



FIRST DRAFT

WATER AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

A STRATEGY FOR INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ESTABLISHED BY
THE ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES**

UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. International Concern for Water and Sustainable Urban Development

Almost all of the World's major cities will go into the twenty first century facing a water crisis. Explosive growth of urban centres over the past 25 years has led to a depletion and degradation of available water resources. Rising costs of developing ever more distant freshwater sources threaten economic development, while a lack of adequate water, sanitation, drainage and waste disposal services affects the quality of life, health and productivity of all who live IN cities, but especially the urban poor.

Recognition of the escalating urban water crisis has prompted a flurry of international concern since the early 1990s. Collaborative efforts have focused on developing common principles and approaches for consideration at the Earth Summit (the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992). In the context of *Water and Sustainable Urban Development*, the adoption of Agenda 21 by UNCED enjoins Governments and the international community to adopt "strategies and actions to ensure the continued supply of affordable water for present and future needs, and to reverse current trends of resource degradation and depletion".

Given the magnitude of the task, and the fact that there is no expectation of any increased future inflow of international resources into the sector, achieving the ambitious targets set by Agenda 21 for urban water will require a strategy that will maximize the real value of future investments through effective collaboration and coordination of the efforts of all stakeholders and actors in the urban water scene.

B. The Working Group and Terms of Reference

At the Thirteenth Session of the Intersecretariat Group for Water Resources (later redesignated as "ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources") held in New York in October 1992, it was noted that the issues pertaining to urban water supply and sanitation remained extremely serious and it would be necessary to consider the various water-related issues affecting urban areas in the broader context of urban development. It was also noted that the question of water and sustainable urban development had been given a great deal of attention within Agenda 21 and that the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources (ACC-SWR) should continue to formulate joint approaches and programmes for the follow-up of the recommendations contained therein.

A working group (task force), under the chairmanship of UNCHS (Habitat), and also composed of UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, The World Bank, together with other interested agencies, has been established by ACC-SWR and entrusted with the task of recommending options for inter-agency collaboration in implementing follow-up activities on urban water resources issues stemming from Agenda 21.

Specifically, the working group is expected to review the programmes and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in the area of water resources and urban development and prepare a series of recommendations on options for inter-agency collaboration in this area. The working group is also expected to examine priority issues concerning the provision of external support to developing countries, alternatives for the delivery of such support, and the scope and nature of future inter-agency collaborative activities.

C. Preparation of the Strategy Paper

The present strategy paper is the outcome of formal and informal consultations among the Working Group members as well as with other interested members of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources. The report also draws upon the information on the major programmes and activities of eight organizations of the United Nations which responded to a questionnaire survey.

II. WATER AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE UNITED NATIONS

A. Agenda 21 for Water and Sustainable Urban Development

Programme E in chapter 18 of Agenda 21 identifies 26 activities, under six thematic headings, for implementation by all states through bilateral or multilateral cooperation, including the United Nations and other relevant organizations.

Further activities related to the area of water and sustainable urban development can be found in the six other programme areas of chapter 18, notably under programme D (drinking water supply and sanitation), as well as in other chapters, especially 7 (promoting sustainable human settlement development) and 21 (environmentally sound management of solid wastes and sewage related issues).

A consolidated list of all Agenda 21 activities supporting urban water resources management is presented in Annex I.

B. A Brief Review of the Activities of the United Nations Organizations

B.1. Ongoing Activities

Responding to the rapid pace of urbanization in developing countries, and the pressing need for the improved management of water resources in urban areas, most organizations of the United Nations system are giving increasing attention to the activities related to water and sustainable urban development.

Some examples of this trend include the UNESCO/WMO initiative on urban hydrology; the urban water supply and sanitation components of the UNDP-World Bank "Water and Sanitation Program"; the growing activities of UNICEF in peri-

urban areas; the inclusion of a special subprogramme to attend to urban areas in the WHO Enhanced Programme for the Promotion of Environmental Health; and the activities on water resources and urban infrastructure management being implemented by UNCHS (Habitat) through its Settlements Infrastructure and Environment Programme (SIEP), Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP), and Urban Management Programme (UMP).

A list of the urban water related Agenda 21 activities being assigned importance by current United Nations programmes and projects is given in Box 1 below.

