

News brief

November | 2012

Local Water Integrity Programme

August - November 2012

This newsletter summarises the activities and progress of the first months of cooperation between the Water Integrity Network and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation in implementing the Local Water Integrity Programme.

Background of the programme

The water crisis is a governance crisis, with corruption at its core. Improving water integrity is a constructive approach to reduce and prevent corruption and to improve performance of the water sector. Progress has already been made in conveying this message to decision-makers and in placing the issue within the global water discourse. In addition, in some countries integrity is being explicitly promoted at the policy level. To take these efforts a step further, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and the Water Integrity Network (WIN) have joined hands by starting a programme which will directly promote integrity in local water supply, sanitation and water resources management. The programme will take place in Guatemala, Mozambique and Nepal where activities will be implemented with partners in key processes that govern the water sector, including budget allocation and management, procurement, (municipal) regulation, monitoring and integrity benchmarking.

On the one hand the programme will seek to directly increase levels of integrity in service provision in the three programme countries. On the other hand the programme activities' outcomes will be used for advocacy that will seek to influence the overall governance framework that affects local service provision. Sharing experiences and lessons learned from these different countries will be used to develop sustainable capacities, effective tools and the knowledge necessary. Moreover the programme seeks to mainstream water integrity in the work of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and other Swiss based water organisations.

Activities

- **15th of August 2012: Kick-off meeting for the Local Water Integrity Programme**

After the approval of funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation the kick-off meeting aimed at enabling the programme partners to start the first phase of the Local Water Integrity Programme. Throughout the meeting the programme structure was discussed and the concept for the implementation of the first six-month phase of the programme was further elaborated.

- **Developing an agreement for the implementation of the first phase of the partnership programme**

An agreement between Transparency International, legally representing WIN-S, and HELVETAS was developed and signed for the realization of the country programme activities under the first phase of the programme that will go until end-February 2013.

- **Establishing the programme's steering and advisory group (PSAG)**

The PSAG will provide advisory and consultative services to strategically guide and support the implementation of the programme. It should further play a facilitating role in mainstreaming water integrity among Swiss based water organisations and enable them to actively promote water integrity.

The PSAG is kept small to allow for effective work and will comprise the following members: Thomas Zeller (independent advisor), Elisabeth Pitteloud (Water Initiatives, SDC), Rupa Mukerji (Co Head Advisory Services, HELVETAS), and Teun Bastemeijer (Director, WIN-S). After the members were confirmed the first meeting of the PSAG has been scheduled to take place at the HELVETAS office on 9 January 2013.

- **18th and 19th October 2012: Operational planning and team building workshop**

The workshop had the purpose to develop a good working relationship between HELVETAS HO and WIN-S staff and to further elaborate the planned activities under the first phase of the programme to assure a successful start of the programme. Throughout the workshop the organisations shared their professional expectations towards the cooperation and programme implementation and defined different communication channels (e.g. e-mail groups, filing system, programme announcement and the use of templates).

Throughout the workshop a couple of experts from the WIN network joined via telephone, sharing their knowledge about the on-going water integrity initiatives in Mozambique and Nepal. Besides developing a better understanding for the situation in the countries this also resulted in an adaptation of the programme approach for Mozambique (see below).

- **Adapting the programme's approach in Mozambique**

PROWATER, with support from the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre are developing an anti-corruption strategy for the Mozambique water sector. In this process a comprehensive corruption risk map has been developed which confirms that budget allocation and monitoring – the tentatively identified work areas for the Mozambique programme – are high risk areas. It was therefore decided to build on this process and deepen the understanding on the status of integrity in sector budgeting procedures during the first phase of the programme. The Terms of Reference for this research have been finalised and consultants have started the initial research. The outcomes of this work will be used to develop specific interventions to be implemented over coming years in coordination with the National Budget Forum.

With Fernando Curasse an experienced governance expert was recently hired by the HELVETAS Mozambique team. Fernando has taken up responsibility for implementing the programme's activities in Mozambique. Fernando has already met with several stakeholders presenting the WIN-HELVETAS programme to key sector actors.

- **Stakeholder mapping and review of the legal water sector frameworks in Guatemala and Nepal**

In Guatemala and Nepal consultants have been hired to undertake a stakeholder mapping and a review of the legal framework of the water sector. The first outputs of this research have been submitted and are currently being revised. The findings will be used for a consultation with various sector actors at the district/municipal levels in Nepal and Guatemala. The consultation is expected to allow for a participatory assessment of integrity risks and of potential entry points to address them. The outcomes will be used to develop a detailed work plan for both countries and will lead the way for the rest of the programme.

The project region in Guatemala was hit by a devastating earthquake in the beginning of November. We are wishing the HELVETAS Guatemala team, the community of San Marcos and everybody affected by the earthquake the necessary strength to recover soon.

Next Steps

- **1st meeting of the PSAG**

The first meeting will take place on 9 January 2013 at the HELVETAS office in Zurich.

- **Scoping missions**

The joint WIN-HELVETAS scoping mission to Nepal is scheduled for January 2013. The missions to Mozambique and Guatemala are planned for the first half of February.

- **Developing work plans and an agreement for the second phase of the programme**

As an outcome of the first programme phase the country teams, with support from HELVETAS HQ and WIN will develop detailed work plans until the end of 2013. Furthermore the programme's logframe will be adapted.

These documents will form the basis for a follow-up agreement between WIN and HELVETAS for the remainder of the programme.

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