



A Daily publication of the Sustainable Development Issues Network (SDIN)  
at the Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

# Youth asks: Which new CSD?



**As day two of the New CSD opened, regulars at the CSD negotiations from the last decade were slipping back into their old habits. Keeping the energy and optimism alive to respond to the call for new approaches at CSD, the Youth present at CSD 12, delivered a firm statement urging delegates to rejuvenate their minds. Here is what the Youth said to CSD:**

“Interactive discussions have been introduced in the new format of CSD 12 as a tool to increase the participation of Major Groups along with governments. However most of the honorable delegates were not present this morning during the interactive discussion. Therefore the interactive discussion turned out to be an “old fashion” multi-stakeholder dialogue.

We, as youth are wondering what you, the governments, are trying to do? Why do governments stick together in one room avoiding a discussion with us? This behavior

gave us the feeling that you are not ready yet to discuss the issues with us. Together we can achieve more! This should be the basic thinking and drive during the review session; we can all contribute to implementation and progress in our own way. Obstacles in your view could be lessons learned in our view. It is time to open up to each other and learn from each other. We believe that a redefinition and new understanding of interactive work is urgently needed and absolutely necessary in order to make the new workprogramme of CSD successful!”

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## Meeting schedule

WEDNESDAY 21, APRIL 2004

- 9.00 - 10.00, NGO Organising Partners
  - 10.00 - 11.00, NGO Steering Committee
  - 11.00 - 12.00, Freshwater
  - 12.00 - 1.00, Earth Values
  - 1.00 - 2.00, Indigenous Peoples
  - 2.00 - 3.00, Youth
  - 3.00 - 4.00, Africa
  - 4.00 - 5.00, Sust. Consumpt & Product.
  - 5.00 - 6.00, Sustainable Communities
  - 6.00 - 7.00, Trade Unions
  - 7.00 - 8.00, Caucus Coordination
- All meetings in Conference Room B

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Visit the SDIN morning strategy meetings for reports from working groups, information sharing and strategic discussions. SDIN Morning Meetings are open to all NGOs.

Meetings are held in Conference Room B at the United Nations Building.

*Articles reflect the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SDIN Network*

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**The Freshwater caucus, having negotiated among their members and consulted other NGOs, came up with the following issue focused statement delivered at the first interactive session at the new CSD.**

**THIS WAS THEIR SPEECH:**

The political profile of water and sanitation was raised in Johannesburg, but significant numbers are yet to benefit as a result. This CSD needs to critically address the question as to why current efforts are not delivering in order to change this report. We as CSOs present today, contribute to the review process by describing road blocks encountered, emerging and worrying trends, but also through highlighting positive cases as our suggestion on how collectively, we can improve performance.

Governance at the international level has been adversely affected by a leadership that changes its initiatives by dressing water, sanitation and other development targets in new and fashionable terms. The result is loss of valuable momentum due to repeated and wasted planning efforts, low synergy between stakeholders on the ground and reduced accountability on international commitments with each new 'vision' cycle.

We are concerned about the absence of clear national and international leadership surrounding public/private partnerships models that that have had mixed to negative outcomes



Rosemary Rop, of Maji na Ufanisi  
*the presenter of the speech*

and are still under careful debate in the water sector. Today water is defined as a service in the WTO/ GATS framework providing opportunity for stealthy pursuance of bilateral fronted private interests in developing countries. In addition the newly established water and sanitation advisory panel to the Secretary General has favored the ears of corporates, over CSOs, those with proven experience in reaching the poorest and 60% currently unserved in urban settlements and rural areas.

At national level implementation has been flawed. There has not been sufficient management support to ensure that the PRSP deliver on communities' priorities. Vertical accountability is emphasized over

coordination and information sharing between stakeholders, government extension workers and NGOs providing services at the level of the district or local government. Communities, including women and young people also need sufficient and current information for co-ordination and performance monitoring. The responsibility of progress is to ensure that services are of a quality required and take issues of equity and sustainability into account. Positive is how Chile for example is developing a National Pollutant Registry System that will empower communities by providing accurate information on environmental contaminants. The Uganda Performance Measurement Framework where 10 Golden indicators were developed with NGOs and other stakeholders prioritizes equity in distribution of water supply to ensure that the poorest are not being disadvantaged. In contrast to this CSOs in certain Asian countries within this CSD session have sited incidents where government withholds information on water quality, to avoid responsibility.

