

# UN-Water Annual Report 2020



United  
Nations



UN WATER

UN-Water, 2020

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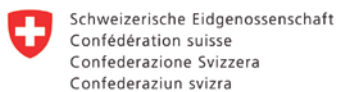
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands



Ministry of Infrastructure  
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# About UN-Water

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UN-Water coordinates the work of the United Nations on water and sanitation. It was formally established in 2003, building on a long history of collaboration within the United Nations (UN). UN-Water comprises the United Nations bodies that have a focus on, or interest in, water-related issues as Members and other international organizations as Partners.

The main purpose of UN-Water is to complement and add value to existing programmes and projects by facilitating synergies and joint efforts, so as to maximize United Nations family-wide coordinated action and coherence and to reduce overlapping and duplication. In so doing, UN-Water seeks to increase the effectiveness of support provided to Member

States in their efforts towards achieving international agreements on water. This is done along the following three main lines of work:

- Informing policy processes and addressing emerging issues;
- Supporting monitoring and reporting on water and sanitation; and
- Building knowledge and inspiring people to take action.

At the end of 2020, UN-Water had 33 Members and 42 Partners.

[www.unwater.org](http://www.unwater.org)

# Chair's message

Mr. Gilbert F. Houngbo, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development and Chair of UN-Water



As the pandemic continues to rage, people living without the defense offered by safely managed water and sanitation, hygiene facilities and healthcare remain intensely vulnerable to COVID-19 and many other deadly, infectious diseases.

Many Members and Partners of the UN-Water family have been on an emergency footing since the coronavirus outbreak began in early 2020. We worked together to make vital hygiene information available to all and to quickly adapt the World Water Day campaign, seen by millions, to encourage effective handwashing.

Staying safe while achieving our objectives became the theme of the year. In a virtual meeting of Executive Heads of United Nations agencies and key stakeholders, we launched the Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) Global Acceleration Framework – a drive to get people from all walks of life behind faster progress to sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030.

The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework is central to our new 2020-2030 strategy, published in 2020, which will shape UN-Water's work until the culmination of the SDGs. Publicly endorsed by the United Nations Secretary-General and the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the Framework injects real momentum ahead of 2023, when we will convene for the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action, 'Water for Sustainable Development' 2018-2028.

Being able to track achievements and ensure accountability with credible and timely data is critical to directing resources where they are

most needed. UN-Water's Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (IMI-SDG 6) worked with more countries to gather data gathered more data and upgraded its online data portal last year. The 2020 'Data Drive' to compile global data for SDG 6 target indicators, has provided indispensable intelligence to guide our journey to 2023 and beyond.

Much remains to be done. The water and sanitation crisis remains extremely serious. One in three people have no safe drinking water and more than half the world's population lack safe sanitation. Industry and agriculture are getting thirstier, ecosystems are being damaged by untreated wastewater, and the water-related effects of climate change are worsening.

UN-Water's public campaigns for World Water Day and World Toilet Day focused on climate change and the role that sustainable, resilient water and sanitation systems can have in mitigating and withstanding a rapidly altering natural world.

Our resilience to current and future shocks must be based on universal provision of basic services, including water and sanitation, and on good governance throughout the water cycle, protecting communities, schools, businesses, industry, agriculture, and the natural environment.

Before we promise to 'build back better' we should recall that many people across the developing world have never had the benefits of equitable, sustainable, integrated management of water and sanitation.

To make the post-COVID world fairer and safer than pre-COVID, we must deliver on our promise of sustainable water and sanitation for all.

