



**HEKS
EPER**
Bread for all.

Right to Water, and to Sanitation & Hygiene

HEKS/EPER Global Cooperation's strategy, promising practices, achievements and perspectives on access to water, sanitation and hygiene for communities as a condition for a decent life.

Why The Right to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Matters

Global Challenges – Context

Water use has been increasing worldwide by about 1% per year since the 1980s, driven by a combination of population growth, socio-economic development and changing consumption patterns¹. Global water demand is expected to continue increasing at a similar rate as in the last decades. Today, the situation remains fraught. Despite progress in some areas, the 2023 UN World Water Development Report presents daunting statistics about the global water crisis: 26% of the world's population, approximately two billion people, do not have access to safe drinking water, and 3.6 billion lack access to safe sanitation services. Water scarcity in urban areas is expected to worsen as projections show that projected doubling from 930 million in 2016 to between 1.7 and 2.4 billion people in 2050.²



Ethiopia: In the Yabello region in the South access to clean drinking water remains a challenge for the rural population.

Agriculture (including irrigation, livestock and aquaculture) is the largest water consumer, accounting for 70% of annual water withdrawals globally³. At the same time, approximately 80% of the global cropland is rainfed, and 60% of the world's food is produced on rainfed land⁴. As a result, stress levels will continue to increase as water demand grows and the effects of climate change intensify.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation are recognised as basic human rights, as they are indispensable to sustaining healthy livelihoods and fundamental in maintaining the dignity of all human beings. International Human Rights law obliges states to work towards achieving universal access to water and sanitation for all, without discrimination, while prioritising those most in need. Fulfilment of the Human Right to Water and Sanitation requires that the services be available, physically accessible, equitably affordable, safe and culturally acceptable.

'Leaving no one behind' is at the heart of the commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to allow all people in all countries to benefit from socio-economic development and to achieve the full realisation of human rights. Although there has been progress in many countries concerning improved access to safe water, because of the efforts of local communities, governments at a national and local level, and a wide range of social movements and development organisations, there is an urgent need to strengthen efforts to improve access to safe water appropriate hygiene for all. Local communities with secure access to water, land and other natural resources are better prepared to face external shocks and stresses. Moreover, water plays a pivotal role in how the world mitigates and adapts to the effects of climate change. Therefore, an integrated view of the water, the biosphere and environmental flows is required to devise sustainable agricultural and economic systems that will allow us to decelerate climate change, protect us from extremes and adapt to the unavoidable at the same time⁵.

Water in Humanitarian Crisis – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

There is hardly any humanitarian crisis which does not provoke severe problems related to water and sanitation. Earthquakes, floods, cyclones and tsunamis damage or destroy existing water supply infrastructure and latrines.

¹ AQUASTAT (n.d.). FAO's Global Information System on Water and Agriculture. Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). www.fao.org/aquastat/en/

² IISD, March 2023

³ Mekonnen, M. M. and Hoekstra, A. Y. (2012). A global assessment of the water footprint of farm animal products. *Ecosystems*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 401–415. doi.org/10.1007/s10021-011-9517

⁴ HLPE (High Level Panel of Experts). 2015. Water for Food Security and Nutrition: A Report by the high-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome, HLPE. www.fao.org/3/a-av045e.pdf

⁵ UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (2020). The United Nations world water development report 2020: water and climate change.

Conflicts and related displacements make people settle in camps or informal settlements. A crucial global trend in the last years is the significant increase of displaced people increased 2021, up to 84 Million⁶. While on the move, nor when reaching a place for temporary shelter, the displaced find adequate water and sanitation infrastructure. The situation becomes even more challenging once displaced people compete for scarce resources with host communities. Lack of access to clean water and basic sanitation, along with low hygiene practices, increases the vulnerability of people to epidemic outbreaks and is detrimental to the health and well-being of people.

