Human Values and Ethics in the Workplace

Improving Leadership and Performance in the Water Education, Supply and Sanitation Sectors

R E S O U R C E P A P E R

The Critical Role of Human Values and Ethics for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals Related to Water and Sanitation

UN-HABITAT

Divine Love Boldly in Action
Global Dharma
CENTER

This resource paper has been formatted for 2-sided printing and copying.

For best black and white photo-copying, print this file in black ink.

"Human Values and Ethics in the Workplace" is a capacity-building initiative developed in a collaborative effort between the Global Dharma Center (GDC) and UN-HABITAT, within the framework of the Human Values Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (HVWSHE) Initiative of the Water for African/Asian Cities Programmes. The purpose of the capacity-building is to improve leadership and performance in every aspect of the water education and water supply and sanitation sectors, and to help bring about a new ethic in water use and management.

© 2005 UN-HABITAT and Global Dharma Center

For more information: www.globaldharma.org/hvew.htm

Human values emphasize the responsibilities that enable the aspiration of "water, sanitation and hygiene for all" to be protected, safeguarded, and fulfilled.

Human values have their roots in a single, universally-held premise: the inherent dignity of every human being.

Capacity-building efforts for human values and ethics, with a specific focus on the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets related to "Water for Life," carry the potential for a fundamental breakthrough and qualitative leap forward

A focus on human values evokes the inner source of motivation for ethical and moral choices – bringing about changes of attitude from the inside out, with changes of behaviour to follow.

When human values are brought forth, a new level of shared meaning occurs, leading to aligned, effective action and results.

Meeting the MDG targets for water and sanitation requires the power of compassion, commitment, conscience, and character. It requires a spirit of humanity that spans generations and works on behalf of the well-being of all people and the environment.

What are human values?

Human values are the positive, desirable qualities of character – such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, responsibility, compassion, altruism, justice and respect – inherent in all human beings. Human values are fundamental to human existence and span across cultures, nationalities and classes.

Human values cultivate an environment of trust, transparency, responsibility, caring, respect, cooperation, quality, and excellence. They are the internal motivators for people to do their best in line with good character, morality and ethics.

Because human values are held in common across all cultures, they strongly tend to be *inclusive* values that bind people together across their differences and prompt a concern for others' well-being.

People are able to draw upon the depth of their traditions of culture, nationality, and religion to find and express human values – an important aspect of their common acceptance among people around the world.

What are ethics?

The word “ethics” comes from the Greek word for “character” and “customs” (traditions). Ethics can be broadly defined as: a set of moral principles or a guiding philosophy that informs people about what is right or wrong in thoughts, words, decisions and actions, often formulated as principles of conduct governing an individual or group. For many people, ethics is a matter of conscience. Ethical behaviour is the practice of human values in the workplace, a natural consequence of living in accord with human values.

In the water-related education, supply, and sanitation sectors, ethical behaviour (and the human values motivating it) includes behaviours, such as:

- Showing respect for public property (related human values: non-violence, self-control)
- Serving the poor communities (related human values: com-passion, brotherhood, love)
- Considering the views of others (related human values: harmony, broadmindedness, tolerance)
- Fulfilling job duties (related human values: responsibility, determination, discipline)
- Producing quality work by hard work (related human values: sacrifice, satisfaction, caring)

In contrast, human values are conspicuously missing with unethical behaviours, such as:

- Lies or secrecy with information (human values missing: honesty, transparency, accountability)
- Bias and partiality (human values missing: equality, justice, broadmindedness)
- Bribery, speed money, and kickbacks (human values missing: character, integrity, conscience)
- Laziness, refusing to do good work (human values missing: discipline, duty, respect)

How are human values and ethics a key part of the UN mission and activities?

Human values are the organising principles of the United Nations. The Preamble of the UN Charter of 1945 states:

"(We are determined)… to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours and unite our strength to maintain international peace and security."

And Article 1 of the 1948 UN "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" says:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Human values and ethics are the foundation upon which rests the hope of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This foundation was clearly articulated in the Millennium Declaration of 2000:

"We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility. In order to translate these shared values into actions, we have identified key objectives to which we assign special significance."

"We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected."

What is the state of water and sanitation needs in the world?

