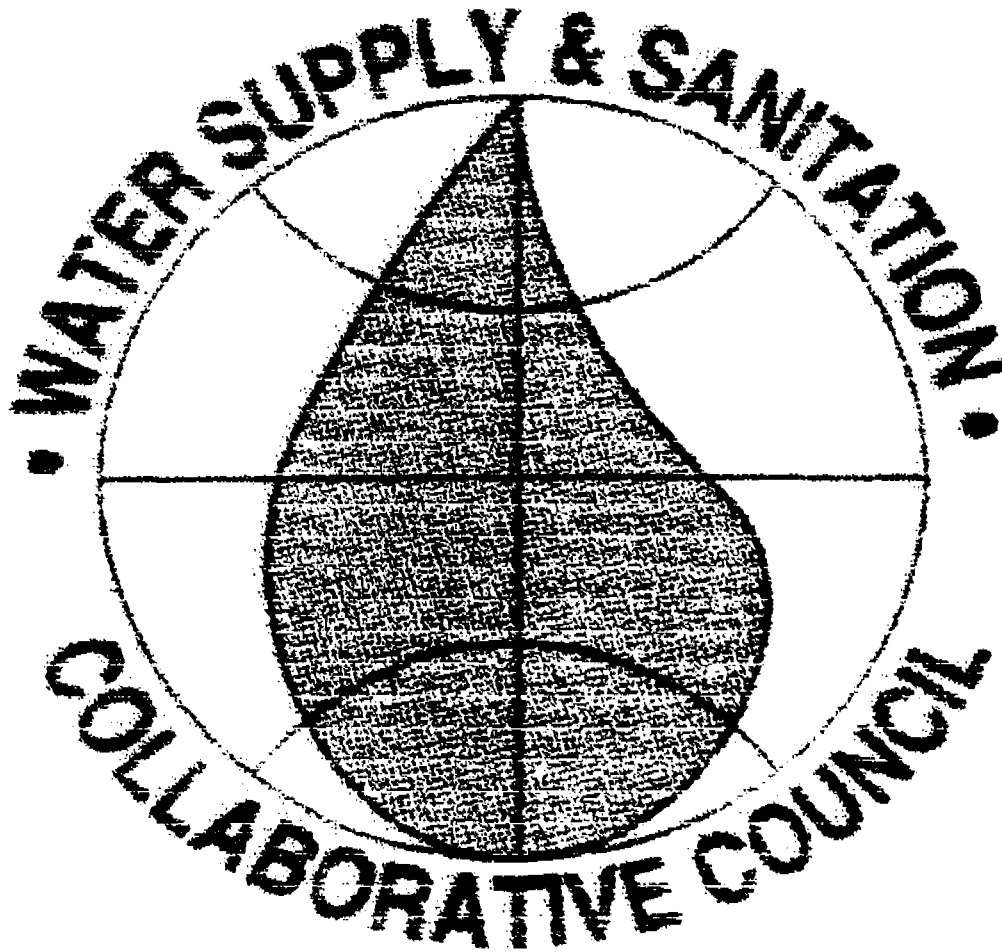


Collaborative Council on Water and Sanitation



AFRICA WORKING GROUP MEETING

28 - 30 October 1996

*Africa Hall
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

UNITED NATIONS
INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE CENTRE
FOR COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY AND
SANITATION (IRC)

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING

WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL SECOND MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA, ADDIS ABABA, 28TH - 30TH OCTOBER, 1996

Specific Meeting Objectives:

- Identify the main issue areas
- Identify gaps and areas of emphasis for the Africa Working Group
- Identify potential linkages between other initiatives and the Africa Working Group
- Develop Addis Ababa Plan of Action for the Africa Working Group

Opening Ceremony

The meeting was officiated by the Honorable Minister of Water Resources, Ato Shiferaw Jarso and chaired by the UNICEF Representative for Ethiopia Mr. RNN Tuluhungwa. Others present at the opening ceremony included the Honorable Minister for Information and Culture, HE Ato Michael Chamo and the Honorable Minister for Urban Planning, HE Ato Haile Assegede, a representative of the Economic Community for Africa, Mr. Pierre Traore, the Coordinator of the Africa Working Group, Ms. Ebele Okeke, the UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, Ms. Z. Ketsella Bendow, and the Executive Secretary of the Collaborative Council on Water Supply and Sanitation, Mr. Ranjith Wirasinha.

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

Mr. Patrick Kahangire opened this session by thanking the Africa Working Group core members for their efforts in coming up with a set of objectives and terms of reference during the meeting in Harare which have set the stage for the present meeting. Following self-introduction by participants, the Coordinator of the Africa Working Group, Ms. Ebele Okeke presented the objectives and terms of reference of the Group (Annex I):

Presentation of Africa Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Review

Mr. Len Abrams, a consultant and member of the Africa Working Group who was contracted to conduct a sector review of water supply and sanitation in Africa presented the results of his work and findings. He reiterated that his report should be seen as a working document which was carried out within a very limited time with the objective of getting a cross-sectional status of the water supply and sanitation sector in Africa. The report should be viewed in this perspective and not as an attempt to present an exhaustive review. He also indicated that any negative or judgmental elements in the

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report were not intended and that one element of the report, the Questionnaire, is still not completed.

Summary Findings--- The water and sanitation sector in Africa is very varied and characterized by both success and failure. A striking observation is the commitment of people within the sector throughout the continent who often work in very difficult circumstances and, particularly in the case of public servants, with very little reward.

There is general acceptance that the engagement of communities at grassroots level is key to the success and sustainability of development programs. Acceptance of the notion of community engagement, however, is very different than genuinely implementing such a policy. Similarly, there was general agreement that water supply and, in some cases sanitation, enjoyed a high political priority but this is not generally translated into adequate budget allocations and implementation support from politicians.

The main areas of difficulties in the water supply and sanitation sector observed during the country visits and through the questionnaires were as follows:

- Lack of follow through on political support for the sector
- Lack of finances
- Frequent institutional changes in government structures
- Lack of policy
- Lack of human resources
- Poor conditions of service in the sector, particularly for government employees
- Different approaches by NGOs and development agencies in the same country
- Increasing stress on water resources and the environment in many parts of Africa
- Inefficiency and excessive bureaucracy
- Lack of collaboration within the sector between all players
- General conditions of poverty and weak economies
- Lack of genuine handing over of responsibility and authority to local levels
- Emphasis on physical delivery and technology without adequate local training and awareness creation
- Ethos of entitlement on the part of people " the government must provide"
- Problems with local payment for services and economic sustainability

This list of difficulties should not mask the effort and commitment made by many people on the continent with a real concern for those who suffer because of a lack of adequate services. Many of these difficulties are inter-linked. The objective of this exercise is to attempt an honest and genuine review of these difficulties.

