

Benin: Taking Action for Sustainable Development



A young woman gets drinking water from a pump built with UNDP's support in the commune of Dassa. © UNDP Benin / Elsie Assogba

What are the bold actions being taken by the Government to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Benin?

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this, but due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, every year millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

In Benin, since September 2015, the Government has been undertaking several advocacy and engagement activities to promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 6 on water. In line with its

Programme of Actions 2016-2021, the Government is currently operating the National Rural Drinking Water Supply Programme, which is among the most urgently needed programmes introduced in 2016.

This water supply project aims to improve access to safe drinking water supply in 54 out of 77 communes of the country, covering 307 villages. In 2014, the coverage rate of safe drinking water in rural areas was 68.1 per cent. The Government intends to increase the coverage to 70 per cent in 2017 and 100 per cent by 2021.

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We have only one well supplying water to the village. During the dry season, the well dries up and the quantity of water is insufficient for the needs of the population. We have divided the village into two; each side can carry water for two consecutive days. Each household is entitled only to 30 litres for three days.

Angèle Zodjilou
Tatonougo village, Savalou commune

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I am very pleased that the population is satisfied with the government's efforts. I would like to reassure you that the government is determined to improve access to sufficient quality drinking water for all.

Jean-Claude Houssou
Minister of Energy, Water and Mines

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Access to water is essential for human dignity. UNDP is happy to support the government to implement Sustainable Development Goal 6 relating to ensuring availability of drinking water for all.

Siaka Coulibaly
UN Resident Coordinator
UNDP Resident Representative
in Benin



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17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

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UN staff in Benin showing support for the SDGs. © UNDP Benin

With the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a series of training sessions and workshops on gaining ownership for achieving the SDGs has also been organized for all segments of the population, including youth, women, public administrators and parliamentarians, along with civil society partners. Amongst topics of discussion, the participants deepened their understanding about what the SDGs are and discussed how they can integrate the 17 Goals into the national development plan and policies.

Why do the above actions matter to the people in Benin?

In 2014, the drinking water supply and access rate in Benin was 68.1 per cent. But this figure

conceals strong disparities between and within communes (communities) of the same region. Many children in rural areas continue to suffer from water borne diseases, such as diarrhea and cholera due to lack of clean water and sanitation.

This also affects girls' education. Some girls drop out of school because every day they have to travel many kilometres to fetch water from a river for their family and help their mothers with domestic chores.

Improving clean water supply will result in solving several multifaceted issues at a time.

What SDGs have been particularly advanced through the programme?

The project focuses on Goal 2 on Zero Hunger, Goal 3 on Good Health and Well-Being, Goal 4 on Quality Education, Goal 6 on Clean Water and Sanitation and Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.



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