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Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Water and the internationally agreed development goals

Note by the Secretariat*

Summary

The present note is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/198, in which the Assembly invited the President of the General Assembly to convene a high-level interactive dialogue of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly in New York on 22 March 2010, World Water Day, on the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015. The present note provides background information for Member States on water and the internationally agreed development goals, the theme of one of the panels of the interactive dialogue.

* The present note was prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as the secretariat of UN-Water, the inter-agency mechanism designated by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, through its High-level Committee on Programmes, as the coordinating mechanism in the United Nations system for follow-up action in the area of water resources and sanitation.



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“We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want”.

(United Nations Millennium Declaration, General Assembly resolution 55/2)

I. Introduction

1. Freshwater, like air, is one of the most essential of the Earth’s elements for human life and civilization, as well as for fauna, flora and ecosystems. Freshwater is the subject of numerous global and regional agreements and internationally agreed development goals. The present note is intended as a basis for continuing high-level intergovernmental policy discussions on freshwater under the aegis of the United Nations, as part of the midterm review of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”. The note provides a strategic overview of water in the context of global policy-setting, recognizing the multiple uses of water for people and the environment.
2. The present note also recognizes that there are multiple levels of governance over freshwater, including regional and transboundary, national and subnational governance, and recalls the importance of taking into account the full range of water challenges emerging from the Millennium Declaration and the World Summit for Sustainable Development, and reflected in the Millennium Development Goals, in policy deliberations.
3. The note makes the case for considering all of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, from a water resources-based viewpoint. Availability and access to clean drinking water and sanitation is essential to the achievement of many of the internationally agreed development goals, including poverty eradication, overcoming hunger and ensuring health, not only those that explicitly mention water availability and access. The note should be read in conjunction with the complementary notes on water and climate change and water, peace and security (see A/64/692, A/64/693 and A/64/695), as well as other notes and reports devoted specifically to accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, such as the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009*.
4. In the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/2 of 8 September 2000, the then 189 Member States of the United Nations set a visionary framework for development in the twenty-first century, recognizing the respective responsibilities of the international community for solidarity as well as the responsibilities of individual sovereign nations. The Declaration addressed the following themes: values and principles; development and poverty; peace, security and disarmament; protecting our common environment; protecting the vulnerable; meeting the special needs of Africa; and strengthening the United Nations.
5. For purposes of most discussions on development policy and assistance, the Millennium Declaration has been summarized in the eight Millennium Development Goals, which have provided the Declaration with a convenient platform for dialogue

and accountability on development efforts and progress, particularly in the social area. The Declaration contains many other internationally agreed goals beyond what is explicitly contained in and measured by the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to global governance and a strengthened United Nations, the human right to development, and peace, security and disarmament, which are equally essential to human progress and well-being.

6. While an in-depth consideration of all dimensions of the Declaration is beyond the scope of this report, it is important to keep all of the above goals in mind in considering the international and national policies related to water, because water is related, either directly or indirectly, to most of them. To be meaningful, the Millennium Development Goals should always be considered jointly with the broader Millennium Declaration. The note therefore begins with a discussion of the Millennium Declaration, followed by an examination the eight Millennium Development Goals and how they relate to water. The note also includes a report on progress towards the Goals in the context of water at the mid-point of the “Water for Life” Decade and concluding recommendations, which are proposed as providing a way forward.

II. Internationally agreed development goals and freshwater issues

7. The Millennium Declaration set an ambitious agenda for improving the human condition by 2015. The Declaration and Millennium Development Goals committed the global community, including Governments worldwide, to a clear agenda for combating poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease, discrimination against women and environmental degradation.

8. The most important specific freshwater goals in the Declaration were:

(a) To stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies;

(b) To halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world’s people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.

Specifically in the area of water resources and sanitation, Heads of State pledged to reduce by half the proportion of people who are unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water by 2015 and to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources.

9. The additional goals adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, were aimed at developing integrated water resource management and water efficiency plans by 2005 and at halving the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation by 2015.

10. The primary goal of the International Decade of Action “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, is to promote efforts to fulfil international commitments made on water and water-related issues by 2015, to be in point of fact a decade of action. The decade 2005-2015 is the second international decade on water-related issues

organized by the United Nations, following the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, 1981-1990.