How HEKS/EPER responds – Strategy

Water – an essential means of life and a common good

To HEKS/EPER, access to safe water is a human right, and water must be understood and handled as a common good. The right to water entitles everyone, including during humanitarian crises, to have access to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for individual and domestic use. Likewise, the right to sanitation entitles everyone to have physical and affordable access to sanitation in all spheres of life that are safe, hygienic, and socially and culturally acceptable, providing privacy and ensuring dignity. Therefore, access to water and sanitation, along with improving hygiene practices, is a central objective in HEKS/EPER's work both in development cooperation and humanitarian aid.

How HEKS/EPER responds to development cooperation programmes

Governance of natural resources such as water, land, and ecosystems entails the rules, processes, structures and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised and how decisions about access to water, its use and management are taken. It describes how those decisions are implemented and enforced, how competing interests in access to water are managed and how the communities are included in decision-making processes.

HEKS/EPER fosters governance principles related to inclusive decision-making, transparency, responsiveness and accountability. They are oriented towards effective, equitable, sustainable natural resources management and livelihood enhancement and embrace diverse cultures and knowledge systems. Thus, for HEKS/EPER, natural resources governance means people and communities having secured rights to water, land and all the needed natural resources. They can control, manage and use these resources in the long term.

Based on its expertise and reflecting on the realities in the countries it operates, HEKS/EPER acknowledges the importance of and sets a special focus on territories and the role of ecosystems in providing and sustaining key services such as providing fresh water, food and biodiversity. Territorial development can be understood as the 'capacity of the actors located in a territory to exercise control over its changes and its future'. HEKS/EPER supports peoples' and communities' participation, engages with state actors, holds them accountable to create a favourable political, legal and economic environment, and encourages the private sector to create opportunities for people and the environment.

A clear framework for HEKS/EPER's involvement

Important pillars to engage in the thematic field of access to water are the UN Human Right to Water and Sanitation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with Goals 6 (Access to Water and Sanitation) and 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of ecosystems). With these frameworks, the different actors' rights, responsibilities and tasks are clearly defined. Consequently, governmental authorities have a clear role in respecting, protecting and fulfilling the provision of sufficient, safe, accessible and affordable water and sanitation for all people and empowering people to exercise their rights and responsibilities.

SDG goal 6 requires that till 2030, the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all must be assured. This ambitious goal needs the participation of all civil society movements, governments and NGOs. HEKS/EPER understands its commitment to the field of access to water as one among many actors and is contributing to well-coordinated efforts.

⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/global-compact-refugees-indicator-report>

Civil Society is a key player

HEKS/EPER's Development Cooperation focuses mainly on the work with Civil Society Organizations (CSO) through its local NGO partner network. Civil Society organisations and their networks are crucial to reach access to water for everyone. CSOs have the capacity to reach out to, empower, represent and defend vulnerable and socially excluded groups and to promote social innovation. Women, small-scale farmers, youth and indigenous people's CSOs do this within their own societal group or sector, addressing the full range of development issues from their perspective.



Brazil: Dried water supply dam, catchment area of the Rio Pardo, Minas Gerais.

Access to water and agriculture

The HEKS/EPER territorial approach implies that local people and communities are at the heart of decision-making on the governance and use of land and resources within their territories/ecosystems. In particular, in all eco- and food systems, the issue of water access is highly relevant. A focus in the HEKS/EPER programs is given to strengthening local institutions' capacity to manage their commons and use them sustainably. HEKS/EPER supports initiatives of local institutions to use the available water in an efficient and sustainable for agricultural production. HEKS/EPER is promoting the capacity of its partners to implement methods of the agroecology concept as a means to use the natural resource in a sustainable and environment-friendly way to ensure the production of healthy food for their own consumption and the local and regional markets.

The linkage between peacebuilding and access to water

Assured access to water is a shared concern for the people in each geographical area. It is also a connecting element for improving the relationship between the people living in urban areas and the rural context. There are many places where access to safe water is the cause of conflicts between different actors. For example, in many rural areas, water is used for irrigation of huge plantations of cash crops by big corporations or affected by mining companies' activities. Processes of negotiations for reaching access to water for all are needed, but also strengthening the local communities to defend their rights.

