Interim Report
of Task Force 7 on Water and Sanitation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February 1, 2004

Coordinators
Roberto Lenton
Albert Wright

Comments are welcome and should be directed to:

Kristin Lewis  at kristen.lewis3@verizon.net

Note to the reader
This Executive Summary is a preliminary output of the Millennium Project Task Force 7 on Water and Sanitation. The recommendations presented herein are preliminary and circulated for public discussion. Comments are welcome and should be sent to the e-mail address indicated above. The Task Force will be revising the contents of this document in preparation of its Final Task Force report, due December 2004. The Final Task Force report will feed into the Millennium Project’s Final Synthesis Report, due to the Secretary-General by June 30, 2005.

Disclaimer
This publication does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), its Executive Board or its Member States.
The Millennium Project is the independent advisory body to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan that is commissioned with recommending, by June 2005, operational strategies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This includes reviewing current innovative practices, prioritizing policy reforms, identifying frameworks for policy implementation, and evaluating financing options. The Project’s ultimate objective is to help ensure that all developing countries meet the MDGs.

As a United Nations-sponsored initiative, the Millennium Project proceeds under the overall guidance of the Secretary-General and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Mark Malloch Brown in his capacity as chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). Professor Jeffrey Sachs directs the Project, which brings together the expertise of world-class scholars in both developed and developing countries, United Nations agencies, and public, non-governmental, and private-sector institutions. Ten Task Forces carry out the bulk of the Millennium Project’s analytical work with support from a small secretariat based at UNDP headquarters in New York. The Task Forces and their Coordinators are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force</th>
<th>Task Force Coordinators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Poverty and Economic Development</td>
<td>Mari Pangestu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jeffrey Sachs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Hunger</td>
<td>Pedro Sanchez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.S. Swaminathan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Education and Gender Equality</td>
<td>Nancy Birdsall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amina Ibrahim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geeta Rao Gupta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - Child Health and Maternal Health</td>
<td>Mushtaque Chowdhury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allan Rosenfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB, Other Major Diseases and Access to Essential Medicines</td>
<td>Agnes Binagwaho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jaap Broekmans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paula Munderi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Josh Ruxin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burton Singer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - Environmental Sustainability</td>
<td>Yolanda Kakabadse Navarro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Melnick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - Water and Sanitation</td>
<td>Roberto Lenton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Albert Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers</td>
<td>Pietro Garau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elliott Sclar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 - Open, Rule-Based Trading Systems</td>
<td>Patrick Messerlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ernesto Zedillo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
<td>Calestous Juma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lee Yee Cheong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional information on the Millennium Project is available on its website at [www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org)
ACIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR WATER AND SANITATION: WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

Interim Summary Report
Task Force on Water and Sanitation

Millennium Project
December 2003
PREFACE

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, 189 heads-of-state adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set clear, numerical, time-bound targets for making real progress, by 2015, in tackling the most pressing issues developing countries face. Among those targets is Millennium Development Target 10 (as expanded by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development): to cut in half, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

To help the international community as a whole reach the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations established the Millennium Project, which focuses on the question “what will it take to achieve the MDGs?” Commissioned by the UN Secretary-General and the UNDP Administrator, the Millennium Project is a three-year effort (June 2002- June 2005) to identify the best strategies for meeting the MDGs. Ten thematically-orientated Task Forces made up of independent experts perform the bulk of the Millennium Project’s work, each Task Force being responsible for recommendations for achieving one or more of the MDG targets.

The Task Force on Water and Sanitation focuses primarily on how the world can join together to meet MDG Target 10. But water resources development and management is also a critical factor for meeting most of the goals, which include eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating major diseases; and improving environmental sustainability. Thus, while the bulk of the report deals with improving access to domestic water supply and sanitation services, the role of sound water management and development in meeting the MDGs as a whole is also very briefly touched on in this report. A more thorough analysis of the subject will be carried out in collaboration with the task forces on hunger, poverty and environment in early 2004, and will be included in the final task force report.

This document, the Interim Summary Report, provides an overview of the initial propositions of the Task Force, the members of which are listed in Annex 1. The analysis that brought us to this set of ideas can be found in the companion document, the Interim Full Report. The Interim Full Report addresses the following questions: why water supply and sanitation as well as water resources development and management require urgent action; where the needs are greatest; what’s holding us back; what are the essential components of action; and who needs to act. It explores both the national and international dimensions of these questions. It also examines the actions required to meet Target 10 and sketches out those needed to manage water as a resource to meet the MDGs as a whole. The paper is intended for several audiences –government decision-makers, policy-makers, experts in the water sector, development professionals, advocacy and other civil society groups, and interested members of the general public (such as students and journalists). We have sought to strike a balance between providing sufficient background information for the non-expert while focusing principally on strategies and recommendations for the future.

At this point, the Task Force is not making definitive recommendations, but rather setting forth a series of propositions. During 2004, these propositions will be discussed at the national level with key actors, and modified, refined and expanded based on these consultations as well as on
research efforts not yet complete at the time of this drafting. By the end of 2004, final versions of Summary and Full Task Force Reports, with concrete recommendations, will be produced.

One final point. Since the term “water” in the name of the Task Force embraces both domestic water supply (as in MDG Target 10) as well as water resources development and management, we will attempt throughout the report to use terminology that clearly differentiates the use of the term in each case. Thus, we will employ the terms “domestic water supply and sanitation services” or simply “water supply and sanitation” when we refer to water and sanitation in the context of Target 10. We will use the terms “water resources development and management”, “water resources management” “water as a resource” or simply “water resources” when we refer to the development and management of water for meeting the MDGs as a whole, including the infrastructure needed to manage the resource. We will only use the overall terms “water” or “water and sanitation” when we explicitly wish to embrace both domestic water supply and water resources development and management.

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is life, for people and for the planet. It is essential to the well being of humankind, a vital input to economic development, and a basic requirement for the healthy functioning of all the world’s ecosystems. Clean water supply for domestic purposes is essential for human health and survival; indeed, the combination of safe drinking water supply, adequate sanitation and hygienic practices like hand washing is recognized as a precondition for human health and for overall reductions in morbidity and mortality rates, especially among children.

