

Final summary water and sanitation, food security and waste management partnerships dialogue,

4 Sept 2014

- Water scarcity, lack of sanitation, food insecurity, and poor waste management are closely interlinked challenges faced by SIDS. Population increases and climate change exacerbate these challenges, as do disastrous hydrological events brought about by climate change.
- These challenges cannot be solved at country level or by governments alone and so call for multi-stakeholder national and international partnerships, including with other SIDS, civil society, the private sector, academia, traditional donors, and new development partners from the emerging economies.
- Multi-stakeholder engagement is key, especially with the private sector as they have know-how, capacity and technologies. They can harness market forces and promote innovation. Public – private partnerships are therefore particularly desirable.
- Water is a basic resource and a prerequisite for human life. Climate stresses has led to ground water over- extraction and use of sea water desalination plants which increases energy expenditures.
- There is a pressing need to improve creation and diffusion of island-specific technologies, to improve data collection and information sharing, as well as to build human capacity to address these issues and scale up green technologies.
- Proper water management implies integrated management that considers all parts of the water cycle.
- World Water Day every year illustrates the importance of partnerships and awareness raising in improving access to safe water.
- Water problems are closely linked to sanitation challenges. Poor and inadequate sanitation negatively affects water quality and supply with associated negative impacts on child and maternal health, as well as causes deaths from preventable diseases such as malaria and diarrhea.
- Women and girls suffer disproportionately from inadequate sanitation and access to water. They face increased exposure to sexual violence when they walk to water sources or practice open defecation. Consequently adolescent girls are often removed by their parents from schools lacking safe girls' toilets and deprived of an education.
- 19 November has been designated by the UN as the World Toilet Day to increase awareness of the global sanitation challenge.
- SIDS are net importers of food. They lack fertile lands and agriculture competes for land with other economic sectors such as infrastructure and tourism. Likewise, food production requires good water management.
- Declining agricultural output leads to increased use of fertilizers and pesticides. This in turn compromises water and land quality and increases cost of production. Climate change further exacerbates all these challenges. Both adaptation and mitigation are necessary.
- Food security and nutrition are closely linked and are significant challenges in SIDS. SIDS face an increasing health crises from alarming levels of obesity from poor nutrition.

- Being net importers of food strains budgets and affects availability of nutritious food. Free trade will not necessarily improve food and nutrition. Food access and food imports need to be healthier, and regulatory frameworks for food imports and public awareness raising is essential.
- Agricultural production requires an integrated management approach as it impacts on water, land quality, productivity and use of fertilizers and other chemicals. Here partnerships can also play a catalytic role, for example, through agricultural and food cooperatives that produce nutritious food and generate local employment opportunities, including for women.
- Waste generation and proper management is a global challenge, but especially so for SIDS. SIDS use landfills, which are expensive and require proper management, unsightly, attract pests, and their close proximity to populations can compromise the health of neighbouring populations.
- Partnerships were recognized for community learning for rural water quality, water science, hygiene coalitions to improve sanitation, organic agriculture, agricultural and food cooperatives, horticulture, livestock management, investment promotion in agriculture, agricultural research, improving food quality, locally grown food, agricultural and food safety, organic agriculture, access to intellectual property, including small-island-scale technology, integrated waste management, waste-to-energy technology, and waste water management in atolls.