BOX 1: MAIN URBAN WATER RELATED AGENDA 21 ACTIVITIES IN UNITED NATIONS' PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

1. Promotion of the allocation and management of resources according to economic, social and environmental criteria and recognizing water as a social, economic and strategic good in its different uses.
2. Implementation of resource allocation decisions among various sectors of freshwater demand through demand management instruments, such as pricing mechanisms, economic incentives, regulatory measures, awareness, education.
3. Introduction of adequate water tariffs reflecting, where affordable, the marginal and opportunity cost of water, especially for productive activities.
4. Introduction of environmental impact assessment for integrated urban water resources management and development projects.
5. Development of integrated measures for the protection of sources of freshwater supply with other relevant development activities, including measures for wastewater disposal and reuse in areas such as agriculture.
6. Implementation of urban water abstraction, storm-water run-off, drainage and flood prevention mitigation programmes based on urban hydrological studies.
7. Promoting and enabling public participation in the integrated management of water resources and urban development, waste management and pollution prevention.
8. Support to water user groups, especially women's, to optimize water supply and resources management.
9. Introduction of water supply and sanitary waste disposal facilities based on environmentally sound low-cost upgradable technologies, especially in peri-urban areas.

Source: Questionnaire Survey, UNCHS, 1993

The increasing emphasis of current and planned activities on water and sustainable urban development demonstrates the increasing commitment of the

organizations of the United Nations system to implement the recommendations of Agenda 21 in this area. However, only a limited number of these current activities are urban specific, most of them being part of broader programmes or projects.

This situation arises partly because most organizations target their activities on broader concerns that might or might not, have an urban component. However, there are some exceptions particularly in activities related to urban drainage and flood prevention, waste disposal facilities and pollution control.

B.2. Planned Activities

There are no major changes in the composition and priorities of future activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in relation to current programmes on water and sustainable urban development. However, several organizations have reported that greater emphasis will be placed in the future on the implementation of activities on the control of domestic and industrial pollution and the conservation of water resources. These changes show a positive response to attend emerging demands related to the protection of urban water resources, especially in large urban centres.

In addition, and as indicated in the previous section, future activities of the organizations of the United Nations system will need to give increased attention to the implementation of complementary activities in other aspects related to the integrated management of water resources and sustainable urban development, such as institutional/legal/management reforms and support to local capacity building.

In this regard, it is expected that on-going programmes with focus on the above aspects, such as the previously mentioned UNCHS (Habitat) activities, will provide the lead in demonstrating more effective approaches for United Nations interventions on water and sustainable urban development support activities.

C. Coordination of Activities within the United Nations System

All relevant organizations of the United Nations system implement activities in the area of water and sustainable urban development from the perspective of their own thematic specialization. For example, UNCHS (Habitat) executes activities within the framework of water and integrated urban settlements management; UNEP and UN.DDSMS focus on the incorporation of urban land and water uses to overall freshwater resources management in a watershed; UNICEF and WHO are concerned with the health and environmental aspects of water supply and sanitation, with special attention to the needs of women and children; and the Regional Commissions tend to link urban water resources activities to overall social and economic development programmes.

In addition to their thematic approaches, the organizations tend to develop certain specialization in the execution of their activities: investment, technical assistance, research, training and public information. Given the nature of these

activities, it is natural that some overlapping takes place in the execution of both global and local programmes and projects.

Although there is no formal allocation of tasks among the organizations of the United Nations system for the implementation of activities in the area of water and sustainable urban development, the annual meetings of ACC-SWR and regular consultation among its member agencies has allowed a relatively high degree of coordination of the tasks and global activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in this area.

The harmonization of tasks in the implementation of national and local activities demands a greater effort of coordination because of the need to satisfy the diverse requirements from national authorities and funding sources, and take into account the relative capacities of the various organizations in a particular country. The allocation of tasks at this level is usually done on a ad-hoc basis coordinated by the local United Nations Resident Representative.

D. Inter-Agency Cooperation in the Implementation of Activities

D.1. United Nations System

Interagency collaboration in the implementation of Agenda 21 recommendations are most prominent in the areas of environmental impact assessment, demand management and support to user groups.

