

CSD NGO Consortium

CSD-13: Priorities for a successful outcome

A consortium of NGOs has been established to encourage states to make progress on implementing water, sanitation, and human settlements commitments through the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) process.

During the intersessional period and at CSD-13, the Consortium is preparing 'issue briefs' on several key issues, including: water supply and sanitation; integrated water resource management (IWRM); quantity and quality of public finance; sanitation and hygiene promotion; the outcomes of the IPM; and follow-up to CSD-13.

The following highlights our priorities for a successful outcome at CSD-13:

- 1. Reaffirm the WSSD targets of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and Water Efficiency Plans (WEP) with:** (i) clear processes and support agreed to help countries that have been unable to meet the target; (ii) clear processes for continued reporting on achievement of this target; and (iii) agreement on a mechanism for monitoring implementation of IWRM-WEP plans.
- 2. Agree with other donors to give 70% of water and sanitation ODA to the least developed and low-income countries by 2008.**
- 3. Agree a timetable for donor harmonisation with developing country water and sanitation plans and for progress to be reported to the UN.**
- 4. Double the spending of donors and developing countries from US\$14bn to US\$30bn per year in order to meet the water and sanitation target, with special priority given to Africa and to sanitation.**
- 5. Support the strengthening of the water sector through sector wide approaches (SWAs). Specifically, 50% of African countries should have established SWAs by 2008.**

Water Supply and Sanitation

Access to clean water supplies and sanitation (WSS) is fundamental to reaching many of the MDG targets and acts as a foundation for economic growth. Access to WSS is a human right that governments have a duty to respect, protect and promote, whilst ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG 7). The means to provide WSS universally to everyone - via public utilities - is under extreme strain, resulting in billions of people being unable to gain access, and those with access experiencing rapidly declining services (in terms of numbers of hours of service per day or week, and in terms of quality of service). This has given birth to a wide range of alternative means of provision principally by small and medium-scale private providers that are currently unregulated by government and by not-for-profit, community-managed schemes. The key problems are not technical; rather they are institutional, managerial and political. Achieving universal services for all and the MDG targets will require that weak institutional, policy and governance regimes are strengthened and made more effective. This cannot be done by governments alone; nor can it be done by governments working only with donors. It will require that key stakeholders in water supply and sanitation services - including consumers themselves - are involved in deciding how best to organise their services.

We want CSD 13 to:

- Commit to assisting governments to localise the targets and double the financing to achieve them.
- Result in action plans and financial support for developing country governments to more effectively monitor information about infrastructure services and their performance.

- Arrive at agreements to develop sector-wide approaches and co-ordinating mechanisms in developing country water and sanitation sectors. Specifically, 50% of African countries should be assisted with sector wide approaches (SWAp) by 2008.
- Agree a timetable for donor harmonisation with developing country water and sanitation plans and for progress to be reported on to the UN.
- Agree action plans and financing for training and building the capacities and institutions of central and local governments to perform their expanding roles in service delivery, regulation and co-ordination of providers.
- Agree programmes and financing for building the capacity of civil society organisations, parliaments, and national and local media to undertake effective scrutiny of government and donor undertakings in the water and sanitation sector.

What is required therefore is the strengthening of governments and the tools of governance over water and sanitation services and actors.

Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)

Protecting ecosystem functionality and ensuring fair distribution amongst different user groups is fundamental to water security and human livelihoods. IWRM, for which plans should have been in place by 2005, can crucially support this. They should be established and implemented as part of addressing development needs. Whilst many 'natural resources', such as water, are the 'basis for development', they are also part of the complex web that supports life on Earth in its entirety. IWRM provides a participatory and integrated framework to ensure the long-term environmental security necessary for truly sustainable development and the provision of water and sanitation required to meet the MDG targets. Sustainable outcomes from CSD-13 must take account of the vital need to address ecosystems as a whole through IWRM in order to effectively

address WSS needs and achieve the WSS targets in the MDGs.

CSD-13 needs to reaffirm the IWRM and water efficiency plans (WEP) targets, with:

- (i) Clear processes and support agreed to help countries that have been unable to meet the target to meet it and implement plans;
- (ii) Clear processes for continued reporting on achievement of this target after CSD-13; and
- (iii) Agreement on a mechanism for monitoring implementation of IWRM-WEP plans, with clear indicators.

We want CSD 13 to:

- Recommend national governments pass specific legislation to implement IWRM-WEP that conserve catchments and guarantee equitable sharing of water between users.
- Highlight that the fundamental goal of sustainable utilisation of freshwater resources will NOT be met unless IWRM-WEP is properly and transparently implemented.
- Reaffirm the CSD-6 recommendation providing support for implementation of the Ramsar Convention and further encourage co-operation between the Convention and others working towards IWRM-WEP.
- Call for appropriate institutional processes to be established by governments to ensure cross-sectoral and stakeholder coordination to deliver IWRM-WEP.
- Call for co-operation between states sharing transboundary watercourses, including groundwater, and call on states, which have not yet ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of Watercourses, to do so.
- Encourage the full valuation of ecosystems (economic, social and environmental) and the use of this information in water resource planning.
- Encourage appropriate technology, often small-scale solutions, such as rainwater harvesting and compost toilets, especially in rural areas.

Quantity and Quality of Public Finance

We need to mobilise more public money and we need to spend it better. These two aspects of finance need to be central to discussions at CSD-13. In terms of the need to spend more, donors and developing countries should double spending from US\$14 billion to US\$30 billion per year in order to meet the water and sanitation target, with special priority given to sanitation. Creditors should cancel all unpayable debts of the world's poorest countries in full, by fair and transparent means, and the Millennium Project recommendation that in 2005 developing countries and donors should develop MDG-based Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) should be implemented. Developed and developing country governments also urgently need to support the strengthening of the water sector through SWAps.

Public money must be spent better. People need to be at the heart of water projects so that they are not passive beneficiaries but rather agents for change in their own development. Aid needs to be better targeted - donors should give 70% of water and sanitation official development assistance (ODA) to least developed and low-income countries by 2008 – and water sector funds need to be made available quicker. Donors should recognize that wise water management based on the integration of human and ecosystem needs is the only way to achieve poverty alleviation, and that finance for IWRM plans in all countries must be provided. Successful community management approaches need better support for scaling up. Support needs to be given to local civil society organisations to advocate for the prioritisation of access to water and sanitation and delivery of integrated water resource management plans at national and regional decision-making fora and to inform and involve people in management decisions.

At CSD-13:

- States need to mobilise more public money and determine how to spend it better - these two aspects of finance must be central to discussions at CSD-13.

- We believe that donors and developing countries should double spending from US\$14bn to \$30bn per year in order to meet the water and sanitation target, with special priority given to Africa and sanitation.
- We support the recommendations of the Millennium Project that in 2005 developing countries and donors should develop MDG-based PRSs and we recommend increased aid allocations and support for them.

We call on donors to give 70% of water and sanitation ODA to least developed and low-income countries by 2008.

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***“What is needed, along with fresh water, is
fresh thinking.”***
Kofi Annan, World Environment Day, June 2003