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## Sustainable solutions

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If countries are to meet the Millennium Development Goal target for water (halving the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015), their governments must critically address operation and maintenance aspects of water systems. A lack of attention to operation and maintenance has resulted in considerable failure of water supply systems in developing countries.

The Government of Kenya must address the challenge of operation and maintenance if it is to provide 100% of the population with access to clean water by the year 2010 (Water Act 2002). Operation and

and maintaining water systems.

The Government of Kenya

Water Act 2002 is a legal framework to guide implementation of reforms in the water sector. Greater emphasis is placed on community management of water facilities, with the promotion of community participation in decision making at all stages, from scheme development through to operation and maintenance. The ultimate goal is to promote community ownership, as a way to ensure the provision of sustainable and affordable services.

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In sub-Saharan Africa it is estimated that 35% of improved rural water supplies are non-operational.

Approximately 680 piped water systems provide over 740,000 water connections throughout Kenya (World Bank estimates). An additional 350 community-run water schemes exist in the country. A high percentage of these connections are however inactive, as a result of poor management and maintenance

Among 24 million rural dwellers in Kenya, about 10 million have access to an improved water supply through piped or point source systems. Among those with access

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A community-managed rural water supply scheme requires a management structure (such as a

**WELL** WELL is a network of resource centres:

WEDC at Loughborough University UK

IRC at Delft, The Netherlands

AMREF, Nairobi, Kenya

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LSHTM at University of London, UK

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