Over 1.1 billion people in the world today lack access to a safe water supply, and 2.4 billion lack adequate sanitation[1]. Approximately 84% of these are in rural areas; however, the situation is also very serious in urban areas, where the population is growing rapidly. In 2000, the global number of those in urban areas without improved provisions for water supply and sanitation were[2]:

- Urban water supply: 173 million people (98 million in Asia, 44 million in Africa)
- Urban sanitation: 403 million people (297 million in Asia, 46 million in Africa)

The health hazards related to this lack of safe water and sanitation are endemic in many regions of the world, resulting in 2.2 million deaths per year from diarrhoea alone, mostly among children.

The economic impact of the lack of safe water and adequate sanitation is enormous, reinforcing the poverty cycle in a multitude of ways such as reducing the time available for income-producing activities and limiting educational opportunities for girls (who must carry water for hours each day).

Furthermore, according to the Asian Development Bank[3]:

> *"Around 1.7 billion people live in countries that are water-stressed. This number will rise to 5 billion unless major changes are made to global water management. Most are poor countries where scarcity is not evenly distributed. Again, it is the poor who are hit first and hardest."*

[1] UN-HABITAT: "Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities", 2003

[2] ibid.

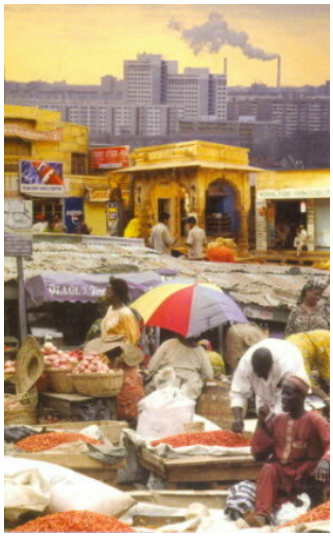
[3] Asian Development Bank: "Water for the Poor: Partnerships in Action" , 2004

What is the global commitment to meet these water and sanitation needs?

In the spirit of "sparing no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty," the member States of the United Nations established in the year 2000 eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), each with one or more targets to achieve by 2015/2020.

With respect to water, the targets related to MDG #7 – "Environmental Sustainability" – are:

- Target 10 – to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
- Target 11 – to achieve, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers
- A special target was added at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002: to halve by 2015, the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation.



Given the challenges related to safe water and sanitation, the UN has taken additional steps, beyond setting MDG targets, to focus on the developmental goal of universal access to safe water and sanitation[4]:

> *"In its resolution 58/218, the General Assembly declared 2005-2015 to be the 'International Decade for Action on Water for Life,' and the Secretary-General has established the Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation to help mobilize action and funds for water and sanitation, and encourage new partnerships."*

"Water for Life," as designated in UN resolution 58/218, is a fundamental element of sustainable development. The notions of human dignity and quality of life require sufficient water to satisfy the basic human needs for drinking, hygiene, cleaning, cooking, subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry, and sanitation. In addition, the flow must ensure the health and functioning of rivers, streams, and all aquatic ecosystems. Thus the right to water means the fundamental right of access to "Water for Life."

[4] "Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration" (IUNMD). Report of the Secretary-General, 27 August, 2004; page 16

What has been the progress to meet these needs?

Today, the world is lagging far behind the pace needed to achieve the MDG Goals as a whole, as stated by the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, in 2004[5]:

> *"As a whole the world is not optimising its performance. Some regions and countries are making little progress towards any of the Goals."*

The "Global Monitoring Report 2004" from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund points out that achieving the targets for safe water and sanitation is key to achieving most of the other MDGs. In fact, achieving the MDG targets for safe water and sanitation would have a profound effect on virtually all the other MDGs; and in many cases, achieving the water targets is necessary before any significant progress on most other MDGs is possible.

Even with significant progress in some areas, including water, if present trends are continued, the goals related to extreme hunger, universal primary education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, major diseases HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability, will not be met[6].

Specifically for water, the 2004 UN report states[7]:

> *"Significant improvements have been made in rural access in all regions, but only a few countries have achieved improvement at a sufficient rate to meet the target. While there has been significant progress towards meeting the sanitation goal, 2.6 billion people worldwide did not have access to improved sanitation in 2000."*

This difficulty in providing safe water and sanitation is not new. The International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990) saw impressive action aimed at full provision of water and sanitation to all by the year 1990. Yet, by the turn of the millennium, there were more people un-served than in 1981.