Most of the current collaborative activities involve a funding organization and one or more implementing agencies. Notable examples of such collaboration include the UNDP-World Bank agreement for the execution of the "Water and Sanitation Program" (Box 2), or the ad-hoc agreements between UNDP and several executing agencies (UN-DDSMS, UNCHS (Habitat), UNICEF, etc.) for the implementation of technical assistance projects.

There are also cases of inter-agency joint funding or shared provision of regular inputs to a particular project or programme, such as the UNICEF-WHO agreement for the implementation of the Water and Sanitation Monitoring Programme; the UNEP-WHO-FAO and UNCHS (Habitat) Panel of Experts on Environmental Management for Vector Control (Box 3); also the UNDP-UNCHS-World Bank Urban Management Programme which receives funding support from other sources as well (Box 4).

BOX 2: THE UNDP - WORLD BANK WATER AND SANITATION PROGRAM

The UNDP - World Bank water and sanitation program is a collaborative initiative emerging from the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade of the 1980's. The program is managed by the World Bank and is one of two divisions in the Bank's Transportation, Water and Urban Development Department dealing with water and sanitation. While the water and sanitation division focuses primarily on formal institutions (utilities) and water resources, the program concentrates on working with governments, donor agencies and NGOs in developing countries to improve access of the poor to better water supply, sanitation and waste management services. The assistance is provided primarily through low cost technologies and community based approaches. The program's sector development strategy is comprised of three components:

- Supporting sustainable investments
- Building capacity at national and local levels
- Dissemination of lessons and knowledge

In order to help build the foundations for large-scale development, the program provides advice and support in strengthening overall sector policies, including the development of sector strategies, preparation of investment programs and introduction of low cost technologies. The program's capacity building efforts have placed special emphasis on human resource development through the International Training Network for water and waste management.

In line with the demographic shift in the developing world and the achievements made in rural water supply over the Decade, the program has begun to focus more attention on the problem of peri-urban areas, especially sanitation in slums and shantytowns.

Sources: UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program Annual Report July 92-June 93 and Country Work Plans FY94

Finally, some agencies have introduced joint programming exercises and consultations to coordinate their activities. The consultative mechanism between WHO and UNESCO's hydrological programmes is an example of this type of collaboration (Box 5).

However, despite these collaborative efforts, the total number of collaborative "events" is still small in relation to the overall number of potential joint activities that could be implemented by the organizations of the United Nations system. The questionnaire survey carried out by UNCHS identified the following key constraints to intensify inter-agency collaboration in the area of water and urban development:

BOX 3: PANEL OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FOR VECTOR CONTROL (PEEM)

Dengue is one of the main urban vector borne diseases and affects 40-60 million people annually in 40 countries. The explosion of haemorrhagic fever, the sometimes fatal form of dengue, in Asia in 1953 then to the Pacific in 1972 and to Latin America in 1981 is of particular concern. There are more cases of dengue now than is expected for AIDS by the year 2000. Other important vector borne diseases include Malaria and Filariasis.

Sustainable solutions for these problems comprise adequate refuse collection and solid waste disposal, improved drinking water supply, rehabilitation of sewage systems and storm drains and a general improvement in environmental infrastructure. This approach requires the expertise of all agencies.

The aim of PEEM is to assist Member States in the promotion of the intersectoral approaches that are needed to implement these solutions and to further develop techniques for rapid environmental health risk assessment and environmental management in the rural and urban settings, with respect to vector-borne diseases.

The secretariat of PEEM, which is shared by WHO, FAO, UNEP and UNCHS, makes arrangements for collaboration between the four UN agencies, each offering their individual expertise in the area of vector-borne disease control. The panel comprises over 50 experts each selected by the individual UN agencies. The panel makes recommendations on the programme activities of each of the agencies individually and on appropriate partners in collaboration. Programme activities are selected based on the full commitment of all the concerned agencies. Their collaboration must enter on the same terms and equal financial contributions to the running of the secretariat are made by each agency.

Source: UNCHS (Habitat) 1993

1. Policy related constraints:

- Lack of institutional will and mechanisms for the joint programming of activities at global, regional and national levels.
- Project funding policies of multilateral and bilateral agencies that preclude effective interagency collaboration at country level.
- Tendency of interagency competition for access to external funds that, due to their conditionalities, often encourage agencies to implement activities for which other agencies have more comparative advantages.
- Absence of a system-wide strategy for the implementation of integrated activities in the area of water resources and urban development: definition of target groups (clients), objectives, scope, and means of delivery.