(Lens Abrams transparencies)

The following issues were raised during the discussion session:

- The sector review should also address the issues of equity, should place greater emphasis on National Development Processes, and should conduct a comparative analysis of various sectors, involving a wider audience in information gathering.
- Finance and human resources management are critical elements to improvements in the sector. The constant changes/transfers of highly qualified staff for political reasons leads to low moral and depletes the sector of valuable resources.
- Because of inadequate resources and time limitations, the review covered only sub-Saharan Africa, with emphasis on urban, peri-urban, and rural water supply and sanitation programmes.
- Many countries are still not aware of the existence and of the role of the Collaborative Council and the Africa Working Group. The need to educate political leadership in African countries on the existence and role of the Council and Group.
- The UN-System-wide Initiative on Africa has provided an opportunity to re-visit the sector and to come up with programmatic approaches to effect change.
- Greater focus should occur on community empowerment as an effective tool for change and sustainable development in the sector.
- The Africa Working Group should consider information exchange as one of its main objectives.
- The Working Group should continue to be truly "African", both in its processes and actions.
- As a starting point, and in order to galvanize support for its activities, Africa Working Group should consider select a few countries for pilot implementation, before going to scale. Water and sanitation cannot be separated from other social sector development issues. A multi-sectoral approach is therefore essential.
- The Africa Working Group should be a collaboration/coordination body to other agencies/organizations

Presentations from other agencies/organizations on linkages

The WHO gave a presentation on the Africa 2000 Initiative and suggested the following possible linkages with the Africa Working Group:

- AFRICA 2000 could provide health inputs to the Group
- Africa Working Group could be an advisory task force to AFRICA 2000
- Africa Working Group should consider holding its next meeting, back-to-back with the 2nd AFRICA 2000 Regional Consultation

- **AFRICA 2000 and Africa Working Group could work together within the framework of the UN-System-wide Initiative on Africa**

The World Bank endorses the concept of an African Initiative and will fully support. Both the Bank and OAU pointed out the need for an integrated approach to the sector. The Bank has completed strategy development on its Water Resources Development and is now moving into the implementation phase and suggested that the Africa Working Group could link up with this process in an advisory capacity. The Bank is also supporting the Global Water Partnership and the Africa Working Group could establish linkages through this partnership.

SIDA was undergoing restructuring, but reiterated that the Agency will continue to place high emphasis on water supply and sanitation. SIDA will continue to work through and with the Global Water Partnership. They suggested that gender equity be addressed and highlighted in the sector review.

UNEP suggested that the Africa Working Group should not only be a "working Group" but also an advisory body. Suggested that collaboration could be through the UN System-wide Initiative on Africa and that the Working Group should consider identification of information gaps in the sector as one of its tasks.

UNICEF noted that water/sanitation is a political issue and that it must be politicized in order that it may receive the desired political attention and support. UNICEF suggested that the decreased resource mobilization in the sector may be due to low absorptive capacity of African Countries. UNICEF is locating a Senior Project Officer in Nairobi, beginning January 1997 to facilitate efforts. The Africa Working Group should consider selecting a few target countries and concentrate on a few strategic issues that UNICEF will be able to fully collaborate.

The ECA views the UN System-wide Initiative on Africa as the umbrella for all other initiatives. Water supply and sanitation is an important component of this initiative. ECA could promote the activities of the Africa Working Group through its annual publication "MAJI", an information Bulletin on Water Resources Activities in Africa.

TASK GROUP SESSION

The participants were divided into three Task Groups to review the main issues and to identify activities for the Africa Working Group to undertake. The following issues areas were used as the basis of discussion of each group:

- The political profile of the sector
- Low resource allocation
- Capacity building in the sector
- Community management and community based development

- Collaboration between all role players in the sector and between the various sector initiatives
- Water policy development
- Conditions of service of sector professionals
- Cost recovery and sustainability
- Field cooperation

The three Task Groups were given the following instructions:

- Review the list and add any additional issues which may be missing
- Prioritize the list in terms of the most important issues facing the water supply and sanitation sector in Africa.
- Choose the three most important issues for the Africa Working Group to address. These may not be the top three items on the above priority list).
- Make recommendations of specific "do-able" follow up actions for the Africa Working Group to undertake, within the next 6 months, on the three issues chosen in 3 above.
- Revisit and make suggestions on the scope of action of the Africa Working Group
- Discuss and make recommendations for an Addis Ababa Action Plan for the work of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council in 1977.

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

The three Task Groups reported back the results of their deliberations during the second plenary session.

Task Group A

Prioritizing issues

New issues added

1. Operation and maintenance
2. Information, communication and coordination
3. Monitoring and evaluation
4. Water for integrated development

Prioritization

1. The political profile of the sector
2. Low resource allocation
3. Water policy development
4. Institutional reform
5. Capacity building in the sector
6. Operation and maintenance
7. Water for integrated development

8. Community management and community-based development
9. Collaboration between all role players in the sector and between the various sector initiatives
10. Cost recovery and sustainability
11. Conditions of service of sector professionals
12. Monitoring and evaluation
13. Field cooperation
14. Information, communication and coordination

Africa Working Group Action Areas

1. The political profile of the sector
 - 1.1 Low resource allocation
 - 1.2 Water policy development
 - 1.3 Cost recovery and sustainability
 - 1.4 Institutional reform
 - 1.5 Conditions of service of sector professionals
 - 1.6 Water for integrated development
2. Collaboration between all role players in the sector and between the various sector initiatives
 - 2.1 Information, communication and coordination
 - 2.2 Field cooperation
 - 2.3 Monitoring and evaluation
3. Community management and community based development
 - 3.1 Operation and maintenance
 - 3.2 Capacity building in the sector

Scope of action of the Africa Working Group

In all of the following actions of the Africa Working Group, African expertise should be used:

- Advocacy
- Commissioning of studies
- Advisory services
- Promote networking
- Information collection and dissemination, particularly African information
- Promote African capacity and the use of African expertise (African Resources)

Activities of the Africa Working Group - "do-ables"

- 1) Political profile of sector
 - Core group to work out a high-level advocacy strategy

- Compile list of meetings through OAU and others, both at continental and regional levels
- Prepare advocacy materials, based on the Sector Review and the Addis Ababa meeting
- Promote the Africa Working Group as an advisory group to other initiatives
- The Africa Working Group should develop a strategy regarding private sector engagement
- Promote gender considerations at all levels in all activities
- The use of gender advocacy groups to promote water and sanitation

2) Collaboration

- Establish an Africa Working Group WWW page on the Internet through "Inter Water"
- Compile and disseminate a list of initiatives current in Africa
- Review ongoing initiatives of ESA and bilateral agencies to identify overlaps, successes and gaps
- Complete, publish and disseminate the Sector Review Report

3) Community management

- Compile and disseminate existing information/guidelines regarding community management
- Promote community management advocacy to top political level

Proposed Addis Ababa Action Plan

- Core group to work out a high-level advocacy strategy
- Compile list of meetings through OAU and others, both at continental and regional levels
- Promote the use of tools produced by the Council of relevance to Africa
- Prepare advocacy materials, based on the Sector Review and the Addis Ababa meeting
- The Africa Working Group should develop a strategy regarding private sector engagement
- Promote gender considerations at all levels in all activities
- The use of gender advocacy groups to promote water and sanitation
- Establish an Africa Working Group WWW page on the Internet through "Inter Water"
- Compile and disseminate a list of initiatives current in Africa
- Complete, publish and disseminate the Sector Review Report

Comment: It should be borne in mind that the Africa Working Group is made up of a small number of busy people with very limited resources.

