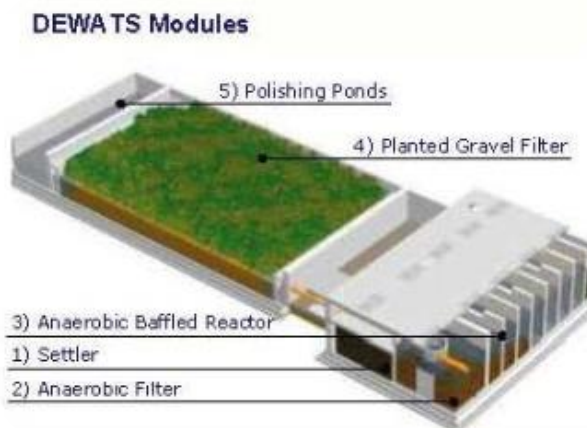


Strengthening capacity of policymakers in South-East Asia to promote policies and developing plans for improved wastewater treatment and reuse in urban and peri-urban areas

Background

Improved sanitation and wastewater management is crucial to maintain water security. It can bring significant benefits to poor communities, particularly women. Lack of awareness amongst policy makers and the relatively high costs of sewage collection and treatment often deter investments. UNESCAP and UN-Habitat have started implementing a joint project to address the fast-growing problem of untreated wastewater through promotion of the Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS). DEWATS provides an appropriate and low-cost solution in many situations in the rapidly urbanizing areas of developing countries where other systems are not suitable. DEWATS also provides a great business opportunity and community empowerment.



Objective This project is expected to strengthen capacities of policymakers in Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia to promote policies and developing plans for improved wastewater treatment and reuse in urban and peri-urban areas. This project will contribute to achieving the MDG target of halving by 2015 the proportion of the population without sustainable access to basic sanitation.

Main Activities The joint project is focusing on capacity-building for policy makers and planners for better wastewater management through knowledge sharing at the regional policy making level and through implementation of a demonstration pilot in Lao PDR. Financial schemes and options will be developed together with a cost-benefit analysis on DEWATS. Three proposals will be developed by national teams and networks, with feasibility studies, seeking partnership opportunities. Promotional materials and a DEWATS guidance manual will be developed and widely disseminated. Three national workshops focused on visioning the national DEWATS strategy and a regional meeting to take a stock on a progress and experiences, are scheduled for August and on 19 November, 2014, to commemorate the UN World Toilet Day. By the end of the project, national and regional networks and existing institutions will be strengthened and the DEWATS Regional Centre of Excellence will be identified.



Partners This strategic partnership between ESCAP, UN-Habitat and national/local partners in targeted countries addresses the need to enhance understanding and awareness amongst policy makers and planners on improved wastewater management. The project would partner and further strengthen the network of Mekong Region Water and Sanitation Initiative (MEK-WATSAN), which is also supporting participating governments to achieve the MDGs for water supply and sanitation, with emphasis on innovative solutions.

Regional Policy Workshop of Stakeholders on DEWATS for South East Asia, 19-21 March, 2014, UNCC, Bangkok has built awareness on DEWATS policy issues in SEA and discussed the way forward. Materials are saved at: <http://www.unescap.org/events/regional-policy-workshop-stakeholders-decentralized-waste-water-treatment-systems-dewats>

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