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## ***PRESS RELEASE***

### **The World Loses 45 Million Cubic Metres of Water Every Day UNW-DPC and UN-HABITAT Look for Applying Solutions**

UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) organized from 3 to 5 September 2008 the International Workshop on “Drinking Water Loss Reduction: Developing Capacity for Applying Solutions”, held at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany. More than 60 participants, including water managers and water decision-makers from 18 cities around the world confronted with the problem of drinking water losses, met in Bonn to share their experiences regarding technical, political and administrative solutions and capacity development tools.

Drinking water loss from distribution systems is a problem in almost all conurbations around the world, but can be a serious issue in areas where water is scarce. The unaccounted loss of water is responsible for lack of development and health for millions of people and adds stress to the scarce and valuable global water resource. It is estimated that every day more than 45 million m<sup>3</sup> of drinking water are lost in the world’s water systems, a quantity that could serve nearly 200 million people. One third of the water is lost in developing countries.

Several big cities have already started programmes geared towards the step-by-step reduction of the losses and it is well known that many institutions and water suppliers have developed and implemented strategies and technologies to control leakage and water loss. These strategies have proven highly efficient and received worldwide recognition. This problem deserves immediate attention and appropriate action to reduce avoidable stress on valuable water resources and support the fulfilment of the water related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The workshop entitled “**Drinking Water Loss Reduction. Developing Capacity for Applying Solutions**”, jointly organised by UNW-DPC and UN-HABITAT, is a response to this urgent issue. In the opening plenary of the workshop, both the State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Prof. Dr Meyer-Krahmer and the Director for Global and Sectoral Policies of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Dr Konukiewitz emphasized the importance of a rapid approach to tackle drinking water loss reduction on an international level. "Despite remarkable progress in the development of knowledge, tools and technology for water loss reduction, there is still a lack of understanding of the essential role which leakage control should play in water resources management. Where can solutions be found? What kinds of strategies have been successful?" State Secretary Prof. Dr Meyer-Krahmer noted in his opening statement. With this workshop UNW-DPC and UN-HABITAT tried to find answers

to these questions. The workshop covered the aspects of technical, political and administrative solutions to reduce water loss and introduced tools for capacity development.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness among water managers, decision-makers and users about the importance of controlling water losses as a solution to increasing the availability of water supply. The workshop encouraged the exchange of experiences and information on successful examples on technical, political and administrative solutions applied within the different national programmes in improving water leakage control and reducing water losses in water supply systems. The presentation of case studies from 18 cities in five regions of the world and the discussions that followed concentrated on the most promising approaches, highlighting especially the need for institutional capacity development and the establishment of cooperation in order to apply the best available technical and managerial solutions.

Representatives from Asia (City of Gwalior, India; City of Lalitpur, Nepal), Latin America (City of São Paulo, Brazil; City of Managua, Nicaragua; Mexico City, Mexico; City of Lima, Peru) Africa (City of Kampala, Uganda; City of Lusaka, Zambia) and the Middle East (City of Alexandria and the Sharkia Governorate, Egypt; Cities of Madaba and Amman, Jordan; City of Ramallah, Palestinian Authority; City of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), shared their experiences with counterparts from water supply companies from Germany (City of Leipzig and the Ruhrgebiet region) and some neighbouring countries in Europe (City of Sofia, Bulgaria; City of Budapest, Hungary).

Providers of innovative technical solutions for detection and control of unaccounted flow, leakage control and water metering presented their products and approaches in a technical exhibition that was held during the workshop. Representatives from German, Austrian and Italian companies exchanged technological advances with the participants of the workshop.

For more information about the outcomes of the workshop, please visit UNW-DPC's web-site at the link: <http://www.unwater.unu.edu/article/730> .The final Proceedings of the workshop including the final report of the workshop and the full-papers of the works presented will be edited and published by UNW-DPC by the end of 2008 and will be made available in the web-site (www.unwater.unu.edu).

