

A Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Water for Asian Cities (WAC) Programme

“Increasing Capacity for Local Actions” to meet Water and Sanitation MDGs in Asia and the Pacific

UN-HABITAT in partnership with Streams of Knowledge, Manila organized a Session on “Increasing Capacity for Local Actions” on 4th December 2007 during the 1st Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Beppu, Japan. The Session was organized in support of Key Results Area (KRA-II). The major thrust of KRA-II is to provide universal access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation to all by focusing on (i) strengthening decentralization with empowerment; (ii) promoting partnership between local authorities, civil society (NGOs and community-based groups) and different service providers (public and private); and (iii) capacity development as an important area of investment. The key objectives of the Session were:

- To drive home the main messages of KRA-II
- To generate better understanding and support for the KRA-II messages
- To launch the capacity building hubs initiative for future exchange of information and knowledge and capacity building for implementation.

The focus of the Session remained on capacity development of local authorities, utilities and communities with the purpose of providing people with knowledge to assist them in making informed

choices through development of appropriate technology, training modules, resources databases, conducting action research and making policy recommendations. There was an emphasis on functional and financial decentralization for empowering local authorities and strengthening the role of civil society self-help groups, resident welfare associations and communities at large. One of the key recommendations was the partnership approach between local authorities, civil society and various service providers. In pursuing various goals for strengthening local capacities, the involvement of women with a gender balanced approach was considered quite necessary, besides adopting a holistic approach to meet the needs of various sectors. There was an emphasis on mobilizing political will to improve accountability and aligning international, national and local efforts and also build sector wide transformation. National initiatives in countries like Lao PDR are supporting community based schemes and promoting private sector participation.

The major outcome of the KRA-II Session was the need to enhance learning and to replicate and scale up local actions for sustainable improvement in the water and sanitation sector for enhancing efficiency of the utilities, local authorities as well as the commu-

nities to reach the last mile with the purpose of increasing the coverage, with special emphasis on the poor. The main messages of the session were:

- Strengthening decentralization with empowerment;
- Promoting partnership between local authorities, civil society and different service providers;
- Capacity development of local authorities, utilities and communities.

The Session was participated by H.E. Saif-ud-Din Soz, Minister, Water Resources, Govt. of India; Mr. Lito Atienza, Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, Manila; Dr. S.A. Hashim, President, India Water Partnership; Dr. Rivka Kfir, Streams of Knowledge; Dr. Somphone Dethoudom, Director General, MCTPC, Govt. of Lao PDR; Mr. Zenkichi Kojima, Mayor of Shizuoka City, Japan; Dr. Sara Ahmed, Chairperson, Gender Water Alliance; Mr. Henry Northover, Water Aid; Prof. Tetsuro Tsujimoto, Professor, Nagoya University; Prof. Komatsu, Kyushu University; Mr. Toshiyasu Noda, Director, ROAP, UN-HABITAT, Japan; Mr. Andre Dzikus, UN-HABITAT Nairobi; Ms. Rory Villaluna, Streams of Knowledge and Ms. Mari Christine, UN-HABITAT Goodwill Ambassador in Japan.



Dr. Anna K. Tibajuka
Executive Director

UN-HABITAT at the High Level Segment of the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali stated that “It is no coincidence that climate change has emerged at the forefront of international debate precisely at the same time and virtually at the same pace, as the world becomes urbanized. This is because urbanization brings about irreversible changes in our production and consumption patterns. How we plan, manage and live in our growing cities determines, to a large extent, the pace of global warming. We are convinced that climate change issues must be tackled within a broader framework of sustainable housing and urban development. This broader framework includes a holistic approach to participatory governance, urban environmental planning and management. It requires new paradigm shifts in the critical areas of transport, energy, water & waste management.”

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First Asia-Pacific Water Summit Concluded in Japan

The Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF) was launched in September 2006 for the purpose of bringing water to the forefront of the political agenda. The first phase of the APWF's activity has focused on the three priority themes identified in the regional document for the 4th World Water Forum as the initial steps towards sustainable development and economic growth: water financing, water-related disaster management, and water for development and ecosystems. The APWF has a matrix structure centered on three Priority Themes and five cross-cutting Key Result Areas (KRAs).

A number of highly recognized institutions from the region have committed to support the APWF as "lead organizations", responsible for identifying strategies and initiating solutions to achieve progress under each of the Priority Themes. These organizations include ADB, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UN-ESCAP, PUB Singapore, SOK and JWF.

In order to address the water issues in the region, the Asia-Pacific Water Forum together with its lead partner organizations organized the 1st Asia-Pacific Water Summit (APWS) in Beppu, Japan from 3-4 December 2007. The outcomes and key messages from the Summit are strong, tangible and wide-ranging. The key messages of the Summit in pursuance of the Millennium Development Goals relating to water and sanitation were to:

1. Reduce by half number of people who do not have access to basic sanitation in the Asian region by 2015 and aim to reduce that number to zero by 2025, through the adoption of new and innovative sanitation systems that are not as water reliant as current methods;
2. Accord the highest priority to water and sanitation in the economic and development plans and agendas of all Asian countries and to increase substantially the allocation of resources to the water and sanitation sectors;

3. Improve governance, efficiency, transparency and equity in all aspects related to the management of water, particularly as it impacts on poor communities and to recognise that while women are particularly vulnerable, they are also resilient and entrepreneurial, hence, should be empowered in all water-related activities; and

4. Take urgent and effective action to prevent and reduce the risks of flood, drought and other water-related disasters and to bring timely relief and assistance to their victims.

