
Aquassistance

The main objectives of the French project *Aquassistance* are to improve

- the drinking water supply
- the waste water treatment
- the domestic waste situation

in Sera.

1. Drinking water supply

- The poor quality of the water triggers the appearance and intensification of a series of water-related diseases.
- Sera Mey Social Service has got a small water treatment plant and sells drinking water to monks at a cost of 1 Rupee per litre.
- The monastery has difficulties in supplying enough water to the population.
- Some water borings are too close to toilets or domestic waste dumps.
- The daily consumption of water is estimated greater than 100 litres per inhabitant and day.

2. Waste water treatment

- The project aims at establishing one or two treatment lagoons.
- Only if at least one treatment lagoon is established is it possible to treat the waste water in harmony with nature.
 - Microorganisms (bacteria) clean the waste water.
 - The pollution of the groundwater will be reduced significantly.
 - The sludge (waste which has been treated) can be used as fertilizer by the farmers.
 - The lagoon(s) provide water birds and fish with a habitat.
 - The banks will be covered with grass and the lagoon will fit well into the scenery.

3. Domestic waste

- The waste is collected daily in Sera and there are containers for waste. But there is still a lot of waste on the fields and along the streets. The waste is often stored inappropriately, e.g. next to the watercourses.
- The dumps are set on fire twice a month. This leads to a high atmospheric pollution (e.g. near the school and the hospital).
- 70% of the waste consists of plastic!

- In India, companies such as Pepsi and Coca Cola will take collected plastic (PET) bottles, provided that they are compacted and clean. The number of plastic bottles in the domestic waste ought to be reduced considerably by means of a sorted collection.

4. Conclusions

- The monks ought to become more aware of the existing problems. They need to know that their waste should be placed into dedicated containers and nowhere else. As little plastic (bags, bottles, etc.) ought to be used. Drinking water can be purchased at Sera Mey and plastic bags are not necessary for shopping!
- The number of containers throughout Sera needs to be increased.
- Plastic (PET) bottles ought to be collected separately after compacting them to minimize the volume.
- Dumping areas need to be created away from watercourses and houses.
- Organic waste could be composted.
- Sera could serve as a positive example for the surrounding villages (both Indian and Tibetan). The population, starting at the primary schools, ought to be informed about the existing problems (posters, etc.).

Keep Sera clean!