

**1999/47. Contribution to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in providing safe water supply and sanitation for all during the 1990s**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

Recalling General Assembly resolution 50/126 of 20 December 1995, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report, through the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, containing an assessment of the water supply and sanitation situation in developing countries, including proposals for action for the ensuing decade at the national and international levels,

Recalling also the progress that has been made in water supply and sanitation,

Recalling further the importance given to integrated water resources management in Agenda 21,<sup>125</sup>

Noting the need for progress in the alleviation of poverty and the links between poverty and the lack of drinking water and adequate sanitation;

Noting also the lack of adequate progress that has been made in providing sanitation and the negative impacts on human health and the health of ecosystems,

1. Requests the Secretary-General, in the preparation of his report:

(a) To ensure that the connections between water supply and sanitation and other sectors are explored;

(b) To focus the report on an analysis of the shortfalls in progress in providing water supply and sanitation, including an analysis of the barriers thereto;

(c) To explore how inadequate attention to an integrated approach to water and land management can exacerbate problems of water supply and sanitation and vice versa;

(d) To emphasize the analysis of issues;

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*Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.98 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

(e) To explore topics where adequate progress has not been made and identify actions and examples of efforts that have been successful;

2. Requests that the following issues, as elaborated in the annex to the present resolution, be included in the analysis:

(a) Mobilization of political will;

(b) Economic sustainability and private-sector involvement in water supply and sanitation;

(c) Community participation and social mobilization;

(d) Sanitation, sewage treatment and wastewater recycling;

(e) Communication and awareness-training;

(f) Gender issues;

(g) Protection of water sources;

(h) Water conservation efforts.

*44th plenary meeting  
28 July 1999*

**ANNEX**

**Issues for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in providing safe water supply and sanitation for all during the 1990s**

1. The need to mobilize political will to accomplish water supply and sanitation objectives and integrated land and water resources management, including:

(a) The need for a clear policy framework for water supply and sanitation which recognizes the fundamental role of water supply and sanitation in socio-economic development and incorporates these considerations into basic development planning, including a commitment to the mobilization of public and private funding for this effort;

(b) The need to incorporate water supply and sanitation into a broader integrated land and water resources management strategy;

(c) The need to pay attention to the most vulnerable groups in society;

(d) The need to give priority to addressing sanitation issues where they are lagging;

2. The need for economic sustainability and private-sector involvement in water supply and sanitation, including:

(a) The need for a clear and transparent policy and management framework which facilitates private-sector involvement, while protecting environmental and social concerns through transparent regulatory and administrative guidelines;

(b) The need for a commitment of public funding to assist in the provision of water supply and sanitation to the most vulnerable groups;

(c) Community participation and social mobilization, including:

- (i) The need for a national policy framework which facilitates community participation in decision-making and contributions by beneficiaries;
  - (ii) The need for a policy framework that encourages, as appropriate, community participation in the construction, management and operations of water supply and sanitation projects;
  - (iii) The need to include socio-economic studies as a part of the initial planning process for water supply and sanitation projects;
  - (iv) The need to link the provision of water supply and sanitation service to demonstrated needs;
  - (v) The need to link community education and awareness-raising efforts to community participation efforts and to encourage the use of local inputs;
  - (vi) The need to promote public sector-private sector partnerships;
  - (vii) The need to strengthen local capacity and participation in monitoring and assessing water resources, including water quality;
  - (viii) The need to strengthen the capacity of the most vulnerable in society to participate in water supply and sanitation planning and decision-making;
  - (ix) The need to review various models of basin management and participation, including basin agencies and organizations, catchment councils, integrated watershed management efforts and international cooperation;
- (d) Sanitation, sewage treatment and wastewater recycling, including:
- (i) The chronic underfunding of these issues;
  - (ii) The costs, benefits and trade-offs of various treatment levels and the extent of coverage considering limited financial resources;
  - (iii) The problems of mixed domestic/industrial/storm-water systems;
  - (iv) The potential of industrial water recycling and pre-treatment before transfer to municipal systems;
  - (v) The potential for wastewater use for agricultural purposes;
- (e) Communication and awareness-raising, including:
- (i) The need to set aside support for water and hygiene education and communication efforts associated with technical and construction projects;
  - (ii) The need to use all appropriate existing and emerging communication channels (e.g., radio, television, newspapers, Internet and public information campaigns);
  - (iii) The need to use local networks (e.g., religious leaders, health and extension workers, women's groups, youth associations and sports clubs);
  - (iv) The need to use the education system at all levels, with special emphasis on youth and women;
  - (v) The need to identify target populations to maximize the benefits of education outreach;
  - (vi) The need to assess existing data-collection and information management to ensure that it meets management and decision-making requirements;
- (f) Gender issues, including:
- (i) The need to ensure full participation by women in all aspects of land and water resources management, including decision-making;
  - (ii) The need for gender-disaggregated data in water supply and sanitation planning, monitoring and evaluation;
- (g) Protection of water sources, including:
- (i) The need to examine the extent to which water supply programmes can be linked to protection of the catchment which is the source of the water (e.g., the Quito water supply);
  - (ii) The need for protection of headwater forests and wetlands to moderate stream flow and facilitate groundwater recharge;
  - (iii) The need for an ecosystem approach to water supply and sanitation planning;
  - (iv) The need for water quality monitoring and dissemination of information, including on manufactured and natural contaminants, such as harmful trace elements and heavy metals (e.g., arsenic in South Asia), and for the identification of sources of contaminants;
  - (v) The need to protect water sources and their catchments from pollution, examining the potential for incentives, regulation, administrative measures and intersectoral coordination;
  - (vi) The need regularly to update and disseminate hydrological information;
- (h) Water conservation efforts, including:
- (i) The need to examine leakage in water distribution and sewage lines;
  - (ii) The need to examine demand management programmes to moderate demand and wasting of water;
  - (iii) The need to encourage the adoption of water-saving devices;
  - (iv) The need to give high priority to water conservation in national land and water policies;

- (v) The need to develop and transfer appropriate water conservation technologies and to encourage the use of local resources in their application;
- (vi) The need to include water conservation efforts in water balance calculations for basin management.