The Summit was attended by 10 Heads of State and Government, 31 Ministers, and representatives from over 36 Asia-Pacific countries, in a bid to mobilize the political will and commitment required to put water higher up in the region's national agendas. The challenges and opportunities being faced by the Asian region were discussed during the Summit. The 1st APWS provided an unprecedented opportunity to recognize the central role that water plays for our quality of life and the wellbeing of future generations. The Summit was opened on 3rd December 2007 with an opening statement by Mr. Yashiro Mori, former Prime Minister of Japan, and the Chair of the Summit's Steering Committee and His Imperial Highness, the Crown Prince of Japan set the stage with his inspiring remarks, Mr. Fukuda, the Prime Minister of Japan, addressed the delegates and described how three main water problems were affecting the Asia-Pacific region: the lack of access to water and sanitation, water-related disasters, and the need to secure water for agriculture. He concluded by stating that IWRM is the solution to these problems, and added that water would be on the agenda of next years' G8 Summit.

Besides organizing a Session on Increasing Capacity for Local Actions, UN-HABITAT also put up an Exhibition with a focus on various activities being implemented under Water for Asian Cities and MEK-WATSAN Programmes.

Release of UN-HABITAT - ADB Joint Publication during Japan Summit



Ms. Mari Chirstine, UN-HABITAT Goodwill Ambassador in Japan at the Press Conference for the release of the publication

UN-HABITAT in partnership with Asian Development Bank has launched a joint publication on "Local Actions for Sustainable Development on Water and Sanitation in Asia-Pacific Region" during the Press Conference on 4th December 2007 at the Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Japan. The Press Conference was addressed by Mr. Toshiyasu Noda and Mr. Andre Dzikus of UN-HABITAT and Mr. Woonchung Um of Asian Development Bank.

UN-HABITAT has brought out this publication in support of its 'Vision 2020' on the 'Delivery of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on Water and Sanitation in the Asia-Pacific Region', which articulated the principle of "Policy as Practice" despite varying conditions and challenges in the region. The publication supports the initiatives of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum for universal access to safe drinking water & basic sanitation for all.

The publication is aimed at supporting the country governments of the region in achieving their localized MDGs relating to water and sanitation by sharing such solutions that can be easily replicated, scaled up and sustainable besides being cost-effective and innovative. It brings forward the proven practices in different parts of the region, which are pro-poor, appropriate, affordable culturally acceptable and extremely useful to the user communities.

UN-HABITAT Participates in the Launch of IYS 2008 in Asia-Pacific Region

From the small island States in the Pacific Ocean to the countries of the Himalayan plateau, Asia-Pacific leaders committed themselves to tackle the region's severe sanitation crisis. Although one out of five people in the region do not have access to safe drinking water, half of the population in the Asia-Pacific region, equating to a staggering 1.6 billion people, are still without adequate sanitation.

The Regional Launch of the International Year of Sanitation 2008 was organised by JBIC, UN-ESCAP, UNDESA, UNICEF, WHO in cooperation with UN-HABITAT and ADB on 4th December 2007. At the Regional Launch of the International Year of Sanitation 2008, His Royal Highness Prince Willem Alexander of The Netherlands, Chairperson of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, stressed that "access to basic sanitation and water

supply, and the practice of hygienic behaviors, are all necessary for the health and well being of the population and are necessary for people to live in dignity and safety".

Meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of reducing by half the number of people without basic sanitation by the year 2015 would require providing sanitation services to 100 million people every year. Participants to the Asia-Pacific Water Summit called upon Governments to take the necessary steps to achieve the MDG target for sanitation, including improving the level of investment in sanitation and hygiene promotion while maintaining adequate investments in domestic water supply.

The Government of Japan has been specifically requested to include sanitation on the agenda of the 2008 Hokkaido Toyako G8 Summit. In the closing cere-

mony of the Summit, the Chair of the 1st Asia-Pacific Water Summit, Mr. Yoshiro Mori, highlighted the political commitments made during the Summit towards improving the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region through providing better access to safe water and adequate sanitation.

Mr. Andre Dzikus, Chief, WSS II, UN-HABITAT, Chaired a Session on Sanitation and the Private Sector. During the Session, the keynote speech on "Financing Sanitation – Looking for New Approaches" delivered by Ms. Barbara Evans, EASAN Conference Director. Also a panel discussion on "Sanitation as Investment opportunities: Perspectives of the Private Sector" was conducted which, inter alia, was participated by Ms. Clarissa Brocklehurst; Dr. K.E. Seetharam, ADB; Mr. Jack Sim, World Toilet Organisation; and Mr. G Payne of U.K.

Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) Steering Group Meet in New Delhi

On the occasion of the World Toilet Summit 2007 held in New Delhi, the 4th Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) Steering Group Meeting was held in New Delhi from 3-4 November 2007. SuSanA is a network of more than seventy five International agencies in order to contribute within and beyond the International Year of Sanitation 2008 to the promotion and up scaling of sustainable sanitation through its thirteen different working groups.

Motivated by the UN's decision to declare 2008 as International Year of Sanitation (IYS), a core group of organisations active in the field of sanitation took the initiative to form a task force to support the IYS. The overall goal of the SuSanA is to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs by promoting sanitation systems which are taking into consideration all aspects of sustainability.

The MDGs and the UN's "International Year of Sanitation 2008" are highly appreciated by the "Sustainable Sanita-

tion Alliance" as they help push sanitation high up in the political agenda. The main focus of the work of the "Sustainable Sanitation Alliance" is to promote the implementation of sustainable sanitation systems in large scale of water and sanitation programmes, in line with the strategies proposed e.g. by WHO, UNDP-PEP, UNSGAB and UNESCO.

In January 2007, a first meeting resulted in a large number of commitments by the participants from various organisations and in drawing up a first draft of a "joint road map for the promotion of sustainable sanitation in IYS 2008".