11. Regarding the call in the Millennium Declaration for the strengthening of the United Nations in 2004, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination established, through its High-level Committee on Programmes, UN-Water, a United Nations system-wide mechanism in the area of freshwater aimed at achieving coherence and coordination in the water- and sanitation-related activities of the 27 agencies, departments and programmes of the United Nations system.

III. Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals

12. The Millennium Declaration set 2015 as the target date for achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals. The Goals established quantitative benchmarks to halve extreme poverty in all its forms. At present, with that date less than five years away, the world finds itself mired in an economic crisis that is unprecedented in its severity and global dimensions. Progress towards the goals is now threatened by sluggish, even negative, economic growth, diminished resources, fewer trade opportunities for the developing countries and possible reductions in aid flows from donor nations. At the same time, the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent, with a potentially devastating impact on countries rich and poor. Today, more than ever, the commitment to building the global partnership embodied in the Millennium Declaration must guide our collective actions.

13. The *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* portrayed the remarkable advances that many countries and regions had made before the economic landscape changed so radically in 2008. Those living in extreme poverty in the developing regions accounted for slightly more than a quarter of the developing world's population in 2005, compared to almost half in 1990.

14. Major accomplishments have also been made in education. In the developing world as a whole, enrolment in primary education reached 88 per cent in 2007, up from 83 per cent in 2000, and the most significant progress was in regions lagging the furthest behind. In sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, enrolment increased by 15 percentage points and 11 percentage points, respectively, from 2000 to 2007.

15. Deaths of children under five declined steadily worldwide, to around 9 million in 2007, down from 12.6 million in 1990, despite population growth. Although child mortality rates remain highest in sub-Saharan Africa, recent survey data show remarkable improvements in key interventions that could yield major breakthroughs for children in that region in the years ahead.

16. Among these interventions are the distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets to reduce the toll of malaria — a major killer of children. As a result of “second chance” immunizations, dramatic progress is also being made in the fight against measles. At the global level, the world came together to achieve a 97 per cent reduction in the consumption of substances that deplete the Earth's protective ozone layer, setting a new precedent for international cooperation.

17. These accomplishments demonstrate that the Millennium Development Goals are within reach at the global level, even in very poor countries. The Goals must continue to provide a focus for our efforts, and the vision of a world without poverty

must not be lost, even in these difficult times: Efforts to provide productive and decent employment for all, including women and young people, must be revitalized. The share of women in paid employment outside the agricultural sector has increased only marginally over the years. And in Southern Asia, Northern Africa and Western Asia, employment opportunities for women remain extremely low.

18. The war against hunger must be embraced with renewed vigour, especially in the interests of our youngest citizens. In the countries hardest hit by the recent rise in food prices, we must implement measures to increase the availability of food and strengthen social policies that address the negative impact on the poor. Work must be intensified to ensure that all children attend school, especially those living in rural communities, and to eliminate inequalities in education based on gender and ethnicity, including among linguistic and religious minorities. The target of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 has already been missed.

19. Greater political will must be mustered to reduce maternal mortality, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, where negligible progress has been made thus far. Rapid acceleration of progress is needed to bring improved sanitation to the 1.4 billion people who were doing without it in 2006, with all the attendant consequences for the health of their communities and the local environment. At the present rate of progress, the 2015 sanitation target will be missed.

20. Advances are most evident where targeted interventions have had an immediate effect, and where increased funding has translated into an expansion of programmes to deliver services and tools directly to those in need. This can be seen in the fight against malaria, the dramatic reduction in deaths resulting from measles, and in the coverage of antiretroviral treatment for HIV and AIDS, which increased tenfold over a five-year timespan. In contrast, progress has been more modest when it requires structural changes and strong political commitment to guarantee sufficient and sustained funding over a longer period of time.

21. This is likely the reason behind the poor performance of most countries in reducing maternal mortality and increasing access of the rural poor to improved sanitation facilities. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals will require the full integration of the development agenda into efforts to jumpstart growth and rebuild the global economy.

