



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN

Date: June 2011

Public Information Office: +93 (0)70-234-236 x4037

E-mail: kabulusaidinformation@usaid.gov

<http://afghanistan.usaid.gov>

FACT SHEET

Afghan Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation (SWSS)

OVERVIEW

Only 27 percent of rural-based Afghans have access to clean drinking water; even fewer have access to safe sanitation. SWSS provides water and sanitation system designs, installation, training of system operators, and hygiene promotion. Together, these components lead to improved health outcomes and sustainable community level impact. Through SWSS, USAID is building the capacity of the Afghan government and local communities to promote community self-empowerment through hygiene promotion and behavior changes that lead to communities building their own safe and clean sanitation solutions. The SWSS project's community mobilization and sustainability unit also lays the groundwork for potable water solutions to alleviate waterborne illnesses. The project managed by implementing partner Tetra Tech AARD, began in October 2009 and will continue through September 2012.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- **Potable water:** Provide wells or pipe schemes to increase access to ground and spring water sources, which need no treatment for domestic purposes (drinking, cooking, and bathing), and reduce diarrheal and other waterborne diseases
- **Hygiene promotion:** Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) engages all members of the village to be aware of the dangers of open defecation. Since the program inception, more than 100 villages have been certified as open defecation free as a result of continuous community engagement by SWSS and its stakeholders
- **Improved sanitation:** Support villagers in helping one another build their own household toilets to achieve and maintain ODF status for community health and pride
- **Village pledge:** For each subproject site, villagers, through their governing community *Shuras*, commit to uphold the newly installed infrastructure by contributing their labor and resources to community-appointed, SWSS trained well caretakers and hand pump mechanics

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed construction of 1,486 wells benefiting 260,050 people.
- Constructed four pipe schemes benefiting 9,600 people
- Empowered families and communities to build 13,000 of their own new/improved latrines benefiting 91,000 people
- Trained 275 hygiene facilitators and hygiene promoters, who will then train others throughout their careers in innovative CLTS technique for community self-empowerment and positive hygienic behavioral changes
- Certified 104 communities as open defecation free covering 242,000 people
- Trained 65 hand pump mechanics to be paid by community contributions for the maintenance of 1,569 wells