TASK GROUP B

Issues facing the water supply and sanitation sector in Africa (in order of priority)

1. Community management and community-based development
2. The political profile of the sector

3. Water policy development
4. Collaboration between all role players in the sector and between the various sector initiatives
5. Cost recovery and sustainability
6. Field cooperation
7. Capacity building in the sector
8. Low resource allocation
9. Conditions of service of sector professionals
10. Information exchange and communication *
11. Institutional reform
12. Population growth pressures
13. Linkages with other sectors *
14. Private sector participation *
15. Gender *

*Additional issue areas identified by the Task Group

Three most important issues for the Africa Working Group to address:

1. Political profile
2. Collaboration
3. Water policy development
4. Information exchange and communication

Proposed Work Plan for the Africa Working Group

1. Political Profile
 - Communicate with OAU, ECA, SADC, ECOWAS to draw political attention to sector needs.
 - Develop and Africa Working Group collaborative council statement on Africa
 - Africa Working Group become an advisory body to African initiatives
 - Africa Working Group should promote the establishment/strengthening of inter-ministerial/agencies steering committees at national level
 - Updating on national leaders/sector professionals on the work of the collaborative council
 - Advocate meeting of sector ministers in Africa
 - Finalize and disseminate Africa sector review report
2. Collaboration
 - Examine the recommendations of the Collaborative Council working group on country level collaboration and promote as appropriate
 - Convene an Africa consultative forum
 - The Africa Working Group to become advisory body to African initiatives
 - Hold next Africa Working Group meeting in conjunction with another sector meeting in

Africa (Africa 2000)

3. Policy Development

- Exchange information on national policies
- Prepare a framework for national policy development
- Prepare report on constraints to policy development
- Recommend that all CC work recommendations - relevant to Africa

4. Information Exchange and Communication

- Provide input to existing information networks (hard copy and electronic)
- Compile an inventory of sector institutions in Africa
- Disseminate ACC report on water and sanitation in Africa

Addis Ababa Plan of Action

First Priority (immediate Action)

- Communicate with OAU, ECA, SADC, ECOWAS to draw political attention to sector needs.
- Finalize and disseminate Africa sector review report
- Develop and Africa Working Group collaborative council statement on Africa
- Africa Working Group become an advisory body to African initiatives
- Africa Working Group to become advisory body to African initiatives
- Convene an African Consultive forum
- Hold next Africa Working Group meeting in conjunction with another sector meeting in Africa (Africa 2000)
- Recommend that all C.C working groups identify policy recommendations - relevant to Africa
- Provide input to existing information networks (hard copy and electronic)
- Disseminate ACC report on water and sanitation in Africa

Second Priority

- Updating of National leaders/Sector professionals on the work of the collaborative council
- Advocate meeting of sector Ministers in Africa
- Examine the recommendations of CC working group on Country level collaboration and promote as appropriate
- Prepare a framework for national Policy Development
- prepare report on constraints to policy development

Third Priority (longer term action)

- Africa Working Group promote the establishment/strengthening of inter-ministerial/Agency steering Committees at National level

- Exchange information on National policies
- Compile an inventory of sector institutions in Africa

TASK Group C

Activity 1

The group reviewed the 10 issues in the consultant's report handed to the groups for the exercise. The following modifications were made to the 10 issues

1. Issue No. 1 was modified to read "Low political commitment and well"
2. Issue no.2 was not modified
3. Issue no. 3 was modified to read "Human Resources Development capacity Building of communities in the sector".
4. Issue no.4 was not modified
5. Issue no.5: Add country Level" at the beginning.
6. Issue no.6 was modified to read "Water Supply and Sanitation policy development and a mechanism for coordination".
7. Issue no. 7 was not modified
8. Issue no. 8 was modified to:
Poor conditions of service and logistics in the sector.
9. Issue no. 9 was not modified
10. Issue no. 10 was modified to read "Field cooperation, coordination and harmonization"

Five more issues were added to the list. There are:

- Gender mainstreaming
- Water quality management
- Cost effective Appropriate Technology
- Social Capital Aspects
- Documentation and dissemination of best practices

The most important issues for consideration by the Africa Working Group were identified as:

1. Low political commitment and Will
2. Gender mainstreaming and
3. Documentation and determination of best experiences including a directory of players.

Three main recommendations were made on "do-able" actions by the Africa Working Group in the next six months. These are:

- The Working group should finalize the Africa Sector report for submission to the WSSCC which in turn should promote a Pan-African Ministerial meeting in 1998. The report should

- emphasize social capital and Gender mainstreaming.
- To document and disseminate best practices in water Supply and Sanitation
- To compile and disseminate a directory of players in the Water and sanitation Sector by the end of 1998.

The Scope of the Africa Working Group

The group agreed that the Africa Working Group should continue to be a non-political and independent group of experts which should provide a platform for sharing experiences and expert advice in the sector. The Africa Working Group should also use other platforms for success e.g. Africa 2000, UN wide initiative on Africa etc.

Activities to be included in the Addis Ababa Plan of Action

- Africa Working Group Consultant should try to reach 100% response to the questionnaire which is part the Africa Sector Review Report.
- Finalize the Africa Sector Review Report so that it will be submitted in time for the global Forum meeting in Manila in 1977.
- Identify countries which can voluntarily compile reports on best experiences in the sector. These papers should be submitted in time for consideration at the nest Global Forum meeting.

SYNTHESIS OF TASK GROUP DISCUSSION

Issues identified and discussed during the meeting

- Capacity building in the sector
- Collaboration between all role players in the sector and between the various sector initiatives
- Community management and community based development
- Conditions of service of sector professionals
- Cost effective appropriate technology
- Cost recovery
- Field co-operation
- Gender mainstreaming
- Information, communication and co-ordination
- Institutional reform
- Linkages with other sectors
- Low resource allocation
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Operation and maintenance
- Population growth issues
- Private sector participation
- Social and economic benefits
- The political profile of the sector
- Water for integrated development
- Water supply and sanitation policy development
- Water quality management

Synthesized areas of concern from the Task Group

This long list of issues was divided into the following four main categories. **It was emphasized that all of these issues should be approached with commitment and passion, bringing the very best of our faculties and skills to bear, to address the**

- Political Profile. There was general agreement that the political profile of the sector and the degree of political will of politicians and eminent leaders on the continent will determine the extent to which all of the other objectives will be achieved . Therefore advocacy activities to raise the political status and commitment of the sector is a major objective of the Africa Working group.
- Structural l issues . Many of the concern raised, such as policy development, institutional reform and conditions of service, are structural issues within the sector. They require attention and are closely linked to the political profile of the sector.

- Collaboration and communication. This area incorporates the numerous aspects of collaboration and communication which are needed throughout the sector and between sectors. Upon demand, the initiative can be started at country level immediately.
- Implementation issues. This area includes such issues as capacity building, community management, operation and maintenance, gender advocacy and payment for services. Again these issues depend upon political will at country level.