Water is also critical to other facets of sustainable development – from environmental protection and food security to increased tourism and investment, from the empowerment of women and the education of girls to reductions in productivity losses due to morbidity and malnutrition. As such, increasing access to domestic water supply and sanitation services and improving water resources management are catalytic entry points for efforts to help developing countries fight poverty and hunger, safeguard human health, reduce child mortality, promote gender equality, and manage and protect natural resources. In addition, sufficient water for washing and safe, private sanitation facilities are central to the basic right of every human being for personal dignity and self-respect.

But for the world’s poorest citizens, the right to safe water supply and adequate sanitation remains a promise unfulfilled. At least 1.1 billion people[^1] lack access to safe water supply, and 2.4 billion lack access to basic sanitation, a silent humanitarian crisis that each day takes thousands of lives, robs the poor of their health, thwarts progress toward gender equality, and hamstrings economic development, particularly in Africa and Asia.

Every year, millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene. Each and every day, some 6,000 children in developing and emerging countries die for want of clean water supply and sanitation[^2]. Water scarcity, poor water quality, and inadequate sanitation negatively impact food security, livelihood choices, and educational opportunities for poor families across the developing world.

[^1]: These figures refer to people without access to an improved water source. Studies by UN-Habitat and others show that the number of people without reasonable access to a reliable safe water supply is much higher.
Yet although far more people die from or suffer the ill effects of poor water and sanitation than are affected by headline-grabbing topics like war, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction, those issues capture the public imagination – as well as public resources – in a way that water and sanitation issues do not.

As this report will show, making a difference in the lives of the poorest depends upon political commitment at the highest levels in both the North and South, truly participatory processes that unleash the energy and creativity of poor communities around the world, and adequate resources. Simply meeting the first part of Millennium Development Target 10 (to cut in half, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation3) requires reaching some 275,000 people with clean water supply every single day for the next 12 years. Though it appears daunting, meeting the target on water supply is, in fact, achievable, feasible and affordable. Reaching the sanitation target will be more difficult, and thus should be the one to which most attention should be paid. But reaching both components of target 10 – as well as improving water resources development and management as a critical factor for meeting the MDGs as a whole -- is necessary for real progress against poverty and to avoid temporary or permanent environmental deterioration.

What then, have emerged as the key elements of the propositions that we as a Task Force would like to convey at this mid-point of our work together? What do we think it will take to meet the MDGs related to water and sanitation?

In essence, the Water and Sanitation Task Force believes that it will take a combination of strong national action—guided by nationally prepared and owned strategies and action plans—complemented and supported by international action.

Our starting point is to recognize the primacy of action at the national and sub-national levels – as close as possible to where the problems and opportunities lie. The key to reaching the targets will be to mobilize people themselves, country by country, particularly in slums and other marginalized communities where access to services is lowest. Clearly, the approach must start on the ground.

Local, sub-national, and national governments have the main responsibilities for expanding access to water supply and sanitation services, and national governments must have the prime responsibility for ensuring that the needs of the poor in their countries are met. Though governments need not engage directly in service delivery, they need to set standards for service providers (including utilities and the private sector), and intervene if needed to force things to happen. The bottom line is that the starting point has to be national action – to recognize the MDGs as priority national development goals, to prepare strategies and action plans for their achievement, to open opportunities for community action, and to mobilize public awareness and support, especially for sanitation and hygiene.

That said, there is clearly a key supporting role for international agencies and actors as well as for developed countries which share the commitment to the MDGs. Multilateral institutions, bilateral donors, and international NGOs have a major, but supporting, role to play to help

---

3 The last three words reflect the expansion of this target as agreed in the Plan of Implementation of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development
countries realize _their own nationally determined goals, strategies and action plans_. In particular, they can be advocates, catalysts, mobilizers of international support, and – especially for the poorest countries far from meeting the goals – providers of additional resources. Research workers and analysts also have an important role in clarifying issues and directing attention to points confused, neglected or over-simplified.

**B. MEETING THE TARGETS:**
**CRITICAL ACTIONS AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS**

Building on the overall framework described above, the work of the Task Force to date has resulted in the following 17 propositions that we believe to be critical for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals related to water and sanitation. As noted in the preface, these propositions should be considered preliminary; they will be discussed and revised through further discussion, substantiation with targeted data gathering, and outreach to stakeholders planned for 2004.

The first eleven propositions address Target 10, while propositions 12 through 17 are relevant to water resources management and development to meet the MDGs as a whole (including target 10). In keeping with the overall strategy of emphasizing strong national action, the first 15 propositions are for action at the national level, while propositions 16 and 17 are for action at the global level.

**Propositions to Address Target 10**

Clearly, at the national level, achieving target 10 will require investments – in both hardware and software. Despite the obviously critical nature of the specific hardware and software ingredients, our Task Force has focused its thinking on some of the less obvious policy decisions that must be taken if the ambitious targets are truly to be achieved. These national policy decisions can be crystallized in the following propositions.

*Proposition 1:* National governments—including planning and finance ministries and their supporting agencies—must be convinced of the importance of achieving the MDGs in water supply and sanitation. They need to recognize that water and sanitation are essential for the success of all development.

Given the myriad development challenges facing the world’s poorest countries and communities—from the HIV/AIDS pandemic to pervasive gender inequality to grinding poverty—why has halving the proportion of people without access to water and sanitation services been singled out as critical? Arguments in support of expanding access to water supply and sanitation services have been expressed in the language of _human values_; have been founded on the notion of a _human right_ to basic services; and have also been made in _economic_ terms. Although based in different traditions, each argument leads to the same exhortation: We must act to ensure that access to basic water supply and sanitation becomes a reality for poor households around the world. Indeed, water supply advocates, policy makers, and practitioners should draw encouragement from the fact that a compelling, multifaceted case for action can be made to a range of key constituencies who need to respond in order to achieve the target.
With regard to human values, expanding access to basic services like water supply and sanitation is a moral and ethical imperative rooted in the cultural and religious traditions of societies around the world. Virtually all of the world’s spiritual and cultural systems embody values and imperatives recognizing the primacy of human dignity, equity, compassion, and solidarity. At least in principle, they exhort us to care about the welfare of others, in particular contributing our various resources toward improving the lot of the poor. Around the world, these principles have formed the basis of action for volunteer, non-profit, and/or religious organizations—often operating on a shoestring budget, hope and commitment—that extend water supply and sanitation services to poor households. Many effective interventions at the community level meld economic and social development with spiritual growth and bonds of communal solidarity, thus mobilizing the enthusiasm and engagement of their communities. The Millennium Development Goals themselves are built around a shared understanding of what we as human beings owe to one another at community, national and international levels. They are informed by principles of fairness, justice, and the obligation of the individual to pursue the mutual good that characterizes religious and ethical systems the world over.

