



# Advancing the SDG agenda through South-South Cooperation

A Trilateral South-South Cooperation initiative between Brazil, Ethiopia and UNICEF, aimed at strengthening water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in Ethiopia



## Introduction

Travelling to a new country, interacting with people from a different culture, as well as learning from and about different customs and traditions are all experiences that enrich one’s world perspective immeasurably. South-South collaboration modalities such as Trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC), with explicit learning agendas and programmes defined through participatory processes by country delegations, hold the potential to reach beyond the individual learning experience to realise learning aims, objectives and priorities with wider societal benefits.

**“Diving into a new culture, especially in a country as rich and diverse as Ethiopia, has been extremely inspiring. Experiences like this contribute to the formation of citizens who are more sensitive to diversity and committed to solutions designed under a holistic and comprehensive perception of problems.”**

**Marcelo de Paula Neves Lelis**, Infrastructure Analyst and Project Manager, National Secretary of Environmental Sanitation, Ministry of Cities

With an urbanization rate of 4.7 per cent per annum, Ethiopia is predicted to become one of the most populous urban nations in Africa by 2050. The Government of Ethiopia faces complex challenges in terms of expanding access to and improving quality of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services for its growing urban population, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

In 2013, the Government of Ethiopia joined efforts with development partners to increase the pace of improved WASH services nationwide. The resulting ONE WaSH National Programme (OWNP), the world’s largest sector wide approach (SWAp), unites government and development partners for the implementation of WASH services in rural and urban areas. The OWNP, with its consolidated processes of WASH planning, budgeting and reporting is unique for its comprehensive, inclusive, cost effective and progress-oriented approach.

Through the UK Department for International Development (DFID)-financed One WaSH Plus programme, UNICEF was requested by the Government of Ethiopia to lead the development of a national integrated urban sanitation strategy.

UNICEF initiated experience sharing between Brazil and Ethiopia to stimulate exchange and learning about tried and tested models for urban sanitation. Brazil has good examples of urban WASH regulation, policy frameworks, services planning and management (at central and local levels), and condominia<sup>1</sup> sewerage (technology and management components).

**“We were impressed by the achievements of Brazil on wastewater management in small towns, and most of all by the high levels of awareness among its citizens.”**

**Mr. Nuredin Mohammed**, Director, Water Supply and Sanitation, Ethiopian Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy

Ethiopia has a developing enabling environment with examples of local leadership and management of services delivery within a federal system, a key similarity between the two countries and their federal structure.

This UNICEF-brokered connection was established with the aim of sharing knowledge, experience and technical know-how on these areas. The Brazil-Ethiopia-UNICEF TSSC relates to One WASH Plus through the programme results of “enhanced sector governance” and “improved Urban WASH service delivery”.

<sup>1</sup> A condominia sewerage system is a low-cost sewer system that is notable for the emphasis on community participation in all aspects of planning, management and maintenance of the system at housing block level. This shallow system collects wastewater in small-diameter pipes laid at fairly flat gradients that are located under front or back yards or the pavement rather than under a road as with conventional sewerage

## Towards a Solution

Based on the principles of South-South cooperation — specifically the idea of sharing practices that can be learned, adapted and sustained by the partner country — Brazil, Ethiopia and UNICEF have partnered to expand the capacity of the Ethiopian Government to implement water supply and sanitary sewerage services in Ethiopia. Inspired by Brazilian experiences, the initiative is changing the way in which urban communities approach these services in a rapidly urbanizing country.

This model of Trilateral South-South Cooperation works by pairing two regions of each country that are similar in terms of geography, challenges, strengths and needs and by building strategies and measures that are not merely replicating what has worked in Brazil but can provoke a critical and qualified debate on models and solutions used in Brazil and adapting them to the Ethiopian specific needs and challenges so that the Ethiopian policy makers and managers are able to design its own solutions that are efficient, effective and sustainable.

**“Brazil offers a good learning ground for African nations such as Ethiopia as its recent developments are understandable and obtainable in Africa’s emerging economies.”**  
**Dr. Samuel Godfrey** (UNICEF Ethiopia)

The initiative aims to benefit the Ethiopian water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector with policy improvements for basic sanitation in general, with a focus on the WASH regulatory framework in urban sanitary sewerage. It addresses SDG Goal 6 by seeking to implement sustainable practices to work towards guaranteeing access to water and sanitation to all in Ethiopia.

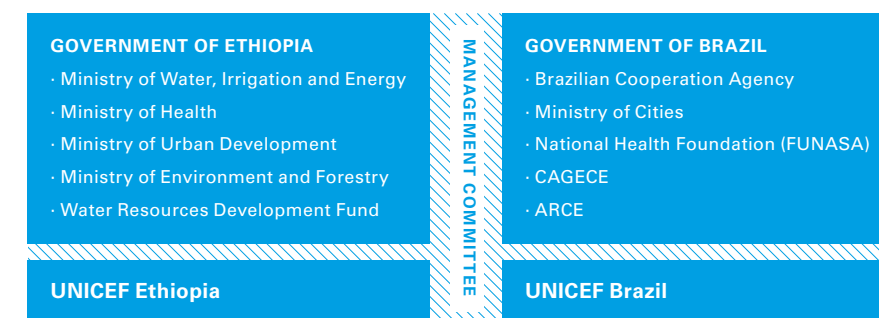
The initiative offers a combination of approaches and methodologies that involve sharing of technology through practical and direct technical support; provision of technical advice in policy discussions around the forthcoming Ethiopian regulatory framework for WASH services; development and implementation of a condominia sewerage pilot project; capacity development through peer review of key documents and on-the-job training; and knowledge-sharing of good practices, documents/manuals and implementation mechanisms.