Domestic water supply accounts for 8% of current water demands compared to agricultural and

industrial needs, and draws attention to the necessity for IWRM plans that place logical management and healthy eco systems at the centre. Positive lessons of sustainable water use have been demonstrated in eco village models initiated by NGOs where waste is transformed into renewable energy and domestic water is channeled to restore the environment. The value of the eco system approach to sustainable development is the calculated benefit of protecting the Nakivubo wetland in Uganda, which through nature, can do the task that would cost \$2 million p.a. in traditional sewage purification services.

The progress made on closing the financing gap for water and sanitation MDGs is a critical review indicator. To date donors have not honored their ODA targets as made in Monterrey. Uganda is one country that prioritized water in its debt relief monies and national revenues, and SA demonstrated increasing allocations to reach the poorest; most developing countries however have decreased budget allocation to water and sanitation e.g. Malawi in 2001/2 to 2003/4, saw a reduction of 37%. An analysis of the partnerships launched since WSSD demonstrates that no new significant resources have been mobilized outside from governments or from the flouted private sector.

We draw your attention to positive cases that demonstrate innovation in financing and the validity on building on local solutions.

- The case of integrated watershed being upscaled in development in Maharashtra, India as undertaken by WOTR
- Brazil, the positive case of scaling up of rain water cisterns, targeting 1,000,000 low cost appropriate water facilities in partnership with local banks, government and NGO resource mobilization in 2003 and ongoing.
- The promotion of sand dams and mountain catchment in Northern Kenya through the Pastoralist Integrated Support Program that recharge ground water, reduce soil erosion and improve the livelihoods of 10,000 pastoralists between 2002 -2004.
- Sustainable financing of household sanitation through the promotion of partnerships between MFIs, CSOs and government in Bangladesh
- The organization of slum dwellers to access urban water supply and improve sanitary conditions undertaken by CSOs such as ITDG and Maji na Ufanisi in Kenya, improving the livelihoods of 45,000 residents in Kibera, Kangemi and Kiambui informal settlements. Bio gas pilots on human waste reuse for methane production and consequent lighting and cooking options are further cases that

successfully demonstrate sustainable development strategies in informal settlements.

The Okavango River Basin 'Every River Has its people' in Southern Africa where stakeholders including government and parastatals successfully enhance livelihoods and at the same time protect the shared international river resource.

NGOs believe that increased support should be given to community based and driven initiatives that recognize leadership of women and the energy of an educated youth. We believe that scaling up and support to community level service providers in plans, strategies and national budgets are key answers to improved water and sanitation MDG performance.



# Trade Unions Draw the Line on Water Privatisation

**A**lthough the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the CSD is only a few days old, ownership and management of water systems is already providing one of the major lines of demarcation for delegates. While trade unions are taking the lead on this issue, several other major groups and governments are also expressing concern about the commodification and privatization which is taking place.

According to David Boys, representative of the Public Services International, and trade union spokesperson, the debating points could not be simpler.

“Everyone must have secure access to safe water and sanitation,” said Boys. “It’s a basic human need, and on this basis, we reject privatisation of water services, sanitation, and water resources in all forms, including public-private partnerships (PPPs).”

“It is too readily assumed that privatisation brings efficiency because of the dynamics of competition and market forces. However, competition doesn’t work in the case of the water sector, because it is a service delivered in a natural monopoly. Market dynamics don’t work either, because people have no choice whether to use water; it can’t be substituted, and price

pressures can only have influence once one has met essential needs.

“The imposition of privatisation can be partly traced to lobbying by private corporations, including here at the United Nations. More fundamentally, national donors are following the lead of the World Bank and the IMF, which often impose privatisation as a condition for funding. In too many cases, borrowing countries are forced to privatise without full democratic debate, overriding local democracy and national policies.

“Privatisation is also promoted as a way of reducing government borrowing and debt, based on the idea that capital investment and operations and maintenance costs will be provided by the private sector and recouped directly from users. The problem, of course, is that private interests won’t invest unless they are guaranteed a healthy return - profit rates above 15% - by governments. These guarantees are government liabilities, but don’t appear as ‘debt’..

“This problem won’t be resolved without innovative financing of the public sector. New government debt calculations must be developed to allow greater borrowing for essential public services, especially water and sanitation infrastructure. IFI’s and donors must initiate mechanisms to facilitate such borrowing and cease supporting of deceptive ‘off-book’ accounting of

public guarantees for corporate profits. Finally, we must accelerate debt relief for poor countries.