BOX 4: URBAN MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The UNDP/Habitat/World Bank Urban Management Programme (UMP) is a long-term global technical assistance programme designed to strengthen the contribution that cities and towns in developing countries make towards economic growth, social development, the reduction of poverty, and other important aspects of human development.

A major undertaking of the international community, the UMP is a partnership of many actors in developing countries at the regional, national, municipal, NGO and community levels. Fifteen multi and bilateral external support agencies participate in the programme, making it the world's largest urban development multi-agency technical assistance programme.

UNCHS (Habitat) is the executing agency for the current phase of the programme; the World Bank is the associated agency; UNDP provides core funding and overall monitoring. The World Health Organization is a collaborating agency.

Initially funded for a ten-year period (1986-1996), major UMP-financing is currently provided by the Governments of Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. The Governments of Denmark and Germany provide programmatic support, while the Governments of Canada, France, and the United Kingdom provide parallel financing and in kind support for specific activities. Two private foundations, the Ford Foundation and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, are also contributors to the Programme.

The UMP's substantive scope covers five thematic areas, along with critical functions in information dissemination and communication. One of the thematic areas covers Urban Infrastructure Management where the principal thrust is to promote an urban infrastructure policy that focuses on demand and emphasizes affordability and appropriate standards; pricing for cost recovery and demand management; targeting of subsidies; and reliability, efficiency, competition, and involvement of the private sector. The infrastructure component initiates and supports capacity building in these areas

Source: Urban Management Programme Annual Report 1993

2. Institutional constraints:

- Lack of mechanisms for the regular exchange of information among United Nations Organizations.
- Difficulties in harmonizing the mandates and work programmes of the various organizations.
 - Difficulties to harmonize the programming cycle of the different United Nations Organizations.
 - Lack of suitable mechanisms for the continuous assessment of demands from urban and water resources managers to allow a coordinated focusing of target groups and objectives of the activities programmed by the various organizations of the United Nations.
 - Lack of coordination of the various water and urban related programmes within each organization.

BOX 5: INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION ON HYDROLOGY

WMO's "Operational Hydrology and Water Resources Programme" is concerned with the assessment of the quantity and quality of water resources in order to meet the needs of society, to permit mitigation of water-related hazards, and to maintain or enhance the condition of the global environment. It includes standardization of all aspects of hydrological observations and the organized transfer of hydrological techniques and methods. The WMO programme is very closely coordinated with UNESCO's "International Hydrological Programme" which aims to find solutions to the problems of countries with different geographical and climatic conditions and at different levels of technological and economic development.

One of the most urgent issues facing international agencies related to the support of hydrological research is to work more closely together, avoiding duplication of activities so as to optimize the use of limited resources and to derive benefits from cross-fertilization.

The necessary steps towards achieving an integration of the activities of IHP (UNESCO) and OHP (WMO) has therefore been recommended as a matter of urgency. The long term goal could be the establishment of a joint structure for both IHP and OHP.

Sources: WMO Annual Report 1992; Report of the UNESCO/WMO/ICSU International Conference on Hydrology, IHP, March 1993; and UNESCO Courier May 1993.

D.2. Non-governmental Organizations and External Support Agencies

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) represents the main mechanism for the coordination of overall policies and programmes of the United Nations organizations with NGOs, bilateral organizations and other external support agencies. Despite the general focus on drinking water supply and sanitation issues, the themes covered by the activities of WSSCC also deal with issues related to overall water resources management.

WSSCC established a working group on urbanization (WG/U) at its meeting in Oslo, 1991. WG/U was entrusted with the task of developing a strategy for the improved provision of services to urban areas. The core group of WG/U is composed of approximately 20 members including United Nations organizations, bilateral agencies, national and international NGOs, and research institutions. The activities of WG/U have allowed regular exchange of experiences and coordination of policy orientations between the United Nations system of organizations and other external support agencies. The activities of WG/U are currently being continued by the WSSCC mandated group on "Services for the Urban Poor".