The idea that the global community ought to ensure the provision of basic water supply and sanitation to poor households has been taken one step further, by deeming access to these services to be a human right. An extensive body of international agreements has recognized the right to life, health, well-being, and protection from disease. As water supply and sanitation are fundamental to achieving these goals, it has in the past been argued that access to water and sanitation is a ‘derivative right’ emanating from existing covenants. More recently, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) explicitly acknowledged that access to water is indeed ‘a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights;’ it also recognized access to water as a basic human right.\(^4\) Observing the right to water implies responsibilities not only for governments and the international community, but also for households themselves. Indeed, experience has shown that the most sustainable community-level interventions are characterized by significant community investment of labor, other in-kind resources, and user fees in the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities.

Finally, improving access to water supply and sanitation is justified on economic grounds, as households with improved services enjoy: reduced morbidity, mortality, and expenditures on water-related disease; greater educational and productive opportunities for women and girls; availability of increased volumes of potable water that can be used to start or expand small enterprises; and increased disposable household income. At the national level, improvements in water supply and sanitation coverage can mean reduced expenditures on health care, increased demand for agricultural products, and greater domestic and international tourism opportunities.

**Proposition 2:** Countries must focus their efforts and resources where needs and challenges are greatest, such as urban slum areas, peri-urban areas and rural areas.

In many cities, provinces, and countries, surprisingly little is known about the characteristics of households that lack access to water supply and sanitation services. Such basic assessments should be undertaken such that the obstacles to expanding access are understood and relevant

---

\(^4\) “The human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights... States parties have to adopt effective measures to realize, without discrimination, the right to water, as set out in this General Comment.” ECOSOC General Comment No. 15, E/C.12/2002/11, 26 November 2002.
financial, policy, and planning instruments are devised to respond. In most countries, the
greatest challenge to increasing water and sanitation service coverage will be in dense urban
slums, peri-urban zones, and rural areas.
Existing resources must be better used. Making the most of such resources is a prerequisite to
reaching the goals. Based on improved information, governments at national, regional and local
levels must reallocate their scarce existing resources towards achieving the Millennium
Development Goals. Subsidies must promote basic services for all rather than luxury services for
some. Ensuring the most cost-effective use of resources and their allocation to highest priority
investment needs requires a thorough restructuring of local and national public expenditures.

**Proposition 3:** A focus on service delivery, rather than only on construction of facilities,
must be at the center of efforts to reach Target 10.

The Millennium Development Goals necessarily focus on measurable targets such as the
proportion of people without access to water supply and sanitation. It is important to remember,
however, that water supply and sanitation are services, not simply facilities. The former is a
process—requiring the sustained involvement of government, service providers, and
households—while the latter is a product that can be delivered in a one-off project. Adopting a
service orientation requires attention to financial flows and institutional arrangements for
operations and maintenance, as well as incentives for providing safe, reliable services to all
customers (including the poor) on a continuing basis. This approach is being contemplated in
Brazil, where government has proposed subsidizing service for the poor contingent not on the
supply of physical infrastructure, but rather on the supply of reliable service.

**Proposition 4:** Donor agencies and governments must adopt a “learning by doing”
approach, combining financing for capacity building and for capital investments.

Over the past decade there has been an undue focus on providing funding for infrastructure and
service delivery only after capacity building and institutional reform have been undertaken. This
strategy was, at times, the result of donor policies that view capacity building and policy reforms
as pre-requisites for investment. However, in a number of cases, the acquired skills atrophied
before the investments materialized. In other cases, expectations for private-sector financial
involvement in service delivery following institutional reform were never realized. By following
a concurrent and “learning by doing” approach, a balance can be achieved between the
sequencing of capacity building policy reforms and investments.

**Proposition 5:** Devolution of authority for water and sanitation service delivery to the local
level should always be accompanied by corresponding devolution of financial authority as
well as the provision of technical and managerial support to build local capacity.

Decentralization of authority and responsibility to local institutions that lacks the requisite
technical, managerial, or financial capacity and authority for planning and service delivery can
have the effect of hindering, rather than accelerating, the expansion of sustainable services.
Where feasible, partnerships with local businesses and NGOs can be used to help build capacity
in local governments and move the service-expansion agenda forward. Civic organizations are
also valuable resources for promoting accountability through facilitation of information
dissemination and citizens’ exercise of voice and demand for services. Also important is the
careful balance of authority between local institutions and the center—for example, with respect to setting standards and subsidy policies—such that the interests of low-income households are served. Central governments should take explicit measures to ensure that decentralization of service provision is not captured by local elites; it should rather create incentives for local governments to serve the poor.

There are strong links between local government reform and reforms in water supply and sanitation sectors. It may well be that the provision of water supply and sanitation services can be pivotal for strengthening local governments. An emphasis on service provision (Proposition 3) implies a greater focus on ongoing management which, in the water supply and sanitation sector, is often more effective when management is decentralized to the lowest appropriate level.

**Proposition 6: Governments must recognize that the financial burden of serving the poor cannot be borne by the poor alone.**

In most areas without access to service, the financial resources for meeting the MDGs must come from outside the communities concerned. Solidarity is absolutely necessary. Hence part of the additional funding must come from the people already served, using appropriate cross-subsidies; part may come from national solidarity, and a part from international donors. Nevertheless, even in the poorest communities, beneficiaries can contribute through various forms of in-kind contributions. Such contributions engender a sense of ownership, better commitment to proper care and maintenance of provided facilities, demand of accountability from service providers, and enhanced prospects of sustainability of service.

Where there is low coverage, applying the principles of solidarity to expand revenues from existing consumers will be very difficult; hence the need to turn to other sources of investment to extend water supply and sanitation service delivery. In situations with higher coverage, cross-subsidies can be an important and feasible option for ensuring affordability to all. In general, subsidizing access (connections in network systems, for example) has proven to be a more transparent way of targeting the poor than subsidizing consumption.