22. At the top of the agenda is the climate change problem, which will have to be regarded as an opportunity to develop more efficient green technologies and make the structural changes needed for sustainable growth. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals will also require targeting areas and population groups that have clearly been left behind — rural communities, the poorest households and ethnic minorities, all of whom will have a hand in shaping our common future.

23. Policymakers need to reaffirm their engagement to the broader Millennium Declaration, of which the Millennium Development Goals and its quantitative targets are an integral but not an exclusive part. The Declaration, committed the signatories, *inter alia*, to a range of values and principles in the area of human rights, including the right to development, dignity, equality, freedom, conserving nature, solidarity, democracy, peace, security and disarmament.

24. The focus on the quantitative targets should at no time detract from these qualitative aspects of development. The Millennium Declaration gives the Millennium Development Goals their context and meaning as well as their orientation towards ethical and holistic development. Realizing the ultimate aspirations of the Millennium Declaration for all people, including the billion most deprived, must remain the true focus of international and national development policy. The Goals and their targets, which primarily address the needs of the billion most deprived by 2015, need to be seen as milestones along the way rather than as finishing posts.

25. As 2015 rapidly approaches, it will be critical for policymakers to develop an alternative strategy for development that goes beyond the Millennium Development Goals and aims at realizing all aspects of the Millennium Declaration for all. What is required is a new discourse on development and new institutions which have human dignity, rights, security, ecological justice and intergenerational accountability at their core, and which put people and our planet Earth at the heart of development.

IV. Progress towards the water and sanitation goals

26. Much has happened since 2000 when the Millennium Declaration was issued: terrorism, war, market failures, immigration, climate change and the search for a new paradigm to address the inadequacies of the previous model, particularly following the financial crisis that started in 2008. Worldwide, only 27 per cent of the rural population enjoyed the convenience and substantial health benefits of having water piped into their homes or to their premises in 2006. Fifty per cent of rural dwellers relied on other improved drinking water sources, such as public taps, hand pumps, improved dug wells or springs. A small proportion of this population relied on rainwater.

27. While nearly one quarter (24 per cent) of the rural population obtain their drinking water from unimproved sources: surface water such as lakes, rivers, dams or from unprotected dug wells or springs, even using an improved water source is no guarantee that water is safe: when tested, the drinking water obtained from many improved sources has not met the microbiological standards set by the World Health Organization (WHO).

28. People living in urban areas of the developing world are more than twice as likely as those living in rural areas to have piped drinking water supplied to their premises. Disparities are especially evident in Latin America and the Caribbean region, which has the second lowest supply of improved drinking water of all rural areas. Only 73 per cent of the rural inhabitants in that region use an improved water source, compared to 97 per cent of urban dwellers. There are currently 1.1 billion people, or 18 per cent of the world's population, without access to safe drinking water. About 2.6 billion people, or 42 per cent of the total, lack access to basic sanitation.

29. The Millennium Development Goals call for halving "by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation". The Goal for safe drinking water on a global scale appears likely to be reached, in most regions, with the exception of sub-Saharan Africa. Between 1990 and 2006, 1.1 billion people gained access to safe drinking water.

30. The greatest access gains were achieved in Asia. In East Asia, water access increased from 71 per cent in 1990 to 78 per cent in 2004, just before the start of the Water Decade, and to 88 per cent in 2006. In South Asia, water access increased from 71 per cent in 1990 to 85 per cent in 2004 and to 83 per cent in 2006.

31. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, access grew minimally, from 49 per cent in 1990 to 56 per cent in 2004 to 58 per cent in 2006. Reaching the water access goal for sub-Saharan Africa, which would mean achieving 75 per cent water access by 2015, would require major national and international development efforts, including massive and steady investments.

32. It is estimated that an additional investment of \$11.3 billion per year would be needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals for drinking water and sanitation at the most basic levels.

33. From 1990 to 2006, 1.1 billion people in the developing world gained access to toilets, latrines and other forms of improved sanitation. An additional 1.4 billion people will require such facilities if the 2015 target is to be met. In 2006, 2.5 billion people worldwide were still unserved. The greatest challenge is in Southern Asia, where 580 million people are without improved sanitation.

