

Small Scale Water Supplies in Georgia



Rural water supply in Dusheti (Georgia), (Photo by Bettina Rickert)

Background

In Georgia, a high proportion of the rural population is not connected to a well-managed centralized water supply, which makes the management of small-scale water supply systems an issue of national importance. The incidence of water-related diseases is higher than in countries of the western part of the WHO European Region. The WHO Water Safety Plan (WSP) approach is recognised as effective means for continuously providing safe drinking-water. It is not yet introduced in Georgian small-scale water supply systems.

Project

The overall goal of the project was to improve the evidence base on the situation of small-scale water supplies as a baseline analysis. This will support Georgia's ongoing efforts in implementing the Protocol on Water and Health.

Field data was collected and assessed on current source water protection measures, drinking-water quality, and sanitary risk factors that may compromise drinking-water quality, alongside with an analysis of epidemiological data in two model districts (Dusheti and Marneuli).

Awareness raising activities for the local authorities and population were conducted. The WHO WSP manual was translated into Georgian and WHO guidance on Water Safety Planning for Small Community Water Supplies into Russian to support future scale-up of the WSP approach in the region.

Drinking water analyses showed significant microbiological contamination in almost 50 % of the samples. This is mainly due to limited resource protection and poor sanitary conditions at abstraction facilities and distribution networks. Identified sanitary risks include a lack of sanitary protection zones, pit-latrines near water sources, uncovered wells, faulty spring boxes and inadequate water storage practices in households. In contrast, chemical drinking-water quality was found to be in compliance with Georgian standards.

The project significantly improved stakeholder's cooperation and communication at national and local level. This will serve as a basis for implementing the project's recommendations towards improving the situation of small-scale water supplies in Georgia.

- Target country: Georgia
- Duration: 11/2010 - 07/2012
- Beneficiary: National Center for Disease Control & Public Health (NCDCPH), Georgian Environmental and Biological Monitoring Association (GEBMA)
- Implementing organisation: WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO Europe) and WHO Country Office in Georgia
- Project number: FKZ 380 01 243