**Proposition 7: Governments and utilities must increase cash flows as a basis for attracting investments for expanding and maintaining services.**

In many situations, consumers are willing to pay where they can hold providers accountable. Households and communities are capable of making responsible decisions about investments in sustainable water supply and sanitation and will pay for them if service providers can be held responsible and accountable for the quality of the service. Willingness to charge by governments and service providers is often the limiting factor for adequate revenue generation and resource mobilization, particularly in those countries where consumers currently pay only a fraction of the cost of services they receive.

Only service providers that generate sufficient cash flow can operate and maintain present systems properly and establish the credit worthiness necessary to attract investments for expanding services. Closing the revenue gap depends both on reducing costs and increasing revenues. Improving revenue collection from all consumers is a matter of survival for most service providers. In many cases, simply charging for what is delivered and collecting bills in a
timely manner will substantially increase cash flow and credit worthiness. Governments must set an example by paying their own water bills.

The geographical unit for financial sustainability (municipality, province, country) needs to be defined. Pricing policy needs to be structured to meet social, technical and economic objectives.

**Proposition 8: Sanitation must receive at least the same priority as water supply in planning, policy making, and budgeting.**

“Water supply and sanitation,” occasionally joined by “hygiene,” are words that often appear together in speeches and pronouncements, and indeed this trio belongs together as a cornerstone of public health as well as social and economic well-being. Sanitation and hygiene, however, somehow disappear during the planning, policymaking, budgeting, and implementation phases, while the lion’s share of effort and resources are allocated to water supply. This reality reflects the often low political commitment to sanitation; low effective demand by users for sanitation; strong cultural and personal taboos against discussing human wastes and their disposal; the lack of an appropriate institutional home for sanitation; and the simple fact that expanding access to sanitation is often more costly and technically difficult than expanding water supply services. Given that many of the health and environmental benefits from improved sanitation accrue to the community at large, rather than to individual households, community institutions have a vested interest in expanding access to sanitation. They should be supported by sound national policies that help to improve individual and public perception of such vested interests and, thereby, help overcome the constraints and push the sanitation agenda forward.

Financing for sanitation cannot be treated in the same way as financing for water supply. In many cases, basic sanitation deserves and will require government financing. Why? Because, as stated above, the private benefits from investments in basic sanitation services are low in comparison with the much higher public benefits from such investments (e.g. improvements in public health and environmental quality). As a result, perceived private benefits from basic sanitation are low; thus demand for such services and willingness on the part of households to pay for them are correspondingly low. This justifies subsidies for basic sanitation, especially for the poor in priority target areas. This is in contrast to water supply facilities at the household level, which have very high perceived private benefits to the users themselves, thereby triggering a greater willingness to pay and justifying appropriate cost recovery (from those who can afford it).

**Proposition 9: The power of social marketing should be exploited, particularly with regard to expanding access to sanitation and promoting hygienic behaviors.**

Achieving the MDG target for sanitation is as much a matter of unlocking demand at the household level as it is of increasing supply. Unlike water supply, where service improvements usually start at the public level with community institutions underpinned by national policy frameworks, sanitation coverage often starts at the private level and depends largely on investment and behavioral decisions made at the household level, often entirely outside of government. The challenge for policymakers and planners is learning how best to use public resources to influence these household decisions toward the public good. The low demand for sanitation documented throughout the developing world is, in some cases, the result of a limited understanding of the links between sanitation, hygiene, and health, not
only at the personal level, but also at the public level. In other cases, however, households with limited resources have simply prioritized other expenditures over improved sanitation. Education and social marketing, aimed at both individuals and public authorities, are thus keys to expanding access to sanitation services. Design of sanitation facilities must take into consideration effective marketing principles, including research for technology innovation and development that responds to user preferences, beliefs and practices; demand for different technical options; motivations for change; and capacity to maintain facilities in the long term. As in all sound marketing practice, sanitation promotion should take into account the distinct needs and preferences of different consumer groups, such as women and children.

Rather than continuing to pursue education campaigns focused exclusively on the private health benefits of improved sanitation and personal and environmental hygiene, innovative marketing strategies are needed that capitalize on basic human emotions such as pride, shame, privacy, convenience and competition. In addition, where culturally, technically and financially feasible, marketing campaigns might promote the use of human waste (excreta and urine) as resources to be harnessed for productive purposes (e.g., agriculture).

In virtually all cultures, marketing is most effective among younger populations. Hygiene education campaigns must prioritize schools, where students can be targeted both as beneficiaries and as agents of behavioral and attitudinal change within their families and their communities. Including hygiene education in curricula, along with the provision and maintenance of improved sanitation facilities at school premises, are essential elements of marketing campaigns in schools.5

**Proposition 10:** A wide range of technological options and service levels should be made available in order to facilitate the provision of safe, reliable water supply and sanitation services.

Related to Proposition 3, it is important to maintain a focus on the objective of expanding access to adequate, reliable water supply and sanitation services, rather than insisting that particular technological options be provided to unserved households and communities. Allowing a broad choice set of technologies allows communities with limited capacity to install water and sanitation infrastructure that they want, are willing to pay for, and can maintain in the long term; it can also lower per-capita costs, thus permitting limited resources to bring service to more households. Hand pumps, improved wells, rainwater harvesting, installations using volunteer labor, community maintenance, and the promotion of small-scale independent service providers are examples of ‘lower-tech’ approaches that may be particularly relevant and cost-effective for many rural and peri-urban areas. In some urban settlements, small, locally operated water supply and sanitation systems may be less expensive to construct and maintain than large, centralized systems.6 Where restrictive technical standards impede these kinds of innovative solutions, they should be re-evaluated and, where feasible, made more flexible to allow for an array of

---

5 In many parts of the world, it is imperative that separate facilities be provided for girls and boys, particularly when girls have begun menstruating. Without gender-specific facilities, many parents simply will not allow their girls to attend school.

6 In this “unbundling” of service provision, a city is divided into zones, each with its own independent water supply, wastewater collection, and treatment system. These smaller systems are often simpler to operate and cheaper to install and maintain, thus both reducing the “lumpiness” of investment and removing technological constraints to improved access. See Wright, Albert M 1997. “Toward a Strategic Sanitation Approach: Improving the Sustainability of Urban Sanitation in Developing Countries” UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program; page 21.
appropriate technical options. A careful balance should be kept between the “maintainability” and reliability of technologies. In congested settlements and in areas where sullage volumes are high, the need for collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater, with or without excreta, becomes increasingly imperative. The use of compact sewage treatment facilities that can be used close to residential areas would make it possible to capture the advantages of decentralized sewerage systems.

