



CSD-13 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 12 APRIL 2005

Delegates met in two parallel sessions to engage in interactive discussions on water, sanitation, and human settlements. One group dealt with water and sanitation issues, including Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), access to basic water services, access to basic sanitation and hygiene, and wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse. The other group considered human settlements, focusing on access to housing and public services, job creation and enterprise promotion. The discussions on each topic were led by a panel of representatives from UN agencies and other organizations.

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

ACCESS TO HOUSING AND PUBLIC SERVICES: This session, which took place on Tuesday morning, was chaired by CSD-13 Vice-Chair Husniyya Mammadova (Azerbaijan), who asked participants to focus on practical measures requiring concerted global or regional action.

Presentations: Dinesh Mehta, UN-HABITAT, highlighted the urban poor's lack of access to domestic capital markets. He explained that experiences with UN-HABITAT's Slum Upgrading Facility suggest that modest amounts of international financing can leverage much larger amounts of domestic capital. He also identified issues related to building technologies, public finance, land tenure, decentralization and strengthening local authorities.

Nefise Bazoglu, UN-HABITAT, explained that the international target of improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers was established when there were no accurate assessments of slum dwellers' population and trends, adding that their numbers were now estimated at one billion. She concluded that slums can be transformed into improved human settlements.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, participants raised a variety of issues, including the benefits of a rights-based approach and the importance of adequate, appropriate and innovative financing. A number of speakers also questioned whether the target of improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers was adequate, highlighted the need for better disaster preparedness and planning, and stressed the need for an integrated and participatory approach. The importance of UN-HABITAT's role was strongly emphasized.

On financing, several developing country speakers urged industrialized nations to honor their funding commitments. NIGERIA said the Monterrey Consensus should be implemented, and debt relief extended. INDONESIA highlighted the importance of micro-financing. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA recommended an international

credit fund for housing to give developing countries access to financial resources. The G-77/CHINA focused on financing issues, technology transfer, and South-South cooperation.

On partnerships and cooperation, LOCAL AUTHORITIES stressed the major role local authorities play in human settlements management, and urged closer partnerships between central governments and local authorities. TRADE UNIONS called for the inclusion of workers at the earliest stages of water, sanitation and housing projects. FRANCE highlighted the need for full stakeholder involvement. The US noted that solutions are unlikely to be top-down or centralized. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE proposed strengthening integrated land-use planning and tenure protection. The EU elaborated on key policy recommendations relating to secure tenure, housing, women's rights and governance.

On slum dwellers, SOUTH AFRICA questioned the adequacy of the current global target and spoke of the need for specific national and regional goals. NGOs said the goal should be changed to "reduce by half" the number of urban slum dwellers by 2020. AUSTRALIA said such targets should not be reopened. The US and EU said the recent UN-HABITAT Governing Council session agreed not to reopen the target. This perspective was questioned by SOUTH AFRICA.

JOB CREATION AND ENTERPRISE PROMOTION:

On Tuesday afternoon, Vice-Chair Boo Nam Shin (Republic of Korea) convened a session on job creation and enterprise promotion in the context of human settlements.

Presentation: Kees van der Ree, International Labour Organization, discussed infrastructure investment for job creation and enterprise development, laws and regulatory frameworks, assistance to small enterprises, job creation for women and youth, and the development of an entrepreneurial culture.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, the EU elaborated on policy options for financing, and CHILDREN AND YOUTH highlighted the vulnerability of youth to slum problems. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES stressed the need for capacity building, and WOMEN recommended a gender rights approach to job creation. UN-HABITAT underscored the importance of preventing future slums from forming.

IRAN raised issues relating to refugees, as well as job creation for slum dwellers and those affected by natural disasters. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY identified "gaps" in the Chair's text relating to governance, enabling frameworks for sustainable job and enterprise creation, capacity building, technologies and innovation. The US highlighted the needs of young people and women, citing examples of successful and replicable multi-stakeholder initiatives. TRADE UNIONS drew attention to research into companies' employment practices



that identifies successes and failures in supporting sustainable employment, accusing ABN AMRO of investment policies that supported companies with “horrendous” working conditions. Ghana, for the AFRICAN GROUP, highlighted poverty, lack of capacity, HIV/AIDS, refugees, rapid urbanization, and public debt as major obstacles to job creation.

WATER AND SANITATION

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO BASIC WATER SERVICES: On Tuesday morning, participants discussed water issues, focusing on IWRM and access to basic water services. The session was chaired by CSD-13 Vice-Chair Dagmara Berbalk (Germany).

Presentations on IWRM: Roberto Lenton, Global Water Partnership, reflected on IWRM’s importance in attaining the MDGs. He noted the catalyzing role of the 2005 target for IWRM plans, as well as declining resources allocated to water issues. Joachim Harlin, UNDP, emphasized the need to improve the knowledge base, empower local actors, create incentives to support decentralization, and link IWRM and infrastructure development. He suggested developing a practitioners’ guide to operationalize agreed policy options.

Presentations on Access to Basic Water Services: Jamal Saghier, World Bank, focused on financing issues, including charges for water services and subsidizing the poor. He also noted the challenge of decentralization and governance, and emphasized the increasing role of the local private sector.