[5] IUNMD, page 14

[6] World Bank: "Global Monitoring Report 2004"

[7] IUNMD, page 16

How are human values and ethics the foundation for making progress?

The Water for Asian Cities program, co-sponsored by UN-HABITAT and the Asian Development Bank, summarizes the need of the day[8]:

> *"Pro-poor investments in the water and sanitation sector will call for a rapid mobilization of political will and commitment to break away from a business-as-usual approach towards time-bound achievements."*

The UN Millennium Project Task Force for Water and Sanitation articulates the foundation upon which political will and "breaking away from business-as-usual" must be built – a moral and ethical imperative founded in the universal principles ascribed to by the UN member States[9]:

> *"Access to water and sanitation is a moral and ethical imperative rooted in the cultural and religious traditions of societies around the world and enshrined in international human rights."*

The necessary political, social and individual will to achieve the MDG targets, especially for water and sanitation, cannot be forced. Justice P. N. Bhagwati, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in India and a current member of the Human Rights Committee of the UN, has stated that compliance measures – using the judicial process, international public opinion, or the censure of international or regional organisations – are insufficient to secure rights such as access to water and sanitation. He states[10]:

> *"These are the external compulsions which have limited efficacy. From human values springs humanism, and the establishment and maintenance of human dignity is not possible without instilling humanism in the hearts and minds of people."*

A focus on human values evokes the inner source of motivation for ethical and moral choices. The goal is to elicit a change of

[8] UN-HABITAT website: "Water for Asian Cities" Programme

[9] Report of the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Water and Sanitation

[10] Speech delivered at the ILO in Geneva, Switzerland, 9 July 2004

attitude from the inside out, with changes of behaviour to follow. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, has commented[11]:

> *"A human values approach to water education… is a promising strategy to bring about a positive and lasting change in attitude and behaviour towards water at all levels of society*."

As demonstrated in UN-HABITAT's "Human Values Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education" (HVWSHE) initiative (part of the Water for African/Asian Cities programmes), when these human values are brought out, new levels of shared meaning result… leading to aligned, effective action and results[12]:

> *"When value-based principles are fully integrated into development activities, the ideas, insights and practical measures that emerge are likely to be those that promote self-reliance and preserve human honour, thereby avoiding habits of dependency and progressively eliminating conditions of gross economic disparity."*

As an illustration of this principle, a public health official in Jabalpur, India declared during a stakeholder consultation meeting:

> *"You have to help the workers realise they are supplying water to the people. This instils a moral duty and a moral feeling. A sense of belonging will come. It instils a feeling of wanting to get the things fixed as soon as possible. Our forefathers fought for this feeling – we must sacrifice for this feeling of being proud of our culture. When a leader teaches this, it helps us to improve the work."*

Comments by Steven C. Rockefeller, Chairman, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, speak forcefully about the practicality and relevance of human values and ethics[13]:

> *"In an interdependent world, the self-interest of all nations is increasingly bound up with the ecological and social common good. To recognize this is not irresponsible idealism but sound practical sense. In all cultures one finds in the midst of great differences a core of common ethical values. These include guidelines for mutual care and support, prohibitions against harming others and violence, and certain elemental principles regarding fairness and procedural justice. To fail to recognize that humanity also has a capacity for sym-pathy, compassion, common sense, and justice unnecessarily narrows our vision of what is possible."*

[11] UN-HABITAT: "Human Values in Water Education," 2003

[12] UN-HABITAT: "Value-Based Approaches to Community Water Education" by Pireh Otieno, in *Water Education in African Cities*, 2001

[13] Speech delivered at the University of the Philippines, 31 August 2004

What are the main obstacles to fulfilling the water and sanitation MDG targets?

As documented by UN-HABITAT, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and stakeholder consultations with over 550 professionals from India and various countries in Africa, there are obstacles in the way of fulfilling the water and sanitation MDG targets. While "insufficient investment and aid" is the first obstacle listed in Table 1, it will take more than just "throwing money at the problem." By analyzing each obstacle in terms of the human values that are missing and identifying how human values can be strengthened and applied in practical and relevant ways, it can stimulate a range of creative ideas for overcoming or diminishing the obstacle.

