



LINKING POVERTY REDUCTION AND WATER MANAGEMENT

ABOUT THE POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

The Poverty-Environment Partnership (PEP) is a network of bilateral aid agencies, multilateral development banks, UN agencies and international NGOs that aims to address key poverty-environment issues within the framework of international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Analytical work and knowledge-sharing activities undertaken by the PEP since 2001 point to three broad, fundamental lessons that underpin efforts to link poverty reduction and environmental management:

- The environmental quality of growth matters to people living in poverty;
- Environmental management cannot be treated separately from other development concerns;
- People living in poverty must be seen as part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

PEP Member Organizations: *Bilateral Agencies:* Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States. *Multilateral/UN Agencies:* African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Commission, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Inter-American Development Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Monetary Fund, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, UN Development Programme, UN Environment Programme, The World Bank, World Health Organization. *International NGOs:* International Institute for Environment and Development, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Stockholm Environment Institute, Stockholm International Water Institute, World Resources Institute, WWF International.

OTHER POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP PUBLICATIONS:

1. Linking Poverty Reduction and Environmental Management: Policy Challenges and Opportunities (2002)
2. Poverty and Climate Change: Reducing the Vulnerability of the Poor through Adaptation (2003)
3. Environmental Fiscal Reform for Poverty Reduction (2005)

Publications and information on the PEP are available at www.povertyenvironment.net/pep.

DISCLAIMER

This publication is a joint product of staff from SEI and UNDP, prepared on behalf of the Poverty-Environment Partnership. While consultations have been considerable, the judgments herein do not necessarily reflect the views of their respective governing bodies, or when applicable, the countries there represented.

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FOREWORD

The global community is united in its commitment to remove the scourge of world poverty through actions that bring different interests and organisations together in effective partnerships around the Millennium Development Goals agenda. The Poverty-Environment Partnership is a product of these concerns, reflecting a determination of different international organisations that support development to work together to address the links between poverty reduction and the various aspects of environmental management. This Joint Agency paper, a product of deliberations among many donor agencies, focuses on one of the most important issues in this agenda: the contribution of water management to poverty reduction. The issue of ensuring that the poor have access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation has, rightly, been prominent in international discussions, and specific targets have been included in the internationally agreed MDGs. But the contribution of water management to poverty reduction goes far beyond just drinking water and sanitation: water is essential for improving the health and livelihoods of the poor, ensuring wider environmental sustainability, reducing urban squalor and eradicating hunger. It is also critical in addressing gender inequalities and improving access to education for the poor.

This paper analyses these links and outlines the different ways in which improvements to water management can advance the cause of poverty reduction. Indeed, improving access to water is in some cases an essential pre-condition to the attainment of other MDG targets: there is little prospect of many health, environmental or income targets being achieved unless action is taken to address water problems. The paper also gives a clear and optimistic message for the future. It illustrates that improving the contribution of water management to poverty reduction is not just achievable: it is affordable. In many cases, it is a good investment that generates growth and gives rates of return comparable with investments in any other sector. And these benefits are directly targeted to the poor, and especially to women who bear many of the burdens that a lack of investments in water creates. Investing in water, in reforms to the institutions that govern water management and creating more effective partnerships to focus international support to water and environmental sustainability are all essential. The agencies that have worked together to prepare this paper are all committed to supporting these changes. The paper demonstrates that affordable and sustainable actions are

possible, and in many places are already happening. The international community faces a critical challenge in building on and supporting these actions so that the existing role that water management plays in poverty reduction can be enhanced in the future.



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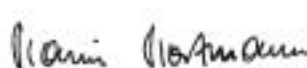
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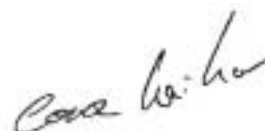
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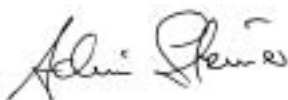
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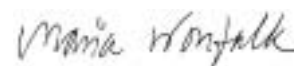
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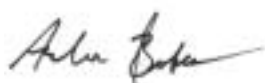
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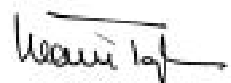
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