Addis Ababa Plan of Action

	Activity	Action	Date
1.	Mid Term Review, London	Ranjith Wirasinha and Ebele Okeke	13 - 14 November 1996
2.	Complete the Sector Review Report with a renewed attempt to get as many responses to the questionnaire as possible	Len Abrams UNICEF/WHO to facilitate	December 1996
3.	Identify and compile a list of initiatives of ESAs, NGOs and other agencies currently underway on the continent	Dennis Warner WHO	end December 1996
4.	Finalise report of 2nd Africa Working Group Meeting in Addis Ababa	Uhaa/Okeke	November 1996
5.	Prepare and disseminate Collaborative Council Statement on Africa and the work of the Africa Working Group, to include the key issue areas facing the sector in Africa as discussed in Addis Ababa and the Sector review Report.	Ranjith Wirasinha and Ebele Okeke	end December 1996
6.	Prepare and submit a resolution to the OAU meeting in June 1997	Ranjith Wiransiha /WHO-Zawide/ Ebele Okeke	Dec 1996
7.	3rd Working Group Meeting Core Group Africa Working Group	Core meeting Africa Working Group Meeting	9-10 Feb 1997 12-13 Feb 1997
8.	Identify a highly regarded senior Africa personality to champion for the water supply and sanitation in Africa	Okeke, Kahangire , Mpamhanga and Cardoso	end March 1997
9.	Africa Consultative Forum, (Abidjan, Nairobi or Ouagadougou)	Okeke, Zawide and Ranjith	May/June 1997
10.	To establish a Web Page on the Internet, connected to the Collaborative Council's web page	Len Abrahams	end December 1996
11.	To explore ways in which the Africa Working Group can become an advisory body to other African and other relevant Global initiatives	Okeke, Zawide and Halifa	end April 1997
12.	Prepare Africa Working Group final report for the Manila Global Forum meeting of the Collaborative Council	Ebele Okeke	end may 1997
13.	The Africa Working Group should authorise the UNICEF Representative to Ethiopia Mr. R. Tuluhungwa to work with the Executive Secretary of OAU to place water supply and sanitation on the organisation agenda.	R. Tuluhungwa, Okeke, Kahangire	

ANNEX I: Objectives and Terms of Reference of the Africa Working Group on Water Supply and Sanitation.

General Objectives:

To place water supply and sanitation high up on the development plans of African Governments through advocacy with national governments, sub-regional and regional groups/institutions.

Specific Objectives:

1. Identify potential modes of advocacy available to the countries for Water Supply and Sanitation
2. Promote the achievement of 80% access to adequate safe Water Supply and Sanitation within a reasonable distance in the next decade or earlier in line with the United Nations System-wide initiative on Africa.
3. Find ways to strengthen planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of Water Supply and Sanitation programmes to ensure sustainability.
4. Review new and current and sub-regional initiatives with a view to identifying positive experiences that may be incorporated within other national developmental plans.
5. Identify ways to improve co-operation amongst governments, ESA, NGOs, communities and the private sector

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Review the potential modes of advocacy to the National Governments for Water Supply and Sanitation development in Africa
2. Identify major shortcomings and ways of strengthening the planning, implementation and operation of Water Supply and sanitation projects by governments in Africa to ensure sustainability.
3. Review current regional and sub-regional development initiatives for Water Supply and Sanitation in Africa to identify positive experiences and how they can be used to improve programme implementation in other countries.
4. Review existing collaboration in Africa between governments, external support agencies, NGOs, communities and the private sector, and recommend changes for improvement
5. Identify constraints and solutions for effective resource mobilization in Africa
6. Identify constraints and solutions for effective capacity building in Africa
7. Suggest ways that the Collaborative Council could support regional and sub-regional Water Supply and Sanitation programmes.
8. Present to the African Consultative Forum and later recommend to the Water Supply and

Sanitation Collaborative Council:-

- a) appropriate ways of advocacy for African Water Supply and Sanitation needs;
 - b) appropriate ways of collaboration between national governments, external support agencies, NGOs and the private sector;
 - c) actions by which donor coordination in Africa can be improved;
 - d) strategies and operational methods by which major regional initiatives in Africa can be strengthened, made more responsive to country needs, and encouraged to become more collaborative with each other;
 - e) actions by which capacity building in Africa can be improved
9. Review and promote gender equity in all aspects of programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
10. Identify available Council's resources and experience for use in the above activities.

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Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

African Sector Review



**Working Group on Water
Supply and Sanitation in
Africa**

Len Abrams

October 1996

Len Abrams - LJA Development Services

1

African Sector Review

- Outline of the project
 - Drafting of the Concept paper and the Questionnaire
 - Sending out of the questionnaire
 - Country visits
 - Compilation of the information
 - Writing of the report
 - Addis Ababa meeting



African Sector Review

- The Questionnaire & Country Visits
 - Questionnaire Format
 - Discursive, opinions rather than data
 - Distributed by UNICEF to 44 countries
 - 24 responses from 19 countries
 - Countries Visited
 - Zimbabwe, Malawi, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire



African Sector Review

- Observations - Policy
 - Lack of policy
 - Misconceptions regarding policy
 - Country specific policy
 - Sector leadership through policy
 - Avoidance of policy
 - Consultative policy development
 - Dissemination of policy
 - Implementation of policy



African Sector Review

- Observations - Institutional reform
 - Institutions in broad terms - general impressions
 - Frequent changes
 - Sanitation
 - The relationship between policy, resources & institutions
 - Inappropriate institutions
 - Decentralisation
 - Conditions of service



African Sector Review

- Observations - Community Management
 - Growing acceptance
 - Avoiding responsibility??
 - Community Management & sustainability - going the whole distance
 - Entitlement and undermining Community Management
 - Community capacity building



African Sector Review

- Observations - Financing
 - Sector Investments
 - level of public investment
 - level of foreign investment
 - lobbying for higher budget prioritization
 - Operation and maintenance
 - User payment
 - financial viability
 - affordability
 - the will to pay
 - Privatisation



African Sector Review

- Observations - Political profile of the sector
 - The importance of political support
 - Questionable political priority
 - Political responsibility and discipline
 - Focusing political support



African Sector Review

- Observations - Development agencies and NGOs
 - Types and roles
 - Emerging trends
 - Relationships with government
 - Financial impact
 - Limited rural support



Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council!

Working Group on Water Supply and Sanitation in Africa

African Sector Review

- Other Observations
 - Sanitation
 - Monitoring & evaluation
 - Capacity building
 - Sector collaboration
 - Role of the Collaborative Council
 - Role of the Africa Working Group



African Sector Review

- Recommendations
 - Develop strategies to :
 - raise sector political profile
 - advocate for greater resource allocation
 - build sector capacity
 - promote community management
 - increase collaboration
 - Undertake further study in :
 - Water policy development
 - Institutional reform
 - Conditions of service
 - Cost recovery and sustainability



*2nd Africa Working Group Meeting
Collaborative Council for Water Supply & Sanitation
October 28-30, 1996
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

*Keynote address
Shiferaw Jarso, Minister of Water Resources*

*October 28, 1996
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

Your Excellency

Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary General of the OAU

Your Excellency

Secretary General of the ECA

Your Excellency

*Mr. Revy Tuluhungawa, Country Resident Representative
of UNICEF*

Dear Mr. Ranjith Wirasinha,

*Executive Secretary of the Water Supply and Sanitation
Collaborative Council*

Dear Ms Ebele Okeke,

Chairperson of the Africa Working Group

Honorable Guests, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Ministry of Water Resources, it gives me a great pleasure to welcome you all to the Collaborative Council for Water Supply and Sanitation, 2nd Africa Working Group meeting. I feel acclimated to be the special guest of honor and deliver a keynote address at this opening ceremony.

It is needless to say water is essential to life and development. Nevertheless, at present, a large proportion of the African populations do not have access to improved water supplies and sanitation facilities. They depend mainly on traditional sources like small streams, unprotected springs, wells and ponds which in many cases are more than half a day's travel from home. The quality of water thus obtained is not acceptable in most cases. Similarly the sanitation situation is even in a most unfavorable condition. As a direct result of this, the populations' mortality and morbidity rates are very high.

Despite the best efforts of many governments, organizations and individuals, the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade of the 1980s, failed to achieve its target of 100% coverage with water and sanitation by 1990, in the developing countries, yet undeniably appreciable developments were made.

Presently, in Africa a large percentage of the population does not have access to safe water supplies & sanitation facilities, hence, the Water Decade Goal has now been rescheduled for the year 2000.