During a second meeting which took place mid April, the goal and the objectives of this global competence network were clarified and the joint road map was reviewed. In order to have a joint label for the planned activities and to be able to align with other potential initiatives, the group formed the "Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA)".

The main focus of the meeting was the detailed discussion on the activities of the joint roadmap. Several Working group meetings was held prior to the meetings.

UN-HABITAT as one of the active member of SuSanA also shared its programme on Sanitation in Asian Region and its role in promotion and up-scaling of Sustainable Sanitation in Asia. The meeting also discussed the World Sanitation Fund Forum (WSFF) to be held in November 4 to 6 2008 in Venetian Macao in combination with the World Toilet Summit. The Fund Forum is intended to serve as a global sanitation platform and marketplace in bringing together the demand (recipient countries) and supply (donors) side.

The next and 5th SuSanA steering group meeting will take place in Durban, South Africa on February 16th and 17th 2008 attached to the AfricaSan conference on February 18th to 20th 2007. The meeting will be hosted by the Water and Research Commission, South Africa.

Capacity Development Workshop for Journalists from Central Asian Countries

An International Workshop on Capacity Development for Water Journalists was organised by UN-HABITAT in cooperation with the United Nations University UNW-DPC (Bonn, Germany), and the Regional Centre for Urban Water Management (under the auspices of UNESCO) in Tehran.

Mr. Parviz Fattah, Iran's Energy Minister responsible for water and waste water management inaugurated the three-day Capacity Development Workshop for Asian Water Journalists in Tehran from 26-28 November 2007. The minister said that his country will be investing US\$ 4 billion annually in the next 10 years in water supply, distribution and treatment.

A total of 30 Journalists from the region participated in this workshop. 10 journalists from electronic and print media joined the workshop from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, China, India, Lao PDR and Nepal. From Iran 16 journalists participated.

The main themes covered included: Engaging media on sanitation, the impacts of media on water and environ-



ment issues in Iran; Drinking water and sanitation issues in Asian countries and journalists as partners to find the solutions. The technical field visit included the Jalalieh Water Treatment Plant, Saad-Abad National Water Museum, Iranian National Broadcasting, and oldest newspaper in Tehran, Ettela'at company, which publishes stories on water and environment regularly. Journalists together with civil society activism are forcing reform in the water sector in various countries so that it becomes more efficient, transparent and accountable to water consumers. The

providers also have to invest more money in safe provision of water and sanitation for the poor in the slums of Asia, was the message in many presentations and discussions. Without adequate and safe water and sanitation many of the other UN Millennium Development Goals will not be reached.

This workshop was the third regional media capacity building of the Water for Asian Cities Programme of UN-HABITAT to help form a regional media network in Asia. Earlier workshops were held in New Delhi and Singapore.

Sanitation Challenge of Indonesia

Sanitation presents one of the most significant service delivery challenges associated with poverty reduction in Indonesia. Currently 73% of urban households are estimated to have on-site sanitation, mostly in the form of septic tanks that are not built properly or functioning effectively. From an institutional perspective, implementation of sanitation is currently fragmented between households, private sectors and various government agencies.

Consequently responsibilities are ambiguous with no lead agency responsible for all sanitation services. Water and sanitation Policy and Action Planning (WASPOLA) program funded by Govt. of Indonesia (GOI) supported by

AusAID has been developing policy and programs for both community and institutionally managed water supply and environmental services (WSES). Ministry of Public Works has also developed National Action Plan for environmental sanitation. Sanitation by Communities (Sanimas) has demonstrated options for solving sanitation problem at the community or neighbourhood level. It has provided a model to show low-income urban communities can develop & manage their own neighbourhood sanitation. Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) also has been successfully implemented to solve sanitation problems in the rural area. This program envisaged the approach in triggering behaviour

change. A Sanitation Working Group (SanWG) is currently being formed by GOI and led by Ministry of National Development Planning which consists of inter-ministerial group of line and central ministries. The formation of this group is a reflection of the government's increased focus on improving sanitation.

Through Indonesia Sanitation Development Program (ISSDP), SanWGs were also formed in six pilot cities. The local SanWGs aimed to solve their city's sanitation problems through comprehensive solution. They developed city-wide sanitation strategies based on sanitation mapping & environmental & health risk assessment which were developed by them.

Community Led Total Sanitation Taking Off in Cambodia

Slaeng Village, about 60 kilometres southwest of the capital Phnom Penh, has become a role model to other villages in Cambodia. It was declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) in June 2006 after all of its 92 households built toilets themselves following an ignition and motivation process of the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach started in September 2005. It is among the first few villages to reach total sanitation in Cambodia, a country with the lowest sanitation coverage in Asia. Mr Chan Ngom, the village chief, said it was embarrassing to be told by others how to properly dispose of your body waste when it should be your own

problem. "Before, we were so used to defecating outdoors without realizing that tons of feces were generated in our village," Mr. Chan said. "We did not know its consequences" But now, "we are very excited to have our latrines. Mine is almost full and I'm ready to dig a new one," he said. Mr. Chan spent 10,000 riels (USD 2.50) to build his first latrine.

Slaeng village has inspired its neighbour – Prey Proh village – which has since implemented CLTS and reached ODF status in June 2007. The Community Led Total Sanitation was piloted by the Ministry of Rural Develop-

ment in 2005. As of November 2007, 200 villages have implemented this innovative approach and more than 60 villages have been declared Open Defecation Free.



International Seminar on Sustainable Urban Catchment Management in China

A three days international seminar on sustainable urban catchment management was organized by UN-HABITAT in partnership with Nanjing University with the support of Nanjing Construction Commission, Nanjing Water Resources Bureau, Nanjing Urban Construction Investment Holding (Group) Co., Ltd and Nanjing Institute of geography and Limnology.