In addition to their global coordination with NGOs and other external support agencies, the organizations of the United Nations system keep direct contact and establish agreements with some of them for the joint execution of activities. This is, however, an area where further improvements can be made in order to strengthen and make optimum use of the capacities of national and international NGOs, professional associations, academic and research institutions.

III. FUTURE DIRECTIONS: ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGY FOR ENHANCED INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

A. The Role of United Nations

Any strategic approach to enhance inter-agency collaboration in implementing follow-up activities on urban water resource issues stemming from Agenda 21 should be based on a clear perspective of the role of the United Nations which is "to support local and central Governments' efforts and capacities to sustain national development and productivity through environmentally sound management of water resources for urban use." The scale and complexity of the urbanization process and the escalating urban water crisis *vis-a-vis* the limited external support that the United Nations system of agencies can provide to national and local Governments and communities in the foreseeable future require that the United Nations assume a catalytic role by helping to improve policies and strengthen institutions in the sector. This calls for initiatives which focus on policy advice, management capacity and institution building and on the introduction of technologies which are both affordable and environmentally sustainable; the focus should be on strategies which mobilize and leverage local, economic and human resources and on targeted strategic assistance which can mobilize substantial local follow-up investments.

The effectiveness of the support provided by the United Nations system as a whole will be determined by the effectiveness and efficiency of such support in generating sectoral investments, public awareness, legislative and institutional changes, technology development and capacity-building programmes. Such effectiveness can only be achieved, however, in an atmosphere of genuine cooperation and partnership rather than through simple "administrative" coordination; it will require an active and interactive "collaboration" in which the partners share responsibilities, duties and rewards in an environment of "creative synergy".

B. The Scope of Inter-agency Collaboration

Past experience indicates that effective inter-agency collaboration in order to enhance collective efficiency in meeting sectoral needs and to make full use of the mechanism provided by the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources requires a flexible framework of multi-level collaboration that include:

- Developing mechanisms that promote better understanding of issues, relationships and priorities through regular exchange of information and experience among United Nations organizations;
- Joint strategic planning at agency level based on a clear perception of priority action areas; the resulting joint strategies will reflect the respective mandates and comparative capacities of the agencies participating in such an exercise and will focus on enhancing the complementarity of agency activities and avoid redundancy and gaps;

- Collaborative programmes at global and regional level that put the comparative advantages of the participating agencies to the best collective use so as to enhance efficiency and effectiveness;
- Strengthening coordination and cooperation among United Nations system of organizations at the country level so as to extend its outreach and improve its cost-effectiveness.

B.1 Exchange of Information and Experience

Information exchange is not new to the United Nations system. In fact, on paper, a good deal of effort within the UN system is directed towards generating and disseminating information. Yet, true sharing of hard-won implementation experience and information among sister agencies, either at the agency level or in the field, is yet to become a common feature in the system.

Mechanisms that promote such as exchange of experience and strategic information among United Nations organizations in the area of water and urban development would serve two specific purposes: they will help in analyzing the key issues and priorities in the sector, and assist in developing coherent strategies for programme implementation; equally importantly, they would promote the dissemination of *Best Practices* in management approaches and delivery mechanisms, providing a sound basis for systemic dissemination of effective "models".

Some encouraging examples of inter-agency collaboration for dissemination of best practices on urban development are emerging. For example, the UNDP/Habitat/World Bank Urban Management Programme is currently making efforts to capture local lessons on operational experience and to disseminate these through guide books with performance indicators for best practices in the field of environmental infrastructure services in urban areas.

Yet another area where collaborative approaches in sharing of information need to be intensified is in developing performance monitors that can measure progress towards achieving Agenda 21 objectives and goals. An example of such cooperation is the Urban Indicators Programme currently being implemented by Habitat in collaboration with World Bank, developing indicators in areas such as water coverage, service level and quality etc.

B.2. Joint Strategies for Co-ordinated External Support

Successive sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development have reiterated that Agenda 21 goals and targets cannot be realized through uncoordinated individual agency efforts, however laudable these may. It is imperative that agency initiatives present a consistent approach towards governments and other target groups based on complementary and mutually reinforcing delivery strategies. Only then it will be possible to maximise the impact of limited resources available for external support, improve integration with national efforts and enhance collective efficiency. Joint strategies may not necessarily be system-wide: these could be the results of

collaborative endeavour of a limited number of agencies which could be funding agencies and/or implementing agencies. Specialised agencies may find it useful to develop joint strategies with regional commissions to enable them to take a common policy stance and adopt common delivery approaches in a region-specific manner.

