



# Regional visions: the basis for collective strength and local action

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**Vision 21 offered a unique opportunity for a host of different countries to share their visions for the future, and demonstrated in the process that diversity should be no obstacle to unity.**

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**The participants developed local, sub-national and national visions and, in a ‘fountain’ of bottom-up consultations, brought all regions together to create a unique global vision.**

‘**A** clean and healthy world, in which every person lives and participates in a hygienic environment, has reliable access to affordable, safe and adequate sanitation and water for consumptive and productive use.’ This is the shared vision of the six countries that participated in local and national Vision 21 consultations in Africa and formed an input into the Africa regional vision. To achieve this, the Africa team set out one objective, ‘The placement of water supply and sanitation high up on the developmental plans of the African Governments through advocacy with national governments, sub-regional and regional groups/institutions.’

In all, 21 countries participated in the social mobilisation process of Vision 21, in which local catalysts and national and regional co-ordinators worked together during the months of January to November 1999. It was a period in which the participants developed local, sub-national and national visions and, in a ‘fountain’ of bottom-up consultations,

brought all regions together to create a unique global vision.

The countries in each region included:

Africa: Mauritius, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda  
South Asia and South East Asia: Bangladesh, India (Gujarat), Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand

Latin America: Chile, Ecuador

Small Island Developing Countries: Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, and Trinidad

Central/Eastern Europe and New

Independent States: Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan

While the challenges of the future in the water and sanitation sector are felt worldwide, they are felt more acutely in the developing world. The experience and the resources of the industrialised world are key to future efforts at problem solving. The regional and national visions offer a brief overview of the regional differences and universal similarities in water supply, hygiene and sanitation. The provision of these services is closely related to each nation’s economy and the enabling environment of policy and institutions. The crisis is most apparent in sub-Saharan Africa while Asia, the Middle East, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean are faring slightly better.

## A world of visions

The following regional visions reflect the input of participating nations in the regions. Highlights of each vision will be presented here. Many of the principles and changes drawn out from each of the regional consultations were prompted as a result of discussions on specific topics such as:

strategies for management and treatment of wastewater (domestic and industrial)



Child workers cleaning food containers at the end of a shift at the lime kilns in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Heldur Netocny/Panos Pictures



modernisation of the water supply and sanitation sector  
 rehabilitation of water supply and sanitation systems  
 regulation and certification on a regional basis  
 financial resources and planning capacities  
 changing the legal framework  
 private sector participation and decentralisation  
 environmental degradation  
 information and communication  
 water policy development  
 institutional and legislative reform  
 conditions of service  
 cost recovery  
 sustainability at local level

Similarities abound in each of the regional visions. In particular, the call for a clean and healthy world having safe and adequate hygiene, sanitation, and water supplies, is common to all regional and national visions, as is the centrality of people in the management and decision-making of the resource. While the Caribbean vision, and the African visions emphasised the importance of mainstreaming gender and gender sensitive approaches, the Asian and Latin American upheld the principles of water

and sanitation as a basic human right.

A vision for Asian societies is for all the people in Asia 'living in harmony with their environment as one earth community, interconnected with one another, upholding the principles of ethics and human rights, individually and collectively own and take responsibility to ensure an equitable and good quality of life through hygiene, sanitation and safe domestic water supply with equity for all.'

## Placing people first

This vision is enshrined in the principles of people accepting the responsibility of stewardship for the resource, water and sanitation as a human right, the need for the changes in lifestyles, behaviours and awareness raising, good governance, transparency, accountability and corruption free practices, people-centred technologies and gender sensitive, people-centred approaches.

The shared vision for Africa outlined above shares many of the principles with the Asian vision but would add financial sustainability, political will, and poverty alleviation as additional principles. The Latin American vision includes many of the key points from the other visions, but explicitly states that water is a good with an economic, social, and limited value,

Power of the collective – building a dam near Asmara, Eritrea.

**The call for a clean and healthy world having safe and adequate hygiene, sanitation, and water supplies, is common to all regional and national visions.**

that there should be payable services for drinking water and sanitation and that water and sanitation represents a point of entry into development and the elimination of poverty.

The Caribbean vision emphasises education and training, institutional strengthening, fiscal management, empowerment and regional networking as the essential next steps in achieving their vision. They highlight the role of youth in achieving their vision of 'safe, adequate, reliable, affordable water and sanitation facilities and services as a Basic Human Right; in an equitable manner through partnerships, appropriate technology, low-cost solutions, gender-sensitive approaches to development, which will ensure the enhancement of the environment and an improved quality of life.'

The shared vision for Group 27 ('From transition to a unique position!') by countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Newly Industrialised countries and the Central Asian Republics outlined existing ineffective structures and the

behaviours associated with them among the critical changes that need to occur in the sector. The core points of their vision relate to changes to the institutional and regulatory regimes, the development of the management and administrative structures and skills, involvement of civil society in decision-making processes, accessibility of new technologies, standards and measures being consistent and affordable, and improving the environment and water quality.

### A new partnership

Finally, the Industrialised Countries vision is one in which a country's population receives sufficient amounts of good quality water and has adequate sanitation so that its health and well being are not compromised by the lack of such services. In providing these services, the environment must be adequately protected and used in a sustainable way. The achievement of this Vision requires a partnership between all concerned, from the individual citizen to the government acting collectively.

#### about the author

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## Rope Pump Technology Transfer



The rope pump has proven to be a sustainable option for rural water supply, used at family and community level and delivering water to already more than 10 % of the rural population in Nicaragua with over 12.000 units installed. It is the national standard for the rural water and sanitation sector.

Favorable characteristics of this technology are:

- High social acceptance.
- High efficiency and availability.
- Easy installation, repair or maintenance.
- Local production and availability of spare parts.
- Applicable up to 60 meters depth in hand dug wells or boreholes.
- Low cost, starting at 75 US\$ for the family rope pump.

The Technology Transfer Division of the Rope Pump Company (Bombas de Mecate S.A.), the Nicaraguan Institute for Aqueducts and Sewage System (INAA), and the Swiss Development Agency (COSUDE) have joined efforts.

A series of documents are made available related to the requirements and strategy for the introduction of the rope pump and related to the production, such as the production photo manual, technical drawings, installation manual and a video.

For further information you are invited to contact us at:

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