Participants from China, India, Lao PDR, Vietnam, Nepal, Indonesia and Australia attended the seminar. Representatives of Asian Development Bank, the partner of Water for Asian Cities Programme, also participated in the seminar. Mr. Andre Dzikus, the Chief of Water and Sanitation Section II, UN-HABITAT and Mr. Zhang Xuyu, the Assistant President of Nanjing University inaugurated the seminar.

The key objectives of the seminar were to explore the right approaches, policies, regulations on urban catchment management and to exchange the experience on urban catchment management. The goal of Urban Catchment Management is to improve the quality of life through equitable and sustainable use of water for the benefit of all users.



Altogether, 18 presentations were made by experts during the seminar. The presentations included scientific research and case studies. Following issues were addressed during the seminar:

- Harmonious inter linkage between water and land use, environmental concerns and human activities; and
- Development of partnership among the stakeholders including government agencies, non-government organisations and local communities.

- Striking a sustainable balance between utilization & protection of water;

A site visit to Nanjing Qinhuai River Environment Improvement Project, partly financed by Asian Development Bank was undertaken. Participants commended the innovative approaches of the project and expressed their keenness to use the experience in their own countries. The seminar provided opportunity to exchange the experiences among the participants to promote urban catchment management in the region.

Sanitation Innovations from Grassroots to Policy levels in Vietnam

Mrs. Luyen and her two young daughters are struggling farmers who earn US\$250, during a successful harvest year. Each evening, her family gathers for dinner to exchange stories and listen to a very old radio. In the past, their enjoyment of the evening meal was often disturbed by a strong smell coming from their unhygienic latrine in the backyard. The smell was the source of contention between her family and the neighbors, but no one had taken the initiative to improve the situation. This changed when Xuan Vinh Commune agreed to collaborate with the supporting organization, International Development Enterprises, to implement a rural sanitation program. Local entrepreneur masons were trained to offer affordable sanitation options to households. After attending several meetings, Mrs. Luyen became convinced that a new latrine would be beneficial to her family. Borrowing 560,000 Dong (US\$35) from a local cooperative, she had a hygienic double vault latrine constructed. After it was

completed, Mrs. Luyen's neighbors began whispering, "If Mrs. Luyen can afford a hygienic latrine, then all households in this village should be able to have one by the end of this year." The quarrels caused by the latrine odor became just a story about the bad old days.

Another innovation, the Public Private Partnership Handwashing Initiative builds upon similarly fast growing household demand for improved sanitation throughout Vietnam. This is a major national effort to improve the hygienic practice of hand washing with soap to improve health outcomes for women and children under five. The program combines the strength of the Vietnam's strong health and education systems with the marketing expertise of the private sector.

Behavior change is promoted through communicating hand washing messages via the mass media, health workers, and community members as well as marketing agencies.

Widening the focus even further, innovation is needed at policy level too. With Vietnam's rapid growth, there is an increasing need to bring together local and national initiatives under one umbrella strategy for sanitation that also spans sub-sectors and physical boundaries.

A larger and more integrated view of sanitation that covers solid wastes, agricultural and craft industry wastes as well as the safe disposal of human excreta is needed. As a result, since 2006, four Ministries and a coalition of partners are developing plans for such an approach through development of a Unified Sanitation Strategy and Action Plan. UN-HABITAT is also involved in supporting several governmental initiatives. These and a host of other necessary innovations, on all levels, will help Vietnam ensure that it is on track towards meeting its sanitation related Millennium Development Goals and ever widening sanitation needs.

Sanitation among the National Priorities and Development Goals of Lao PDR

National Growth and Poverty Eradication Program (NGPES) is the strategic framework under which all of the Lao Government's future growth and poverty eradication programmes are being developed and implemented with the long-term development objective of freeing the country from the status of least-developed country (LDC) by 2020. Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) targets are included under the Health Sector. The NGPES poverty eradication objectives are in line with the country's commitment to achieve the MDG as well as the Brussels LDC Action Plan.

The current Sixth National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) is a 5-year plan which plays a crucial role in achieving the overall targets outlined in the NSED plan. The improvement of the social situation as reflected in the social indicators (which include WSS targets and indicators) has always been in the centre of the NSEDPs. Through the

5-year NSEDP, the Government translates these into specific targets and objectives and identifies strategic programmes and priorities by sector to achieve them.

The role of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) Sector strategy is to set objectives and identify the means to attain goals that comply with the National Policy outlined by the Party and the Government, particularly those policies aimed at reducing poverty and promoting activities that will allow Lao to graduate from the ranks of least developed countries by 2020. The strategy shall be instrumental in attaining target coverage for Rural Water Supply and Environmental Health provisions and for these provisions to be sustainable in the long-term. The strategy also supports the Demand Responsive Approach of UN-HABITAT and informed choice process, which expects to promote community ownership of water and environmental

health provisions whilst providing the community with the skills required to operate and maintain their services in a sustainable manner.

Most significant advances in the field of water and sanitation are:

1. WSS service provision has been progressively expanded in small towns of Lao PDR.
2. The RWSS Sector Strategy has been refined in June 2004.
3. WSS have been included under health sector as one amongst four main priority sectors identified in the NGPES.

Lao People's Democratic Republic is an ethnically diverse country. There is currently a relatively small population of around 5.62 million, and approximately 80% of the total population lives in rural areas with difficult roads to access. There is a low population density in urban and

rural areas, presenting a major challenge for the provision of equitable and sustainable sanitation infrastructure and it also requires high investment.