Besides these many challenges, access to water also can be a connecting driver between different groups to work together to improve access to water for all. Therefore, HEKS/EPER is promoting spaces for collaboration between different stakeholders involved in the issue of access to water and strengthening local and regional networks.

Promising Practices Worldwide

Haiti – concretise triple nexus including improvement of access to clean water in Grand'Anse

Access to clean water and sanitation is one of the greatest challenges for the people and their communities in the Department of Grand'Anse. HEKS/EPER has been heavily involved in this region for years, among other themes in promoting sustainable farming methods. The BuCo is anchored in the concretisation of the triple Nexus by the development of innovative models of access to water, such as (i) retention basins for run-off water, useful in the event of drought, (ii) community works water storage and drinking water which are also multi-use infrastructures allowing community meetings and access to electricity.

In 2022, HEKS/EPER gave mayor attention to initiatives like the project of "development and reinforcement of capacities in accessibility and management of water, hygiene, sanitation" (EPAH) to improve the living conditions of rural populations by increased access

and these basic services. Furthermore, the HEKS/EPER coordination team is anchored in the realisation of the Triple Nexus through the development of innovative models of access to water, such as (i) stormwater retention ponds, useful in case of drought, (ii) community water storage and stabilisation facilities which are also multi-use infrastructures allowing community meetings, access to electricity.



Handwashing at school – HEKS/EPER project in Haiti.

Uganda – improve sustainable WASH services in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement and introduction of the Blue School Concept

HEKS/EPER WASH interventions in Uganda improved WASH services for 32,003 (20,418 refugees and 11,585 hosts). The intended specific results were water supply, infrastructure development, hygiene and sanitation promotion, the introduction of the Blue Schools signature approaches, Innovations, Evidence-based Policy advocacy & Knowledge with the following key results. Whereas there are still variations in access to safe and clean water, the investment contributed to realising the SPHERE standards of 20 l/p/day and less than 30 minutes of a round trip for water collection within the targeted project locations. This has been attributed to investment in constructing two mini solar water supply systems and operational maintenance of two hybrid water supply systems in host and refugee communities. Through implementing Blue Schools approaches, 6,079 people were reached with knowledge and information on menstrual health and hygiene, operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure, solid waste and environmental management and food production at the school level. Trained school participants have worked to transfer skills and information to other school stakeholders. Blue Schools' signature approaches were introduced and implemented in all four blue schools. In addition, blue School benefited from pad-making workshops, information on solid waste, school gardens and environmental management. HEKS/EPER, throughout the year, continued to engage with partners and government, promoting learnings and successes in coordination platforms at national, district and settlement levels. HEKS/EPER has contributed to awareness creation on pertinent WASH topics such as menstrual health and hygiene through the systematic engagement of stakeholders. As a result, an MHM technical Working group committee was formed and is hosted at the Yumbe district headquarters for continued lobbying and advocacy.

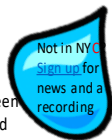
Globally – joint preparation effort toward the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York

HEKS/EPER participated actively in the preparation process of a side event at the UN Water Conference in New York, March 22–24th, 2023, by sharing our experiences using the Water Flow Diagram as implemented in various HEKS/EPER country programmes. The side event did raise interest in this tool.

Water Flow Diagrams are, most of all, tools to build awareness about access to water in a concrete context. Access to information and understanding the challenges are strong and indispensable preconditions to improving access to water for all.

With this side event and by sharing experiences with the application of the water flow diagram, we contributed to promoting more awareness about challenges in a concrete urban context – and motivated actors to build professional exchanges among cities in the global South and cities in the global North. Our joint effort during the UN Water Conference was an excellent space to promote the water flow diagram as a useful tool for better understanding the water situation in an urban context and for searching in a participative way options and priorities to improve access to water for all.

