



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

6 November 2003

Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes at its sixth session

Rome, 18-19 September 2003

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1–2	2
II. Reflections on current developments	3–5	2
III. Financing for development	6–11	2
IV. HIV/AIDS and its linkages with food security and governance	12–16	3
V. Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development	17–22	4
VI. Conflict prevention	23–25	6
VII. Follow-up to the Millennium Summit: 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration	26–31	6
VIII. The Millennium Project and the Millennium Campaign and the related work of the United Nations Development Group	32–35	8
IX. Communication strategy for the Chief Executives Board	36–40	8
X. High-Level Committee on Programmes work programme for 2003-2004	41–42	10
XI. Autumn 2003 session of the Chief Executives Board	43	10
XII. Other matters	44–57	10
Annexes		
I. Agenda		14
II. List of participants		15
III. Follow-up to Monterrey: financing for development		17
IV. Organizing the United Nations response to the triple threat of food insecurity, weakened capacity for governance and AIDS, particularly in Southern and Eastern Africa		23
V. Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development		47
Appendix to annex V: Inventory of existing inter-agency coordination mechanisms and collaborative arrangements and joint projects		65
VI. High-Level Committee on Programmes work programme for 2003-2004		87

A. Freshwater and water and sanitation

11. Freshwater. Beginning with Mar del Plata Action Plan (1977), which later led to the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990), the International Conference on Water and Environment (1992) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992), the World Water Forum, the Millennium Summit (2000) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002), the international community has tried to identify the political, economic, ecological, social and strategic challenges related to freshwater and to develop approaches on how to address these challenges.

12. The *World Water Development Report: Water for People, Water for Life*, launched in 2003 by the United Nations World Water Assessment Programme, is a key success story of the United Nations system. It has also helped in crystallizing the challenges of freshwater which include meeting basic needs, securing the food supply, protecting ecosystems, sharing water resources, managing risks, valuing water, governing water wisely, monitoring industrial usages of water, assessing water and energy needs production, ensuring the knowledge base and assessing water in the cities.

13. There is a general view that the water crisis faced by the global community is mainly one of mismanagement of water resources and its cascading impact on the lives of world's inhabitants. The *World Water Development Report*^h considers the issue of distribution of water as another challenge — overabundance of water in some regions and serious shortage in others — and is calling for pricing water more sensibly to reflect the costs of providing it (including environmental costs), as well as its marginal utility. The case for privatization, however, is seen as being flawed when it comes to developing countries and where it would imply a serious increase in water tariffs — a burden on the already impoverished population and among other reasons, politically unacceptable.

14. There is no panacea for dealing with issues of governance and distribution. Thus far, there is no single model, public, private or a combination of private and public, that can be identified as being ideal for all situations. Experience has been mixed and the key to a successful public/private partnership, as made clear in the *World Water Development Report*, is to have “good governance and the right institutional framework, notably effective regulation”.

15. Major international events, in particular the Rio Summit, the Millennium Summit, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Third World Water Forum and the publication of the *World Water Development Report* have not only drawn the attention of Governments, the United Nations system, international financial institutions, business and industry, non-governmental organizations and civil society to these challenges. They have also helped in generating international consensus to deal with them in the broader context of sustainable development, poverty eradication, health, education and capacity-building, economic and social development and a host of other economic, social and environmental factors.

16. According to Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, “Water is needed in all aspects of life. Adequate supplies of water of good quality should be maintained for the entire population of this planet, while preserving the hydrological, biological and chemical functions of ecosystems, adapting human activities within the capacity limits of nature and

combating vectors of water-related diseases”. The Millennium Declaration commits Governments to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation not only reaffirmed the Millennium Declaration goal, but also added the issue of access to basic sanitation. It adopted four major objectives with regard to water, namely, (a) halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water and the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation; (b) develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005; (c) develop programmes for mitigating the effects of extreme water-related events; and (d) establish and/or develop national monitoring networks and water-related databases.

17. To move forward on the water agenda emanating from the Summit’s Plan of Implementation will require political will and major policy shifts by Governments. An effective response from all stakeholders, and in particular by the United Nations system, to the four objectives mentioned above, is essential. For the United Nations system, it is critical to formulate strategies for the effective follow-up to the Summit and to ensure the implementation of existing agreements within the agreed-upon time frames. The United Nations system must also contribute constructively to the programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and its sessions in 2004 and 2005, which will focus on water, sanitation and human settlements.

18. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation calls for effective coordination among various international and intergovernmental bodies and processes working on water-related issues, both within the United Nations system and between the United Nations and international financial institutions, drawing on the contributions of other international institutions and civil society to inform intergovernmental decision-making; and promoting close coordination in developing and implementing activities related to the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 and beyond.

19. Within the United Nations system, water is dealt with by a number of specialized agencies, United Nations programmes and other United Nations entities. Implementation of the complex and ambitious international agenda is, therefore, a collective responsibility and challenge, beginning with the United Nations system, but also involving progressively other “non-traditional” partners and stakeholders into a global, comprehensive effort.