34. From 2006 to 2015, the number of people currently using improved facilities in Southern Asia will have to double to meet the Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation. Sub-Saharan Africa also faces steep challenges. The target is to provide improved sanitation to 63 per cent of the region's population — about 370 million more people than the estimated 242 million who had access to such facilities in 2006.

35. Despite having the lowest sanitation coverage in 1990, Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa have made notable progress. In Southern Asia, the population that uses an improved sanitation facility has more than doubled since 1990; in sub-Saharan Africa, it has increased by over 80 per cent. Defecating in open, often publicly accessible spaces is the last recourse for people without any form of sanitation, a practice that not only jeopardizes individual health and that of his or her family, but also those who live nearby — even if they themselves use improved facilities. In addition, seeking private areas in which to defecate can put the safety of girls and women at risk. Eighteen per cent of the world's population — 1.2 billion people — have no other option. The vast majority of these people (87 per cent) live in rural areas. In developing regions, more than one in three rural dwellers have no access to proper sanitary facilities. The one exception is Eastern Asia, where the practice is less common in rural than in urban areas.

36. Water, sanitation and hygiene education are crucial for poverty reduction and form the bedrock of a healthy, productive society. The work of the members and partners of UN-Water makes a significant contribution to reaching the Millennium Development Goals, especially through actions to halve the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation, which are specific targets within Goal 7. Without health and education, people remain trapped in the stranglehold of poverty and disease.

37. Below is an outline of how freshwater relates to each of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day. More than one billion people still subsist on less than \$1 a day, with many regions of the world still falling short of achieving the Goal

38. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) Proportion of population living on less than \$1 per day;
- (b) Poverty gap ratio, which is the mean distance below the \$1 a day poverty line;
- (c) Share of the poorest quintile in national consumption.

39. According to the 2009 UN-Water *World Water Development Report*, problems of poverty are inextricably linked with those of water, its availability, proximity, quantity and quality. Improving the access of poor people to water has the potential to make a major contribution towards poverty eradication.

40. The amount of time spent on water collection greatly contributes to poverty. Water development projects provide convenient water supplies allowing people to efficiently look after the needs of their families for water, freeing up the rest of the day for earning much-needed cash or tending to agriculture. In addition, healthy people are better able than those suffering from water-related diseases, particularly worms, which rob their hosts of calories, to absorb the nutrients in food.

41. There are important side benefits that arise from the establishment of wells and pumps. Excess water is often used to nurture kitchen gardens, which provide a sustainable source of vegetables to vary people's diets. Development practitioners also advocate the use of composting latrines that produce a free, viable and sustainable alternative to expensive, and often polluting, fertilizers.

By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

42. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), some 840 million people still suffer from undernourishment. This challenge is further amplified by the rapidly growing world population.

43. According to the *World Water Development Report*, a large number of undernourished people live in environmentally degraded rural areas and in urban slums. War and natural disasters, such as floods and droughts, are the major causes of undernourishment.

44. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age;
- (b) Proportion of population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

45. In order to reduce the level of hunger worldwide, the World Water Assessment Programme identifies three water-related challenges: meeting basic needs; valuing water; and securing food supply. Additional documentation and evidence include the report of the Asian Development Bank on the Third World Water Forum, held in March 2003, on the issue of water and poverty and the *Human Development Report 2003* of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

46. The United Nations also holds two yearly events: the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, observed every year on 17 October, and World Food Day, observed annually on 16 October. Water availability and access issues are an integral part of the messages for both days.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

By 2015, ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

47. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) Net enrolment ratio in primary education;
- (b) Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 and reaching grade 5;
- (c) Literacy rate of 15- to 24-year-olds.

48. Improving the access of poor people to water has the potential to make a major contribution towards increasing children's, particularly girls', school attendance.

49. The main related challenges identified in the World Water Assessment Programme are: meeting basic needs and ensuring the knowledge base.

50. Additional related publications include: the annual *Global Monitoring Report* issued by the Education for All programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which assesses progress towards the education goals set by the international community, and the UNDP *Human Development Report*, which shows progress towards this goal in all countries.