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# Highlighted achievements and lessons learned in 2020

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## Spotlight

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**“The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of the importance of sanitation, safe water and handwashing facilities to stop the spread of infectious diseases.”  
(United Nations Secretary-General’s message on World Water Day 2020)**

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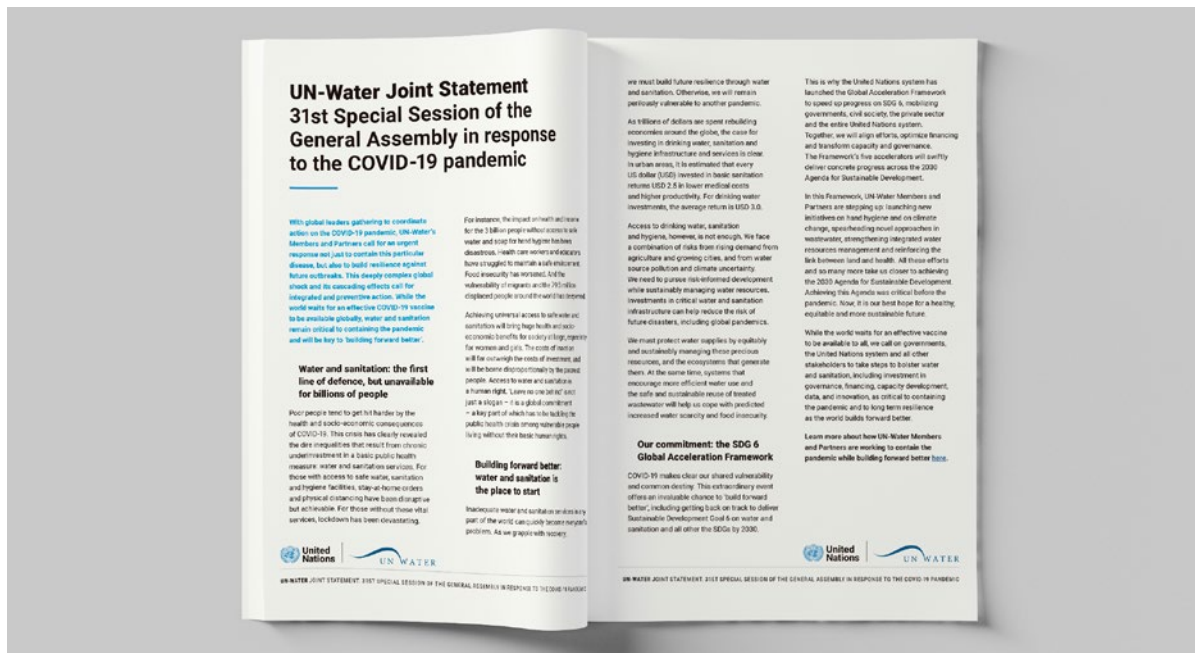
In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic stopped the world in its tracks. According to the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020,<sup>1</sup> the pandemic threatens to reverse years of progress on poverty, hunger, health care and education. Water and sanitation is a first line of defence against COVID-19, however, billions of people around the world still lack access to basic water and sanitation facilities. The effects of the pandemic devastated the most vulnerable people in the world. COVID-19 revealed the unfortunate reality that our ability to protect ourselves is far from equal.

As the pandemic was unfolding in March 2020, UN-Water established a special section on its website to collect water and sanitation-related information from UN-Water Members and Partners considering the COVID-19 global emergency. UN-Water worked to ensure the most up-to-date information, resources and guidance were accessible to the general public. Members and Partners unified their voices and fostered digital conversations around the strong link between COVID-19 and hygiene.

In December 2020, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) hosted a special session in response to COVID-19 pandemic. With global leaders gathering to push action on the pandemic, the UN-Water family released a joint statement with the aim of contributing to the coordinated efforts of the UN system and multi-stakeholders to address the COVID-19 pandemic. UN-Water’s 33 Members and 42 Partners have called for a bold and urgent response, not just to contain this pandemic but also to achieve resilience by building back better.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf>



## Highlighted achievements

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG) 6 GLOBAL ACCELERATION FRAMEWORK

In response to the Secretary-General's call for a Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030, the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework was developed by UN-Water Members and Partners to deliver fast results at an increased scale. The Framework will contribute to progress across the 2030 Agenda and other relevant global targets, in particular: poverty reduction, food security, health, gender equality, peace, sustainability and climate resilience of communities, ecosystems, and production systems. By committing to the Framework, the UN system, governments, civil society and the private sector will work together in a coordinated way to advance the water agenda. Five accelerators outlined in the Framework – financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance – will dramatically improve the international community's support to country progress.