Table 1 illustrates *10 major obstacles* along with: observations from UN-HABITAT and ADB reports; stakeholder consultations[14], and examples of missing human values.

[14] Stakeholder consultations included: state directors of urban development, mayors, elected city council members, city commissioners, heads of department, public health engineers, field engineers, inspectors, supervisors, community development specialists, consultants on infrastructure development and management, utility executives and managers, consultants on international water and sanitation, directors of adult education, curriculum specialists, principals, and teachers

Table 1: Obstacles to fulfilling the water and sanitation MDG targets

Obstacles UN-HABITAT and ADB Comments	Stakeholder Consultations	Missing Human Values
1. Insufficient Investment and Aid *The current level of investment in the (water and sanitation) sector is quite inadequate to bridge the widening demand-supply gap and to extend services to urban low-income settlements.* (UN-HABITAT and ADB: "Water for Asian Cities Programme")	*There is a lack of sufficient infrastructure for water and sanitation services. Therefore, there is a need for large investment and proper use of existing facilities. This involves many stakeholders like donors, contractors, consultants, suppliers, users, and other governmental and non-governmental organizations.* (Planning Executive, Addis Ababa Water and Sanitation Authority, Ethiopia)	Determination Equality Initiative Integrity Perseverance Respect Responsibility
2. Poor Quality Work *Introducing performance-based principles did not ensure that the dates were actually used in decision making (or) that actions were taken when performance fell short of targets.* (ADB: "2003 Annual Report")	*There is worry about the contractors and how they will work, the quality and efficiency and safety. The tender documents must be prepared properly. The technical parameters must be correct. This must be checked properly.* (Urban Water Supply and Environment Improvement [UWSEI] Engineer, Gwalior, India)	Dedication Enthusiasm Helpfulness Perseverance Sacrifice Self-respect Sincerity
3. Lack of Faith in the Participatory Processes *Perhaps the greatest obstacle to successful participatory development is convincing institutional players that it is indeed possible.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002)	*The people think the government is different than themselves. There's no problem to pelt the bus, to throw trash, to tear things up. So the people do not take ownership of the city; there is a duality between the government and the people.* (Municipal Official, Jabalpur, India)	Broad-minded Cooperation Fairness Good citizenship Respect Trust

Obstacles UN-HABITAT and ADB Comments	Stakeholder Consultations	Missing Human Values
4. Lack of Good, Pro-poor Governance, Transparency and Accountability *Governments are only too happy to prepare policies for development agencies but are often not held accountable for implementing them.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002)	*People don't have the feeling of duty; sometimes people have a vested interest. If there is a personal interest, then they will act; otherwise they won't act.* (Public Health Official, Jabalpur, India)	Accountability Brotherhood Honesty Integrity Morality Responsibility Right Conduct Transparency
5. Political Interference *There continues to be political interference in tariff setting.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002) *The Millennium Development Goals are a test of political will...* (UN report: "Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration")	*There are politicians who will from time to time undermine our activities by making statements that are not true.* (Commercial Manager, Arusha Urban Water and Sanitation Authority, Tanzania) *Political people make the decisions and often do not consider the people's needs.* (UWSEI Engineer, Indore, India)	Conscience Concern for the Welfare of All Duty Fairness Higher Goals Selfless Service
6. Limited Awareness in Civil Society *Perhaps the most important finding is that there is limited awareness among civil society regarding the problems and solutions facing the sector. Governments will not reform themselves without due pressure from civil society.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002)	*There used to be 50 lakes; now there are 10. With population growth, if we don't respect water, we'll run out of water.* (UWSEI Community Development Expert, Jabalpur, India) *We must raise awareness through community participation so people can understand the living conditions.* (Municipal Official, Indore, India)	Awareness Caring Determination Dialogue Empathy Equality Justice Refusal to hurt

