



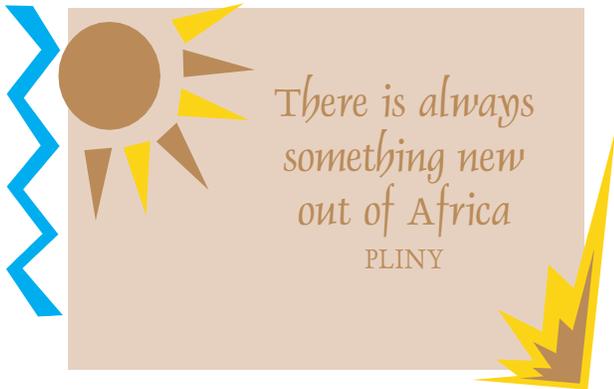
Water and Sanitation Program

An international partnership to help the poor gain sustained access to improved water supply and sanitation services

Blue Gold: Building African Solutions for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Africa Region





Water, sanitation and hygiene are at last beginning to receive the recognition they deserve from the highest political levels. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has named water and sanitation as the first of the five key areas in which to improve the lives of all humans while protecting the global environment. Water, sanitation and hygiene are explicitly or implicitly essential for the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. Within Africa, Ministers responsible for water have formed a standing alliance, the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW); several other regional groups, such as the Africa Water Task Force and the African Water Forum, are increasingly active. As the Water Ambassador for Africa, invited by the African Development Bank and endorsed by the African Water Task Force (at the Accra conference on Water and Sustainable Development in Africa in April 2002) and the AMCOW conference in Abuja, I am delighted to introduce this series of Field Notes and Leaflets.

We face the formidable task of assisting all Africans to achieve access to safe and convenient water and sanitation services and to adopt hygienic behaviours – a task that requires both committed leadership and skilled professional work. The Water and Sanitation Program-Africa Region, with Jon Lane as the series editor, has researched and produced this series of documents to help achieve that task. The series brings together examples of interesting and innovative work in water, sanitation and hygiene from across our continent. The range of work described reflects the depth of local knowledge and experience that Africa can draw upon in solving its own problems. I commend these Field Notes and Leaflets to all African politicians, leaders and professionals concerned with water, and to all our colleagues around the world working with us for the benefit of African people.

Salim Ahmed Salim
Water Ambassador for Africa

Africa: positive responses to daunting problems

Around the world, 1.1 billion people lack water and 2.4 billion lack sanitation. Over 300 million of those people live in Africa. Nowhere in the world is poverty more visible, more destructive, more pervasive, than in Africa. Too often African experience is associated only with stories of failure and pessimism, of wars and famines, floods and unrest. Africa appears to be slipping back on many development indicators, even as other parts of the world move ahead. So, global achievement of the Millennium Development Goals requires African achievement. Specifically, we must address vigorously the water, sanitation and hygiene needs of African people in both urban and rural areas throughout the continent.

In mid-2002, we can be optimistic about the prospects of achieving good progress in water, sanitation and hygiene in Africa. Across the continent, conflicts and rivalries, many of them associated with the Cold War, are ending and there is a strong sense of the need for peace, stability, democracy and co-operation. Through the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, industrialised countries are finally proposing to write off a significant part of the debt into which the poorest countries have fallen. For their part, many African countries have written Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, which give clarity and direction to all the development work in those countries.

Within the water sector itself, the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) has been formed to share ideas and lessons and to provide mutual support and active direction. AMCOW's role complements the overall political leadership of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) – leadership that is vital for development and the fight against poverty. Recent meetings, such as the African Sanitation and Hygiene Conference (July 2002) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (August 2002), are giving fresh political impetus to the work.

Increasing sustainable water and sanitation service coverage in Africa requires efforts from many parties. Much of the workload rests on governments at

Africa's future solutions will be African solutions

local and national levels. But they are not alone. Civil society and NGOs, external support agencies and private sector enterprises, large and small, all have roles to play. All of these agencies and people need to find new resources and improved ways of working. Africa's future solutions will be African solutions: they may draw from experience around the world, but they will be approaches that have the trust and confidence of African consumers, African governments and African leaders. Where better to find approaches that work, than within Africa itself?

The Blue Gold series

 The Water and Sanitation Program-Africa Region (WSP-AF) is keen to contribute to this work. WSP-AF is an international partnership programme helping the poor gain sustained access to improved water supply and sanitation services. It works with African governments and other decision makers to increase the impact of their activities on the poor. This involves learning from each other, developing new and better policies, and putting them into practice. WSP-AF believes that there are many examples of positive, inspiring and innovative ideas and work in Africa, many of which are not widely known. So it is publishing this Blue Gold series of Field Notes and Leaflets.