Sanitation coverage still remains low, particularly in rural remote areas. National Policy on Sanitation is not yet in place despite sanitation being the national priority and among the development goals of Lao PDR. From the recent MOH's MIC Survey in 2006, figures on improved sanitation facilities reveal:-

- 83.4% coverage in urban areas
- 38.4% in rural with road access
- Only 15.7% in rural without road access areas
- 98.3% of the richest quintile uses improved sanitation facilities. Only 7.6% of the poorest quintile uses them.
- Residents of the South are much less likely than others to use improved facilities.

While the sanitation coverage in rural areas is critically low, school sanitation also one of the government's challenges to be addressed. One of the main challenges for the school sanitation programme is to reach over 8,000 schools in Lao PDR regarding the importance of hygiene promotion. This is not easy when 20 percent of the population is concentrated in urban areas and the country is multi-cultural with 47 ethnic minorities. In 2003-2004, only 12% of over 8,000 schools have been provided with clean water and latrines. The GOL have made various efforts to estimate the magnitude of the improvement of its citizen's health in order to contribute to the economic growth and improve quality of life.

One example on the GOL response to the challenge of producing IEC materials for 47 ethnic groups (covering 120 sub-groups) with a corresponding number of different languages (often only oral with no script) and many of whom do not speak the national Lao language - particularly women and girl, the RWSS agencies in Lao PDR are developing and

piloting innovative IEC materials and communications systems. The process involves using communities' local knowledge and practice to design their own IEC materials and active participation by all concerned stakeholders including the private sector.

One of the key activities under the school sanitation programme is teacher training. This is actively carried out by the Ministry of Education in close collaboration with the Centre of Environmental Health and Water Supply (Nam Saat Central) under the Ministry of Health. Under the School Sanitation Programme (here school sanitation refers to effective use of latrines and water facilities), water supply schemes were provided and latrines built in many schools.

The earlier focus was mainly on easily accessible areas, usually along main roads. The reality, however, is that some 80 percent of Lao school children live in rural, remote and often inaccessible areas. Thus in 1994, the Lao Government decided to review its past practices and prepared a Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) Sector Strategy to show a new path towards sustainable development.

The Nam Saat, the national agency responsible for the rural water supply and sanitation sector took the lead in the preparation of the RWSS Sector Strategy that adequately covers some key principles for School Sanitation Programme of Lao PDR.

Hygiene Promotion and School Sanitation

The interesting aspects of the hygiene promotion and school sanitation programme in Lao PDR are:-

- The participatory process of involving communities on designing their own materials. Community-designed hygiene promotion material enables local promotion to surrounding villages within, e.g. 5-10 km radius. All people within surrounding villages will recognize the picture of the family. This will also help to enable informal dialogue,

particularly for illiterate people. Messages described by the communities are printed in their own language.

- The participatory learning approach to school sanitation creates a child friendly and health promoting environments in schools. 'Learning with Joy' process has adopted child-to-child and child-to-adult approaches in teaching. Children learn better when they participate and talk.

The GOL is working towards finding appropriate ways of providing and scaling up improved sanitation infrastructure and services, including:-

- giving information and choice to people about different latrine options
- improving the design of household and communal septic tanks
- developing hygiene promotion materials designed by remote ethnic groups for use in their local communities.
- mapping of sanitation facilities in major cities, such as Luang Prabang and in some schools in Vientiane Capital City
- improving school sanitation facilities and wastewater treatment using septic tanks and drain fields.

GOL have also developed a health promotion website under the National Centre for Environmental Hygiene and Water Supply of the MoH, which is part of an on-going process of improving access to hygiene and sanitation information for our people.

Under the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, a project to encourage school children in urban areas to learn about geographical information systems (GIS) to map and find ways to improve their school latrine facilities is currently being implemented. Under this project, the GOL will also be looking at culturally acceptable ways of creating demand for improved sanitation services through social marketing and awareness raising campaigns.

WAC Programme in Lao PDR

Building Capacity for NCRWSSP in Lao PDR

The Northern and Central Regions Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project (NCRWSSSP) is a collaborative project co-financed by ADB, NORAD, OPEC and UN-HABITAT and being executed by the Department of Housing and Urban Planning of the Ministry of Public Work and Transport, Lao PDR. UN-HABITAT and the Government of Lao PDR have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation under the Water for Asian Cities (WAC) Programme for providing capacity building support to the NCRWSSP. The Project started in the beginning of 2006 and is expected to complete by 2010.

The specific objectives of the Project are to (i) improve the quality, reliability, and sustainability of water supply services in 12 selected small towns in Northern and Central regions, and (ii) improve the environmental conditions in these small towns. These objectives will be achieved by: (i) constructing new optimally sized water supply systems using appropriate technologies, (ii) rehabilitating/improving selected urban facilities, (iii) enhancing public hygiene awareness and motivating public participation in the village improvement initiatives, (iv) strengthening the sector planning, managing, and regulating capacity/

and (v) promoting the private sector's participation in water supply services.

The Technical Assistance of UN-HABITAT covers three main components: Component 1: Water Quality and Quantity Assessment, and Settlement, Community and Social Mapping; Component 2: Capacity building of the Community Action Teams (CATs), and the Community Water Supply and Sanitation Units (WATSANs); and Component 3: Capacity Building of the Provincial Branch of Nam Papa (Water Supply Enterprise).

In implementing the first Component, UN-HABITAT is providing training to technical staff of 8 provincial Nam Papa Branches in assessing and monitoring of water quality and quantity focusing on all potential spring and stream sources for each town. Water quality test kits including instruction manuals have been provided to each provincial Nam Papa concerned during the workshop on Water Quality Assessment and Flow Measurement of Small Streams held in Luang Prabang.