“Too many governments are retreating from their basic obligations to supply essential public services. Water, for example, receives insufficient political attention because its infrastructure is invisible, and the citizens in greatest need are often amongst the poorest.

“It is time we put pressure on governments to deliver water services to all citizens, with popular participation in decision-making. Our answer to PPP’s is public-public partnerships, with more resources and political profile to give utilities the incentives to participate.

“Water is a social and ecological necessity and as such must be held in the public domain,” says Boys. “We recognize that reform of public services is essential, but workers will only be partners in any such process where there is respect for worker rights.”

#### For further information:

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## Consensus statement from more than a hundred NGOs to the new CSD.

After having laboured and discussed in sessions stretching from Sunday morning until Tuesday afternoon, the following statement received consensus agreement, and will be read out to the new CSD as the NGO contribution to the general discussion.

NGOs reaffirm that water, sanitation and human settlements is about meeting people's basic human rights and needs. NGOs stand poised and ready to contribute our good practices and expertise to facilitate identification and removal of the obstacles to ensure fulfillment of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Our assessment of the SGs "Overview of Progress Towards Sustainable Development" (E/CN.17/2004/2) is that the international community have little to show by way of having met goals and targets. Progress "mostly in terms of process" is hopelessly inadequate when billions of poor people lack access to safe water, basic sanitation and shelter - the cornerstone of health, social, cultural and economic well being. "Mixed outcomes" are unacceptable in any report particularly when we have the resources and technology and when there are many good practices already in place. Therefore, this CSD has to address the question of why current economic and governance structures are not delivering on commitments already made.

In reviewing the main factors undermining sustainable development at the local, national

and international levels, NGO's highlight the following:

1. Despite concerted efforts to address the underlying development problems, in just two decades the number of people living in poverty has more than doubled. As many now acknowledge, global poverty has a woman's face as the majority of people living in poverty are women. The lack of access to free, safe water for household use and sanitation, particularly in rural areas, undermines the attainment of MDGs pertaining to water and health.
2. The global political reality of wars, armed conflict and militarisation of the world destroys human settlements and diverts resources and political will from implementing sustainable development.
3. The current economic framework works against achievement of sustainable development.
  - Globalization, largely funded by the IMF and the World Bank, with its market approach to development and the push for privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation as well as other socially irresponsible policies emphasize profit over people

increasing the gap between the rich and poor.

- NGO's strongly reject the trade liberalisation of water under the WTO/GATTs
- At a time when ODA still falls far below the 0.7% target, these scarce resources are too often NOT spent on poverty reduction, but on inappropriate and even harmful development interventions, such as large-scale hydropower and privatisation of essential services imposed upon by donors. Mass, forced evictions and destruction of houses without due process of law must be stopped.
- 4. Earth's fragile environment has been neglected as a result of the overdue emphasis on economic growth and preoccupation with shortterm goals and security concerns.

This CSD session is providing us with an opportunity to address one of the biggest crises of the 21st century. Water, sanitation and human settlements must be addressed in a holistic way. Resources must be made available to communities so as to fully capitalize sustainable development and enable people to remain in their communities. The WSSD objectives of poverty alleviation,

*NGO Statement, continued on page 8...*



## Human Settlements Caucus Statement to be presented during the interactive sessions at the new CSD

The NGO signatories to this statement, representing civil society organizations working at community levels around the world, have committed to support the recommendations of Agenda 21 (1992), HABITAT II (1996), and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (2002). We agree that sustainable human settlements, adequate shelter, and basic services for all are goals that can only be achieved through progressive policies that realize the universal Right to Housing, access to land, secure tenure, and provision of infrastructure.

Illegal and forced evictions of more than 100,000 people each year are an obstacle to slum and squatter improvement. The impact of militarism and war on human settlements is particularly destructive. Not only is the built infrastructure destroyed but also vast resources are reallocated from basic human needs.

Privatisation of public or social housing and infrastructure

creates shortages and displacement in many countries.

The number of homeless and those inadequately housed continues to increase, deeply impacting the physical, mental and spiritual health of more than a billion people. In the coming decade this trend will account for more than 120 million additional slum dwellers, outpacing the Millennium Development Goal for slum improvement and eradication. Governments, civil society, and organizations involved in the construction of housing must therefore increase their efforts. In particular, governments and the private sector must stop mass forced evictions and the illegal destruction of houses.