A new approach is mandatory to solve the enormous problems encountered by all Africans to meet the proposed 80% access to adequate safe water supply and sanitation, in line with the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa.

As you very well reckon, water resources management is a daunting task, especially given the complex institutional and human resources issues and competing demands for resources. The challenge of comprehensive water resources management, which incorporates addressing water resources issues in an integrated, holistic and interrelated mode aims at environmentally sound, economically viable, sustainable, and socially acceptable solutions to water problems.

The elements of this holistic water resource management framework include, among others:-

- Institutional and human resources issues (including laws, regulations, and organizations)
- The development of adequate information systems
- The participation of those concerned with or having an interest in water resources (stakeholders)
- The use of economic principles (including cost-recovery, in water resources management)
- Consideration of the environmental and public health aspects of water resources management
- Working with other countries or regions to manage international resources successfully
- The development, adoption & adaption of appropriate technologies.

The water sector in Ethiopia has seen many ups and downs. My government is now entirely committed to the development of the country's vital water resources. As a result, a ministry has been established to undertake a coordinated nationwide program for water resources development, with the objective of improving the well-being, health and productivity of the population by increasing coverage and ensuring the long-term viability and integration of water supply and sanitation operations including hygiene education in line with the government's regionalization policies. To this effect, the Ministry is currently working on the formulation of

a Federal Water Resources Policy, and we will be glad to learn from those of you who have undertaken similar policy formulations.

At this juncture, please allow me to express our indebtedness to the financial & technical assistance provided by UNDP & UNICEF towards the attainment of our lofty objectives.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Water supply and sanitation facilities are one of the essential services human beings require for a wholesome, contented & peaceful life. In Africa these services are in short supply.

Meeting water supply and sanitation objectives requires clear understanding of the problems, hard work, patience, dedication, quite a lot of investment & time and above all community participation and promotion which would highlight the gender issue as well. Present socio-economic conditions in Africa cannot meet all the competing demands.

The challenge ahead, is therefore, to optimize, efficiently & effectively utilize the available limited resources, for the provision of sustainable, reliable and affordable services.

Certainly this challenge cannot be met without the proper management tools. These tools include, interalia:-

- Sector assessment
- Policy principles
- Institutions
- Strategies
- Plans of actions
- Programmes & projects
- Finance
- Collaboration
- Political will

- Information systems
- Stakeholders issues
- & technology

The initiation of an African Group to work on the problems is a positive development for the water and sanitation sector in the continent.

It is hoped that this Group together with the stakeholders will address the outstanding issues in water supply and sanitation and formulate strategies and programmes for successfully meeting sector objectives, harmonizing the various cross sectoral needs with the appropriate solutions. The task facing Africa in the development of water supply and sanitation is enormous. Indeed planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of water supply schemes need to be strengthened and the present low level of water supply and sanitation coverage will have to be increased. It is crystal clear that all these efforts require coordinated and improved cooperation among governments and all those involved in the sector. Appropriate advocacy principles available to the governments will have to be identified.

I trust that the final plan of action will promote & spur meaningful progress in water supply and sanitation issues in the continent & pave the way for the development of objective oriented policy and the formulation of strategies that can implement declared policy principles.

I wish you all a successful meeting & enjoyable stay in Addis Ababa.

Thank you,

**WELCOMING ADDRESS BY MR. RRN TULUHUNGWA
UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE TO ETHIOPIA, OAU AND ECA**

**AT THE OPENING CEREMONY
OF THE SECOND AFRICA WORKING GROUP MEETING
OF THE COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL FOR WATER SUPPLY AND
SANITATION, 28 OCTOBER 1996 – ADDIS ABABA**

**The Guest of Honor, the Honorable Minister of Water Resources,
The Honorable Ministers,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
The Chairperson, Africa Working Group,
The Executive Secretary of the Collaborative Council,
Excellencies,
Fellow Participants:**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the second Africa Working Group meeting of the Collaborative Council for Water Supply and Sanitation in Addis Ababa.

As many of you are aware, the Africa Working Group was formed in Barbados in November 1995 at the Third Global Forum of the Collaborative Council (which works independently) for Water Supply and Sanitation, based on initiative taken by African countries. Following this, the group met in Harare in April 1996 to undertake the mandate set out in Barbados – to place water supply and sanitation high on the development agenda of African governments. All of us in UNICEF have high expectations that the Africa Working Group will advance significantly as a result of the deliberations of this

meeting and provide the much needed leadership, policy direction and strategies for the development of the water supply and sanitation sector in Africa.

This meeting brings together water and sanitation sector representatives from African countries, multilateral and bilateral organizations and provides a unique opportunity to look at the progress, constraints, challenges and opportunities of the sector in the African context and from the African perspective. This meeting is different from others in that it aims to bring more realistic solutions to Africa through investigating uniquely African values and fundamentals. During our three days of deliberations, I am certain that we will be able to make concrete recommendations addressing the more pertinent problems causing slow progress in the water supply and sanitation sector.

In the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa launched in Addis Ababa, Geneva and New York on 15 March 1996, priority is accorded to water. This initiative aims at achieving 80 per cent access to safe water supply and sanitation within a reasonable distance in the next decade if not earlier. Currently, only 25 out of 54 African countries have safe water coverage of more than 50 per cent of their populations, and only 14 countries have safe excreta disposal coverage of more than 50 per cent. As you can see, despite the progress made during the last decade, the challenge remains enormous. This initiative provides added emphasis for us to move ahead, and I am confident that the Africa Working Group which has been acknowledged by the UN Administrative Coordination Committee for the Special Initiative will be

able to provide strategies to steer and accelerate the process. All concerned UN agencies are represented here.

At this juncture, I would not like to miss the opportunity to outline some of the pertinent challenges affecting the progress of the water supply and sanitation in Africa. The convention of the Rights of Child recognises that water is one of the basic human rights. I sincerely hope that this meeting will be able to deal with these issues more realistically and provide practical solutions:

The first is the reduced investment by African governments and donors in the water supply and sanitation sector in Africa. Africa receives less water supply and sanitation investment than any other region in the world. During the last decade (1981-1990), the investment was only US\$13.2 billion in Africa compared to US\$21.1 billion in South-East Asia and US\$ 44.8 billion in the Western Pacific. This alarming trend persists, and with the changing global priority among donors, we need to look at this issue more carefully and come out with realistic strategies for resource mobilization.

The second challenge is water and sanitation's low priority in the national development agenda of many African countries, particularly sanitation is almost forgotten, resulting inadequate budget allocations and disbursement for the sector. This has been discussed in many similar fora, and the situation in most of African countries remains unchanged.

This meeting must give insides of how to tackle this issue seriously.

Thirdly is the lack of standardized user friendly technologies that can easily be maintained by the user communities. It should be noted that many systems installed in the past have deteriorated badly and are in need of major repairs and rehabilitation due to lack of community based maintenance system.

Fourthly is the current inappropriate institutional framework. Most African countries do not address the issue of institutional framework seriously. Due to a lack of appropriate institutional arrangements, there are conflicts in many countries between the institutions that handle water supply and those that handle sanitation.

Fifth, the water and sanitation sector in Africa is challenged by a lack of collaboration between sector partners. Although there is agreement in principle among sector partners, implementation of this principle remains a big problem in many countries.

Finally, development of an African countries strategic framework for collaboration amongst themselves and between partners is very important. In country it is imperative that the national government, donor community, non-governmental organizations, mainly, the civil society the and the population at large must work together towards common purpose, namely accelerating access to potable water supply

and sanitation.