## COUNTRY LEVEL ENGAGEMENT

As a fundamental component of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, UN-Water continued its support to Resident Coordinators (RCs) and the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) in 2020. UN-Water, through its Task Force on Country Level Engagement, offered its expertise and support to RCs and UNCTs and has been working closely with eight countries.

## 2020 DATA DRIVE

To close the data gap and to advance trend analysis of existing data, the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (IMI-SDG6) launched its second round of global data compilation on seven SDG 6 indicators in March 2020. Despite being launched at the start of the pandemic, the 2020 Data Drive process proved to be robust and achieved very satisfactory results. The custodian agencies also offered various types of capacity-building support to country focal points as part of the 2020 Data Drive.

## Lessons learned

The events of 2020 made it clear that water, sanitation and hygiene underpin health and every other critical aspect of society, from business and industry to agriculture and the integrity of our environment. The UN launched a global consultation to mark its 75th anniversary in 2020. More than 1.5 million people in 195 countries participated and shared their short- and long-term priorities. The immediate priority of most respondents during the COVID-19 crisis was to facilitate improved access to basic services: safe water and sanitation, healthcare, and education. It is clear that the pandemic offers a unique opportunity to get back on track to achieve SDG 6 on water and sanitation.

UN-Water Members and Partners encountered challenges around virtual working during the pandemic. Several face-to-face meetings and

events were cancelled or transferred to an online format (e.g. World Water Day 2020). The UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit explored different approaches to adapt and take advantage of the 'new normal'. For example, the transition of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework launch to a virtual format allowed for 11 Heads of UN Agencies to participate from different countries, and attracted over 1,400 people registered globally. Due to the flexibility of virtual events, global participation in the launch event greatly exceeded what would be possible at a physical gathering, and in particular allowed greater participation from developing countries.

In September, UN-Water organized the thirty-third UN-Water Meeting in a virtual format for the first time. After this meeting, UN-Water Members and Partners held a consultation to collect feedback on the virtual format to improve the future process.

# Informing policy processes and addressing emerging issues

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## UN-Water 2030 Strategy

Collectively developed through a consultative process including UN-Water Members, Partners and External Support Agencies, the UN-Water 2030 Strategy was approved in 2020. It builds on UN-Water's 2014-2020 Strategy, Terms of Reference and mandate, and the UN-Water External Review 2018. The 2030 Strategy represents a collective way forward to address the water and sanitation challenges over a ten-year period with necessary focus, urgency, effectiveness and coherence.

As the 2030 Strategy will take UN-Water to the conclusion of the 2030 Agenda, it has a focus on accelerating progress towards the targets of SDG 6, as well as other relevant global targets. The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework constitutes a central element of the 2030 Strategy.

## SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework

### THE FRAMEWORK

The SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation demonstrated that the world is not on track to reach SDG 6 by 2030. This

is hindering progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the realization of human rights and the achievement of peace and security around the world. The effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic are deepening the water and sanitation crisis. There is an urgent need to speed up the implementations of SDG 6. A more efficient and integrated global response is required to meet the targets for SDG 6 over the next ten years.

Taking inspiration from the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All, the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework was developed to deliver fast results at an increased scale in response to the UN Secretary-General's call to mobilize for a Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030. While the SDG 6 targets set forth 'what' needs to happen, the Framework is a roadmap for 'how' to achieve this ambitious goal.

The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework contributes to realizing the human rights to water and sanitation. It builds on ongoing processes, including awareness-raising through the Water Action Decade 2018-2028, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General's global call to action for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in all health care facilities and the Agenda for Humanity. The Framework will

also support implementation of other global commitments, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement and others. The Framework will utilize the high-level meeting on the implementation of the water-related goals convened by the President of the General Assembly (PGA) in 2021 and the 2023 Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action, 'Water for Sustainable Development' 2018-2028, combined with strengthened system-wide collaboration at the country level to accelerate and showcase progress on SDG 6 and ultimately across the 2030 Agenda.