A large number of United Nations agencies are currently active in the water sector. They operate from their respective mandates, and their interest in the urban sector widely differ from almost exclusive to marginal. Joint strategies could be premised on the critical interaction of mandates or objectives of these agencies. For example, WHO, UNEP and UNCHS (Habitat) could develop common strategies for supporting Agenda 21 goals in the area of water and urban development, based on concerns which can be as varied as primary health care, protection of water resources within a watershed and alleviation of urban poverty by ensuring equity and a participatory approach in the provision of water.

Developing such joint strategies on a sectoral basis should be focused more on the process than on the end product. It could begin with agreeing on a common policy stance on such key sectoral issues as poverty alleviation, decentralization, participation and environmental protection by harmonizing the policy strands of the agencies participating in such an exercise. This will also allow some agencies with smaller outfits to take the advantage of in-depth, sectoral policy analysis carried out by others. A case in point is the extensive policy research carried out by the World Bank in the area of water resources management (Water Resources Management - A Policy Paper, World Bank, May 1993) which has much relevance to urban water resources management, and could provide a sound basis for starting a policy dialogue among interested agencies.

As the process of harmonization of sectoral policies continue, and the understanding among the participating agencies on key issues and priorities improve, there will be automatic progression towards enhanced coordination through collaborative programmes and country-level activities.

Joint strategies could eventually lead to formal collaborative arrangements through Memoranda of Understanding in the area of water and urban development.

B.3 Collaborative Programmes

Any strategy for effective inter-agency collaboration in the area of water and sustainable urban development should ultimately translate into a series of collaborative programmes that would increase the scale and outreach of external support based on the comparative advantage of the participating organizations. To move coherently in this direction in the urban water sector, a number of policy guidelines can be suggested.

- *Building programmes around key issues.* Past experience has shown that multi-agency programmes can be developed around a cluster of key issues that readily respond to concerns of Governments and the international community. A notable example is the UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme which is built

around three key issues, namely: capacity-building at national and local levels, supporting sustainable investments, and solution-dissemination. In the area of urban water, issues like *efficiency and equity, participation and partnerships, and conservation* on the one hand, and action priorities such as *integrated urban water resource management, attention to peri-urban areas*, to name a few, can provide the nuclei around which many of the Agenda 21 programmes could be linked and implemented (Box 6).

■ *Building collaboration around on-going agency programmes.* On-going programmes, currently implemented by single agencies, can sometimes provide a nucleus around which to build collaborative programmes. The key motivating factor for another agency in such collaboration would be to get "extra mileage" for its own programmes, often with nominal inputs and with practically no administrative cost. Current UNDP/UNCHS on-going "Land and Environmental" management project in the Caribbean has been joined by UNEP to address environmental issues. UNDP and ECLAC are also joining forces to address their thematic and regional concerns. This approach of "providing complementary on an incremental basis" can often successfully overcome usual collaboration constraints stemming from different mandates, programming and implementing procedures of different agencies.

■ *Incentives for joint programming and joint activities.* Belying initial expectations after UNCED, the number of inter-agency programmes remain quite limited in relation to the overall number of potential joint activities that could be initiated in implementing Agenda 21. For speedier implementation of Agenda 21, inter-agency cooperation in the area of water and sustainable urban development must be given incentives, particularly financial incentives such as establishing funding mechanisms to support multi-agency programmes which pursue Agenda 21 goals. Such issues could be addressed to the Commission on Sustainable Development through the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources.

■ *Forging strategic alliances.* The range of collaborative approaches should also be widened beyond the traditional external agency/national government arrangements. Emphasis should be on developing and expanding joint programmes and activities of the United Nations system of agencies, based on new alliances with the private sector, NGOs and local communities. Bringing onboard the "major groups" in collaborative programmes will not only make these programmes more attractive to funding agencies but will also improve the long-term sustainability of the development.

