

national discussion on decentralization and private sector participation in potable water service supply and sanitation that is currently taking place in the country.

Actions taken

The community followed procedures after the participatory Rural Diagnosis with Project AGUA was concluded and executed the potable water project through CARE's Water Access, Management and Efficient Use project executed in partnership with the Foundation for Municipal Development –FUNDAMUNI. Mayor's Office of Usulután provided different types of support to the El Cerrito Community: when the El Cerrito Community was granted assistance for the potable water project through CARE Project AGUA, the municipality contributed with \$24,000.00 (representing approximately 8% of the total cost of the project).

These funds were used to finance the three-phase line for the electric installation of the pump since the project consisted of a well and electric pumps. Additionally, 80% of the population benefited from house electric energy service. Finally, the Mayor's Office granted legal status to the El Cerrito Canton Community Potable Water Managing System Association -ACASAPEC. Actions executed by CARE: In 1996, CARE through its project Credit for Sustainable Agriculture and the work carried out by CENTA with El Cerrito community's ADESCO, started actions in such canton granting a revolving fund of \$5,714.00 in the first year, ending with a total of \$24,343.00. In 1999 the project Water Access, Management and Efficient –AGUA was started in the 18 priority municipalities of US AID, among which is Usulután; it was executed by the CARE Consortium in partnership with three local NGOs. The Project has 5 components:

1. Local Development;
2. Basin and Agro-Forestry Management;
3. Infrastructure;
4. Environmental Education;
5. Water Resource Management -Incidence.

Outcomes

Phone: (+46) 771 10 26 10 Email: support@iver.se The objective of increasing the access to potable water in terms of quality and quantity in rural communities was accomplished by obtaining a decentralized rural potable water system for 351 families (2,106 people), as a local experience in the solution of conflicts related with water access and resources channeling.

These results were achieved through the formation of strengthened and legitimized local organizations implementing a micro basin management as recognition to the environmental service of the water and as a product of an environmental education process at all levels. It was possible to establish sustainable rural potable water management and administration system models with a comprehensive vision of the resource (economic, social and environmental vision).

El Cerrito community improved its quality of life by having access to potable water, electric energy, improving their access roads, and improving the health and education of their children. In the incidence processes, it was possible to link the local actors, social sectors

and different water users in debate and incidence processes including proposals for the legal framework of the water sector at national level.

Lessons Learned

The key for poor communities to have water access and management is their capacity to get organized, their tenacity, clarity of objectives, attitude and community leaders' willingness to be of service, human capital building, and better use of social capital.

The rural potable water systems can be managed by community organizations in a sustainable way but it is necessary to link these efforts at national level.

Such local managing entities are recognized and obtain legal status based on equity to have access to and use the water efficiently.

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Supporting Materials

GWP Central America
El Salvador: Analysis of water decentralization

Related IWRM Tools

Public sector water utilities, Community-based water supply and management organisations, Pricing for Water and Water Services

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