Very lastly as UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia, I am grateful to Water Working Group of UN System-wide Special Initiative in its 11/10/96 in Paris, identifying Ethiopia as one of four first group of countries to be selected for convergent actions for all agencies and donors.

Let me conclude by thanking Ms. Ebele Okeke, Chairperson of the Africa Working Group, and Mr. Gourisankar Ghosh, Chief of the Water, Environment and Sanitation Cluster for UNICEF in New York, for giving us the opportunity to host this meeting in Addis Ababa.

I would like to take this opportunity once again to wish you a very enjoyable stay with us in Addis Ababa and a successful meeting.

It gives me an honor and privilege as your humble chairman for this occasion to introduce and call upon Ms. Ebele Okeke, chairperson of the Africa Working Group to make her statement.

**[Global] Collaborative Council on
Water Supply and Sanitation**

**Second meeting of the
Africa Working Group**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,
28-30 October 1996**

Statement by Mr. P.A. Traoré, Officer-in-Charge

of the Natural Resources Division

representing Mr. K.Y. Amoako, U.N. Under-Secretary-General and

Executive Secretary

of the

Economic Commission for Africa

28 October 1996

**Statement by Mr. P.A. Traoré, Officer-in-Charge of the
Natural Resources Division
representing Mr. K.Y. Amoako, U.N. Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa
at the
Second Meeting of the Africa Working Group of the
(Global) Collaborative Council on Water Supply and Sanitation
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 28-30 October 1996**

**Honourable Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished members of the
Africa Working Group,
Distinguished representatives from the UN agencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is indeed a pleasure for me to address you this morning on the occasion of the second meeting of the Africa Working Group of the Collaborative Council on Water Supply and Sanitation. At the very outset, I take this opportunity to welcome you all to the ECA headquarters and wish you a very fruitful meeting and a pleasant stay at Addis Ababa.

I recognize that the work of your Group in the area of water resources in general and water and sanitation in particular is very important for the overall socio-economic development of Africa. Water and sanitation are not only two of the most basic needs of human beings, they are also some of the major yardsticks for measuring human well-being and their societal developments. In Africa, specially in the vast rural areas where some 80 percent of African population live, it is also a matter of survival. For without potable drinking water and adequate sanitation, no society can flourish or even last long enough.

The situation in Africa, at present, in this vital sector is not only most discouraging but at times in certain areas it is even heart breaking. The average African rural woman spends upto six hours of her day in procuring a bucket of drinking water for her family. The morbidity and mortality rates of under five year old children due to water borne diseases in Africa are among the highest in the world. Every decade, large areas of the continent suffer from ever-expanding droughts and desertification. This is despite the fact that Africa holds a solid ten percent of the global freshwater resources and the ratio of water withdrawal to naturally available fresh water in Africa is one of the lowest in the world.

During the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) in the 1980s, some noteworthy developments took place in the sector, specially in the urban areas. But, because of rapid population growth, the overall situation in the sector today is no better than it was in the beginning of the Decade. Indeed, there are more unserved people in the rural areas today than there were in the beginning of the Decade.

The implementation of IDWSSD in Africa was constrained by economic, political and environmental factors. The past two decades witnessed severe political unrest and natural disasters. The issue of unclear policies and strategies have also been the major underlying problems for development in this sector. The cumulative effect of all these led to significant deterioration in water and sanitation services.

Having described the rather precarious sectoral situation which is rather easy and even at times fashionable to do when it comes to Africa, let us briefly discuss what is being done to address the issue.

There have been a number of initiatives in recent years to stimulate overall socio-economic development in Africa. The most recent and by far the most comprehensive one is the UN Secretary General's Special Initiative for Africa which was launched earlier this year. As you know, water is one of the sectoral elements in that initiative selected for concerted action in the next ten years or so. This also signifies the importance of the sector in which you are professionally involved.

ECA is proud to be associated with this initiative at the highest level for coordination of its implementation. I believe you all should also feel proud to be making a contribution through the work of your Group in the implementation of this initiative.

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The work of your Group will mark a fresh starting point to chart a new vision for concerted action towards accelerating the pace of development in the water and sanitation sector in Africa. It was in taking note of the gravity and the seriousness of the situation, that delegates from Africa at the Third Collaborative Council meeting held in Barbados in 1995 proposed to designate this Africa Working Group for mapping out a strategy to address the root causes of the problems, provide regional inputs, and seek an African solution to the development crisis in this sector.

In the coming three days, you will be heavily engaged in making an in-depth examination of past achievements and shortcomings in the sector and employ your collective wisdom and experience to outline new measures needed, taking into account the unevenness and diversity of the situation in the various countries and keeping in perspective the unique African values. You have a challenge to face in reviewing the underlying causes and identifying the main factors on the basis of which you are expected to draw up new strategies for the future. Your Group may also use the advantage of its unique composition to enhance awareness of all concerned about the seriousness of the problem. Your Group may wish to issue an urgent call for rededication of commitment for accelerated development of sectoral projects which did not heretofore receive the priority they deserve.

You may wish to reemphasize the institutional strategy for the rest of this decade, as was reiterated in Agenda 21. Agenda 21 attributed responsibility of ownership and management of the water supply and sanitation sector to the countries themselves. However, in today's world, the role of governments as providers of services is perceived to be limited to that of facilitators. This would call for increasing involvement of private sector participation, involvement of communities in general and women in particular which implies an adjustment of policies and strategies. The policy issue regarding women demands greater focus in improving their situation, enhancing their participation and making them beneficiaries of the development process. This also calls for safeguarding their rights including equal access to decision making process.

Past experiences indicate that self-reliance is an important factor in our efforts to move ahead. We need to realize that the concern and development of Africa is primarily the responsibility of Africans. External aid can be a great help, a form of stimulant and catalyst but in no case, can it be a substitute for our own sweat and toil. Thus, there is a challenge for self-reliance and work towards strengthening cooperation within our region in matters of technology and available financial and human resources. Reliance on the boundless enthusiasm and energy of our human resources will go a long way to add impetus towards the attainment of these goals and objectives.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The task of achieving universal coverage of population with water supply and sanitation services is a challenging one and demands thrust, dynamism and concerted action by both private sector and public sector, albeit, with assistance from international agencies and donor countries. The policy measures and the infrastructural and financial inputs to the sector are decisive for the attainment of success. Governments have to be prepared to reorient policies and strategies and translate those into concrete actions. The constraints of trained and experienced human resources have to be surmounted; community involvement and private sector participation encouraged. It must also be recognized that there are competing demands for scarce resources. The problem can be overcome only if the governments concerned identify weak and deficient areas and rationalize their policies in a coherent manner and integrate the sector in the overall perspective of national development plans and allocate resources on priority basis. In this connection I should also like to mention here that ECA organized only two weeks ago an expert group meeting on guidelines for private sector increased participation in development and management of natural resources including water resources in Africa. These guidelines, I trust will assist African governments in reorienting their sectoral policies and strategies.

On the part of the UN and other external support agencies, there is a need for concerted action in order to achieve better efficiency and longer mileage, so to speak, out of the limited and scarce resources and to avoid duplication and overlap. I am pleased to note that a number major UN agencies are involved in the sector and there are

representatives to this meeting from many of these agencies including the World Bank. This signifies a sense of strong partnership and team spirit and also indicates the importance that the UN system attributes to this sector. I must add here that ECA being the largest UN regional body in Africa also places top priority to water sector in Africa. Thus, water resources development and management will be an important and integral element of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division in the renewed ECA. The other ECA programme area in which water will play a significant role will be the Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration. As you all know, development of the vast transboundary water resources in Africa can be used as an effective vehicle for subregional and regional cooperation within the framework of overall economic integration.

