

Opening remarks Prof. Hubert Gijzen, DIR UNESCO Jakarta Office

UNESCO JKT Office, as the regional bureau for Science for ASPAC is very pleased to team up with the other partners on this most important subject of Capacity building and training in the water supply and sanitation sector. On the request of my colleagues at UNESCO-IHE in The Netherlands, I will also be representing the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education in this meeting, as they could not make someone available in time.

The broader context of this project is Water and Sustainable Development. Water is probably the most pressing factor hindering development, limiting food production, causing death (via water borne disease), and causing distress and economic damage via water related disasters. Water supply and sanitation (WS&S) is a prime service to people and should be considered as a human right. Of all Water Services, WS&S hampers development most and on a daily basis, because people without access to WS&S:

- spent more time on managing their water (especially women)
- spent more money on these basic services
- are more likely to be affected by water borne disease

Provision of WS&S could therefore have tremendous positive effect on development by:

- saving time (which now could be used on productive and income generating activities)
- saving money
- saving lives
- and by creating employment opportunities and development of (community based) SME

This immediately pinpoints the key importance of the project. But the challenge is a tremendous one!

The Challenge:

Water supply and sanitation services delivery immediately connects to MDG-7, Goal 10 Today, world-wide some 1.1 billion people have no access to safe water and about 2.4 billion people lack appropriate sanitation services. The largest share of the people not reached today are found in Asia and Pacific, with some 680 million with no access to safe water (62% of world total) and 1.92 billion for sanitation (74% of world wide figure). So the challenge is huge, and before we naively assume service provision for WS&S can be simply achieved, lets look back and learn from previous attempts.

There were other attempts:

1980-1990	The Water decade (actually ended with more people without sanitation)
1990-2000	Safe water 2000
2000-2015	MDG-7, reduce by 50% (we seem to have become more realistic)
2015-2025	full coverage (as indicated in the World Water Vision)

WS&S relates to a number of MDGs, directly and indirectly.

Relation MDGs:

1. There is a contradiction between the Target 10 and the Goal (7) under which it is defined("Environmental Sustainability"). We have to revisit the conventional approach.

If full coverage achieved by 2025, and 8 billion people will use an average 150l/c/d, then some 600,000 million m³ sewage are produced annually. Assuming 1 l sewage will destroy 100 l of water resource, then this would lead to 48,000 km³ water resource destruction every year; this is more than the 40,000 km³ renewable water per year.

2. Relation to other MDGs

MDG 1: If sewage could be treated such that nutrients and water would be recovered in agriculture and aquaculture, then this could contribute to better food security and income generation.

MDG 3: Improve gender equality: In many countries woman are responsible for managing the domestic water services. This time consuming activity makes it difficult for most of them to engage in income generating activities and limits their independency.

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality. Water is life, but at the same time it is also killer number 1. The number of children that die from water borne disease (e.g. diarrhoea) amounts to about 3.3 million per year. Worldwide there are about 4 billion cases of diarrhoea every year.

MDG 6: Reduce major diseases: Malaria and several other major diseases are water related (e.g. mosquito breeding, ascariasis, hookworm etc.). The impact of water borne infections is stronger in people with an impaired immune response (AIDS).

Conclusion:

- Goal 10, MDG-7 presents an enormously complex challenge, with direct relations to most other MDGs
- We need to revisit conventional approaches and develop innovative recycling approaches that are sustainable
- In doing so we need to maximize the positive spin-offs to other MDGs
- Capacity building, training and awareness raising will be key to the success of interventions aimed at improving WS&S coverage. At all levels, universities, technical colleges, operators, communities, schools etc.

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