

Clean water and sanitation

Should Uzbek government invest in educating the youth to preserve the water resources?

Problems

Unfortunately, in our world, there is never enough water for people, especially clean water. Access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation are vital for health, especially among children.

Clean water and access to sanitation facilities is one of the basic prerequisites for development. Whereas the proportion of the world's population with access to clean water is growing, in Central Asia the trend has been reversed since the collapse of the Soviet Union: fewer and fewer people have access to clean water because in the newly independent states hardly any resources are being allocated to build new water supply infrastructures. Existing systems are falling into disrepair or breaking down altogether because there are no funds to maintain them.

In Uzbekistan, less than half the population has access to good quality drinking water, and fewer than 1 in 5 urban households receive water 24 hours per day.

Rural areas in Uzbekistan lack an adequate supply of clean water. A large proportion of Uzbekistan's rural population of 10 million people suffer from diseases caused by unclean water. A project funded by the SDC is helping people in rural areas help themselves. Villagers are learning how to organise their water supply themselves. Improving access to clean, safe drinking water in rural Uzbekistan is a critical but complex challenge. Many water supply companies in the basin have largely failed, due to ill-defined legal status, poor management, and lack of infrastructure maintenance. Most small rural villages lack capacity and resources to design and implement their own systems. EDM worked in the region to develop and demonstrate models to enable community water stewardship and improved drinking water and sanitation systems. In its first phase, 18 community leaders, including 8 women, were trained in resource mobilization, public-private partnership development and gender-sensitive rural water and sanitation management. This led to the application of new community led approaches to assess and prioritize social needs as a basis for the development of action plans to build community water supply systems. A first action taken included the mobilization of resources to improve pipe lining and install street taps.

Rural conditions

Uzbekistan faces major problems in water supply and sanitation coverage. High rates of some infectious diseases, particularly among children, likely reflect low incomes, and poor access to water and sanitation facilities especially rural areas suffer most when it comes to clean water and basic sanitation needs, however, despite many complaints and attempts, conditions in remote areas still stay the same as problematic as they were. Clean drinking water is at the top of the list of problems in many districts and villages, especially in the most remote areas. Today, the issue of supplying clean drinking water to the most difficult areas of Karakalpakstan, to the remote mountainous areas of Surkhandarya, is being considered at the level of state policy. However, even with these two sides of the coin, drinking water supply reform in all parts of the country had not completely eliminated people's concerns. (Gulnoza Sharafova,)

Global situation

even we can see some developed countries have water problems in the world, lets have a look at these figures;

In 2017, 71% of the global population (5.3 billion people) used a safely managed drinking-water service – that is, one located on premises, available when needed, and free from contamination.

90% of the global population (6.8 billion people) used at least a basic service. A basic service is an improved drinking-water source within a round trip of 30 minutes to collect water.

785 million people lack even a basic drinking-water service, including 144 million people who are dependent on surface water.

Globally, at least 2 billion people use a drinking water source contaminated with faeces.

Contaminated water can transmit diseases such as diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, and polio. Contaminated drinking water is estimated to cause 485 000 diarrhoeal deaths each year.

By 2025, half of the world's population will be living in water-stressed areas.

In least developed countries, 22% of health care facilities have no water service, 21% no sanitation service, and 22% no waste management service. (world bank, 2019)

Financial approach

Uzbekistan has made substantial investment in upgrading its water supply and sanitation services in recent years. From 1995 to 2014, total public borrowing for improvements to these services amounted to US\$ 344.1 million, the largest of any country in Central Asia.

Despite these important efforts however, the country's citizens continue to face challenges in accessing clean and reliable water services. For instance, less than half the national population (roughly 32 million people) remain unconnected to a piped water system, and only 17% of urban households receive water 24 hours per day. The situation is even worse in smaller cities and rural areas.

A family in Syrdarya region has to pay UZS 12,000 for each water refill. For the average low-income family in rural areas, this cost has a significant impact on the tight budget of local households. Only for this region, one water providing project that's supported by World Bank cost \$100 million to provide the regional people with clean drinking water.(world bank, 2019)

International Spending

Countries need to quadruple spending to \$150 billion a year to deliver universal safe water and sanitation, helping to reduce childhood disease and deaths while boosting economic growth, said the World Bank.

Investments should be better coordinated and targeted to ensure services reach the most vulnerable, and governments need to engage the private sector more closely to meet the high costs. "Millions are currently trapped in poverty by poor water supply and sanitation," (Guangzhe Chen, 2018)

The total global economic losses associated with inadequate water supply and sanitation were estimated at US\$ 260 billion annually. The total economic benefits of meeting the MDG target amount to US\$ 60 billion every year.

And single well for any African countries to have water to drink can cost \$8,000 on average.

Each well serves 2,000 people. That means it costs \$4.00 to give a person clean water and help them live long and live better

Solutions

1. **Education/Awareness.** – educating youth to preserve and use the water in a proper way and about the effects of wasting water on our planet.
2. **New Conservation Technologies.** – as technology advanced, we should use more developed machines to save as much water as possible
3. **Recycle Wastewater.** – much of the wastewater is not recycled and hence recycling them and using in industry again can help to save more water.
4. **Improve Irrigation and Agriculture Water Use.** – this is also an actual problem in most countries, governments should invest in new technologies to better their water use efficiency in irrigation
5. **Water Pricing.** – governments should one more time consider the price of the drinking so that people tend to use it less for unimportant things
6. **Rain Water Harvesting.** – again new technologies are required to get possible amount of water from rain water supply
7. **Community Governance and Partnerships.** – communities and governments should collaborate in terms of water management as there are many underlying problems everywhere.

In 2014, a team of Uzbekistan-based World Bank researchers conducted 17 focus group discussions with consumers, 19 in-depth interviews with government and WSS utility firm officials, and 10 household case studies across Uzbekistan. Comments and feedback by Uzbek citizens who participated in the focus group discussions are included in the study.

" I believe this is a very useful report. It is always interesting to listen to consumers, and the problems are there. Lack of data is a real issue for us; our customer databases are incomplete. But let's not forget that the government is making substantial investments in the WSS sector. Cost recovery is key. But that requires reducing system losses and increasing the accountability of water utility providers for the amount of water that is supplied. I believe that raising the drinking water tariffs will not be a good idea unless we substantially improve service delivery and the transparency of service providers, so that we can justify those higher tariffs. Resolution 306, which decentralizes WSS management decisions to the regions, is an important step towards institutional reform needed for better performance of the sector. " (Ms. Sadjida Rustemova).

Conclusion

To sum up, taking all the given facts and claims above, we can conclude that every child in Uzbekistan has to be taught to preserve the water and understand the side of effects of lack of water. Investing in educating youth can cost much less than spending on the side effects of not educating them. Thanks for your attention