Know your water



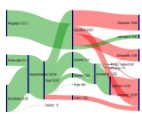
Action-oriented partnerships at the interface between science, politics, and practice to reduce inequity and increase resilience in urban water management

When: Tuesday, 21 March 2023 16:30 to 18:30 pm
 Where: Columbia University, CEPSP building, 7th floor
 Followed by a Swiss Apéro at the International House, 500 Riverside Drive, New York City

REG-ISTER

With contributions from:

- Marlene de Souza Alves (Federal State of Minas Gerais, Brazil)
- Prof. Pedro Arnojo-Agudo (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner)
- Marc-André Bünzli (Swiss Development Cooperation)
- Dr. Arne Panesar (Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit)
- Maude Barlow (Blue Communities)
- Anne le Strat (Global Water Operators Partnership Alliance)



Using the examples of the urban Water Flow Diagram (WFD), the Shit Flow Diagram (SFD) promotion initiative and partnership programmes, such as Solidariteau Suisse, Blue Communities and the Global Water Operator Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA), we will show how a joint effort by science, politics, and practice can trigger local action to reach the SDGs and the human right to water and sanitation.



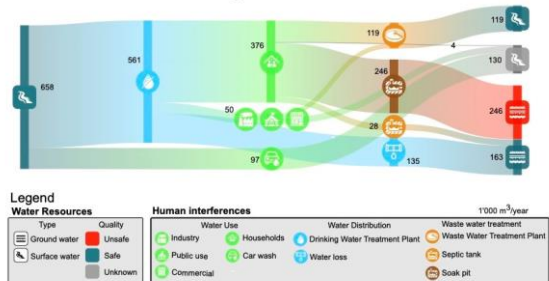
Announcing the side event powered by HEKS/EPER and many other partners.

Applied research

Tangible tools

"The main water-related problems identified correspond to the low rate of sewage collection and treatment, large losses of water in the treated water distribution system, a high use of water for car washing and lack of data related to surface water quality."

Water Flow Diagram of Rio Pardo de Minas



Water flow diagram of Rio Pardo de Minas, Brasil (above); presented at UN Water Conference (below).

Our Joint Contribution to Water for Cooperation

<p>Applied research</p> <p>... to develop actionable tool</p>	<p>Local action</p> <p>... to implement the SDGs and HRWS</p>	<p>Public commitment</p> <p>... public-public partnerships to mobilise funds and develop capacities</p>	<p>Private sector innovation</p> <p>... to scale up innovative approaches.</p>
--	--	--	---



Ethiopia – Blue School, a promising practice of the HEKS/EPER country programme

Providing access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services has remained at the centre of HEKS/EPER's work in a country where water means time, safety, livelihood, hope, health and education. In one word, water means 'life'. During the year, HEKS/EPER reached an estimated 181'531 persons through humanitarian assistance, consolidating its work on WASH, multi-purpose cash distribution, emergency seed and fodder distribution and protection services, with a strong focus on girls and women.

In 2022 WASH activities have been at the centre of HEKS/EPER's work: out of the 7 humanitarian projects implemented by HEKS/EPER in Ethiopia during the year, 6 had WASH components, reaching a total of 91,950 people. One important learning was providing the full WASH package when working with internally displaced persons, as per the Sphere standards.



Promoting WASH with a holistic approach in Ethiopia.

In 2022, through its first advocacy project in Ethiopia, HEKS/EPER started gathering evidence for the need and gaps concerning WASH in healthcare facilities in Amhara Region. The project will create local advocates, including community and institutional representatives, to influence policy development and government budget allocation in this sector.

Cambodia – protecting collective rights and enhancing the productivity of rice land



Access to water for food production: a key element in the Cambodia programme.

