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### FAO: Innovations in water management needed to sustain cities

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As the world's urban population continues to swell, the need to employ new and innovative approaches to ensuring safe and adequate water for city dwellers in developing countries is becoming increasingly pressing, FAO said today. "Within the next 20 years, 60 percent of the world's population will live in cities, with most urban expansion taking place in the developing world. Ensuring access to nutritious, affordable food for the poorer of these city-dwellers is emerging as a real challenge," said Alexander Mueller, FAO Assistant Director-General for Natural Resources.

Expanding city populations require increased water supplies for drinking, washing and cooking. In turn, a demand for more food translates into more water needed for expanding marketplaces, agro-industry and food processing operations. And growth in urban and peri-urban agriculture also means a heightened demand for irrigation water.

This array of pressures on urban water supplies requires non-conventional alternatives to creating more resilient cities, Mueller said.

For instance, rainwater harvesting in cities holds great potential for urban agriculture, but is as yet relatively untapped.

Meanwhile, good agriculture and forestry practices can contribute to sound watershed management, safeguarding water catchment and reducing runoff and flooding in cities - ever more important as climate change increases the frequency of extreme weather events.

For more information click [here](#).