



CPME/AD/Brd/140309/026 final/EN

At the CPME Board Meeting in Prague on 14 March 2009, CPME adopted the following document “**End Water Poverty**” (CPME 2009/026 final EN/Fr)” (referring to CPME 2009/026 EN/Fr)

“End Water Poverty” CPME Policy

Background

End Water Poverty (EWP) is an international campaign, driven by a growing coalition of organisations, calling for immediate action to address the global crisis in water and sanitation. The British Medical Association has joined the campaign, which is calling for a Global Framework for Action on sanitation and water, 70% of aid money for sanitation and water to be targeted at the poorest countries, and water resources to be protected and shared equitably.

At its meeting on 24 October 2008, the CPME Public Health Prevention and Environment Subcommittee received a short paper from the BMA, outlining the scale of the crisis and the potential for it to undermine efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. To summarise:

(i) *The scale of the crisis*

- Currently, 900 million people live without safe water and 2.5 billion people live without access to sanitation. Of these around 5000 children die every day from water-related diseases – the equivalent of 20 airliners filled with children, lost on a daily basis to an entirely preventable public health crisis.
- Recent research by Water Aid suggests that poor sanitation could be a major factor in 2.4 million child deaths annually, making it the *greatest contributing factor* to child mortality in the developing world.
- 1.6 million people die annually from diarrhoeal diseases (including cholera) attributable to lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation and 90% of these are children under 5, mostly in developing countries.
- 160 million people are infected with schistosomiasis causing tens of thousands of deaths yearly.
- Intestinal helminths (ascariasis, trichuriasis and hookworm infection) are plaguing the developing world due to inadequate drinking water, sanitation and



hygiene with 133 million suffering from high intensity intestinal helminths infections; there are around 1.5 million cases of clinical hepatitis A every year.

(ii) *The impact on the Millennium Development Goals*

Millennium Development Goal 7, Target 10 outlines the global ambition to halve the proportions of people without access to water and sanitation by 2015. However, at current rates of progress, in sub-Saharan Africa the water target will not be met until the 22nd century.

A greater focus on sanitation and water is also essential if we are to make progress on the other Millennium Development Goals. For example

Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

- Improved health and reduced water-carrying burdens improve school attendance, especially among girls.
- Having separate sanitation facilities for girls and boys in school increases girls' attendance, especially after they enter adolescence.

Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

- Improved sanitation and drinking water sources reduce infant and child morbidity and mortality.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

- Accessible sources of water reduce labour burdens and health problems resulting from water portage, reducing maternal mortality risks.
- Safe drinking water and basic sanitation are needed in health-care facilities to ensure basic hygiene practices following delivery.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

- Safe drinking water and basic sanitation help prevent water-related diseases, including diarrhoeal diseases, schistosomiasis, filariasis, trachoma and helminths.
- The reliability of drinking water supplies and improved water management in human settlement areas reduce transmission risks of malaria and dengue fever.

Recommendations for further action

In order to address the global crisis in water and sanitation, and to ensure that progress is made on the above Millennium Development Goals, the CPME makes the following recommendations:



Recommendation 1: That the CPME joins the End Water Poverty campaign and urges individual member associations to do the same.

Recommendation 2: That Governments and health agencies recognise the key role of providing safe sanitation and clean water as one of the most effective interventions to under-5 mortality, and ensure that these services are prioritised and integrated appropriately by both donor and recipient countries.

Recommendation 3: That Governments should agree to establish a Global Framework for Action to ensure sanitation and water for all, in which:

- (i) Developing country governments develop credible national plans to provide sanitation and water for all, and invest more in their implementation
- (ii) Donor governments support the development of these plans, and provide the funding to ensure that no credible national plan fails for lack of finance
- (iii) International systems are developed to monitor and drive progress, including a global task force, an annual review and an annual global high-level meeting

Recommendation 4: That European Governments should fulfil the commitment made in the EU Agenda for Action on the MDGs to provide an extra 2 bn Euros for sanitation and water programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2010.