ECA recognizes the importance of partnership with UN and other external support agencies for assisting the African countries in achieving these goals. I am therefore pleased that you chose Addis Ababa - site of ECA secretariat - as the venue for this meeting to launch the work of your Group. ECA will always stand by to assist your Group in any way it can to facilitate its work.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I know you have an important and heavy agenda for the next three days. I am confident that with your collective and varied experience and wisdom you will accomplish the task you set out for yourselves. I wish you all successful deliberations and a very fruitful meeting.

I thank you for your attention.

WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION
COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL
WORKING GROUP ON WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

*A Brief Presented By the Co-ordinator Ebele Okeke
to the Africa Working Group Meeting,
28th -30th October, 1996 at Addis Ababa.*

H.E Ato Shiferaw Jarso
Honourable Minister of Water Resources, Ethiopia

H.E. Mr. Wolde Michael Chamo
Minister of Information and Culture, Ethiopia

H.E Haile Assegede
Minister for Urban Planing

H.E Joao G. Cardaso
Honourable Minister for Energy, Industry and
Natural Resources, Guinea Bissau

Mr. Revy Tuluhungwa
UNICEF Resident Representative, Ethiopia and Chairman
of the occasion

Members of the Diplomatic Corps.
Representatives of International UN Agencies here present

Mr. Pierre A. Traore
Representing the Economic Commission for Africa,

Mr. Ranjith Wirasinha
Executive Secretary of Water Supply and Sanitation
Collaborative Council

Mr. Patrick Kahangire
Chairperson, Africa Working Group,

The Press

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the end of the United Nations Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990) it was obvious that some gains had been made in the provision of water supply and sanitation to the World's population even though the original objective of providing water and adequate sanitation to every person in the world no matter their place of abode was not achieved.

In order to ensure that the gains made were maintained and improved upon the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council was launched by the UN.

The Council which draws its membership from sector professionals meets once every two years and functions through Working Groups and Task Forces.

The assessment presented in 1990 showed that two continents were grossly affected with low coverage, these were Asia and Africa, but Africa's problem was the most pressing. So at the 3rd Global Forum of the Council held in Barbados in November, 1995 it was unanimously agreed that Africa's problem must be tackled and thus the Working Group on Water Supply and Sanitation Development in Africa was formed.

This Working Group is special in that African professionals have taken the African problem into their own hands in order to find solutions to the problems.

The membership of the Working Group is mostly Africans with some ESAs participating. The Working Group Africa is co-ordinated by a sector professional from Nigeria, while sector professionals from Zimbabwe and Uganda are co-chairpersons. The Working Group Africa is fortunate to have the WHO & UNICEF as the agencies mandated by council to assist with the operations.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you can see, the Working Group is not just African in nature it is also gender sensitive. This is very important as the feminine gender is the most affected in the fetching of water and the provision of sanitation in the African setting. No wonder UNICEF, the UN's custodian for issues concerning women and children and the WHO for Health, are very concerned about the activities and eventual output of the Working Group Africa.

The Working Group-Africa which is made up of 23 members, had a core Group of about 8 members meeting in Harare in April 1996 during which the direction and modus operandi of the Group were worked out. At that meeting the Objectives, Terms of Reference, Work plan etc were drawn up.

The board objectives of the Group are to place water supply and sanitation high up on the developmental plans of African Governments through advocacy with national governments, sub-regional and regional groups/institutions.

The Working Group intends to identify potential modes of advocacy available to African countries for water supply and sanitation and promote service level to 80% in the next decade or earlier in line with the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. It would also find ways to strengthen planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of water supply and sanitation programmes in order to ensure sustainability. Also a review of new and current regional and sub-regional initiatives would be made with a view to incorporating the positive experiences so identified into national developmental plans, such initiatives as the Lusophone Initiative, African Orientation Committee, Africa 2000, UNICEF / OAU Dakar Initiative, UNDP/World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme, Capacity Building Consortium for Utility Partnerships, UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, National programmes of Action and various regional programmes of bilateral support agencies and NGOs.

It was also agreed that for a meaningful output, because of the size of Africa, it was necessary that a Status Report be produced. This has been done and the consultant would present briefly his findings during this meeting. This study would form the working document for the Group.

The objectives of this meeting are to identify the serious issues/areas, identify the gaps and areas of emphasis for the AWG, identify potential linkages between

other initiatives and the work of the AWG and finally develop an Addis Ababa Plan of Action for the AWG.

On behalf of the Working Group-Africa it is worth mentioning the assistance provided by the council especially the Executive Secretary Mr. Ranjith Wirasinha who has been most supportive and also Dr. Dennis Warner of the WHO and Dr. Gouri Ghosh of UNICEF whose organisation has funded so far over ninety five percent of the activities of the Working Group.

The members of the Group are highly elated at the interest being shown by the level of the turn out at this meeting.

We hope that this is a confirmation that the findings of Working Group Africa would not just be a collectors item but would be looked into and implementated for the betterment of the continent.

Thank you and God bless.

**Ranjith Wirasinha Executive Secretary WSSCC, Vote of Thanks,
28 October 1996**

Africa Working Group Meeting - 28 to 30 October 1996, Addis Ababa

- The Honourable Minister of Water Resources of Ethiopia, Ato Shiferaw Jarsso,
- The Honorable Minister of Urban Development and Construction,
- The Honorable Minister of Information and Culture,
- Ms. Z. Ketsela Bendow, Deputy Regional Director, UNICEF, ESARO,
- Mr. Tuluhungwa, The UNICEF Representative to Ethiopia,
- Mrs. Ebele Okeke of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development in Nigeria and the Co-ordinator of the Council's Working Group on Africa,
- Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues,

It is indeed an honour to be here to represent the Collaborative Council. But equally, I feel very fortunate to be here because we are, I believe, at the threshold of a very historic change in Africa. That is, if we are able to move through these three days with dedication and enthusiasm and also a deep interest and willingness amongst the Africans to assume the burden of making the choices and decisions yourselves, for the future of the sector. I do believe you have.

I also believe that all external support agencies will be willing and ready, as they always have been, to befriend, encourage and support the Africans in this initiative.

I will revert to this later.

Honourable minister sir, we are both honoured and encouraged that you have taken time to address this important meeting for Africans AND the attendance of other Ministers also, I believe reflects the recognition your government and you yourself assign to this sector.

Let us remind ourselves that without the provision of safe water supply and sanitation services, particularly to the poor, poverty alleviation, social mobility and environmental sustenance, which we all want to strive for, cannot have much of a chance.

Political support to the cause is, therefore, critical and so thank you sir for your valuable support.

In this context I would like to recognize the presence of Minister Joao Cardoso From Guinea Bissau who has been a major supporter of the sector. Thank you sir, for being with us.

Mr. Tuluhungwa, we thank you and UNICEF for hosting this Group Meeting and providing the full support of your office. I have no doubt that at the end of the meeting you will feel very happy and rewarded that you did so.

