

U.S. WATER POLICY: WATER SECURITY IS HUMAN SECURITY



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"It's not every day you find an issue where effective diplomacy and development will allow you to save millions of lives, feed the hungry, empower women, advance our national security interests, protect the environment, and demonstrate to billions of people that the United States cares, cares about you and your welfare. Water is that issue."

- Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

Why Water? Why Now?

Water scarcity is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Growing populations, expanding economies, and climate change are putting water resources under increasing pressure. Consider this: right now, 1.5 million people die every year for lack of clean water and sanitation. In just 20 years, the world's demand for freshwater is expected to outstrip supply by 40 percent.

Meeting the Challenge

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton established water as a top U.S. foreign policy priority on World Water Day 2010. The U.S. Government believes that investments in water and sanitation will translate into improved health, greater economic sustainability and a safe living environment for everyone, and everything, on the planet.

Increasing Diplomatic Efforts

The United States is coordinating with donor countries and international organizations to raise the priority given to water and sanitation issues, increase the exchange of information, and to encourage and strengthen regional cooperation.

Building Capacity through New Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are key to bolstering government efforts to address global water challenges. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are collaborating with entities such as the World

Health Organization, CARE, UNICEF, private sector foundations and foreign governments. For instance, MCC will contribute \$275 million through the Jordan Compact to work with countries in the Middle East on water and sanitation projects. And through the Water and Development Alliance, USAID's partnership with Coca-Cola has mobilized more than \$28 million since 2006 and provided improved water access to 500,000 people in 20 developing countries.

Sharing Science and Technology Solutions

Technology can provide critical information and lead to innovative solutions to the world's water challenges. The United States shares information gathered from satellites with other nations to predict floods and famine, while using existing low-tech solutions such as clay filters, solar disinfection, and household water purification to make water potable. Through a new agreement with the World Bank, the U.S. Government will mobilize its knowledge resources to assist the world's most vulnerable populations.

Leveraging New Resources

Through the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act (2005), the U.S. Government has provided \$3.4 billion for the water sector and sanitation programs in developing countries around the globe. U.S. financial institutions such as the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank), USAID's Development Credit Office and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) are working to leverage and mobilize additional private capital for the water sector.