Obstacles UN-HABITAT and ADB Comments	Stakeholder Consultations	Missing Human Values
7. Delays in Implementation *Most Water Supply and Sanitation projects experience significant delays in implementation. These delays result from an interplay among institutional, design, policy, and administrative factors.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002)	*The contractor's workers must be properly trained on skills, doing work on time, understand the value of the work, and be properly supervised. If the supervisor is sincere and devotes the time to see that the work is done, then good quality will be had.* (UWSEI Engineers, Bhopal, India)	Character Morality Proper use of money and time Responsibility Right conduct Selfless service
8. Corruption *It may also be found that there are those – including utility staff, government officials, and elected officials – with vested interests in maintaining a status quo that allows considerable amount of informal revenue to enter their pockets.* (ADB: "Asian Water Supply: Reaching Urban Poor")	*Project supervisors and utility collude to reduce the quality of materials in order to increase profits. Fudged bills are given when the work is not done.* (UWSEI Engineer, Indore, India)	Conscience Courage Honesty Integrity Justice Respect Self-control Transparency
9. Insufficient Tariffs *Rationalizing or raising tariffs may often require difficult institutional changes and the reasons for increasing tariffs may need to be fully explained to water consumers and producers as well as to politicians.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002)	*The slum people think the water should be free if the city supplies it. However, they will pay a large amount to buy water from other sources. The political will must be there to get the people to pay. The payment of the water bill will be the last to be paid because there is no fear of the water being cut off.* (Municipal Official, Indore, India)	Concern for the welfare of all Equality Fairness Good citizenship Higher goals Responsibility Unity
10. Long Procurement Processes *Protracted domestic procurement and decision-making processes have been a reason why projects have not provided the level of benefits to participating communities that they might otherwise.* (ADB: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects," December 2002)	*The payments must be made within the timeframe, but normally they are not and so the contractors do not do good work.* (UWSEI Engineer, Gwalior, India)	Caring Determination Discipline Duty Initiative Respect Responsibility

How have human values and ethics proven themselves to be tangible and practical?

Stakeholder consultations with professionals in India and countries throughout Africa revealed that when human values and ethics are present in the day-to-day work of adults in the water education, supply and sanitation sectors, extraordinary work is a natural result.

When asked, "How are human values and ethics being practiced in your field of work?" people readily gave statements such as these from the water and sanitation sector in Madhya Pradesh, India:

- *In some places there were many illegal connections. One way we are addressing the problem is to forcefully stop the illegal connections. Another is to have love and compassion, so we can make the connections legal. We are trying to understand the cause of the illegal taps through camps and public awareness, rather than just cutting them off.*
- *One man went to a politician and asked him to pay for his water so he would be a model for others and neighbours would start to pay. The one leader in a cluster of homes is the one we look for. If they pay, then the others will pay.*

- *There was a sewage treatment plant that wasn't working – no one knew what to do. A retired man came forward and solved the problem. He worked hard to solve the problem and saved the corporation a lot of money.*
- *There were 3 or 4 families who had no drainage because it was blocked by others, so they had to collect their waste and take it away to a distant place. Our engineer saw that the problem was that the drain had to go through the path of the political heavy-weights. She worked to make sure the drain was put in, despite the political interference.*

Providing access to safe water and sanitation can be challenging, often with significant delays as noted in an ADB report evaluating numerous water supply

and sanitation projects[15] . However, that same report highlighted an exception:

> *"Except for Dalian in the PRC, completion of all the reviewed projects was delayed. The average delay was almost 20 months, compared with an average expected implementation period of 56 months. This may be contrasted with the expeditious implementation of the Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Supply Project in India, which was implemented over a period of 18 months and constructed water supply systems for more than 1.25 million people in 731 villages."*

How did the India project referred to in the ADB report achieve such rapid implementation, and have the results been sustained? According to a study conducted 5 years after the completion of the project by UN- HABITAT[16], this NGO-sponsored water supply project in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India, continues even today to bring drastic improvement in the health conditions and quality of life of over 1 million people by providing safe drinking water in drought prone districts with ground water contamination and fluoride. The report highlighted the positive impact that high integrity leadership, human values and ethics can have on the design, implementation and sustained maintenance of these types of projects. According to the UN-HABITAT report, the success factors and lessons to be learned include[17]:

- *Faith in what one was doing with devotion coupled with role appreciation and professionalism was considered a prime value.*
- *Task orientation and strict adherence to time frames and efficient completion of project works in a record time of 18 months has been the hallmark of the project.*
- *Bringing up remarkable professional discipline right from the stage of formulation of the project till its completion by building up unity, trust, competitiveness, diversity, and devotion among the partner institutions.*
- *A non-governmental organisation led the way in showing that the success of the entire endeavour depends on unity, purity, and divinity.*
- *The people's devotional involvement in the spirit of the cause – providing all possible cooperation (even bearing*

[15] Asian Development Bank: "Impact Evaluation Study on Water Supply and Sanitation Projects in Selected Developing Member Countries", December 2002

[16] UN-HABITAT: "An Impact Evaluation Study of the Sri Sathya Sai Water Supply Project", 2001

[17] ibid.

losses on their part) – exhibited their full support and effort to bring the project into reality

- *The project was executed at a minimal cost and time; the project, if completed by the Government with the normal procedures, would perhaps have cost 200% more… and would have taken 4 to 5 years for completion.*

In accord with these findings, in workshops on "Human Values and Ethics in the Workplace," over 170 professionals from the water education, supply and sanitation sectors were asked to identify the practical benefits of human values and ethics in water and sanitation work. Participants from these workshops stated:

- *Teams with sincerity and honesty "deliver the goods" and accomplish the goals with high personal satisfaction, and they are appreciated for their output.*
- *Respect, participation and strong leadership results in work accomplished with high quality, enhanced output, and stronger motivation and perseverance.*
- *Patience and tolerance leads to doing the job better, with more harmony and less conflict.*
- *Vision and foresight to do the best planning results in money and time being used well and projects being completed in a timely, prompt way.*
- *Kindness and compassion leads to mutual satisfaction, mutual help and benefit where everyone is energised.*
- *Sharing (experience, knowledge...) results in work being done faster and with better quality.*

What are ways to build the capacity for human values and ethics with working adults?

The purpose of the capacity-building for human values and ethics in the workplace is to improve leadership and performance in every aspect of the water education and water supply and sanitation sectors, and to help bring about a new ethic in water use and management. This capacity-building includes developing and strengthening both leaders and workers in their ability to:

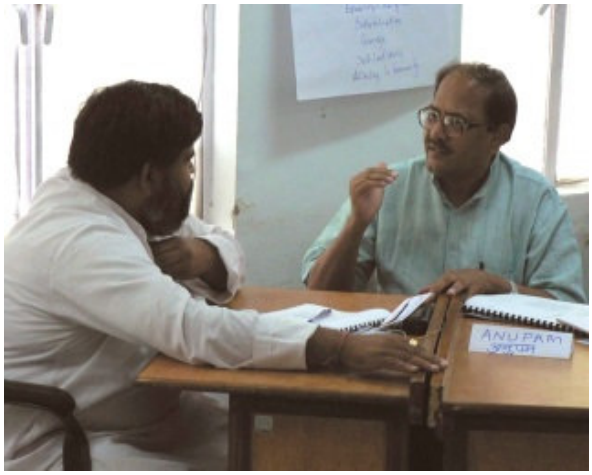
1. Increase their awareness about the importance and role of human values and ethics at work
2. Identify and draw from their human value strengths in all of their work activities
3. Define the need for ethics at work and generate creative ways to strengthen the work environment for human values and ethics
4. Practice and encourage others to have a purity and unity of thought, word, and action
5. Recognize how to positively influence their work environment and establish guiding principles for groups based on human values
6. Make the commitment to being a champion of human values and ethics in their workplace

There is a common belief that it is difficult for adults to change, given long-standing habits of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour. Yet every person is endowed with the ability to live by and practice human values. Thus, capacity-building with human values and ethics requires drawing out and evoking these human values, which then have an impact on beliefs, attitudes and behaviour "from within." When a facilitator brings this kind of awareness and confidence to their capacity building approach, it directly impacts the success of their efforts.

An important step to developing the capacity-building for human values and ethics is to formulate an adult learning methodology that is suitable to the working environment. Based on 40+ years of combined experience among the Global Dharma Center staff, it is clear that for an

adult learning process to result in practical change and achievement, it must not stop at "new understanding," but must lead people through five levels of engagement:

- *Awareness* – "I understand this and find it meaningful."
- *Aspiration/Intention* – "I want to achieve a purposeful goal."
- *Motivation* – "I am moved and energized."
- *Action* – "I am doing something to achieve the goal."
- *Actualisation* – "I am seeing results."