■ *Greater local orientation.* Greater emphasis should also be given to delivery mechanisms which allow external agencies to work directly with and for local communities and local governments, in genuinely decentralized activities which promote more integrated development and utilization of local resources.

BOX 6: A COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMME FOR PERI-URBAN AREA

Implementing the strategy proposed in this paper could possibly begin with a substantive collaborative effort focused on one agreed strategic action area. Once such modalities have been developed, it should be possible to begin work on other strategic action areas.

The strategic action area to be developed first by the working group should be the one that best meets the following criteria:

- members should have on-going projects/programmes in the area in order to provide a ready-made framework for collaboration;
- each member should be able to contribute its own expertise while at the same time benefiting from the experience of others;
- the identification of policy issues, best practises and strategy options should be possible in the short to medium term.

Water resource management in peri-urban areas is probably the strategic action area which can form the basis for a substantive collaborative effort of interest to all members of the working group.

An inter-agency collaborative programme for peri-urban areas within water and sustainable urban development would essentially focus on the "Brown Agenda" which covers such problems as inadequate water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management (both domestic and industrial wastes). This would allow the programme to address cross-sectoral objectives such as poverty alleviation, participation and partnerships, environmental management, and local capacity-building, in an integral manner. Tackling the "Brown Agenda" in peri-urban areas could lead to the establishment of a UN water and environmental management programme for peri-urban areas, equivalent to the UN's support in this sector in rural areas through Unicef's WES programme.

B.4 Country-level Collaboration

In the context of development assistance, the importance of country-level collaboration among the external support agencies in general, and among the United Nations system of agencies in particular, is well recognized. Effective coordination can avoid obvious redundancy and wasteful competition among agency efforts. The recent initiative of the United Nations General Assembly (through its resolution 47/199) to introduce "Country Strategy Note" is a significant initiative in this direction. It seeks to establish a mutually-agreed upon framework for a coherent and coordinated UN system response for national development efforts. In the area of urban water, as in other development areas, CSN can provide system-wide scope for dialogue and programmatic integration at country level, in light of national development priorities.

BOX 7: COUNTRY LEVEL COLLABORATIVE MECHANISMS

Purpose of CLC	Mechanisms and Tools for Collaboration
Overall sector coordination	National coordination (Action) Committee, Water Resources Management Group, National Coordination Unit (secretariat).
ESA-Government Coordination	Donor consultations, National workshops, Special topic conferences/seminars/workshops, Consultative groups/Technical support teams, Technical reviews, UNDP donor meetings, PAHO/WHO consultations.
Sector and Strategic Investment Planning	Sector investments plans, Five-year development plans, Master Plan studies, Sector studies, Rapid assessment reports, Steering Committees, National Water Resources Committees, Working Groups, UNICEF National Programme/UNDP-World Bank sector analyses.
Programme and Project Planning and Implementation	Water sector round tables, Inter-agency coordinating committees (urban/rural), Regional coordinating councils, Environmental Action Programmes, Emergency relief programmes, Project Management Committees, Information Reference Centres, Directories and manuals, Workshops and seminars, Resource and equipment sharing, NGO forums.
Issues resolution/problem solving	Task forces, Demonstration projects, Action committees.
Informal Collaboration	Water Club, School/University Batchmantes, Engineerign Institutions, Professional Associations, ESA meetings.

Source: Report of the CLC Working Group of the WSSCC presented at the Council Meeting in Rabat, September 1993

The Working Group on Country-level Collaboration established by the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council has noted that "there is a mass of qualitative evidence that successful country level cooperation leads to more effective planning, implementation and operation of sustainable water supply and sanitation and operation of sustainable water supply and sanitation systems, that it means more efficient use of available resources and can help to mobilize more resources, and the sector professionals benefit from the sharing of knowledge and experience with their counterparts in other agencies." The Working Group has outlined six possible areas of country level collaboration (Box 7) which are equally relevant for urban water. For the United Nations system of agencies, country-level collaboration provides a mechanism to establish a dialogue with key in-country sector stake-holders. For Governments, such collaboration provides a means to strengthen their capacity to manage water resources in an integrated manner.