The UN system and its multi-stakeholder partners, driven by country demand and coordinating through UN-Water, will unify the international community's support to countries for SDG 6 through five accelerators:

1. **FINANCING.** Optimized financing is essential to get resources behind country plans.
2. **DATA AND INFORMATION.** Improved data and information targets resources and measures progress.
3. **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT.** A better-skilled workforce improves service levels and increases job creation and retention in the water sector.
4. **INNOVATION.** New, smart practices and technologies will improve water and sanitation resources management and service delivery.
5. **GOVERNANCE.** Collaboration across boundaries and sectors will make SDG 6 everyone's business.



## WHAT'S NEW?

- An increased focus on concrete country support as part of the UN reform will enable a scaled-up impact on country level. Through a reinvigorated Resident Coordinators system and a new generation of UN Country Teams, UN-Water will provide access to expertise, technical assistance and advocacy support.
- A clear commitment from Principals of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes will enable UN entities to work better together. This represents a unique shift in how the UN system and its partners deliver collectively.
- A multi-stakeholder, high-level, annual stock-taking moment, complemented by the SDG 6 Action Space, will enable stakeholders to keep up momentum on SDG 6, as well as share lessons and best practices.

## COMMITMENTS FROM THE HIGHEST LEVEL

“I am impressed by the commitment, support, coherence and unity shown by the whole United Nations system, together with Member States, youth, civil society and the private sector. Today, this commitment is needed more than ever.”

(UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the launch of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework)








'Water is becoming a scarce commodity – 1/3 of the world will face water stress in the coming years.'

Mr. Achin Duttar,  
Administrator,  
United Nations  
Development  
Programme

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'The hydro cycle is a miracle. Only about 1% of the world's water is freshwater. We can't take the cycle for granted.'

Ms. Inger Andersen,  
Executive Director of  
United Nations  
Development  
Programme

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'Let's make WASH a daily reality for communities worldwide.'

Ms. Harvatta Pera,  
Executive Director  
of UNICEF

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'Water and sanitation is vital to public health and resilience.'

Ms. Manarrah  
Mohd Sharif,  
Executive Director,  
United Nations  
Sustainable  
Development  
Programme

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'COVID has shown that WASH saves lives.'

Ms. Olga Algerevics,  
Executive Secretary,  
United Nations  
Economic Commission  
for Europe

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'Clean drinking water and sanitation are human rights – SDG6 enshrines those rights but COVID is pushing us backwards.'

Ms. Neela Al-Haq,  
Deputy High  
Commissioner for  
Human Rights,  
Office of the United  
Nations High  
Commissioner for  
Human Rights

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'We cannot achieve SDG6 without measuring, valuing and sharing water better. Business as usual in WASH doesn't work anymore.'

Ms. Jennifer Barr,  
Global Director of  
Water Global Practice,  
World Bank Group

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'We have the choice between spending COVID recovery money well and prepare our societies for a resilient future, or waste it on short-term quick wins.'

H.E. Ms. Cora  
van Rossum-Broekmans,  
Minister of Infrastructure  
and Water Management  
of the Netherlands

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'Access to water and sanitation are essential services against COVID 19, to preserve the health of millions of people.'

H.E. Mr. Jorge Luis  
Montenegro Chaves,  
Minister of Agriculture  
and Irrigation, Peru

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'President Mandela said, "Freedom alone is not enough without light to read or access to water to irrigate farms".'

H.E. Ms. Lindwe  
Neneke Shaba,  
Minister of Human  
Settlements, Water  
and Sanitation of  
South Africa

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'All stakeholders must pay attention to the poorest, leaving no one behind.'

H.E. Mr. Shajidul  
Mulk,  
Minister of Foreign  
Affairs, Pakistan

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)




'A Bedouin man told me, "The next world war will not be fought over terrorism or oil, but over water. I fear my children will become the first water refugees".'