The sustainability of the initiative is based on both countries’ willingness to exchange knowledge and practices, which is being ensured by a formally signed Trilateral South-South Cooperation Project Document between Brazil, Ethiopia and UNICEF. Expectations are that this exchange can pave the way for Ethiopia

to continue expanding the initiative through its own means, based on the lessons learned and successful practices from Brazil.

The direct beneficiaries consist in managers and technicians of the following federal, regional and municipal Ethiopian institutions: Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Urban Development, Housing and Construction; Wukro Town Administration in Tigray Regional State; Amhara Region Water Resources Development Bureau; and the Oromia Region Water, Mineral and Energy Resources Development Bureau. The indirect beneficiaries (i.e. the Ethiopian population) will increase in numbers, along with the subsequent scale-up process.

### PROJECT PARTNERS



## Results so far

After two years of implementation significant progress results have been obtained in the form of increased capacities at the local level throughout four regions of Ethiopia (Oromia, Amhara, Afar and Tigray), in the areas of independent water regulation for urban settlements, condominia sewerage for high-density population areas, and water resource management and the recent finalization of a condominia sewage system in the town of Wukro, in the Tigray region. Moreover, operational guidelines for the service provision of the condominia system have also been developed. With regards to regulation of WASH services in Ethiopia, a joint assessment of current mechanisms and policies in Ethiopia is under way and counts on direct support from the Government of Brazil and UNICEF. This assessment will in turn contribute to the efforts of designing a regulatory system for the country, drawing on the Brazilian experience. In addition, positive spill-over effects have also been witnessed of this cooperation, as a complimentary learning experience between the two countries recently commenced also in the context of refugee settlements in Ethiopia, as to promote a sustainable and Government-led approach towards WASH services for such settlements.



## TIMELINE OF COOPERATION — SUMMARY OF KEY EVENTS

### 2013

SEPTEMBER · Formal request from Government of Ethiopia received

### 2014

JANUARY · Videoconference with all stakeholders to establish cooperation priorities and next steps

SEPTEMBER · Ethiopian ministerial study visit to Brazil

### 2015

JANUARY · Scoping mission to Ethiopia

MARCH · Sanitation and Water for All Ministers' Meeting in Ethiopia

OCTOBER · Mission to Ethiopia to develop and finalize the condominium sewage project and identify a management system for the pilot construction

· Videoconference with government partners on follow-up actions

· Project document developed and ready to sign

· Elaboration of sewage system technical design, budget and management model

· Opening of tender for the building of sewage system

## Next steps

Next steps will include a joint assessment of the installed sewage system, training-of-trainers, with local, regional and national stakeholders around environmental education as well as capacity development on suitable management models, building on tested approaches applied in Brazil. Following this, the pilot system will be tested out and evaluated as to generate evidence for a subsequent scale-up throughout other regions of Ethiopia.

### 2016

JULY · Monitoring mission to Ethiopia (sewage system)

OCTOBER · Technical mission to Ethiopia (regulatory framework)

### 2017

FEBRUARY · Technical mission to Ethiopia (regulatory framework)

· Drafting of Terms of Reference (ToR) for assessment and initial steps towards the design of regulatory framework for WASH services in Ethiopia

· Videoconference with all stakeholders to review proposed ToR

OCTOBER · Joint participation in WHO-UNC symposium on Public health governance and regulation of drinking-water and sanitation services, USA

· Technical mission to Ethiopia (regulatory framework)

· Finalization of ToR

· Videoconference with all stakeholders to review progress so far and plan for next steps

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER · Technical mission to Brazil, including participation in International Congress of Engineering of Public and Environmental Health

### 2018

· Budgetary allocation of Ethiopian Government for consultancy to assess existing mechanisms of regulation and initiate the design process of the regulatory framework for WASH services in Ethiopia

· Planning for future technical mission to Ethiopia to assess condominium system, carry out training of trainers around environmental education, and provide capacity development around suitable management models for the sewage system

#### CONTACT:

**Mr Nuredin Mohammed**, Director, Water Supply and Sanitation Directorate, Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Ethiopia  
nuredinmohammed@yahoo.com

**Mrs Anna Maria Graziano**, Project Manager, Brazilian Cooperation Agency, Ministry of External Relations, Brazil  
anna.graziano@abc.gov.br

**Mr. Samuel Godfrey**, Chief WASH, Water Supply Section, UNICEF Ethiopia  
sgodfrey@unicef.org

**Mrs Liliana Chopitea**, Chief Social Policy and Monitoring & Evaluation, UNICEF Brazil  
lchopitea@unicef.org



#### SUMMARY FACTS

PROJECT NAME: Strengthening the Water Supply and Sanitary Sewerage Services in Ethiopia

COUNTRIES: Brazil, Ethiopia

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL TARGETS: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.5, 6.a, 6.b

SUPPORTED BY: Government of Brazil, Government of Ethiopia, UNICEF and DFID

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing (since 2015)