

Urban Sustainability in Asia and the Pacific is seriously threatened by the growing water and sanitation crisis

Asia is facing a major challenge in the water and sanitation sector. 80 per cent of the global population without access to improved sanitation, and almost two-thirds without access to improved water supply, live in Asia. The need for these basic services in Asia outstrips that of Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean taken together.

To meet the Millennium Declaration Goal of halving the proportion of people without access to improved services by 2015, an additional 1.5 billion people in Asia will need access to adequate sanitation facilities, while an additional 980 million will need access to safe water. In urban areas, the corresponding figures are 675 million and 619 million respectively. Emphasis on urban water and sanitation has also been placed in the Millennium Declaration by setting a target of improving the living condition of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.



Asia Pacific Scenario

In **Dhaka**, the head of Dhaka's water and sewerage authority estimated in 2002 that there were 2.5 million people in Dhaka's 'slums' with most having very inadequate provision for water and sanitation. 70 per cent of the population had no sewers. Tens of thousands of children die each year in Dhaka because of waterborne diseases and polluted water

In **Kolkata**, about half the population that lives in the slum or squatter colonies collect water from stand posts. The rest of this population do not have access to the municipal water supply and have to make their own arrangements - for instance relying on handpumps drawing from tube wells.

In **Bangalore**, a city of some 6 million inhabitants, it is estimated that more than half depends on public fountains - but

these often have broken taps or pipes and damaged platforms. Almost a third of the population has partial or no access to piped water.

More than half of **Karachi's** 12 million inhabitants live in *katchi abadis*. Only half the *katchi abadis* have piped water and only 12 per cent have provision for sanitation - compared to the planned areas where more than four-fifths have piped water and sanitation. For the whole city, only 40 per cent of the population is connected to the official sewer system.

In **Faisalabad**, some two thirds of the city's two million inhabitants live in largely unserved areas. Over half have no piped water supply and less than a third have sewers.



The New Delhi Consultation



Participants at the New Delhi Consultation

The Water for Asian Cities Consultation organised by UN-HABITAT in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank and held in New Delhi from 10 to 11 April 2002 was attended by more than 100 participants from 16 Asian countries and 12 external support agencies. The participants shared their experience in the water and sanitation sector, analysed the key problems and issues currently faced by the sector in the countries of the region and identified a clear set of action priorities that could be addressed by the proposed regional initiative.

A key outcome of the Consultation was the consensus recommendation to UN-HABITAT and its partners to launch a regional programme on Water for Asian Cities to promote pro-poor investments in water and sanitation in the region. The Consultation also made specific recommendations with regard to the implementation strategy and partnership arrangements for the proposed programme.

Programme Objectives

The Programme focuses on three inter-linked priorities

Introducing demand-responsive and demand management strategies to improve efficiency of water-use and give more influence to those currently deprived of water and sanitation

Scaling-up sanitation provision city-wide through innovative public-private-NGO partnerships, financing mechanisms and appropriate technical choices

New pro-poor investments in urban water supply and sanitation with emphasis on serving the urban poor with piped water and formal sanitation facilities

Key Programme Activities

- **Monitoring of progress towards achieving Millennium Goal targets in the water and sanitation sector in Asian cities.** This will provide the basis for policy adjustments and new and directed investment in the sector.
- **Mobilisation of political will through advocacy and exchange of information.** The politicians will be sensitised as to the need for policy, regulatory and tariff reforms. Information exchange will be facilitated through internet (interactive network and website), newsletters, study visits, staff exchange, etc.
- **Strengthening regional, country and city level capacities** for integrated water and sanitation management. This will require human resource development in a focused manner, strengthening the capacity of existing institutions and establishing a regional network of experts and institutions. **Gender mainstreaming** will be an important cross-cutting theme of capacity-building at all levels.
- **Promoting pro-poor investments in the water and sanitation sector.** This will call for the establishment of a pro-poor governance framework at the city level through stakeholder consultations, to facilitate the necessary policy and institutional reforms required for improving water and sanitation services for the urban poor. Investments in water supply and sanitation in Asian cities will provide the source developments, pipelines, treatment plants, reservoirs and distribution systems to bring water to those without direct access to piped water. It will also provide sanitation facilities in those cities, based on appropriate technology.
- **Creating a new ethic among children and community through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education.** Interventions will include: introducing value-based, water education in schools; establishing water education classrooms in pilot cities; community education, training of trainers etc. Twinning of cities and schools will be part of this initiative.

Implementation Strategies

Implementation strategies will include public awareness campaigns for good urban water governance. The programme will focus on

- Water sector reforms based on transparent policy, independent regulation and involvement of civil society.
- Tariff policy reforms that promote sustainable investments by phasing out subsidies.