51. The United Nations observes International Literacy Day every year on 17 October, and has declared the period 2003-2012 as the United Nations Literacy Decade. Water availability and access issues are an integral part of the messages for both days.

52. Approximately 113 million children of school age, some 60 per cent of which are girls, do not attend school. According to the *World Water Development Report*, water factors, such as the need to collect domestic water, play a large part in school attendance. School attendance, especially among girls, is affected by time-consuming water-carrying burdens and poor health. A lack of adequate sanitation facilities in schools also prevents girls from attending school, particularly when they are menstruating. Convenient access to clean water and improved sanitation facilities in schools not only gives children time and an appropriate environment, it also helps in the recruitment and retention of professional teachers.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

53. Two thirds of the world's illiterate are female, and the rate of employment of women is only two thirds that of men. It has been shown, however, that water-related enterprises, such as agricultural development projects, have a far greater success rate when women are involved than when they are excluded.

54. According to the *World Water Development Report*, many girls are prevented from attending school because they are in charge of collecting domestic water and because of the lack of separate toilet facilities in schools.

55. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- (b) Ratio of literate females to males aged 15 to 24;
- (c) Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector;
- (d) Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.

56. The main related challenges identified in the World Water Assessment Programme are: meeting basic needs and ensuring the knowledge base.

57. Related publications include the UNDP *Human Development Report*, which shows progress towards this goal in all countries.

58. Related events include: International Women's Day, celebrated every year on 8 March.

59. Development practitioners agree that it is vital for women to be actively involved in all stages of community projects. With their detailed knowledge of local water sources, and as the main users of future water points, women are best placed to choose the ideal location. Women often take on the role of hygiene educators as they are able to talk to other women freely. Involving women in projects has a positive impact on women's position and status in the community.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality by two thirds for children under five

60. Some 11 million children under the age of five die each year, mainly from preventable diseases. Children are the most hit by water-related diseases. According to the *World Water Development Report*, of all the people who died of diarrhoeal infections in 2001, 70 per cent (or 1.4 million) were children.

61. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) The under-five mortality rate;
- (b) The infant mortality rate;
- (c) The proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles.

62. The main related challenges identified in the World Water Assessment Programme include meeting the basic needs of children under five. Related publications include: *The State of the World's Children*, the annual report of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which assesses the status of children around the world. A related event is World Health Day, celebrated every year on 7 April. Children are most vulnerable to the diseases that result from a lack of water, dirty water and poor sanitation. Diarrhoea is the biggest single killer of children in the developing world where 5,000 children die every day from water-related illnesses. Where development projects bring hygiene education, clean water and sanitation children's health improves. They also have time to go to school, gain an education, or simply to play.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

By 2015, reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality rate

63. In developing countries, many of which have implemented safe motherhood programmes, 1 woman in 48 still dies during childbirth. Access to safe water and sanitation is essential in reducing the maternal mortality rate.

64. The main indicators for progress towards this goal are:

- (a) The maternal mortality ratio;
- (b) The proportion of births attended by skilled medical personnel.

65. During pregnancy, women in developing countries still have to collect water, and the lack of sanitation facilities means that it is not possible to maintain basic hygiene practices. After childbirth, women are often unable to wash themselves or the baby. Clean, accessible water and sanitation help women to minimize the chances of illness, or death, both for the baby and themselves.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

By 2015, halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

66. Over a billion people in the world do not have access to safe water and over 2 billion lack adequate sanitation. Safe drinking water and basic sanitation help prevent water-related diseases, including deadly diarrhoeal diseases. Improved water management also reduces the risk of transmitting malaria and dengue fever.

67. Development research reveals that clean water and sanitation assist HIV/AIDS sufferers. People contracting water-related illnesses are very likely to have compromised immune systems, which may cause them to succumb more quickly to the HIV virus and develop AIDS-related illnesses. Conversely, those living with HIV will be less likely to be able to fight or to recover from water-related illness.

68. Worldwide, 40 million people are now infected with HIV/AIDS. Some countries, such as Brazil, have shown that the tide can be stemmed. People weakened by HIV/AIDS are likely to suffer the most from the lack of safe water supply and sanitation, especially since diarrhoea and skin diseases are two of the more common infections.