Ms. Mira Sult,  
Water Advocate  
and CEO of Thera

[www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space](http://www.unwater.org/sd6-action-space)

The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework was launched virtually at a Special Event during the High-level Political Forum in July 2020. UN Secretary-General António Guterres, the President of the seventy-fourth Session of the UNGA, the UN-Water Chair, and Heads of 11 United Nations entities joined to demonstrate their commitment and support. "COVID-19 makes us acutely aware of our shared vulnerability. The consequences of chronic underinvestment in water and sanitation services for billions of people are becoming abundantly clear," said the Chair of UN-Water

and President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Gilbert F. Hounbo. "Yet the extraordinary global disruption offers a unique opportunity to use the Framework and get the world on track to deliver SDG 6".

Representatives from Member States, civil society, and the private sector also welcomed the new Framework. As it calls for collective efforts to enable multi-stakeholder collaboration, the commitment and support from the UN leadership is imperative.

## COUNTRY LEVEL ENGAGEMENT TO ACCELERATE SDG 6

As the United Nations reform is transforming the way the United Nations system works together, UN-Water is currently strengthening its support to Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams in collaboration with the Development Coordination Office.

In January 2020, UN-Water's offer was communicated to RCs and UNCTs via a letter from the UN-Water Chair. The demand-driven support to RCs and UNCTs focuses on interagency coordination; monitoring, reporting, and analysis for Common Country Analyses

(CCAs) and Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs); connection to technical expertise in different water and sanitation-related areas; and capacity development. Eight country teams responded to the offer and are included in the pilot phase through December 2021: Bahrain, Costa Rica, Guinea, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Nepal and São Tomé and Príncipe. The experience will be reviewed, and adjustments and improvements will be made to ensure that UN-Water continues to support coordinated country level action in the context of UN reform. Since progress can only be made by countries, this work is central to the success of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework to delivering on SDG 6.

**UN-Water's OFFER TO UN COUNTRY TEAMS AND RESIDENT COORDINATORS**

**Introduction**

UN-Water is the United Nations (UN) inter-agency coordination mechanism for freshwater related issues, including sanitation. While there is no single UN entity dedicated exclusively to water and sanitation, over 30 UN entities carry out water and sanitation programmes, reflecting the fact that water runs through all areas of work at the UN. The mission of UN-Water is to enable the UN system to 'deliver as one' on water and sanitation-related issues by maximizing UN system-wide coordinated action and coherence.

Through its 32 (UN) **Members** and 40 (non-UN) **Partners**, UN-Water supports Member States to sustainably manage water and sanitation in three ways: **informing, advising, mobilizing and reporting, and ensuring action**. UN-Water's Members and Partners have helped build water and sanitation into recent milestone agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2015-2030 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change.

UN-Water is committed to support Member States in their efforts to implement these agreements and ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. As part of the UN reform, the UN-Water family is extending its offer to UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinators' Offices to support their analytical and technical work, and to help raise awareness about the importance of water and sanitation issues.

**Menu of support for UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinators**

- 1. Insight, information and data**, including through the monitoring and reporting of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6):
  - a. The **SDG 6 Data Portal** and the **SDG 6 Synthesis Reports on Water and Sanitation**
  - b. **World Water Development Reports**
  - c. **UN-Water Policy and Analytical Briefs**
- 2. Connection to expertise, technical assistance and support** from UN-Water Members and Partners, through UN-Water's network of 72 organisations with diverse water and sanitation expertise across global, regional and country levels from within and outside the UN system. An initial overview of who does what, including useful tools and resources, is available through the **UN-Water Inventory**.
- 3. Support for country-level advocacy on all water and sanitation-related issues to influence policy and inspire action**, including through UN-Water campaigns such as:
  - a. **World Water Day, 22 March**
  - b. **World Toilet Day, 19 November**
  - c. **Water Action Decade, 2018-2028**

**How to access UN-Water expertise**

To access UN-Water expertise, we suggest to set up a first introductory call to learn more about your needs. Please write to [unwater@un.org](mailto:unwater@un.org) to set up a first call.

