches and user choices are being incorporated into water and sanitation projects.
- Technologies include boreholes and handpumps, piped water in towns and rainwater harvesting. Treated pond water and cloth filters are used in guinea worm-endemic areas.

Basic Indicators

Total population (1000s)	6,736
Under-five mortality rate (per 1000)	154
Total adult literacy rate (%)	37

Water and Sanitation Coverage

	Water (%)	Sanitation (%)
Urban	79	58
Rural	60	12
Total	68	32

UNICEF WES Programme

Main Components

- Support to the development of national water supply and sanitation policies.
- Provision of safe drinking water and establishment of Village Water Committees, spare parts selling points and training of handpump caretakers and committees.
- Improvement of hygiene behaviour through training of local latrine builders, marketing for family latrine promotion, school sanitation and hygiene education programme.
- Focus on community empowerment as part of an integrated approach promoting IECD and Girls' Education.
- Support to guinea worm eradication including water supply, community-based surveillance, treatment of water ponds and promotion of use of cloth filters and monitoring.

Programme Highlights and Achievements

- Support to Hygiene and Sanitation Sector for the development of a monitoring system.
- Provision of 100 new water points and one water piped system to provide safe water to 36,000 people.
- Rehabilitation of existing water points and improvement of maintenance system.
- Contribution to the reduction of guinea worm cases from 492 cases in 1999 to 181 cases in 2002.
- Improvement of hygiene and sanitation in more than 100 schools and promotion of hygiene in communities and families.