Through the SAFE project of innovative community-based water governance for irrigation, 70 smallholder farmers have access to water for irrigating 86.50ha of dry season recession rice. The farmers can cultivate the dry session two times per year. At the same time, the project also coordinated and linked between the FWUG and one solar company, SOGE, to discuss alternative business models by using renewable energy (solar pumping) and replacing diesel ones. This process is ongoing until 2023.

HEKS/EPER started working on larger volume and outreach projects. From December 2022, HEKS/EPER Cambodia has launched a new larger project with Caritas Switzerland with co-funding from SDC (Nurture

project) on climate resilience agriculture and water governance. This is, at the moment, the largest project in the HEKS/EPER Cambodia Program. It will be a flagship project for HEKS/EPER in the region.

Brazil – making use of the water flow diagramme

The highlight of the year was the development of the Water Flow Diagram (WFD) of Rio Pardo de Minas, where an action plan was developed to solve the problems revealed by the WFD for the city of Rio Pardo de Minas. Another important moment was our participation at the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar/Senegal. We shared our experiences on elaborating a WFD and using the results as a base for defining concrete steps for improving access to water for all.



HEKS/EPER, Comunidade Sobrado, Rio Pardo de Minas, Dec. 2022

Adopting a tool such as the Water Flow Diagram proved important to collect and systematise evidence on the water situation in the municipality of Rio Pardo, favouring local articulation, including public power, around the issue. However, in a context of social and political tension, this movement also brought to light a potential conflict with sectors linked to mining in the region. In analysis, this situation not only stems from the intervention of HEKS/EPER and partners but has also been reinforced by the conjuncture of polarisation and the increasingly widespread production and dissemination of fake news. These are elements of reality that project - especially for those working to secure land rights, access to water and biodiversity protection. Therefore, both HEKS/EPER program team and the partner organisations involved in these processes are sensitive to ensure that their intervention continues to favour community articulation in water defence without entailing risks for the people involved.

Bangladesh – humanitarian aid and behaviour changes



At the entrance of a health care centre.

The WASH FIT approach is a new concept in Bangladesh. HEKS/EPER earlier worked in partnership with WHO only on WASH FIT capacity building for targeted healthcare service providers. But the current project adopted a comprehensive approach, which government authorities greatly appreciate. During the pandemic of the novel CORONA virus, it was discovered that the lack of capacity and limitations of the healthcare facilities increased virus threats in the project locations. The situation in health facilities contributed to the people becoming more vulnerable, and the WASH sector (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) is threatened daily. Despite these challenges, WASH and IPC initiatives were key in tackling the CORONA outbreak in healthcare facilities. In that regard, the project's demand and needs are being well-augmented. As a humanitarian organisation, HEKS/EPER set the project's mid- and long-term perspective.

The WASH FIT approach is a new concept in Bangladesh. HEKS/EPER earlier worked in partnership with WHO only on WASH FIT capacity building for targeted healthcare service providers. But the current project adopted a comprehensive approach, which government authorities greatly appreciate. During the pandemic of the novel CORONA virus, it was discovered that the lack of capacity and limitations of the healthcare facilities increased virus threats in the project locations. The situation in health facilities contributed to the people becoming more vulnerable, and the WASH

Switzerland – awareness building and networking by Blue Community

The Blue Community is an international network of civil society organisations and public institutions committed to raising awareness concerning the human right to water as a public good. It encourages municipalities and other communities to support the idea of a water commons framework, recognising that water is a shared resource for all. Blue Community as a Global Network was founded in 2010 (initially launched by the grassroots social organisation Council of Canadians in 2009) after adopting the right to water as a Human Right by the UN General Assembly of June 2010. Membership is open to cities, municipalities, and a wide range of organisations like churches, unions, universities, etc. One of the members' common goals is to assure that water must be treated as a public good and that access to water must be respected by duty bearers as a human right.



HEKS/EPER is since 2018 member of the Blue Community.

