

## ADB EXPERIENCE IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

1. **Asian Development Bank (ADB) Water Policy.** In 2001, ADB outlined its vision for integrated water management in the Asia Pacific region in its Water Policy. The policy recognizes the region's need to formulate and implement integrated, cross-sectoral approaches to water management and development. The Policy advocates that (i) water is a socially vital economic good, (ii) water needs careful management, and (iii) a participatory approach will help conserve and protect water resources. The principle elements of the Policy<sup>1</sup> are to (i) promote a national focus on water sector reform; (ii) foster the integrated management of water resources; (iii) improve and expand the delivery of water services;<sup>2</sup> (iv) foster the conservation of water, and increase system efficiencies; (v) promote regional cooperation, and increase the mutually beneficial use of shared water resources within and between countries; (vi) facilitate the exchange of water sector information and experience; and (vii) improve governance and capacity building.

2. ADB views water from two perspectives: (i) as a resource or an integral part of the ecosystem, and (ii) as a service or an economic good. As a resource, water management is critical to meet the needs without creating conflict or an additional environmental stress. As a service, water promotes accountability and autonomous service providers, proper regulation, and advocates consumer share in operation and maintenance. ADB's Water policy is indirectly related to other ADB existing policies on natural resources such as fisheries,<sup>3</sup> forestry,<sup>4</sup> and the environment<sup>5</sup> on aspects related to water use, water management and water quality. Likewise, ADB's Health Policy<sup>6</sup> also highlights the importance of access to safe water and better sanitation as prerequisites for better health. Consistent with the Water Policy, ADB's Water Financing Program for 2006–2010 aims to double investment in irrigation and drainage to improve health and livelihood in Asian communities. ADB's Sanitation Agenda plans to provide safe water supply and sanitation to 200 million people. ADB has established networks among ADB water professionals and nongovernment organizations<sup>7</sup> involved in water issues. Recently, ADB has jointly organized with the Investment Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development<sup>8</sup> an expert's meeting to advance the debates on private sector partnership in the water supply and sanitation sector.

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<sup>1</sup> ADB. 2001. *Water for All: The Water Policy of the Asian Development Bank*. Manila. Available: <http://www.adb.org/Water/Policy/default.asp#water>

<sup>2</sup> Water service delivery covers sanitation as well.

<sup>3</sup> ADB. 1997. *ADB Fisheries Policy*. Manila.

<sup>4</sup> ADB. 1995. *ADB Forestry Policy*. Manila.

<sup>5</sup> ADB. 2002. *ADB Environment Policy*. Manila.

<sup>6</sup> ADB. 1999. *ADB Health Policy*. Manila.

<sup>7</sup> The NGOs include Global Water Partnership, Gender in Water Alliance, and Water Aid.

<sup>8</sup> ADB. 2008. *ADB-OECD Experts Meeting: For Beneficial Private Sector Participation in the WSS sector—Lessons Learnt from Asian country experience*. Manila.