As regards social and community mapping of the 12 towns, UN-HABITAT organized a workshop on Settlement, Community and Social Mapping held in

Oudomxay province. The workshop brought together the personnel of the NCRWSSP Coordination Unit (PCU) and the Project Implementing Unit (PIU) of each target province to train them on the use of satellite imageries for mapping so that they could participate effectively in the social mapping to be conducted in 12 target towns of the Northern and Central regions. Since then UN-HABITAT has engaged international and local experts to work on satellite imageries interpretation, digitization and conduct socio-economic survey.

In addition to basic maps showing the physical infrastructure of the towns, maps showing particular social features are now complete for (i) Khoun, (ii) Nan, (iii) Khenethao, (iv) Houn, (v) Sing, (vi) Xanakham, and (vii) Namor towns.

These digitized maps will be used as baseline maps for future post evaluation of the project:

- showing locations of poor households
- showing locations of households of different ethnic group
- showing locations of households with different types of latrines
- showing locations of households led by women
- showing locations of houses of different types.

Participation, awareness and community actions (PACA) related activities, with the appointment of the UN-HABITAT media relations and communications specialist in June 2007, are in full swing. WATSAN Groups have been established in the three core sub-project towns, as have the community action teams (CATs) in each of the three PIUs by UN-HABITAT community development officers and socio-economic specialist.



Launch of Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting in Schools of Madhya Pradesh

Urban areas of Madhya Pradesh like other populous cities of the country are facing similar problems. To meet the challenges of the water scarcity, Government of Madhya Pradesh has made roof top rain water harvesting mandatory for all buildings having plot size more than 250 sq. mt. in municipal areas and even provided rebate on the annual property tax for the year in which the construction of rainwater harvesting facilities has been completed. Despite the provision of this incentive, compliance of the orders is not satisfactory.

Under this backdrop, UN-HABITAT and the directorate of Urban Administration and Development have jointly prepared a policy paper on sustainable measures for consultations with Municipal Corporations. It was felt that there is a necessity of awareness generation and convergence of the efforts of various agencies for the water conservation. To address this issue, UN-HABITAT in collaboration with Coca Cola India and Lake Conservation Authority of Madhya Pradesh has

initiated the programme for promotion of roof rainwater harvesting through the involvement of schools in Madhya Pradesh under the Water for Asian Cities Programme.

The objective of the programme is to improve the water supply and sanitation situations in the selected schools in 4 cities of Madhya Pradesh through rainwater harvesting (RWH); demonstrating the benefits of rooftop RWH so as to encourage installation of household rooftop RWH systems in the community; and promoting Human Value based Water Sanitation Hygiene Education (HVWSHE).

Mrs. Alka Upadhyaya, Secretary, Department of Health, GoMP launched the programme in Hamidia Higher Secondary School on 20th November 2007. Mr. Durgesh Telang, Head of Coca Cola, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat and Mr. Dharendra Chautharvedi, District Educa-

tion Officer, Department of Education, GoMP and Dr. Kulwant Singh, Chief Technical Advisor, WAC Programme, UN-HABITAT were present on the occasion. The programme was attended by 600 students, 100 Principals and teachers from various schools in Bhopal and Government Officials from Department of Housing Development, Lake Conservation Authority and Department of School Education. During the launch the foundation stone was laid at the Roof Top Rain Water Harvesting storage tank site.



Introducing HVWSHE in Cambodian Schools

UN-HABITAT in partnership with Cooperation for a Sustainable Cambodian Society (CSCS), a local NGO, with extensive experience in delivering community based training projects to schools, have taken up a project on water, sanitation and hygiene related education in selected Cambodian schools.

The Royal Government of Cambodia considers both the education and health sectors as pillars of its strategy for reducing poverty. The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport of the Government of Cambodia considers water and sanitation as one of the key issues that need to be addressed in schools. The Cambodian Human Development report for 2007 indicates that limited water resources and poor sanitation are still a major concern in Cambodian schools as well as the surrounding communities. In order to address these appalling condi-

tions in Cambodia's water and sanitation situation, only investment in infrastructural development is not good enough. Strategic interventions need to be made to address these problems through Human Values-based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (HVWSHE).

Water education is considered by UN-HABITAT as a strategic entry point to bringing about positive attitudinal changes among both water consumers and providers, and in the longer term, can help develop a new water use ethic in society. Since it was launched in Africa after a proposal for introducing water education in participating African cities was presented to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency for funding support, it has made significant strides & has been instrumental in bringing about positive developments in the water and sanitation sector.

To initiate advocacy and to ensure behavioural change among the global population, HVWSHE, has been an integral part of UN-HABITAT's Water for Asian & African Cities Programmes. This initiative widens the scope of the programme and introduces water education in participating cities with a view to develop new water-use ethics and to minimize the current water wastage in cities through promotion of water education. The following are the major objectives of the Project in Cambodia: (1) Enhance better understanding of HVWSHE in Cambodia; (2) Develop training guidebooks for HVWSHE; (3) Provide platform for exchanging domestic and international experience on HVWSHE; (4) Enhance the capacity of teachers to conduct HVWSHE; & (5) Establish cooperation with the Royal University of Phnom Penh to introduce HVWSHE within the University's Environmental department.

Improved Sanitation dignified Squatter's life in Bharatpur, Nepal

"It's a shame to defecate in open field but we now have toilets at our houses", said Suresh Pariyaar, a resident of Nagarban Community in Bharatpur Municipality. This is one of the ten communities where toilets are being constructed under 'Water, Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene Improvement (WESI) Programme' supported by UN-HABITAT Water for Asian Cities Programme Nepal, Water Aid Nepal and Bharatpur Municipality and implemented by LUMANTI.