More information about UN-Water can be found at the [UN-Water website](http://www.unwater.org).

\* More information here: <http://www.sdgfinancing.org/> | Version 19 November 2019

**UN WATER**  
unwater@un.org | www.unwater.org

**United Nations**



**THIS CHART REFLECTS THE INITIAL REQUESTS FROM UN COUNTRY TEAMS THAT WERE RECEIVED TO THE OFFER**

Request	Bahrain	Costa Rica	Guinea	India	Madagascar	Mexico	Nepal	Sao Tomé and Príncipe
Coordination mechanisms on water and sanitation								
CCA/CF support								
Sanitation and wastewater								
Advocacy efforts								
Water and climate								
Funding for SDG6								
Monitoring & Reporting								
IWRM								
Publication development								
Innovation								
Capacity building								

**COLLECTIVE EFFORTS FROM UN-WATER MEMBERS AND PARTNERS**

UN-Water Members and Partners have been contributing to the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework since its launch. An example is the Water and Climate Coalition, established to achieve an integrated global Water and Climate Agenda to support more effective adaptation and resilience by speeding up progress towards SDGs 6 and SDG 13 on climate action. Support for the innovation accelerator area has been initiated through the UN Innovation Network. In addition, the Hand Hygiene for All initiative has been developed around the Framework’s five key accelerators.

The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework has been recognized and included in different UN resolutions or processes. A Human Rights Council resolution from October 2020 (A/HRC/RES/45/8) calls on States “to take measures to accelerate the realization of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 6 global acceleration framework”. The Framework was also recognized in UNGA resolution (A/RES/75/212) entitled “United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028”, which takes note of it along with other processes.

## **Strengthening water-related sectors**

### **POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK**

The fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will adopt a post-2020 global biodiversity framework as a stepping stone towards the 2050 Vision of “Living in Harmony with Nature”. It is clear that freshwater ecosystems are essential to biodiversity. The effects of water extraction, exploitation, pollution, and invasive species have been accelerating in freshwater ecosystems and impacting agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries. It is important to ensure that the link between freshwater and biodiversity is properly integrated into the framework with a coherent approach.

In February 2020, UN-Water developed an Input Paper in response to the CBD Zero-Draft Document on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The paper aims to provide consolidated and constructive input from the entire UN-Water family to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The paper also proposes detailed suggestions on the new goals and targets of the CBD framework, and recommends coherent monitoring and reporting on all targets and indicators related to freshwater and biodiversity between the SDG and the new CBD frameworks.

### **UN-WATER ANALYTICAL BRIEF ON UNCONVENTIONAL WATER RESOURCES**

Water scarcity is recognized as a key challenge to sustainable development and as a potential cause of social unrest and conflict within and between countries. At the same time, water is increasingly considered as an instrument for international cooperation to support

food production, livelihoods, ecosystems, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development. In June 2020, UN-Water launched the Analytical Brief on Unconventional Water Resources at the Virtual Dresden Nexus Conference 2020 under the theme ‘Circular Economy in a Sustainable Society’.

## **Engaging with other stakeholders**

### **SDG BUSINESS FORUM**

As the largest and most globally representative UN convening of business leaders, the SDG Business Forum highlights companies that are using their influence to be a positive agent of change in their local communities and across the world. During the SDG Business Forum in 2020, hosted by the International Chamber of Commerce, UN DESA and the UN Global Compact, UN-Water partnered around a breakout session titled ‘Untapped potential: Water Innovation to Advance the SDGs’. This session provided an opportunity for UN agencies driving the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and companies who have pledged support for the Water Resilience Coalition to explore how innovations in direction operations, supply chain management, technology and governance practices can advance the 2030 Agenda. The dialogue also highlighted the ways innovation for water and sanitation helped manage the COVID-19 response in countries globally, alleviate water stress, and build long-term resilience.

