



Vitens and Evides, the two largest water utilities from the Netherlands have joined forces in Vitens-Evides International. The alliance provides knowledge and expertise to water utilities in developing countries. Both companies have over one hundred years of operational experience and provide with innovative concepts cost-effective and most reliable water services to approximately 7.7 million people. Since 2002 the alliance is engaged in Water Operators Partnerships with water utilities in Mozambique, Jemen, Vietnam, Mongolia and Surinam. Additional international partnerships are envisaged in South-East Asia, Southern Africa and Latin America.

Water Operators Partnerships

On a non-profit basis



Most governments in developing countries have consistently failed to deliver affordable and sustainable water and sanitation services to their people, and in particular to their poor. There are a variety of reasons available; each situation differs in complexity. However, some broad problems cut across many public utilities and municipal services, such as bad financial management, low funding priority, lack of staff experience and qualifications, absent or weak customer service orientation, political interference, and little or no independent regulation or oversight.

The alarming situation concerning access to water and sanitation services triggered the formulation of the UN Millennium Development Goals aiming to halve the

proportion of people without access to water and sanitation by 2015. The Hashimoto Action Plan calls for urgent action by all governments and water utilities through Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs). Vitens-Evides International has taken up this challenge and is currently co-responsible for water and sanitation services provision to over 15 million people in cities and towns of Mozambique, Ghana, Yemen, Vietnam and Mongolia.

The starting point of a WOP with Vitens-Evides International is the demanding water utility. In discussions the focal points of the WOP are determined and translated into performance indicators (PIs) to be realised at the end of the project period. Commonly the transformation of a utility into a well-performing and

cost-effective utility takes several years. The power of the WOP concept is that it is not for profit, it aims at strengthening the capacity of the local human resources, it is demand driven, flexible and responsive to the context circumstances, and it is directed by the achievements of PIs.

Issues that commonly emerge in the WOPs are the reduction of non revenue water, the reduction of outstanding debts, capacity building in operational and managerial competences, establishment of reliable management information systems and formulation of transparent rules, regulations and standard operating procedures within the utility.

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sustainable water services