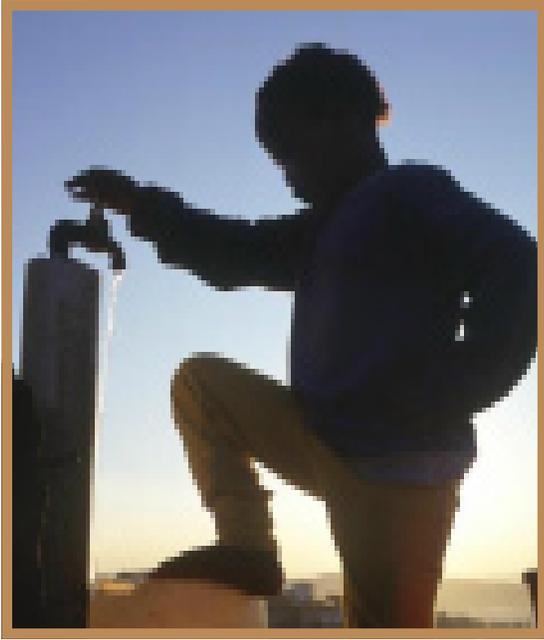
These Field Notes and Leaflets aim to describe and reflect upon African initiatives in water and sanitation that



have worked, or have the potential to work, at a large scale, that are demonstrably sustainable, and that do not benefit from too many unique local conditions. These characteristics enable the lessons from these examples to be useful for other people in, and indeed outside, Africa. The Field Notes and Leaflets are short enough to be easily read by busy people. They describe the work done, highlighting points of interest, problems and lessons. They are not intended to be detailed analytical papers.

Among the subjects being published or planned in the Blue Gold series are:

- Water and Sanitation Sector Reform in Uganda: A Government-Led Transformation
- Hygiene Promotion in Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Behaviour Change
- Water Services in Small Towns across Africa: The Role of Small and Medium-Sized Private Enterprise
- The National Sanitation Programme in Mozambique: Pioneering Peri-Urban Sanitation
- Rural Piped Water Supplies in Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi: Community Management and Sustainability
- The Ventilated Improved Pit Latrine in Zimbabwe: How a Local Initiative Became a World-Famous Sanitation Technology
- Rural Water Sector Reform in Ghana: A Major Change of Both Policy and Structure
- The Strategic Sanitation Plan in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: A Holistic Approach to a City's Problems
- The National Water and Sanitation Programme in South Africa: Turning the 'Right to Water' into a Reality
- Social Funds in Africa: Supporting Community Micro-Projects in Rural Water Supply
- The National Sanitation Programme in Lesotho: How Political Leadership Achieved Long-Term Results
- The Mvula Trust in South Africa: An Independent Partner to Government
- Hand Washing in Ghana: New Co-operation with the Private Sector
- Urban Water Supply Innovations in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire: How Cross-Subsidies Help the Poor
- Upgraded Family Wells in Zimbabwe: Household-Level Water Supplies for Multiple Uses
- NGOs across Africa: A Range of Different Roles
- Water Services for the Poor in Durban, South Africa: Technologies and Tariffs



The Blue Gold series is independently edited for WSP-AF by Jon Lane, formerly the Director of WaterAid and now living in Malawi. He asked for suggestions from a large number of fellow professionals concerned with African water, sanitation and hygiene. Dozens of nominations came in, from which the examples published in the series were selected by WSP-AF and the series editor in consultation with a number of professional colleagues. All the resultant Field Notes and Leaflets have been

reviewed by respected professionals independent of WSP-AF.

The examples described come from West, East and Southern sub-Saharan Africa, from large and small countries, from those speaking English, French and Portuguese. Some are individual projects, others are large programmes. They all relate to the needs of poor people, in either urban or rural areas. Some describe the benefits of courageous reforms, others concentrate on lesser-known instances of successful sanitation and hygiene initiatives or of community or household-based approaches that have improved the lives of many.

WSP does not claim that these examples are perfect or lack any problems. Some are long established but perhaps not known to a new generation of decision makers. Others are still under implementation. Clearly we should not make hasty claims of success before sufficient time has elapsed to allow for a mature judgement. On the other hand, time is pressing and we must take every opportunity to share good ideas; we must not wait so long to verify them that the targets slip further away from our grasp.

These Field Notes and Leaflets are intended principally for the new generation of Africa's parliamentarians, sector leaders, administrators and individuals tackling the water and sanitation challenge in Africa. WSP-AF is publishing all of them in both French and English, and many in Portuguese, as a specific attempt to bridge the language barriers within Africa and share experiences right across the continent.

Please use these lessons in your own work, and contact WSP-AF to put you in direct touch with the people centrally responsible for the work described in them. Please tell WSP-AF about your own ideas and successes, so that we can share them with other people by publishing them in the Blue Gold series.

WSP-AF trusts that the Blue Gold series of Field Notes and Leaflets will contribute towards our common goal of achieving water supply, sanitation and hygiene for all the people of Africa.

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