More than 50 percent people in these communities didn't have toilets at their home and 25 percents have temporary facility. Open defecation was rampant in the past. Hence, diarrhoea was very common among the children and community people were infested with parasitic worms. In addition, going to the nearby

forest for defecation was not safe due to wild animals.

"Private toilet has made relieving comfortable and safe, specially for women and children", said Samjhana Gautam, a member of the User's Committee at Narayani Path Community. She had to walk to the public toilet 20 minutes from her house everyday. She has bitter experience of eating and drinking less, when she suffered from diarrhoea. According to her, she constructed her own toilet with a loan from the saving and credit group in her community. Fifteen private toilets have already been constructed in that community and within a year all 82 houses in the community will get this facility.

It has been targeted to provide 100 percent toilet facility throughout in the ten communities with construction of more



than 700 toilets within a year. 183 pit latrines have already been constructed where as 117 are under construction. The programme is also providing subsidy for the toilet construction to the community people. Likewise, the various health and hygiene training and awareness raising programmes are also gradually changing their toilet habits and they have become more conscious about their health.

Khokana making headway for a clean village in Nepal

The traditionally important ponds which are also the landmark for Khokana have got a facelift after UN-HABITAT Water for Asian Cities Programme Nepal supported LUMANTI and Users Committee in Khokana to rehabilitate and recharge them. A branch canal of 800 m length has been diverted from the historic irrigation canal to recharge the six ponds in the settlement. "There are various religious activities associated with these culturally significant ponds in Khokana. Revival of the ponds has conserved religious activities, too", said Mr. Madan Krishna Dangol, Chairperson of Users Committee. To add to the joys of people, the newly constructed canal also passes through the agricultural fields benefiting many farmers in the locality. "Villagers are much excited as they are privileged with irrigation facility after two decades. It will add greenery in their farmland and they are planning to initiate fishery and cultivation throughout the year", added Mr. Dangol. Chandra Lal Dangol, resident of Khokana said, "Farmlands were cultivated only during monsoon in the

past years. Now, we can plant seasonal vegetables even during dry season, too. Hence, irrigation canal will help us in increasing our productivity in coming days."

"I have noticed the rise in water level in the existing dug-wells after the ponds have been recharged", said Shanti Dangol, resident of Khokana. Many dug-wells in the settlement have been rehabilitated which is used by the locals for various non-potable purposes which has greatly helped them to cope with the water scarcity.

Khokana has also made a progressive stride towards improving the sanitation condition in their village. A small community of 37 houses has constructed a biogas reactor to manage their toilet waste. The biogas reactor is fed with kitchen and animal waste. The gas from the reactor is contributing in energy optimization in this community. Leachate from the digester and grey water from the

households is treated in the reed bed wastewater treatment plant established near the biogas plant. The sludge from the biogas plant is used as fertilizer in the agricultural fields and the treated wastewater is fed into the farmlands.

The storm water drainage system and brick paving in the village has improved the neighbourhood environmental condition greatly. The village has got a cleaner and fresher look and people are happy with the result. Women were brought into the mainstream of the developmental activities.



Little Things to Quench the Thirsty Kathmandu Valley

Gone are the days when Kathmandu valley was replete with water. Today the struggle for water in capital starts with every dawn and people are living with the hope of relief in future. But the problem is pertinent instead. The gap between water supply and demand is very high. Therefore, people have to depend upon ground water and springs as there are no other reliable sources. But unfortunately, these sources rapidly dry up with the commence of dry season. The mega water-supply project, Melamchi, is supposed to solve this problem but it is also far from its completion in spite of the efforts made to facilitate it. Hence, the capital needs to adopt an intermediary solution at present.

There are many rivulets, streams, streamlets and traditional stone spouts in Kathmandu Valley which were neglected with the piped water supply was made available. However, with the inadequate supply and increasing scarcity of water, it has been realized that water from these sources, if tapped and utilized properly, would contribute largely to overcome the water scarcity in the Valley. Water crisis can also be minimized through integrated rainwater harvesting as well as the watershed management. This could also contribute significantly to recharge ground water aquifers.

UN-HABITAT Water for Asian Cities Programme has been promoting various options to meet water demand in urban areas of the country through its partner

organizations. Urban Environment Management Society (UEMS), one of the partners, launched Community Based Safe Drinking Water Bottling Pilot Project Community in Chyasal tole, Lalitpur. Less than half the people in that area did not have piped water supply. So, they had to queue up at the local stone spouts or fetch water from a dug well with poor water quality next to one of the stone spouts to collect water for the daily chores. But now, water from these sources is being tapped, filtered through a bio-sand filter and then chlorinated to make it safe for consumption. Thus treated water is being distributed at a nominal amount of Rs. 3/- for 20 liter. With demand coming from neighbouring communities too, the committee is distributing the water to the requesting households in these communities for Rs. 5 per 20 liters. More than three hundred households in the community benefit from this system. People now have WHO standard drinking water at a nominal price.

NGO Forum for Urban Water and Sanitation (NGOFUWS), another partner, is gearing rooftop rainwater harvesting (RWH) technology through its various activities such as establishment of demonstration sites, raising awareness through various orientation programmes etc. Till date, RWH system has been installed in more than 100 private households and many government as well as institutional buildings in the valley. Sambridha Awas Housing Colony, Kirtipur, with 44 households supporting evicted squatter families

from the Bishnumati Link Road, is one of them. Inhabitants in the colony had to walk a mile to the public tap to fetch a bucket full of water because there were no tap connections in their colony.