**Proposition 11:** Monitoring and evaluation systems should focus on access to services, not on infrastructure in order to provide decision makers with a basis for their decision making.

Monitoring and assessment systems for access to water supply and sanitation services need to be active and adequately resourced from the sub-national to the international level. Equally important, following on Propositions 3 and 9, these systems need to employ valid and reliable measures of access to water supply and sanitation services. Historically, monitoring has focused on the presence or absence of particular water and sanitation infrastructure; information about the functioning, use, and reliability of systems was typically not collected. At this time, however, there exists the opportunity to improve and strengthen monitoring such that a more accurate picture of access to water and sanitation services can be obtained. More specifically:

- Access to services, rather than to infrastructure, should be at the center of monitoring efforts. At a minimum, monitoring should assess whether infrastructure is functioning and provides reliable service. The parameters that matter most to users—including the convenience, reliability, sustainability, and adequacy of water supply and sanitation services—should be measured over time. Equity of access (e.g., by women and the poor) must be undertaken to assess the impacts of investments on different segments of society.
- Monitoring systems should employ a sample survey approach (in lieu of, or in addition to, self-reporting methodologies) such that policy and planning can be based on more objective and accurate information regarding access to water and sanitation services.
- Collected data should not only be analyzed and reported to national and international institutions, but should also be organized and shared in a user-friendly manner with NGOs, civic groups, and the public at large.

**Propositions relating to the development and management of water as a resource to meet the MDGs as a whole**

The Task Force has six additional propositions that aim at meeting Target 10 and promoting sound water development and management in support of the MDGs as a whole. The first four are for action at the national level, while the last two are for action at the global level.

---

7 A thorough analysis of the actions relating to the development and management of water as a resource to meet the MDGs as a whole is currently being carried out in collaboration with the Task Forces on Hunger, Poverty and Environment through the “Synergy Initiative”. The results of this analysis will be included in the final Task Force Report.
**Proposition 12:** The vision of Integrated Water Resources Management needs to be translated into tailored solutions to specific countries as a base for achieving the MDGs as a whole.

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is an approach to coordinating policy and action in the development of water, land and related resources to optimize economic and social welfare without threatening the long-term sustainability of environmental systems. Its salient features, as enshrined in the “Dublin Principles”, are applicable not only to the management of water as a resource, but also to its utilization for such purposes as domestic water supply and sanitation, irrigation, power generation and environmental sustainability. Water and its coordinated development, management and use, including investments in water infrastructure, is a crucial pre-requisite for achieving the MDGs as a whole, especially those related to reducing poverty and hunger, improving environmental sustainability and health conditions and making progress toward gender equality.

A target was set in Johannesburg requiring countries to have formulated IWRM plans by 2005. The 2005 target was loosely defined in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation and needs to be clarified. Noting that IWRM is an ongoing process, the Task Force suggests that a realistic approach is to seek to ensure that an IWRM process is begun by 2005 in all countries with an appropriate institutional responsibility in place. Importantly, IWRM processes need to give attention to development as well as management issues, recognizing the key role of investment in infrastructure and the vast deficiencies in infrastructure endowments in the poorest countries most at risk of failing to achieve the MDGs.

The MDGs are intrinsically interlinked. Most water interventions impact on the achievement of more than one MDG, and approaches that fully exploit the potential for synergies need to be promoted. For instance, using wastewater to fertilize and water crops can advance Target 10, the poverty goal, and the hunger goal, as can landless pump programs, such as those introduced by Proshika and the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Supplying water to households for drinking and for productive purposes, such as home gardens, can advance the poverty goal as well as help achieve Target 10. And school lunch programs, combined with latrines and hygiene education, can help advance the education, gender, hunger and water supply and sanitation goals simultaneously.

**Proposition 13:** Countries need to develop national development planning and budgeting processes that focus on achieving the MDGs.

The Task force has noted that current development planning and budgetary processes in many developing countries are not yet aligned with the achievement of the MDGs. There seems in many cases to be a contradiction between the aspirations of the MDGs and the planning and budgeting process. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs) provide a useful framework for prioritization and resource allocation in IDA countries, though a review of the system as a whole would appear to be timely.

There is often an inherent tension in the PRSP process: should countries outline in a serious way what it would truly take to meet the MDGs or should they outline what they believe they can achieve within likely levels of development assistance? For the poorest countries most off-track for meeting the MDGs, it would appear to be crucial to make transparently clear the gap between
what they could achieve with likely levels of development assistance and what they really need in order to achieve their goals.

At the same time, until developing countries see concrete signs that donor countries are taking the Monterrey commitments seriously and are willing to go beyond current levels of assistance, there is reluctance to take a more optimistic approach. Preparing PRSPs that show both what could be achieved with likely assistance amounts and the “upreach” required to meet the MDGs could offer an effective compromise. The UN Common Country Assessment – a key national-level planning instrument for the entire UN system – should also look realistically at needs in the sector in light of the MDGs.

In terms of national-level budgeting processes, countries need to ensure sustainable financing when making investments in the sector: no system should be built unless it is known how it will be financed - not just the initial capital investment, but also the costs of operation and maintenance. While this principle may seem obvious, its application may be one reason why more progress is not made towards the achievement of the MDGs since in many countries, the availability of funds (at household and national level) is not adequate for operations and maintenance and, in the absence of other sources, governments are reluctant to commit the investments required.

A credible arrangement for the sustainable flow of funds to cover operating expenditure is therefore essential: payment for services by those who can afford them is a crucial element of any system to create a stable operating framework and to contribute to subsidizing service to those who cannot pay. Where the needs of the poor are not being met because available public resources are being captured by the rich and powerful, appropriate reforms will be required.

Budgeting processes also need to be transparent. Governments need to prepare budgets with proper discipline, and allocations towards the water sector from national resources. Reduction of corruption at all levels, including in the donor organizations and international agencies, is key.

Priority should be given to ensuring cost-effectiveness and efficiency in the use of scarce public resources. In this regard, it is critical that existing systems are maintained. Community-based and micro-financing may be a starting point, building a domestic financing system in the process. Governments can also develop financial models for support to non-governmental and community-based organizations, which can often deliver services at lower costs. However, in many communities and countries there are simply not sufficient financial resources to meet basic needs for water supply and sanitation services without action that improves local incomes and/or increased external financial assistance.