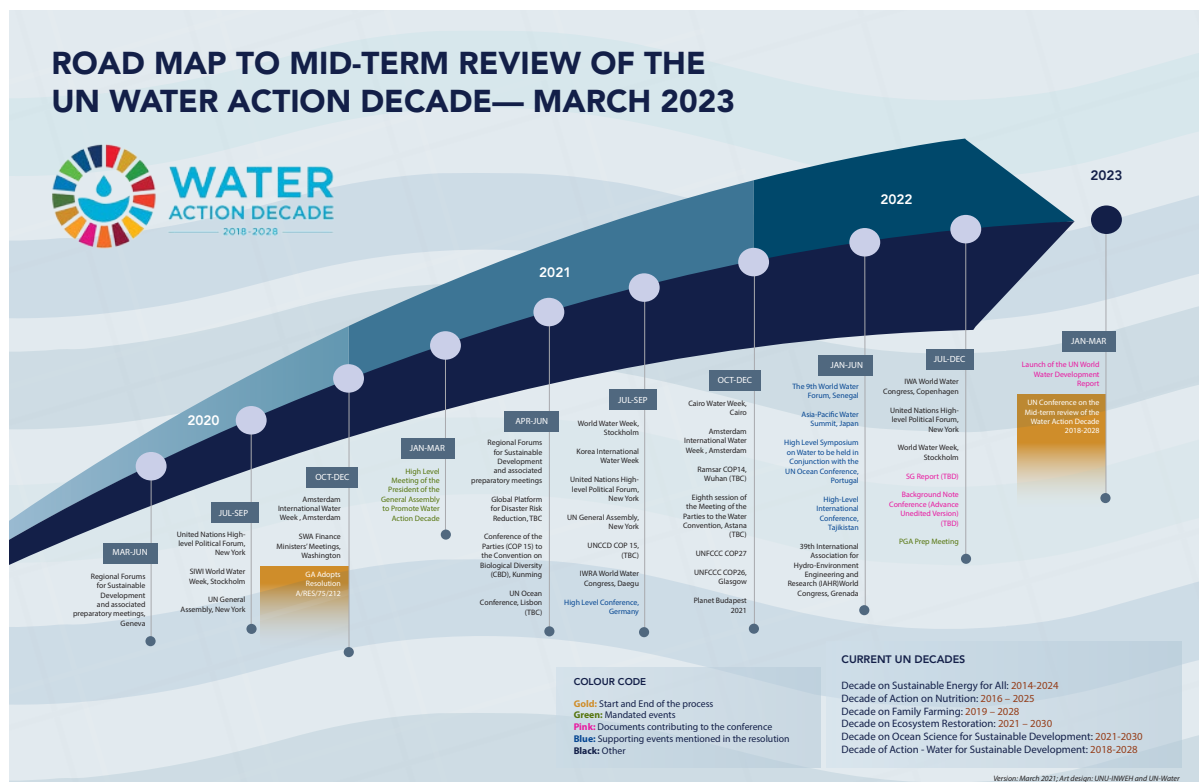
### **G20**

Sustainable and resilient water management is a key policy priority under the G20 Presidency of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The G20 Leaders’ Declaration featured a dedicated paragraph on water and sanitation for the first time. G20 Water Ministers also met for the first time

in September 2020 and the outcome of the meeting was released in a joint communiqué with G20 Agriculture Ministers. UN-Water supported the G20 Dialogue on Water through awareness-raising on SDG 6 implementation to build political will and to promote cross-sector collaborations for advancing global water issues.

“Water: We acknowledge that affordable, reliable, and safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services are essential for human life and that access to clean water is critical to overcome the pandemic. We welcome the G20 Dialogue on Water as a basis to share best practices and promote innovation, and new technologies, on a voluntary basis, that will foster sustainable, resilient, and integrated water management.” (G20 Leaders’ Declaration, Riyadh Summit, 21 November 2020)

## Journey towards 2023



In December 2020, the UNGA adopted the modalities resolution (A/RES/75/212) on the “Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Sustainable Development’ 2018-2028”. The resolution establishes the broad structure and defines roles for the conference, which will be convened in New York from 22 to 24 March 2023. The Conference will focus on “the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives, on the implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects, as well as on the furtherance of cooperation and partnerships at all levels, in order to help to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The detailed arrangements for the conference will be finalized during the seventy-fifth session of the UNGA.