The specific role of HEKS in the Blue Community Switzerland network is to connect members of Blue Community to projects, processes and partners in the South with the goal of strengthening the network at the international level and stimulating the motivation of members to participate actively in the promotion and defence of the human right to water. Concrete activities in 2022 were the celebration of World Water Day with activities in Bern and Zurich, the publication of a newsletter, an exposition on water, and talks and discussions in communities about the work of HEKS in the thematic field of access to water. In 2022, the number of Blue Community members in Switzerland continued growing; among others, the city of Dietikon and the University of Zurich formalised their membership and started with different efforts to sensitise the public and students about water a public good. Furthermore, HEKS supports the national

Blue Community coordination and promotes regional Blue Community working groups to enhance the participation of the 42 member organisations in Switzerland. For the members of Blue Community, the yearly World Water Day (22 March) is a 'moment fort' for networking and sensitisation activities in Switzerland, focusing on the challenges concerning access to water and sanitation in the global South.

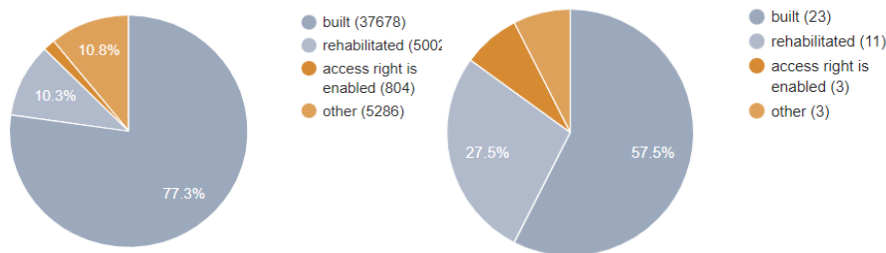
The UN-World Water Day: a special day for the Blue Communities in Switzerland to address current challenges on access to water and sanitation.



Achievements & Perspectives

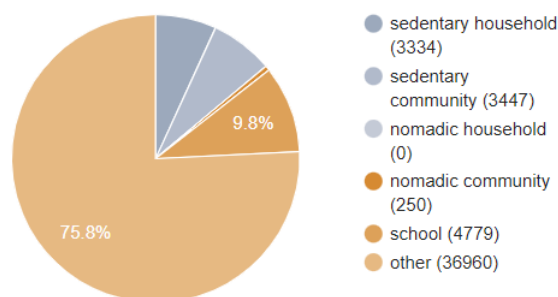
Achievements 2022

In 2022, HEKS/EPER improved access to **safe drinking water** for more than **48'770 individuals** (data from 3 DC countries). **Graph A and B** show that 37'678 profited from 23 newly built, 5002 from 11 rehabilitated facilities such as protected dug wells, piped water and tubes, wells or boreholes and rainwater harvesting. In addition, in 3 cases through negotiation, 804 people got access to existing water points or their households were linked directly to an existing water distribution system.



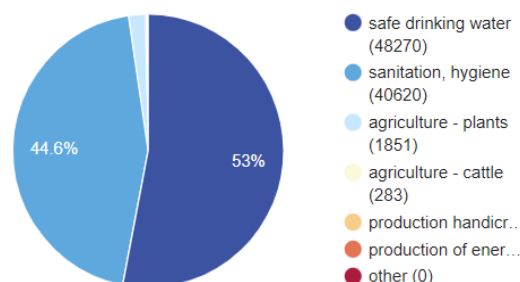
Nb of person (**Graph A**) and nb of facility/right (**Graph B**) who profit from various measures (newly built, rehabilitated, enabled access rights) to enhance access to drinking water.

People and communities newly accessing drinking water (Graph C) are 3334 members of individual sedentary households, common access rights for sedentary community members (3447 people), and nomadic or semi-nomadic community members. In addition, most 'other', 75.8% or 36'960 individuals of all 48'770 benefitted from access to drinking water through newly built (see Graph A) water infrastructure attached to health centres.



Graph C: Type of individuals getting access to water.