**Proposition 14**: Countries need to incorporate analysis of gender and water into policy recommendations and programme design in all areas of water resources management and development.

The involvement of both women and men in water supply and sanitation services provision and integrated water resources initiatives increases project effectiveness. It enhances project results

---

8 A pre-requisite, of course, is that PRSPs should be fully developed and owned by the countries concerned. This requires capacity building.
and improves the likelihood of sustainability. In other words, a project is more likely to achieve what planners hope it will achieve if women are active participants and decision-makers. In addition, community action and social mobilization around the provision of basic social services like water have been shown to be a valuable entry point for promoting women’s empowerment. Having a leadership role in community management of water supplies, for instance, can increase women’s social capital as well as their bargaining power within the household.

The core assumption of a mainstreaming strategy is that gender differences and inequalities are relevant in all water discussions. Furthermore, in many cases the analysis of gender perspectives in relation to water resources must be context-specific. It is important to ask in each specific situation how and why gender issues are relevant. A starting point is the consideration of the differences and inequalities between and among women and men, such as the interrelationship (and visibility) of productive and domestic uses of water; women’s and men’s access to and control over water and other key resources linked to water, such as land, credit, and extension services; and gender biases within public institutions working on water resources.

**Proposition 15: Innovations in both hardware and software should be promoted in strategic areas.**

In the area of water and sanitation, there are many proven technologies that have already been adopted and a great deal of energy and resources has gone into their development. Nevertheless, technological advances as well as innovation in institutional and financial mechanisms are still needed in key areas. Examples include:

- Robust and cost-effective techniques to use saline water for both agriculture and domestic use, which will greatly expand the availability of the resource.
- Technologies aimed at advancing the achievement of multiple MDGs, including in particular efforts to improve “crop per drop”, which help advance progress towards the hunger goal while at the same time reducing demands on scarce water resources.
- Appropriate technologies and technical standards for basic sanitation, sewerage and sewage treatment. Many developing countries have been using technologies, design approaches and technical standards that are inapplicable to their conditions. For example, they have been using technologies like activated sludge treatment processes that are far more complex than trickling filters and waste stabilization ponds. Lower-cost technologies that are technically simple and cheaper to operate and maintain need to be developed. Many developing countries are also using standards for conventional sewerage developed over a century ago. These standards do not reflect advances in hydraulics or in developments in such areas as sewer cleansing technologies and result in unduly high costs for installing water-borne sewerage, and more appropriate guidelines for the design of sewerage and sewage treatment plants are needed.
- Effective, affordable and simple to operate sewage treatment plants that can be located close to residential areas to enable the “unbundling” or decentralization of sewerage systems in large cities.
- Innovation in drainage and solid waste disposal in parallel with improvements in access to basic sanitation. There is a great need from the perspectives of municipal and local governments to address the drainage and solid waste disposal problems they face. Feasible approaches to the planning and incremental implementation of
programs for the broader range of sanitation services in response to effective demand and financial capacities of governments are greatly needed.

- Urban wastewater management in large urban agglomerations. Beyond the household and neighborhood levels, the largest unsolved financing problem is the expansion of wastewater treatment to serve large urban areas and protect the surrounding environment. Currently, only a small fraction of wastewater in cities in developing countries is treated but urban wastewater treatment, is much more expensive than simple access to safe water and household sanitation. A long-term strategy for urban wastewater management in the large urban agglomerations in the developing world is a high priority.

Since many national, regional and international institutions are engaged in various dimensions of technological innovation in water and sanitation, there would be benefit in creating an “international strategy forum” to prioritize work on the key technical obstacles to meeting the goals. Several existing institutions would appear to be well placed to act as a vehicle for such a forum.

**Propositions for supportive actions at the international level**

The Task Force has two additional propositions addressing the essential components of supportive actions needed at international levels to achieve the MDGs, as outlined below. Both are relevant to the achievement of Target 10 as well as to the management of water as a resource for the achievement of the MDGs as a whole.

**Proposition 16:** Official development assistance (ODA) for water and sanitation must be fully aligned towards the achievement of the MDGs, and countries doing the right things should not be unduly constrained by the lack of financial resources.

This proposition implies using a program approach, targeting the poor, and employing innovative financing mechanisms. It means ensuring that the poorest countries that cannot meet the MDGs with their own domestic resources get the additional financing that they need to meet the goals. It means increasing not only the quantity but also the quality of development assistance. And it means that no successful program or project should be stopped because of lack of external funding.

Countries with the lowest levels of human development and that have made the least progress over the past ten years are stuck in poverty traps, bypassed by economic development because of structural impediments like geography, climate, the burden of disease, rapid population growth, heavy debt burdens, dependence upon primary commodity exports, and the inequities of the global current trade regime. For these countries, all the governance reforms, enabling policy

---

9 In fact, many cities in the industrialized world that have neglected maintaining their systems could benefit from such innovative approaches and strategies.

10 The need for such innovation was one of the major points made by the World Commission on Water in its report of March 2000. Noting that innovation requires incubation, they recommended the creation of an innovation fund that would help promote environmentally and socially desirable technical and institutional innovations.

11 One dimension of the quality of development assistance relates to the need for donors to be committed for the long-term. In particular, donors should not discontinue support for projects without assurance that other sources of sustainable financing are in place.
environments and social mobilization efforts in the world will not address the fact that domestic resources are simply inadequate to support a meaningful expansion of water supply and sanitation services. Without a significant expansion in ODA levels, these countries simply cannot meet the goals. This point is illustrated by the fact that South Africa’s success in significantly increasing access to water supply and sanitation was only possible because of the significant additional resources that were made available as result of cross-subsidies.

A recent OECD/DAC\textsuperscript{12} report showed that only 12% of the total aid to the water sector in 2000-2001 went to countries where less than 60% of population has access to an improved water source (which includes most of the LDCs), and that aid in the water sector is concentrated in certain countries -- with the 10 largest recipients receiving 48% of total for period 1997–2001. One implication therefore is that donor countries should focus their efforts in regions and countries where the needs are the greatest – i.e., in Africa and Asia. For the 60 or so poorer and least developed countries, more programme aid in the short and medium-term will be essential, from the main international and donor agencies, from the regional development banks, and from bilaterals. Here the challenge is not only an increase in the quantity of aid, but also some substantial speeding up of the process for making aid available and some simplifications in the procedures, which too often at present make obtaining aid a nightmare of negotiation, multiple administration and management systems and resultant delays.