Coordination or collaboration at country level should not, however, be seen as an end in itself; especially when institutionalized, coordination often tends to divert resources from operations to administration and tends to stifle innovation, flexibility and responsiveness. Informal and non-institutionalized cooperation among all stakeholders and actors at the country level need to be given greater attention, so that there is a genuine "demand-driven" collaboration based on shared concepts and approaches.

Agenda 21 Activities¹ Related to Water and Sustainable Urban Development

- 1. Protection of water resources from depletion, pollution and degradation**
 - (a) introduction of sanitary waste disposal facilities based on ecologically sound low-cost and upgradable technologies;
 - (b) implementation of urban storm water runoff and drainage programmes;
 - (c) promotion of recycling and reuse of waste-water and solid wastes;
 - (d) control of industrial pollution sources to protect water resources;
 - (e) protection of watersheds from depletion and degradation of their forest cover and from harmful upstream activities;
 - (f) promotion of research into the contribution of forests to sustainable water resources development;
 - (g) limitation of the intensive use of agrochemicals with a view to minimizing their impact on water resources.
 - (h) *development of new and alternative sources of water supply such as sea-water desalination, artificial ground recharge, use of marginal-quality water, and rainwater harvesting, and to consider water as a unitary resource;*
 - (i) *promotion of water conservation through improved water use efficiency and wastage minimization schemes for all users, including the development of water saving devices;*
 - (j) *generation, analysis and presentation of data and information on water resources and urban hydrology in the forms required for planning and management of countries' socio-economic development and for use in environmental protection strategies and in the design and operation of specific water related projects;*

¹ Activities shown in normal type relate to programme area E of chapter 18; those in italics relate to other chapters/programmes of Agenda 21.

- (k) *introduction of environmental impact assessment for major water resources development projects related to urban areas, combined with the delineation of appropriate remedial measures and a strengthened control of new industrial installations, solid waste landfills and infrastructure development projects.*

2. Efficient and equitable allocation of water resources

- (a) reconciliation of city development planning with the availability and sustainability of water resources;
- (b) satisfaction of the basic water needs of the urban population;
- (c) introduction of water tariffs, where affordable, which reflect the marginal and opportunity cost of water, especially of productive activities.
- (d) *implementation of resource allocation decisions through demand management, pricing mechanisms and regulatory measures:*
- (e) *promote the allocation of resources according to economic, social and environmental criteria and recognizing water as a social, economic and strategic good in its different uses. Introduce appropriate tools and models (economic/social/environmental) for water resources management;*
- (f) *Incorporate the health aspects of water supply and sanitation services to the decision making process.*

3. Institutional/legal/management reforms

- (a) adoption of a city-wide approach to the management of water resources;
- (b) promotion at the national and local level of the elaboration of land use plans which give due consideration to water resources development;
- (c) utilization of the skills and potential of non-governmental organizations and the private sector and local people, taking into account the public and strategic interest in water resources.
- (d) *development of legal and institutional frameworks and planning mechanisms of the integrated management of urban development and water resources with a watershed;*
- (e) *implementation of the principle that decisions are to be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with public consultation and the involvement of users.*

4. Promotion of public participation

- (a) initiation of public awareness campaigns to encourage the public towards rational water utilization;

- (b) sensitization of the public for the protection of water quality within the urban environment;
- (c) promotion of public participation for the collection, recycling and eliminations of wastes.

5. Support to local capacity building

- (a) development of legislation and policies to promote investments in urban water and waste management reflecting the major contribution of cities to national economic development;
- (b) provision of seed money and technical support to the local handling of materials supply and services;
- (c) encouragement, to the extent possible, of autonomy and financial viability of city water, solid waste and sewerage utilities;
- (d) creation and maintenance of a cadre of professionals and semi-professionals and semi-professionals for water, wastewater and solid waste management.

6. Provision of enhanced access to sanitary services

- (a) implement water, sanitation and waste management programmes focused on the urban poor;
- (b) make low-cost water supply and sanitation technology choices available;
- (c) base choice of technology and service levels on user preferences and willingness to pay;
- (d) mobilize and filiated the active involvement of women in water management teams;
- (e) encourage and equip local water associations and water committees to manage community water supply systems and communal latrines, with technical back-up available when required;
- (f) rehabilitate existing malfunctioning systems and correct operation and maintenance inadequacies, before investing in new systems.