69. The main indicators for progress towards the Goal are:

- (a) HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15 to 24;
- (b) Ratio of condom use to other contraceptive methods;
- (c) Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

By 2015, halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other diseases

70. Malaria is a water-related vector disease that kills more than 1 million people each year, 90 per cent of those in sub-Saharan Africa according to the *World Water Development Report*. The disease causes at least 300 million severe cases of illness annually, a number all the more striking since simple, effective solutions are available.

71. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:
- (a) Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria;
 - (b) Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures;
 - (c) Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis;
 - (d) Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under the Directly Observed Treatment Shortcourse (DOTS) programme.
72. The main related challenges identified in the World Water Assessment Programme are meeting basic needs and protecting ecosystems.

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

73. The target of Millennium Development Goal 7, to halve the proportion of people without access to water and sanitation, is the focus of much of the policy and operational work of the members and partners of UN-Water, many of whom have been working with local partner organizations to help people in the poorest countries gain access to water and sanitation by 2010.

74. This work is particularly focused in countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, which between them contain 30 per cent of the world's population without safe water and 40 per cent of the world's population without sanitation. Members and partners of UN-Water work with local counterpart entities to ensure that appropriate technology is used in, and training provided to, communities to create sustainable projects.

75. Another key part of the strategy followed is to ensure all future water supply and sanitation projects supported by the members and partners of UN-Water address the issues of water depletion and contamination through appropriate integrated water resource management.

By 2015, integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources

76. Environmental resources are at ever greater risk — since 1900, some 50 per cent of wetlands worldwide have been lost. Environmentally sound policies are needed to ensure the sustainability of our ecosystems.

77. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:
- (a) The proportion of land area covered by forest;
 - (b) The ratio of areas protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area;
 - (c) Energy use (metric ton oil equivalent) per \$1 of gross domestic product (GDP);
 - (d) Carbon dioxide emissions per capita and consumption of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons;
 - (e) Proportion of the population using solid fuels.

By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

78. One billion people lack access to safe drinking water, and 2.4 billion to adequate sanitation. To achieve this target, an additional 1.5 billion people will require access to some form of improved water supply by 2015, that is, an additional 100 million people each year (or 274,000/day) until 2015.

79. The main indicator of progress towards this Goal is: the proportion of the population (urban and rural) with sustainable access to an improved water source.

Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers, by 2020

80. According to UN-Habitat, almost 1 billion people now live in slums, mostly in the developing world where slum-dwellers account for 40 per cent of the urban population. This number could climb to 2 billion by 2020. Slums present a particular challenge, as they are rarely supplied with clean, safe water or adequate sanitation.

81. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

(a) The proportion of the urban population with access to improved sanitation;

(b) The proportion of households with access to secure tenure (owned or rented).

82. The main related challenges identified by the World Water Assessment Programme include: protecting ecosystems; meeting basic needs; and water and cities.

83. Related publications include the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment reports on the intrinsic links between ecosystems and human well-being and the yearly report issued by the World Health Organization (WHO), which assesses the state of health around the world.

84. Related events include World Environment Day, celebrated every year on 5 June, and World Water Day, celebrated annually on 22 March.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory

85. This Goal includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction — both nationally and internationally.

Address the special needs of the least developed countries

86. This Goal includes tariff- and quota-free access for exports from the least developed countries; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance (ODA) for countries committed to poverty reduction. According to the *World Water Development Report*, achieving the Millennium Development Goal on drinking water supply coverage will represent a major expenditure in all countries,

requiring between \$10 billion and \$30 billion a year on top of the amount already being spent.

87. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) ODA received in landlocked countries as a proportion of their gross national incomes (GNI);
- (b) ODA received in small island developing States as a proportion of their GNI.

Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term

88. Many developing countries now spend more on debt service than on social services, severely crippling their development capacity.

89. According to the *World Water Development Report*, during the last decade many Governments, preoccupied by debt and deficit reduction, have significantly reduced their expenditures on environment-related infrastructure and services.