Critical to the improvement of human settlements is overcoming the dramatic and tragic situation of poverty that affects vast numbers of urban dwellers, especially slum and squatter inhabitants. We need time-bound goals to ensure that all people have easy access to land, safe drinking water, adequate

sanitation, affordable transport and new and renewable energy sources even for traditional, hand made houses located in slums and squatter settlements. All of these necessities require financial support, individual and NGO initiatives locally, nationally and internationally. Security in human settlements is a prerequisite to sustainable development. Growing spatial and social segregation in cities contributes to social violence, which cannot be solved by security measures alone, but through improvement of neighbourhood and public space and programs of social integration and transformation. We stand to work with governments and community organizations to provide sustainable livelihoods for women and men, especially experienced older persons and underemployed youth, to extend prototypes and best practices, training, advocacy and

*continued on next page*

### NGOs THAT AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT INCLUDE

ICOH (International Commission on Occupational Health)  
 CHEC (Commonwealth Human Ecology Council)  
 ARC\*PEACE (Architects Designers Planners for Social Responsibility)  
 AARP (American Association for Retired Persons)

GHF (The Global Housing Foundation)  
 The Salvation Army  
 HIC (Habitat International Coalition)  
 American Psychological Association  
 International Council of Women  
 Caribbean Policy Development Centre  
 ECLI  
 International Union for Land Value Taxation

Canadian International Development Agency  
 Integrative Strategies Forum  
 CREUMHS (Cohort for Research on Environment, Urban Management and Human Settlements)  
 Indigenous Environmental Network  
 Rotary International  
 Environment Liaison Centre  
 International

job training opportunities to slum dwellers in urban and peri-urban areas.

Enabling national policies are necessary and critical to effective participation of all people to engage in the decision-making processes to plan, implement and monitor activities directed to their benefit. We urge the development and support of active local groups and particularly the application of information and communi-

cations technology that can facilitate these activities. Governments and civil society can facilitate and ensure the same access and full participation to indigenous peoples with regard to activities and measures as accorded to all citizens in conformance with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In response to the expansion of urban slums, NGO's have provided programs for land registration and tenure, affordable housing

empowerment of the world's poor. Governments and private sector institutions need to support and legitimize the production of housing and community facilities and to work with local organizations and community groups to define, plan, implement and fully fund the actions required to implement the Millennium Development Goals.

## SIDE EVENT

**Dr. Anna K. Tibaijuka, (see picture) United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT will talk on:**

### **Empowerment of Urban Youth "Challenges and opportunities for Youth Partnership with UN-HABITAT"**



Other speakers will include Professor Ian Douglas of Manchester University, Representatives of Youth Organisations and UN Agencies.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Strategy for engaging the Youth in the work of UN-HABITAT; Youth, Cities and Governance and Youth and Livelihoods

**TIME:**  
**Wednesday,**  
**21 April 2004**  
**1:00 –2:45 P.M.**

**PLACE:**  
**United Nations**  
**Church Centre**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> floor East 44<sup>th</sup> Street**

This event is organised by UN-HABITAT, in collaboration with the Human Settlement Caucus and ANPED, the Northern Alliance for Sustainability.

*NGO Statement, continued from page 5 ...*

the promotion of health and the prevention of diseases, including AIDS, sustainable production and consumption patterns, and protecting the natural resource base must always be respected. Within these objectives, NGO's stress the need to integrate water, sanitation and human settlements with safe, decent and sustainable employment and to ensure the participation of women and indigenous peoples in decision making and implementation.

NGOs have, in our Discussion Paper, put together case studies and illuminated several successful examples which are cost effective and easily implementable on the ground. With respect to

resources NGOs request that a fraction of military expenditures be transferred to the implementation of poverty eradication and sustainable development which are the basis of real human security. Also that the CSD engages actively to ensure appropriate funding through the Ffd and other global consensus building processes.

We know the facts, we have agreed on the targets, we do have the resources. The investment we need is political will. We are ready to work with all stakeholders on implementation and we call for the highest level of responsibility both individually and collectively to ensure the survival of the human species and our planet.

## CSD HUMOUR



## Contribute to Taking Issue

To publish articles in this newsletter, please submit your text before 5.00 p.m. to one of the SDIN facilitating organisations' staff.

### SDIN Facilitating Organisations:

ANPED, The Northern Alliance for Sustainability

TWN, Third World Network

ELCI, Environment Liaison Centre International

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