A related issue is that official aid for the sector should be used more efficiently and in a more coordinated manner, including harmonization of procedures and joint projects. The evaluation of the Water Supply and Sanitation decade at the end of the 1980s already showed that donors do not often coordinate and in fact frequently compete. A recent OECD/DAC report shows that aid for water sector has declined since the middle of the 1990s, and funding is more and more dispersed (more donors giving lesser sums of money).

One means to address the issues of inadequate financial resources, poor donor coordination and shifting priorities and provide adequate, sustained financial and technical support for the achievement of the water and sanitation MDGs would be through regional-level multilateral donor mechanisms. Regional Water and Sanitation Facilities could provide funds for both sector investment and capacity building in the poorest countries. Just such a facility – the African Water Facility – is at an advanced stage of development, and will be hosted within the African Development Bank. While a “copy-cat” approach in other regions that have very different international dynamics should be avoided, countries in other regions might take the lead in calling for mechanisms for funding investments and capacity building that meet their needs. Some characteristics of the African Water Facility would seem to provide useful pointers for similar facilities elsewhere -- including being housed in a regional bank with UN Regional Office support and liaison, access on a self-selection basis, and use of a “learning by doing” approach -- combining capacity building, reforms, and investments towards the achievement of the MDGs for water and sanitation.

To ensure inclusion of and priority for the poor, the vulnerable and the remote in improved services, ODA should be targeted within countries to programs that benefit the poorest. Subsidies should focus on access rather than consumption and should help to “crowd in” community and private resources through output-based-aid-type mechanisms. Projects that will

\textsuperscript{12} Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
primarily serve the middle and upper income groups should be excluded from ODA but countries should be assisted to develop mechanisms through which they can pay the cost of their services both through improving the management of public utilities and by supporting the development of local financial markets.

Countries other than those discussed above will themselves need to mobilize the bulk of resources, mostly from public resources, though in a few cases local or international private sector funding may be forthcoming. The ability of countries to mobilize such funding depends enormously on the extent to which their economies achieve dynamic growth – itself requiring a diversity of international support far beyond anything at present available in trade, debt relief and aid.

Since focusing on where the needs are greatest will often imply working in countries with inadequate policy structures relating to water and sanitation, development assistance will need to simultaneously tackle reforms and investment. Actions to enhance institutional capacity and policy reforms and funding for infrastructure should come together as a package rather than the latter being predicated on the successful completion of the former – ODA must support the “learning-by-doing” approach rather than insisting upon a sequential, conditional approach. Allowing reforms and investments to take place simultaneously will help address the tension between the desire to have reforms in place before investments and meet the MDGs by the deadline of 2015. This parallel approach could be made contingent upon a credible program of investments and a commitment (at the highest level) to reforms simultaneously.

The bottom line in terms of increased international assistance to the poorest countries is that two things are required: a realistic assessment in each country of what is truly required to meet Target 10; and the willingness on the part of donors to then allocate the necessary funds. In the water sector, donors and developing countries alike have become accustomed to identifying what can be done within the confines of existing aid allocations. To meet the goals, this process must be turned on its head, with identification of needs and demands coming first and appropriate allocations being made second.

In sum, therefore:

- Donor countries must meet their side of the Monterrey compact to provide official development assistance, thus expanding aid for investments in water and sanitation as well as other critical sectors.
- Donors must increase efficiency of aid through better coordination
- Official Development Assistance must be channeled to places where the potential for impact on the MDGs is highest.
- Countries that need additional resources to meet the MDGs related to water and sanitation need to make sure that demand for investments in these sectors is effectively expressed, so as to overcome the current apparent mismatch between supply and demand.

**Proposition 17:** There is a need to revamp the global institutional structures for supporting water resources and sanitation issues.
If the MDGs are to be reached, the way in which the international community is supporting work in the area of water services and sanitation must be improved and aligned around the MDGs. This international community includes the UN system, the larger multi-lateral development system including the Development Finance Institutions as well as bilateral donors and broader organizations of civil society.

The critical international need is to strengthen focus on and commitment to the MDGs among all the key international actors – the UN agencies themselves, the major bilateral donors, international NGOs, regional organizations and the private sector. There are a number of steps that should be taken toward this end.

On the **institutional arrangements within the UN system**, the Task Force recognizes that, within this system, a large number of agencies are involved in water resources and sanitation without there being an official “lead agency” (as, say, FAO is for agriculture and WHO is for health). In 2000 the UN agencies took an important step towards system coordination by launching the World Water Assessment Program, whose World Water Development Report (WWDR), the first of which was issued in March of this year, is playing an important role in presenting a clear picture of the state of the world’s water every three years. A more recent but equally significant development has been the establishment, by the United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB), of UN-Water as the inter-agency mechanism for follow-up of the WSSD water related decisions and the MDGs concerning freshwater, and CEB’s request to UN-Water to prepare its terms of reference and modalities of work, including arrangements for progressive and effective participation of non-UN actors.

Given these developments, the Task Force believes that the time is right for the UN system to take steps to adequately gear itself towards a sharp and strong focus on the MDG water goals. While the Task Force does not advocate the creation of a new “water” agency, it proposes that four specific steps be explored:

- The agencies that are a part of UN-Water might develop a game plan for sustainable support for the MDG water goals that replicates the United Nations’ overall four-pronged strategy for helping the international community as a whole reach the Millennium Development Goals, and which includes (1) the MDG reporting processes, which focuses on the question “where do we stand?”; (2) activities to mobilize political support for the Millennium Declaration; (3) operational support through national-level activities to help individual countries implement policies necessary for achieving the Millennium Development Goals; and (4) substantive analyses, which addresses the question “what will it take?”.

- In the same vein, the terms of reference of UN-Water, now being drafted, might include specific reference to the measures that will be taken by UN agencies (with the assistance of non-UN actors) to (1) report on progress towards the goals, (2) mobilize political support, (3) provide operational support, and (4) undertake substantive analyses.

