

Nepal

# Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project



Kiran Panday

The population of urban centers in Nepal along major national highways was growing rapidly in the late 1990s as a result of rural migration. Drinking water supply in these urban centers was generally inadequate in terms of coverage, quantity, and quality.

In September 2000, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved the Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project to help the Government of Nepal cover the investment requirements of the initial years of the government's 15-year Plan for Small Town Water Supply and Sanitation Development. The project is in line with the strategic directions of ADB's South Asia Department, which focuses

on sustainable infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, human development, regional cooperation and integration, public-private partnership, and good governance.

The project's objectives were to improve the health and quality of life of the people living in project towns by constructing water supply, drainage, and sanitation facilities and providing health and hygiene education; support community participation by developing the institutional capacity of community water users and sanitation committees, and requiring water users to make cash or in-kind contributions to cover some project costs; and promote community water quality.

## Project Results

**Piped water supply** was completed in 29 small towns, installing 834 kilometers of water pipes. Town projects included intakes; the main transmission line; treatment facilities for sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection; surface reservoirs for gravity systems; tube wells for pumped systems; submersible pumps; electrical facilities; overhead tanks for tube well systems; house connections; pump houses; and guards' quarters. A total of 76% of houses were connected to the system, against a target of 80%.

**Public awareness campaigns** were conducted for 70,306 beneficiaries—51,181 females and 19,125 males—to create awareness among local people on the project modality, financing arrangements, roles of stakeholders, need for women's representation in decision making, significance of safe drinking water, and appropriate use and maintenance of on-premise latrines.

Nongovernment organizations provided **health and sanitation training** to 3,133 community stakeholders and leaders, of which 1,847 were women. The **health and hygiene education awareness program** generated increased demand for household sanitation.

*(continued overleaf)*

**Improved access to water supply and sanitation facilities has significantly reduced hardship and saved time for small town residents, especially women and children, who had to walk long distances to fetch water for household use**

## Project Results

(continued)

The project also provided **technical training** to members and staff of the water users and sanitation committees to develop their capacity for the operation and maintenance of town projects regarding meter reading, meter maintenance, plumbing, testing water quality, and operating pumps. Committee members also received training on financial management, which included water tariff planning, billing, and collection, as well as basic accounting. A technical support center was also established in each of the five regional offices of the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage to promote community-based monitoring of water quality and meter calibration.

The project successfully introduced a cost-sharing mechanism and the practice of community involvement in small town development for the first time in Nepal



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*Improved water supply, the health and hygiene public awareness program, and the development of sanitation facilities under the project have significantly reduced health risks*



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*The incidence of waterborne diseases was significantly reduced, allowing savings on health care costs*

## The Project at a Glance

**Cost and financing:** Asian Development Fund, \$32.1 million; Government of Nepal, \$12.0 million; Local government and water users, \$6.9 million

**Project approval date:** 12 September 2000

**Project themes:** Human development, poverty reduction

**Status of project implementation:** Closed

**Loan closing date:** 3 December 2009

### Executing agency

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### ADB department

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Sources: Project information document, <http://pid.adb.org/pid/LoanView.htm?projNo=31402&seqNo=01&typeCd=3>; ADB. 2000. Report and Recommendation of the President. Available at <http://adb.org/Documents/RRPs/NEP/rrp-1755-nep.pdf>; ADB. 2010. Project Completion Report. Available at <http://adb.org/Documents/PCRs/NEP/31402-01-nep-pcr.pdf>