

**Draft Statement for Topic Session 1: Sanitation in Society****“How can we sustainably embed sanitation in social, economic and cultural systems?”**

Sanitation is critical to human well-being and yet 2.5 billion people lack access to adequate and sustainable sanitation. Sustainable sanitation should be embedded as an essential component of development efforts and as a component of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), for the greatest benefit of the people, the economy and a better environment.

Recognizing that:

- 2.5 billion people lack access to sustainable sanitation and, that at current rates of progress, the MDG target for sanitation is seriously off-track
- Sanitation underpins all development efforts; in particular, health, education, economic development and resource and environment protection
- Sustainable sanitation should be accessible to all and must be affordable and appropriate in the local context to ensure that everyone has access all of the time
- Sanitation is a culturally important element in society, with distinct traditions and religious characteristics, which must be considered during programming
- Sanitation is economically beneficial to all including the poor and the vulnerable, and must be affordable
- Professional and sustainable management of sanitation systems has to be ensured, and
- Sanitation is important to the environment and people's well-being.

This can be achieved by:

1. Advocating for sanitation as an essential development sector that has the potential to bring huge social and economic benefits, so that

- Sanitation is prioritized alongside other critical development sectors including water, health and education
- Awareness for the economic value of human excreta and water from households as resources that can be recovered, treated and reused safely, is recognized
- Human waste is transformed into fertilizer in agricultural fields supplementary income is generated from agricultural products in rural areas, to help preserve soil fertility and to safeguard long-term food security, and human waste should be treated within the area where they are produced
- Water bodies downstream are protected in accordance with the Polluter Pays Principle.

2. Taking steps to accelerate progress on sanitation and in particular the sanitation MDG target by:

- Prioritizing sanitation in national development plans and international development efforts alongside water, health and education
- Increasing developing country budget allocations and international assistance for sanitation
- Identifying and upscaling existing good practice and rolling out to similar contexts through a concerted multi-donor approach
- Developing and investing in sustainable sanitation plans that stimulate demand for sanitation and build community participation and ownership
- Increasing investments in institutional sanitation - in particular for schools and healthcare facilities, prisons, etc.
- Targeting vulnerable groups including children and the poor or marginalized, notably in urban slums.

3. Building cross-sectoral alliances for sanitation at all levels, by:

- Engaging key stakeholders at national and sub-national level, including households, community organisations and NGOs to engage in sanitation efforts and promote the (local) private sector to recognize sustainable sanitation as a viable business approach
- Good sanitation practice
- Building networks and partnerships to share learning and best practice on sanitation approaches at the national and international level
- Engaging relevant sectors at the national level including health, education and environment
- Supporting initiatives at the international level that seek to bring greater accountability and urgency to the sanitation problem, including the Global Framework for Action on Sanitation and Water