But presently, they do not have to go through this ordeal. RWH system installed in their houses collect 40,000 liter of water in an underground tank. Water thus collected is used for the drinking as well as other purposes. The surplus collected water is being used to recharge ground water through two dug wells and a recharge soak pit which significantly contributes for the availability of water in dug well during drying season.

RWH system established at school in Lubhu has benefited students and teachers. The system collects rainwater in a 5000 litre tank and surplus water is passed into a dug well to recharge the ground water. The collected rainwater is filtered before drinking it. This has also encouraged local people to set up RWH system in their houses. The system was installed by Centre for Integrated Urban Development (CIUD) in technical collaboration with NGO Forum.

Such practices of using available sources and tapping rainwater can be adopted by anyone, anywhere to escape from the graver condition of water scarcity. The only need is commitment and action. The residents in Chyasal, Samridha Awas and Lubhu are examples to draw lessons in mitigation of water scarcity.

Fourth Session of the World Urban Forum in Nanjing, China



The fourth session of the World Urban Forum will be held in Nanjing Convention and Exhibition Centre, China from 13-17 October 2008 which will be dedicated to the

launch of new partnerships, revitalized networks and financing arrangements in support of sustainable urbanization and how to cope with the challenges of climate change.

The Forum is the world's premier conference on cities and the problems they face in a world where half of humanity is urbanized – in the new era of homo urbanus. The theme of the Fourth World Urban Forum is "Harmonious Urbanization: The Challenge of Balanced Territorial Development".

The World Urban Forum is a biennial gathering that is attended by a wide range of partners from non-governmental

organizations, community-based organizations, urban professionals, academics, to governments, local authorities and national and international associations of local governments. It gives all these actors a common platform to discuss urban issues in formal and informal ways and come up with action-oriented proposals to create sustainable cities. More details of WUF Session IV may be found at <http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf>.

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World Toilet Day: Bhopal Slums Declared Open Defecation Free

The Slums Environmental Sanitation Initiative (SESI), a pilot project is being executed in 4 project cities in a tri-partite partnership model, bringing together resources and expertise from the UN-HABITAT, Water Aid India and its local NGO partners and the four Municipal Corporations of Bhopal, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Indore for 20,000 households in poverty pockets of 5000 households in each city which are lacking in infrastructure deficiencies viz. access to water supply, improved sanitation, grey water disposal etc.

On the occasion of World Toilet Day, a Seminar on Sanitation for All was organized in Bhopal. Dr. Narottam Mishra, Hon'ble Minister, Urban Administration and Development, Government of Madhya Pradesh presided over the function. Mr. Rustam Singh, Hon'ble Minister, Panchayat and Rural Development, Government of Madhya Pradesh was also present as a special guest on the occasion. Addressing the gath-

ing, Dr. Narottam Mishra stressed the need to create awareness among the people about use of sanitation facilities in slums. He said that the facilities of sanitation should be provided in the lines of Slum Environmental Sanitation Initiative in the slums. He also said that the Govt. of M.P. has drafted the State Sanitation Policy, which will be adopted by the government soon.

During the function 16 poverty pockets of Bhopal (Rahul Nagar, Shanti Nagar, Aadarh Nagar, Gautam Nagar, Dashmesh Nagar, Police Line Ki Basti), Gwalior (Dholi Bua Ka Pul, Laksman Pura, New Mehera Colony, Mari Mata, Gollandhaj Mohallah), Jabalpur (Basor Mohallah) and Indore (Narwal Kakad, New Indira Ekta Nagar, Ekta Nagar and Piplia Rao) were felicitated for becoming the open defecation free slums. The representatives of these slums received the certificate of facilitation from Hon'ble Minister, UADD and other dignitaries.

On the same occasion, a community toilet in Police Line Ki Jhuggi, one of the poverty pockets in Bhopal was inaugurated by Mr. Ramdayal Prajapati, Chairman, Municipal Corporation, Bhopal. The poor settlement of Police Line Ki Jhuggi having 150 households without access to household toilets compelled the residents to resort to open defecation. Based on the poverty pocket situational analysis, UN-HABITAT supported SESI project is being implemented in this poverty pocket in cooperation with WaterAid and Bhopal Municipal Corporation. AARAMBH, the local partner NGO played a pivotal role in mobilization of the residents of the poverty pocket to form Community Water Supply and Sanitation Committee (CWASC) and got them registered as a legal entity. The Community toilet has separate toilets for men & women, disabled and the old aged people. There are child friendly toilets for boys & girls as well as bathing facility for men & women.

Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Workshop in Jabalpur

A workshop on "Urban Water Supply and Sanitation – Challenges and Solutions" was organized by Madhya Pradesh Urban Water Supply and Environmental Improvement (MPUWSEI), Project Uday and Jabalpur Municipal Corporation on 24th October 07.

During the workshop Mayor, Members of Mayor-in-Council, Commissioner, Additional/Deputy Commissioner, Councilors, City Engineers, Health Officers, Project Management Unit, Project Management Consultant, Project Uday participated. The workshop was attended by

more than 75 persons of the Engineers, Health Officers of the Municipal Corporation.

The Mayor emphasized the importance of water and sanitation. The Project Director, Project Uday in the workshop, made a presentation on the role, partnership and pilot projects under WAC Programme in Jabalpur.

During the workshop a City Master Plan for water supply and Solid Waste Management, including the UN-HABITAT supported Community managed solid waste disposal scheme were presented.

The workshop was followed by a field visit of the officials from Project Uday and the selected members of the ward committees of Gorriya Ghat where Slum Environmental Sanitation Initiative is being implemented under WAC programme.

The officials had inspected the community toilet constructed under the initiative and had interaction with the members of the SHG managing the operation and maintenance of the Community toilet through collection of user charges.