Furthermore, a process with the following three activities is essential to achieve a high level of shared meaning that leads to aligned, effective action and results:

- *Knowledge and skill acquisition:* to gain new understanding, skills, or behaviours through direct experience.
- *Introspection*: a reflective look to examine one's own thoughts, feelings, and values.
- *Dialogue*: the free flow of meaningful conversation from which shared meaning emerges.

The effectiveness of this approach has been demonstrated with the professionals attending the workshops on "Human Values and Ethics in the Workplace." At the end, each participant wrote a "letter" to themselves, stating their commitment to concrete actions to implement their insights from the workshop. The typical letter included commitments such as:

- *I will try to work for the poor people with honesty to upgrade their living standards. I will encourage my sub-ordinates to work hard by appreciating when they achieve their targets.*
- *I have to improve my patience to solve the problems of water supply in the village where there are severe water problems and have the villagers develop trust in me by fulfilling their requirements.*
- *I would like to motivate others to follow the ideal goal of selflessness: not to entertain corrupt practices; not to be selfish; and to give a human ear to the people's problems.*
- *When we work hard people will recognize and cooperate with us to get better results. I have to work for the welfare of the people; then only will I get satisfaction for whatever the government has paid to me.*

The time is now

The human values shared by all UN member countries – such as freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, shared responsibility[18] – are the foundation upon which rests the hope of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. They were the source and compelling force behind the UN Member States declaring[19]:

> *"We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want."*

Capacity-building in human values and ethics, with a specific focus on the MDG targets for safe water, sanitation, and slum improvement, represents the promise for a fundamental breakthrough and qualitative leap forward by helping to achieve the following:

1. Enhanced involvement, ownership, and satisfaction of all stakeholders
2. Active partnership between government and civil society
3. A new sense of trust in and understanding by the communities for the government's efforts
4. Efficient project completion – on time, in budget, with high quality
5. Enhanced sustainability of water and sanitation projects (with better cost recovery) through high stakeholder commitment
6. Good governance, including pro-poor practices, ethics and transparency
7. A new ethic of water use and management
8. High regard for the protection and use of natural resources
9. A fully integrated approach to water and sanitation management
10. Long-term economic growth and poverty reduction

The Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Annan, strongly reminds us that the time to act is now[20]:

> *"Overcoming human poverty will require a quantum leap in scale and ambition: more nationally owned strategies and policies, stronger institutions, wider participatory processes, focused investments in economic and social infrastructure, and more resources, domestic and external. Realistically, if the goals set are to be reached, these developments need to happen very soon. The Millennium Development Goals are still technically feasible in even the*

[18] UN Millennium Declaration

[19] Ibid.

[20] IUNMD, page 2

poorest countries, but the window of opportunity is rapidly narrowing and the political will remains largely absent. We must seize this opportunity."

Achieving the MDG targets for water and sanitation requires the power of compassion, conviction, commitment, conscience, and character. It requires a spirit of humanity that spans generations and works on behalf of the well-being of all people and the environment. Most of all, in the words of the Secretary General, it requires[21]:

"…a world united by common values and striving with renewed determination to achieve peace and decent standards of living for every man, woman and child."

[21] Ibid.

"Human values and ethics are directly relevant to the art of responsible public policy making. Human values and ethics can become a source of political mobilization and contribute to social change. These fundamental values should guide and inspire us in our efforts to promote development and combat poverty."

Kjell Magne Bondevik
Prime Minister of Norway

"As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest. Poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice… the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life."

Nelson Mandela, 3 February, 2005
"The Campaign to Make Poverty History"

"I am not interested in listening to 100 ways by which it cannot be done. Can you tell me one way in which it can be done? If I am authorized, I will remove the word 'impossible.'"

The Honourable A. P. J.
Abdul Kalam
President of India
in *"Vision to Mission" (2003)*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, KENYA
www.unhabitat.org
www.unwac.org
Tel: +254-20-623060
Fax: +254-20-623588

Global Dharma Center (GDC)
Dallas, Texas 75240 USA
www.globaldharma.org
Tel/Fax: +1-646-514-8260