Mr. Traore, we are very pleased with ECES presence at this Meeting. As the sessions progress, I believe that you will be pleased to recognize a Group which will be very important to the UN's Special Initiative for Africa. We thank you for the pledge of support to the Africa Group. At the recent ACC sub-committee on water resources we agreed that linkages between this group and the groups working with WMO on water resources will be desirable.

Mrs. Ebele Okeke, We are very pleased that you accepted this onerous but challenging and no doubt rewarding task of co-ordinating this activity.

And to Mr. Patrick Kahangire of Uganda and A.C. Mpamhanga of Zimbabwe, the co-chairperson of this Group, who unfortunately was not able to attend thank you all.

We would not have reached this position today but for the very willing and timely technical and critically needed financial support provided by Mr. Gourisankar Ghosh and UNICEF. We thank you.

I am pleased to inform you that the governments of the Netherlands and Norway have confirmed some financial support to this Group. This is not to say that the other ESAS are not supportive. ESA support is shared amongst the 18 Council on-going activities.

All of you who have come from developing countries in Africa and from external support agencies and from near and far, to participate and to give of your experience and knowledge, a big thank you and much appreciated.

Moments of history must have some background.

Moving from habitat I in Vancouver in 1976 through Mar del Plata in 1977, the "eighties" were declared as the Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade because it was socially and morally unacceptable that billions of people (nearly a third of the global population) and particularly the poor had no access to safe water supply and sanitation, the very basic needs of decent human living if not existence.

The decade happily succeeded in harnessing higher priority and more effort and resources for the sector thus helping accelerate access. But for the Decade thrust, the numbers of unserved today could have been more than a half the global population, and again mostly the poor.

We also learned from the decade.

We had to progress more rapidly but at the same time make what we instal last and make the most of what we have (funds, water, land, human resources)

We had to prepare ourselves to face the emerging issues of rapid urbanization, industrialization, population, siltation, decentralization, supply driven privatization rather than private sector participation, corruption, a diversity of agencies (national and international) often applying diverse approaches to overcome the same barriers and often in the same country.

To tackle these issues effectively, we had to make a paradigm change from supply side management to demand side management and conservation. Fundamentally, we had to do things differently and better for which involvement of all stakeholders (particularly women) in all facets was (and is) an imperative for best and lasting value.

There was therefore a need to encourage collective effort with enhanced benefits, resolve conflicts and promote collaboration, achieve more for less, mobilize and deploy resources for sector public goods such as strategic investment plans, research and development, information management and networking mechanisms.

In a resource constrained environment, collaboration provided the most if not the only viable option.

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council came into being at the end of the Decade to attend to such collaborative needs bringing all stakeholders into play as equals and to charter a better way to do things in the sector.

The Council has been provided a mandate through a UN Resolution. However, it is a neutral body.

The mechanisms that the Council adopts to carry out its tasks are :

- Biennial Fora
- Voluntary North/South Working Groups/Task Forces
- And Networks

Currently the Council has 18 on-going activities of which the Africa Group is one.

At the last Council Biennial Forum in Barbados in November 96, the Africans decided to and had the support of the Council to:

- Make their own assessment of the sector issues;
- Evaluate current and planned initiatives for Africa, identify any gaps and overlaps in the context of needs as perceived by Africans;
- Propose feasible and desirable changes and any further initiatives needed for consideration of Governments/ESAs; and
- Put in place follow-up mechanisms to institute action.

Taking responsibility for making choices and decisions brings forth concomitant responsibility to make them work and also to assume responsibility for failures.

In conclusion, I see a new approach, a new attitude being born. The Council is happy to be the midwife.

You Africans are the parents and will have to nurture and develop the approaches to adulthood to reap the goods. I trust that the Ministers (and Governments) will be the god-parents and provide the political backing and encouragement.

I do believe that the ESAS, your partners in the Council, will be your friends in support and need.

Many years from now, even decades from now, I pray that all you Africans here will be proud of this moment.

And those of us here who are not Africans but your friends may have the pleasure and privilege to have been with you here at this moment of change.

Let us all remember at this moment, through these three days and also thereafter that agencies may come and go but Africa must and will go on forever.

Long Live Africa. The very best to the Working Group and the sector and at the least we wish "Some for all rather than more for some".



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PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Children's Fund
Addis Ababa Office

**WATER AND SANITATION MEETING OPENS TODAY
AMID CALLS TO REVITALIZE LAGGING AFRICAN SECTOR**

Addis Ababa, 28 October 1996. An important meeting on water supply and sanitation in Africa opened here today with calls for priority to be given to revitalize a sector that has lagged behind other development-related activities on the Continent. The Coordinator of the Africa Working Group of the Collaborative Council for Water Supply and Sanitation, Ms. Ebele Okeke, stated that the expected outcome of the three-day meeting will be the development of a framework for accelerated action in the water and sanitation sector in Africa.

"This meeting provides a unique opportunity for water specialists from Africa to look at the problems facing water supply and sanitation in Africa and to come up with African responses," said Ms. Okeke. She continued "water supply and sanitation activities have been seen to lay a crucial foundation for social development in Asia and Latin America, but this sector has not moved as quickly in Africa. Recognizing the many advantages to Africa of a 'jump-start' in this area, the Africa Working Group has been formed to help put water supply and sanitation at the top of African national agendas."

The three-day meeting of programme specialists and political leaders from ten African countries and six multilateral and bilateral organizations opened today with a keynote address by the Honorable Ato Shiferaw Jarsso, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources Development. The minister of this country that, in recent years, has witnessed water-related emergencies ranging from drought to floods, called for concerted action by the main partners in the Africa Working Group to "address the outstanding issues in water supply and sanitation and formulate strategies and programmes for successfully meeting sector objective, harmonizing the various cross-sectoral needs with the appropriate solution." Ato Shiferaw continued, "I trust that the final plan of action will promote and spur meaningful progress in water supply and sanitation issues in the Continent and pave the way for the development of objectives-oriented policy and the formulation of strategies that can implement declared policy principles."

The Africa Working Group was formed in November 1995 with a mandate to place water supply and sanitation high on the development agendas of African governments. With the launch of the U.N. System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, for which UNICEF, UNDP, WHO and the World Bank are the lead agencies for water, this mandate takes on increased importance.

[more ...]

“What makes this meeting unique,” said Mr. Gourisankar Ghosh, Chief of UNICEF’s Water, Environment and Sanitation Cluster in New York, “is that within the context of the Special Initiative on Africa, this is an initiative by Africans for Africa. The Africa Working Group will chart the future of water and sanitation sector development on this continent through the end of the decade and beyond, and countless Africans will benefit.”

According to U.N. statistics, only 25 out of 54 African countries have safe water coverage of more than 50 per cent of their populations, and only 14 countries have safe excreta disposal coverage of more than 50 per cent. Said UNICEF Representative to Ethiopia, OAU and ECA, Mr. RRN Tuluhungwa, at the opening ceremony, the meetings will address five main challenges currently blocking sustainable water and sanitation progress in Africa: “reduced investment by African governments and donors in the water supply and sanitation sector in Africa, ... the water and sanitation’s low priority in the national development agenda of many African countries, resulting in inadequate budget allocations and disbursement for the sector, ... the lack of standardized user friendly technologies that can easily be maintained by the user communities, ... a lack of collaboration between sector partners. ... [and] finally the development of an African countries strategic framework for collaboration amongst themselves and between partners.

According to Tuluhungwa, “this framework must take into account prevailing African situation, levels of poverty and the status of women and girls.”

In addition to UNICEF and the World Health Organization, main partners in the Africa Working Group meeting include the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank.

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