Up-scaling Good Practices Through Innovative Partnerships

Community-constructed and managed facilities for water and sanitation

A good example of community-municipal partnerships include the rapid expansion of community-constructed and managed toilets and washing facilities in Pune and Mumbai over the last two years. These have greatly improved provision for low income households at costs that they can afford but with little or no increase in public investment; these centered on municipal authorities shifting funding from contractors to community organisations to design, build and maintain the public toilets. The 'seed' for such innovations are usually community-managed demonstrations that show what is possible - which then are extended to a much larger population as municipal authorities learn how to support many community-managed initiatives.

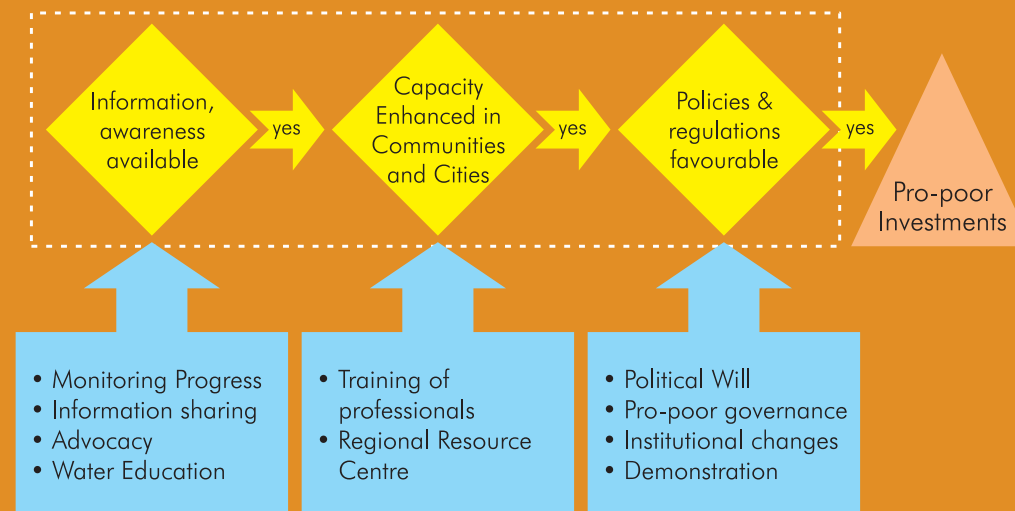


For community-driven new developments, the key is to ensure that low-income households can buy or build accommodation with better provision for water, sanitation and drainage. Support for low-income groups' savings schemes and for their acquisition of land with infrastructure on which they can organise the construction of their own homes is an important part of improving provision for water and sanitation - as demonstrated in the large number of low-income households that have acquired better quality housing through community-managed schemes in India (within the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan), Thailand (with the support of the Urban Community Development Office) and South Africa (within the Homeless People's Federation). This is an approach that also has to be 'demand-driven' for low income households; many government schemes have been 'supply-driven' with the result that new sites with provision for water and sanitation were in the wrong location or were too expensive for low income households.

Source: SPARC Presentation in New Delhi Consultation, April 2002



Awareness → Enhanced capacity → Action

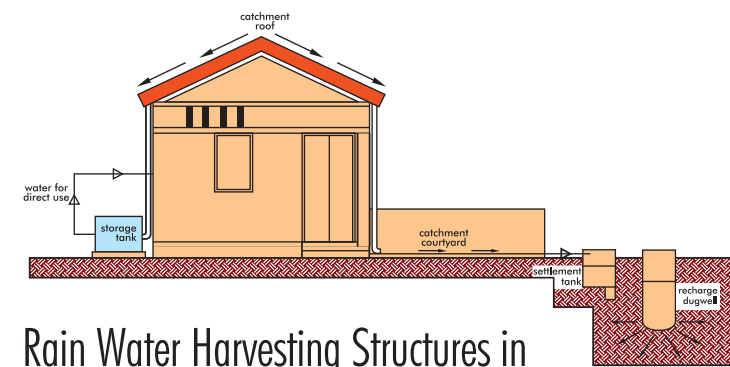


Partnership and Capacity Building for Pro-poor Investments

The programme will commence with a partnership development phase. The focus in this phase will be on developing a framework for collaboration among city level actors as also with external support agencies and other ongoing programmes.

The central emphasis of the Water for Asian Cities Programme will be on Capacity building in the countries and cities in the region with a view to prepare the environment for pro-poor investments in the water and sanitation sector.

While the Capacity Building Phase of the Programme will be directed to enhancing the willingness and commitment of the policy makers and creating the necessary institutional and human resource capacity to implement pro-poor policies and programmes, the investment promotion phase of the Programme be directed to creating the enabling environment for pro-poor investments.



Rain Water Harvesting Structures in Urban Environment

A typical roof top Rainwater Harvesting System comprises of

- Catchment roof
- Gutters
- Downpipes
- Rain water/Storm Water Drains
- Storage tank
- Catchment courtyard
- Ground water recharge structure like settlement tank, recharge dugwell



Water for Asian Cities Programme

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WATER FOR ASIAN CITIES

PRO-POOR INVESTMENT IN WATER AND SANITATION TO SUPPORT MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