People did **use the water (Graph D)**, multiple answers possible) mainly as safe drinking water (53%) and for sanitation/hygiene (44.8%, mainly water points linked to health centres). However, the ratio stays low for agricultural use at 2.5% of all 'usage forms'.



Graph D: Type of usage of water sources.

HEKS/EPER also followed up during the year on the **functionality of the water points** 93% of the interviewed people still reported access to functional, 4% to partially functional water infrastructure – only 3% indicated the water point was not usable anymore.

In addition, HEKS/EPER contributed to the rehabilitation of safe water sources and sanitation and facilitated access to drinking water in almost 20 humanitarian aid projects in 6 countries. HEKS/EPER also continued to actively participate in additional WASH-related networks, namely the Swiss Water and Sanitation Consortium, AGUSAN, Swiss Water Partnership and Solidarit'eau Suisse.

Perspectives

Methods for improving access to safe water for human use, but also access to water for irrigation for food production, are needed in nearly all country programs. HEKS/EPER strongly focuses on a systemic approach concerning land, water and resource access. We consider this approach very relevant and with high potential to reach good results. Water is a basic public good – and for this reason, a connecting force to strengthen local initiatives to find fair and satisfying solutions for all. We see new and interesting initiatives at the community or regional level in many of our programs, together with our local partners. HEKS/EPER is in a good position to work and support these initiatives, interlink them and strengthen them.

Cooperation within the SDC-funded Swiss Water Consortium (SWSC): HEKS/EPER is an active member of the SWSC and is responsible for the lead of the steering committee of the SWSC. HEKS participate in four projects, two in Ethiopia, one in Uganda and one in Niger. The SWSC is an important instrument for sharing good practices,

methods and approaches and promoting upscaling initiatives, most of all in the Blue School approach and water and hygiene in health care facilities.

In Humanitarian Aid, HEKS/EPER will continue ensuring access to safe water and sanitation in ongoing and future emergencies, tailored to the specific needs and context. In addition, projects will more and more consider the wider environmental context, e.g., by implementing projects on solid waste management and recycling.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the crucial role of access to safe water and hygiene as the key element to protecting people and reducing the loss of lives and illness. As a result, HEKS/EPER country programmes, including those normally not engaged in humanitarian aid programming or WASH, are increasing their efforts to support local communities in preventing pandemics and straightening their protection capacities.

New initiatives are raising in the different country programmes, which are interesting and worth attention. One of them is 'environmental water governance' in Haiti, working with a partner on coastal and marine biodiversity, like coral reefs and mangroves.

HEKS/EPER is an active member of Blue Community (see page 7) – and, therefore, is in a good position to shape this international network to become an even more effective instrument for strengthening local initiatives defining the human right to water. Blue Community has a high potential to interlink people, organisations and groups in the North and South to exchange and work together in promoting the right to water.

Many HEKS/EPER projects work in semi-arid regions worldwide – e.g. in Latin America (Cerrado region in Brazil, the dry corridor in Honduras or Sub-Sahara Africa (e.g. Niger, Senegal, Ethiopia). Water stress and physical water scarcity will increase in these regions in the coming years. Thus, addressing water-related issues linked to the sustainable governance of resources, climate change adaptation and agriculture remain important for HEKS/EPER's work in these contexts.

Rural communities are not only users of water – in many regions and contexts, there are at the same time also guardians of water resources. The local communities increasingly understand their important role as a producer of clean and safe water by promoting environmental-friendly management of their land and ecosystems. They are proud to contribute and assure access to water to more people. The importance of rural communities in defending water resources opens new ways of cooperation between rural communities and urban areas. This aspect will be given attention in future HEKS/EPER programming.



Niger: Access to water for pastoralists and local sedentary communities.

HEKS/EPER is an active member of water-related networks and alliances: Swiss Water Consortium, AGUSAN, Blue Community, Swiss Water Partnership, Ecumenical Water Network, ResEau, Solidarit'eausuisse, contributing and strengthening the coordination and cooperation among the members.