90. The main indicators for progress towards this Goal are:

- (a) The proportion of total developed country imports (by value, excluding arms) from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duties;
- (b) Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries;
- (c) Agricultural support estimate for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries as a percentage of their GNP;
- (d) Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity;
- (e) Total number of countries that have reached their Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative);
- (f) Debt relief committed under the HIPC Initiative, in United States dollars;
- (g) Debt service as percentage of exports of goods and services.

In cooperation with developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth

91. The main indicator for progress towards this Goal is the reduction of the unemployment rate among 15- to 24-year-olds for each sex and in total.

In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technology (ICT)

92. The main indicator for progress towards this Goal is:

- (a) Number of telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 inhabitants;
- (b) Number of personal computers in use and Internet users per 100 inhabitants.

93. Information and communications technology (ICT) can go a long way in enhancing capacity-building and knowledge in the water domain. According to the *World Water Development Report*, at present there are about 45,000 courses available internationally for online learning, including 30 in hydrology and water resources.

94. The main related challenges identified in the World Water Assessment Programme include: water and cities; meeting basic needs; valuing water; governing water; securing the food supply; and securing the knowledge base.

95. There is an urgent need for action, but all too often water and sanitation are overlooked in the global development agenda, despite being consistently cited as top priorities by communities themselves. Total global investments in water and sanitation would need to be doubled to meet the Millennium Development Goal targets of halving the proportion of people living without water and sanitation by 2015.

96. Members and partners of UN-Water address global water and sanitation problems by: undertaking projects to support national efforts to set up and manage water and sanitation systems, particularly in countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific region, and communicating and advocating for policymakers, policy-shapers and development practitioners to adopt a more integrated approach to development that recognizes how water and sanitation are vital to poverty reduction.

97. In rural areas the most common technologies that members and partners of UN-Water recommend to national partners are hand-dug wells, tubewells or boreholes that reach groundwater resources. Where possible, the rehabilitation of existing wells that have fallen into disrepair is recommended, as it is more cost-effective than the construction of new wells. The wells are hygienically sealed and fitted with appropriate pumps that the communities are trained to maintain and service themselves, with help from engineers available for serious problems.

98. Where groundwater is inaccessible or in short supply, rainwater harvesting can be a viable alternative or supplementary source. Rainwater is generally collected from roofs, from where it is filtered and stored in tanks. In mountainous areas, springs can be protected and gravity flow systems are used to pipe water downhill to a network of storage tanks and tapstands.

99. In urban areas where there are existing piped water supplies, members and partners of UN-Water and their counterpart organizations often help national efforts to negotiate with local governments or water suppliers to extend the network into their areas and construct communal tapstands that can be managed by the communities themselves.

100. Once communities have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education, they can escape the water and sanitation poverty trap. Freed from the time-consuming chore of water collection and the misery of water-related disease, communities are better able to channel their time and energy into more productive activities and simple enjoyment of life. Women have more time to work to earn money, grow food and cook and care for their children, which boosts households' income, nutrition and health. Children have more time to help with domestic tasks or dedicate to their schooling, which improves their long-term prospects.

101. In addition, the stress on household finances may be lessened owing to a reduced need for medical care for water-related diseases. Families also report lower stress levels, increased status and self-esteem and increased ability to observe religious rites and customs.

V. The way forward

102. The final year of the “Water for Life” decade coincides with 2015, the milestone year for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It is now clear that the present midterm review provides policymakers and policy-shapers in Member States with an opportunity to look beyond 2015 and to consider the deprived populations who were not covered by the Millennium Development Goals and those who were left out in countries that fell short of meeting the Goals.

103. Whatever the outcome of the 2010 summit on the Millennium Development Goals and the subsequent development of goals on poverty reduction adopted by the international community, Member States should consider specific, more ambitious goals for water and sanitation, goals that accommodate not only those deprived under the current goals, but also provide complete access to water and sanitation for all as one of the most economical, humane and effective means towards the achievement of broader development goals.

104. In setting goals for the midterm review of the Water Decade, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the progress achieved towards the Millennium Development Goals, and what is needed to accelerate that progress, but what additional measures should be taken to realize the holistic aspirations of the entire Millennium Declaration, which remain valid but unrealized a decade later.