Ravi Narayanan, WaterAid, stressed the importance of more and better water and sanitation financing, effective governance, community participation, accountability, and authentic and accessible information in attaining the MDGs.

Discussion: On IWRM, the INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT called for a greater rural focus. UNEP identified economic development, social equity, and environmental sustainability as central to IWRM. The G-77/CHINA underscored the need to apply IWRM in a country-specific manner, a view supported by NORWAY, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and others. The EU suggested linking IWRM with broader development plans, decentralizing to the lowest appropriate level and coordinating monitoring of the MDGs and IWRM implementation. SWITZERLAND suggested involving representatives of related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), while AUSTRALIA voiced reservations about extending MEAs’ mandates. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY supported IWRM as a framework to reduce water supply risks.

On access to basic water services, IRAN, BANGLADESH, SOUTH AFRICA, and TRADE UNIONS endorsed a rights-based approach, while several others supported a market-based approach.

Many speakers reported on national implementation activities, and a considerable number welcomed the ecosystem approach. CANADA emphasized science and information sharing. SWITZERLAND encouraged debt-for-nature swaps. NGOs suggested that CSD-13 produce a country-specific table of commitments. The US underscored the importance of partnerships. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE called for integrating indigenous knowledge. The PHILIPPINES encouraged South-South and “triangular” cooperation, while FRANCE noted North-South cooperation. The EC identified the implementation of Monterrey Consensus commitments, innovative funding mechanisms, and empowerment of local authorities as practical measures. LESOTHO urged acknowledgment of HIV/AIDS as a constraint. MEXICO discussed the need for mechanisms, such as catchment councils, to resolve disputes. The INTERNATIONAL RAINWATER HARVESTING ALLIANCE, supported by others, encouraged an emphasis on rainwater harvesting. WOMEN emphasized the importance of land tenure and urged governments to ensure that industry internalizes pollution externalities. TUVALU called for the establishment of a funding facility for LDCs and SIDS and for an implementation review of water actions relevant to SIDS.

ACCESS TO BASIC SANITATION AND HYGIENE, AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT, RECYCLING AND REUSE: On Tuesday afternoon, participants engaged in discussions on sanitation issues in a session chaired by CSD-13 Vice-Chair Khaled Elbakly (Egypt).

Presentations: Ede Ijjasz, World Bank, emphasized institutional and coordination challenges in sanitation, stakeholder involvement, the need for clear regulations and affordable options, interaction between households and authorities, and the importance of behavioral change.

Vanessa Tobin, UNICEF, called for a reduction in disparities between sanitation facilities in Africa and Asia. She suggested prioritizing sanitation, decentralizing and supporting community-led initiatives, targeting school and health facilities, involving all stakeholders, and improving the role of UN agencies. Gouri Ghosh, Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, called for a “paradigm shift” in sanitation, and focused on concrete collaborative actions and tools to be used for improving sanitation services. He stressed the importance of community-driven initiatives and building coalitions of governments and stakeholders.

Veerle Vanderwerd, UNEP, suggested, *inter alia*, strengthening the WET-WASH campaign and the Whitewater to Bluewater initiative. Jamie Bartram, WHO, discussed the adverse impacts of wastewater mismanagement, the need for information to support evidence-based policymaking, and strengthening of regional processes and coordination.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, FRANCE noted its commitment to doubling aid devoted to sanitation. CHILDREN AND YOUTH, supported by many participants, emphasized the importance of sanitation education. The G-77/CHINA proposed a 10-year programme on wastewater management in line with the Marrakech Process. The EU urged transparency in subsidies and reflection of sanitation priorities in national budgets. He called for an enlargement of the mandate of UN-Water. The UK highlighted the potential role of the International Finance Facility.

Many countries noted the need for micro-credit, debt relief, integration of women into all stages of the process, adequate school sanitation facilities, consideration of cultural impediments to reuse, and a rights-based approach to sanitation. BOTSWANA noted the need for affordable wastewater treatment, and the problems associated with HIV/AIDS. The US called for a web-based mechanism to support exchange of experiences, noting that means of implementation issues should not be reopened. TRADE UNIONS proposed scaling-up sanitation as a public good and a right of citizens. COLOMBIA supported public-private partnerships, MEXICO supported awareness raising programmes in schools, and IRAN highlighted wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse in arid and semi-arid areas.

Summarizing the discussion, Veerle Vanderwerd noted the positive exchange of ideas and said the challenge now was to select a few key issues and practical mechanisms that could be decided on by CSD-13. Jamie Bartram highlighted comments on technology innovation, information sharing, UN-Water’s role, and links to health issues.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As CSD-13’s first full day of interactive discussions on water, sanitation and human settlements drew to a close late Tuesday afternoon, some participants who had complained in the morning about the quality of interactions seemed to have had a change of heart. Earlier in the day, there were suggestions that too much time was being spent on domestic measures that were hard to translate into practical policies. However, as the day progressed, the sentiment changed, with several delegates pointing to more focused and relevant interventions. A number of participants seemed pleased with the interactive nature of the discussions and the steps taken to integrate Major Groups. A few observers were also heard praising the G-77/China for its efforts to develop a conference room paper on an implementation review procedure for the CSD and matrices for CSD-13 outcomes.