HEKS/EPER works in different spheres/dimensions regarding water, e.g., strong WASH components in humanitarian aid and development cooperation and a strong link between access to land/land governance and access to water/water governance. In addition, HEKS/EPER deals with water in conflict areas. HEKS/EPER is also working on the advocacy level and trying to bring together research and water programming. To combine these aspects, creating a **nexus** is challenging, but also important to see these aspects in an integrated way.

This is HEKS/EPER



HEKS/EPER is the aid organisation of the Swiss protestant churches. It operates towards a more equitable and peaceful world (and Switzerland) with resilient communities, focusing on four topics: **Climate Justice, Inclusion, Right to Land & Food, and Refuge & Migration.**

In 2022, HEKS/EPER supported more than 60 projects in Switzerland, the inclusion of 98'000 people, and with 232 projects in 30 countries, 2.5 million people directly in economic, social or humanitarian need. As a result, the operating income of the whole organisation has risen to 114 M CHF and expenditure to 108.13 M CHF – of which 54.54 M CHF were net costs spent for the international

programme.

In the Global Cooperation division, HEKS/EPER ameliorated with 17.8 M CHF (net costs) spent on 96 **development projects** for the life of 946'267 people focusing on access to land and resources, securing basic services, fostering sustainable production and inclusive market systems. It also promoted the social inclusion of marginalised, inclusive governance structures and conflict transformation. In addition, 23.4 M benefitted indirectly – e.g., through successful advocacy for new rights or policies (e.g., right to land, water, education, health, market access).

HEKS/EPER's **humanitarian aid** spent more than 29 M CHF (net costs) in 72 projects in 18 countries reaching directly 1.522 M people affected by conflicts and disasters; another 2.4 M were indirectly reached with health prevention campaigns or rebuilt public sanitation, road or health infrastructures.

In the frame of **Church Cooperation**, HEKS/EPER enabled with 2.26 M CHF social work of Reformed Churches in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, reaching out to almost 35'000 people through 29 projects; another 30'500 were reached indirectly.

HEKS/EPER sensitises on the needs and rights of people and communities worldwide, addressing causes of global inequalities. To **influence the public, media, politics and other stakeholders in Switzerland** to achieve a transition to a more equitable, peaceful world, preserving the limited natural resources, HEKS/EPER spent 4.5 M CHF on advocacy and policy work.

HEKS/EPER Global Cooperation strives towards systemic change with its human rights-based approach, promoting ownership, innovation, and the nexus between humanitarian aid and development activities. Together with competent partners and well-interconnected alliances, HEKS/EPER fosters constant dialogue between civil society, the private sector, and Government actors enabling people and communities to advocate for their needs and rights. The international divisions' conflict- and gender-sensitive programming is risk-informed and evidence-based. A proficient institutional governance framework allows effectiveness and transparency.

In Switzerland, HEKS/EPER supported with 34.2 M CHF net costs of more than 60 projects in 15 cantons disadvantaged people in becoming socially and economically integrated by promoting equal opportunity and assisting jobless people, refugees, and other individuals by providing day structures, legal advice, vocational training, language courses, dialogue platforms, etc.


The nine core values of HEKS/EPER: Justice / Self-Determination / Participation / Respect / Solidarity / Support without Borders / Close to People / Effectiveness, / Accountability.

Strategies, policies, guidelines, and reports published on ID's Governance Website: https://en.heks.ch/Institutional_Governance

Published by HEKS/EPER thematic advisory and MEAL units, May 2023, Zürich (Switzerland)

HEKS/EPER

Main Office +41 44 360 88 00
Seminarstrasse 28 info@heks.ch
P.O. Box heks.ch
CH-8042 Zürich IBAN CH37 0900 0000 8000 1115 1

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Direktion für Entwicklung
und Zusammenarbeit DEZA

SWISS CHURCH AID is member of
actalliance