20. There are important implications for the United Nations system that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency, especially taking into consideration the need to support and actively participate in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Prior to the reform of the Administrative Committee on Coordination in 2001, its Subcommittee on Water Resources played a key role in ensuring United Nations system-wide coordination and cooperation. This Subcommittee, like other ACC subsidiary bodies, was discontinued in favour of new, flexible and substance-driven arrangements for inter-agency coordination.

21. Since 2001, the members of the former Subcommittee have continued to informally coordinate their activities. In October 2002, immediately after the Johannesburg Summit, this informal arrangement became known as “UN Water” and brought together the senior managers of the water programmes of 24 United Nations system entities. It was responsible for the preparation and publication of the first edition of the *World Water Development Report* in March 2003. UN Water’s World Water Assessment Programme, of which the *World Water Development Report* is a

part, was created to provide the kind of global water assessment and policy advice called for by the Summit and the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eleventh session. Its priorities are to lay the basis for implementing system-wide activities in support of the Plan of Implementation, the Millennium Development Goals concerning water and sanitation, and to support the work of the Commission.

22. UN Water should be able to manage new partnerships with the main actors outside the United Nations system, such as the Global Water Partnership, the World Water Council, the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council and the World Conservation Union, and the private sector. A number of donors have already indicated their willingness to establish operational relations with UN Water to contribute to implementation of the global water agenda through country-level solutions. It has already constituted a subgroup that deals specifically with sanitation issues and will shortly add a second on capacity development. It has also incorporated a task force on gender and water.

Decision No. 1

The Committee confirmed UN Water as the inter-agency mechanism for follow-up of the World Summit on Sustainable Development water-related decisions and the Millennium Development Goal concerning freshwater; requested it to finalize, before the end of 2003, its terms of reference and modalities of work, including arrangements for progressive and effective participation of non-United Nations actors in the World Summit on Sustainable Development follow-up, bearing in mind the guiding principles and functions established by the High-Level Committee on Programmes.

Decision No. 2

The Committee requested the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to inform HLCP on progress achieved in developing programmes, in cooperation with UN Water as may be necessary, for mitigating the effects of extreme water-related events (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, para. 26 (d)).

23. Water and sanitation. As stated earlier, the Plan of Implementation envisaged halving by the year 2015, the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation. To this end, the Plan underlined the need for action in developing efficient household sanitation systems; improving sanitation in public institutions, promoting safe hygiene practices, promoting education and outreach focused on children, promoting affordable and socially and culturally acceptable technologies and practices; developing innovative financing and partnership mechanisms and integrating sanitation into water resources management strategies. The Plan also highlighted the need to support capacity-building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development and to promote technologies for safe water, sanitation and waste management for rural and urban areas.

24. In addition to these areas for action, water and sanitation is also seen as a complex governance issue that is critical for urban basic services with social (health and education), economic (poverty eradication) and environmental (water quality, ecosystem and aquifer protection) dimensions. There is now a better understanding of the key urban governance issues, which affect delivery and performance of urban basic services. The issues of decentralization of government functions to local levels and the importance of involving local communities in operation and management of

services at neighbourhood level have also been recognized. Attention must also be given to the interlinkages with health issues, population and the role of women in managing water resources. The priority is now to shift to mainstreaming these concepts into national policies and legislation and demonstrating the validity and sustainability of these approaches through well-conceived programmes and projects at the local level.

25. Some of the policy priorities that have emerged in this context from the ongoing intergovernmental and inter-agency consultations, through technical assistance to national and city governments, are improving governance of basic services; services for the poor; promoting innovative financing mechanisms (encouraging private sector to invest in urban basic services, including in the water and sanitation sector); enhancing livelihood and environment linkages in urban basic services, greater focus on information, advocacy and communication; collaboration with the private sector, international financing institutions including strengthening partnership between organizations of the United Nations system and the World Bank, as well as the regional development banks; and finally, monitoring and evaluation based on a strong inter-agency partnership in monitoring improvements in the living conditions of slum-dwellers around the world. UN Water seems well placed to deal with these issues.

Decision No. 3

The Committee requested UN Water to prepare a detailed plan, through its subgroup on sanitation, for an effective follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in the field of water and sanitation linked to the work related to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

B. Energy

26. Building on the outcome of the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development identified five key areas as critical to achieving the goal of energy for sustainable development. These areas include:

(a) Increasing access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources. Two billion people lack access to modern energy services. Continued reliance on traditional fuels and technologies brings hardships, health problems and ecological strains;

(b) Improving energy efficiency. The potential for more efficient energy use is enormous, since overall global energy efficiency is estimated at 37 per cent. Many energy efficiency gains have already been realized, especially in centralized processes, for example, power stations. A large unrealized potential for greater energy efficiency exists at the point of end-use, for example, through more efficient vehicles, appliances and buildings. Gains in energy efficiency of 25 to 35 per cent are achievable in industrialized countries over the next 20 years, with higher potentials of 30 to 45 per cent in developing and transitional economies with effective policy measures to encourage energy conservation;

(c) Increasing the proportion of energy obtained from renewable energy sources. Renewable energy (biomass, small hydropower, wind, solar, and