- To address the need to give strategic direction to individual member agencies and to hold them accountable for their performance, an informal group of senior officials able to commit their agencies might be created. One example that comes to mind is the Task Force on Child Survival, which drove the immunization campaign globally and then disbanded when its task was accomplished.
• Under the direction of UN-Water, the World Water Development Report might be considered as a mechanism for periodically reporting on progress made in the area of water resources development and management towards achieving the MDGs as a whole, complementing the role that the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) is currently playing as the official monitoring mechanism for the MDG targets on domestic water supply and sanitation services. The publishing of the WDDR in 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015 would provide an ideal series of time-checks along the road to 2015.

There is also a need to enhance monitoring and assessment at the global level. As noted earlier, the Task Force believes that monitoring needs to be improved at national and sub-national levels. But there is a global and regional dimension to monitoring, too, since achievement of the MDGs is a global commitment.

One issue that requires analysis relates to the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP), which has largely been funded by its two lead agencies, UNICEF and WHO, and whose mandate appears difficult to achieve given its limited resources. There is a clear need to strengthen the JMP as the key global mechanism for monitoring access to water supply and sanitation, and to provide it with the substantial resources necessary to enable it to do its job effectively and truly monitor progress toward the MDGs on Water Supply and Sanitation. Some important principles here include:

• The focus must change from measuring infrastructure provision to measuring sustainable access to safe and adequate services, and from collecting provider system data to collecting data on actual service delivery according to agreed norms.
• National strategies and monitoring indicators should be respected; but to promote comparability of data, a few common parameters that can be readily measured at the household level should be identified and tested by the JMP for use in collecting standardized household data on access to safe water supply and basic sanitation.
• Access should be monitored at both national and sub-national levels, using sample survey techniques to complement quantitative national statistics of infrastructure provision.
• The JMP should promote a stakeholder approach, encouraging national governments to cooperate with local as well as international civil society agencies, including representatives of user groups.
• The JMP should play a more active role in promoting capacity building for monitoring purposes at national and sub-national levels.
• The JMP and national governments must adhere to agreed programs for the publication of monitoring data in a consistent format at national and international levels; reports should be publicly available to promote transparency.

A second issue, which is broader and more far-reaching and on which the Task Force has reflected at length, relates to the ways in which the international community might achieve high-level strategic focus that is not trapped by institutional interests. How can the key stakeholders -- the world leaders who pledged to the MDGs -- ensure that their agenda is faithfully taken
forward by those working in the implementing institutions, and is not hijacked by institutional interests?

At least three factors suggest that a group that could stand a little back from existing organizations and consider the effectiveness of their programs would be helpful in advancing progress toward the MDGs:

- In the existing international institutions, both within the UN system and beyond, there is weak oversight and accountability, and the institutions themselves tend to set, implement and evaluate their own agendas.
- Virtually all existing recurring reports on water concentrate on “what the world should be doing” or “what my institution is accomplishing in this area”. There is little or no sustained high-level attention to questions such as “What has to happen for there to be real change?” “Is it happening or not?”, and “If not, why not?” A periodic, focused, high-profile report that would eschew advocacy in favor of pointed and focused recommendations would, at a minimum, be useful to the world leaders who pledged to the MDGs, to the senior officials trying to sway other senior officials, and to those who try to shape government policy at all levels.
- Although bodies such as the JMP and the World Development Report are concerned with monitoring progress towards the outputs for the water targets, there is no mechanism for monitoring inputs – not only support from external donors and international financial institutions as is done by OECD, but also commitments for investments and financial, institutional and policy reforms at national and sub-national levels. A way of interpreting output results in the light of such inputs would fill an important need, as well as help sustain international commitment to the MDGs and to the water targets in particular.

At the same time, there are a number of factors that point in the direction of caution and suggest that the establishment of an independent group should be examined with great care. These include, for example:

- Given the inherently political nature of the water resources and sanitation sector, is it indeed possible to achieve the needed independence of such a group in practice?
- Since the time and effort involved in the establishment of any such group might be considerable, would it not be preferable to direct such resources to in-country action rather than to global oversight, especially since water is not a global commodity but a very local one? 13
- Could the establishment of such a group point to the need for other MDGs to have their own monitoring mechanisms, and thus lead to an inappropriate proliferation of such institutions?
- Would the establishment of a new group be a disservice to existing output monitoring mechanisms such as the JMP, and would it therefore not be preferable to focus on strengthening existing mechanisms instead?

13 Note, however, that regional or global monitoring promotes peer pressure on performance by Governments.
Against this background, the Task Force welcomes the recent bold decision of the United Nations Secretary General to establish a “Panel of Eminent Persons” on Water and Sanitation. To assist in the implementation of this decision, the Task Force Coordinators have prepared a set of specific suggestions for the Terms of Reference of the Panel.
ANNEX 1. MILLENNIUM PROJECT TASK FORCE ON WATER AND SANITATION

Note: Nationalities of task force members (other than international civil servants) are indicated in brackets

**Ingvar Andersson**
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

**Margaret Catley-Carlson** (Canada)
New York

**Ivan Cheret** (France)
International Consultant, Paris

**Kamla Chowdhry** (India)
Vikram Sarabhai Foundation, New Delhi

**Bill Cosgrove** (Canada)
World Water Council

**Jennifer Davis** (USA)
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**Manuel Dengo**
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

**Halifa Drammeh**
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

**Gourisankar Ghosh** (India)
Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)

**Mi Hua** (China)
John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

**Hans Olav Ibrekk** (Norway)
Ministry of the Environment, Norway

**Sir Richard Jolly** (UK)
Institute of Development Studies, Sussex

**Torkil Jonch-Clausen** (Denmark)
Global Water Partnership

**Roberto Lenton** (Argentina, Co-chair)
The Earth Institute at Columbia University

**Mike Muller** (South Africa)
South Africa Department of Water Affairs

**Dennis Mwanza** (Zambia)
Water Utility Partnership, Dakar

**Ravi Narayanan** (India)
Water-Aid, London

**Noma Nyoni** (Zimbabwe)
Institute of Water and Sanitation Development, Harare

**Kalyan Ray**
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

**Frank Rijsberman** (The Netherlands)
International Water Management Institute (IWMI)

**Jamal Saghir**
World Bank

**David Seckler** (USA)
International Consultant, Greeley

**Andras Szollosi-Nagy**
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

**Vanessa Tobin**
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

**Albert Wright** (Ghana, Co-chair)
Africa Water Task Force

**Gordon Young**
UN World Water Assessment Programme