

Asia and Pacific

LEADERSHIP / FACILITATION / COORDINATION / SERVICES TO NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Democratic People's Republic of Korea



Water and sanitation

Dilapidated water supply schemes, dirty latrines and the absence of wastewater systems still form an everyday reality in many communities in DPRK, both in urban and rural settings. High rates of water-borne and water-related diseases like e-coli, bloody diarrhoea, and dysentery put an additional strain on the already fragile health system. Women and girls walk long distances to collect water from often unclean sources, for cooking and washing purposes. The physical burden this imposes on the women and girls, the majority of whom are underweight, forms a serious aggravating factor to their health condition.

Through simple technologies like the gravity-fed water supply system, which require little or no maintenance, and the installation of the systems by the community itself, the water and sanitation programme of the DPRK Red Cross and IFRC can have a huge impact at a relatively low-cost in providing clean drinking water and more hygienic latrines.

Depending on the geographical features of the communities, gravity-fed water supply systems are constructed either with or without a pumping system. Through an extensive network of pipes, water now arrives directly from the source to the households. At the same time, soak pits are constructed to collect wastewater, which can then be used for irrigation of the gardens, as well as ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines. The latrines are equipped with removable pits, so faeces can be used for fertilizer.

Water and sanitation

Besides individual households, all schools, kindergartens, clinics and other public buildings in the communities receive water taps, soak pits, and latrines.

Since the start of the programme in 2000, a total of 165 communities have been reached, for a total population of 500,000. For 2010-2011, another 18 communities will be targeted. The communities are selected on the basis of the rates of water-borne and water-related diseases, water quality data from the anti-epidemic stations, and a proactive attitude from the community.

To ensure sustainability of the water and sanitation systems, community technicians receive technical training on the maintenance of the systems.

Main achievements:

- Supply of clean water at household level to a total population of 500,000.
- Significant decrease in water-borne and water-related diseases, e.g. 27 per cent reduction in number of reported diarrhoea cases.
- Considerable gain in time for other chores and less physical burden for women and girls through easy access to water at household level for cooking and washing purposes.



Health facilities and beneficiaries report a significant decrease in water-borne diseases through the provision of safe drinking water at household level, like above in Joyang ri, South Hamgyong province.



The community people themselves construct the water supply and sanitation systems, such as above the pump house and water source tank in Myongam ri, Cholsan county, North Pyongan province.

For more detailed information on the IFRC in the DPRK, please visit:

<http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=193>

For more information, please contact:

Finn-Jarle Rode
Head of IFRC office in DPR of Korea

Ryonhwa-1 dong, Central District
Pyongyang, DPR of Korea

Tel: +850 2 381 4350

Email: finnjarle.rode@ifrc.org