The resolution includes three direct requests to UN-Water:

- 1. to support the preparation of a report for the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly to assess progress in the implementation of the first half of the Water Decade.**
- 2. to support the Conference Secretary-General to prepare proposals for themes of the interactive dialogues in a background note due by November 2022.**
- 3. to support the Secretary-General to continue taking appropriate steps to support and organize the activities of the Decade.**

This Conference will be the first UN conference on water and sanitation since the 1970s and will provide a precious opportunity for the international water community to review the progress made on water and sanitation and accelerate implementation. Along the journey, UN-Water will continue its support to the Water Action Decade and the Midterm Review in 2023.

# Supporting monitoring and reporting on water and sanitation

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When Member States adopted the SDGs in 2015, they committed to regularly report data to the UN to track progress and ensure accountability. Credible and timely data are essential to the realization of the SDGs, as they help decision-makers to identify countries, people and sectors that are left behind, and set priorities for increased efforts and investments.

Since the adoption of the SDGs, there had been at least one round of global data compilation for each of the 11 indicators under SDG 6, and in 2020 it was time for the second round: the 2020 Data Drive. In this drive, custodian agencies reached out to their country focal points and asked them to report data on the following seven indicators: wastewater (6.3.1, WHO and UN-Habitat), ambient water quality (6.3.2, UNEP), water use efficiency (6.4.1, FAO), water stress (6.4.2, FAO), integrated water resources management (6.5.1, UNEP), transboundary cooperation (6.5.2, UNECE and UNESCO), and ecosystems (6.6.1, UNEP).

## **Implementing a coherent, integrated and efficient monitoring framework**

The 2019 work on refining monitoring methodologies and developing outreach materials and capacity-building tools was completed in early 2020 for most of the SDG 6 indicators. New methods for data collection on safe management of on-site sanitation systems were piloted in a handful of countries. IMI-SDG6 also decided to strengthen gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive analysis and use of water and sanitation data, and planned for joint activities starting in 2021.

## **Engaging Member States and enhancing national capacity**

As part of the 2020 Data Drive, the custodian agencies also offered various types of capacity-building support to country focal points. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, most of the planned face-to-face capacity-building activities were cancelled. These activities were replaced by scaled-up online activities such as regional, sub-regional and country workshops, instruction videos, helpdesks and bilateral calls for all the

indicators. In addition, geospatial data services, gap assessments and national roadmaps were provided for some of the indicators.

To encourage as many countries as possible to report on as many indicators as possible, the indicator-specific efforts were complemented with joint outreach activities. This included sending letters from the UN-Water Chair to all permanent missions to the UN, a dedicated webpage and social media outreach, a news article signed by all custodian agencies, and regular communications from UN-Water to all focal points. A community of practice was created on LinkedIn to encourage cross-country learning.

The online focal point database developed in 2019 was expanded to cover all indicators as well as the overall focal points and national statistics offices, and password-protected country views of the database were shared with all overall focal points (125 countries). These views, so called 'SDG 6 Country Focal Point Directories', were created to make available to each country information about the focal points for SDG 6 monitoring and reporting in that country, as a first step towards coordination and collaboration across indicators. The overall focal points were encouraged to use the directory to work with the indicator-specific focal points to support data submissions and promote coordination and collaboration.

To further support the 2020 Data Drive and promote integration at the country level, a cohort of 30 countries with low levels of reporting in the past were identified<sup>2</sup> and offered additional support and encouragement. This support included bilateral calls with the overall focal points as well as webinars with all focal points in the country.

Looking at longer term capacity-building, the engagement with AMCOW was revitalized in 2020, and following a call between the IMI-SDG6 and AMCOW secretariats, a number of principles as well as opportunities for collaboration were identified, including joint efforts to promote intersectoral monitoring teams at the country level. IMI-SDG6 also engaged with the UN country offices to keep them informed about the ongoing monitoring activities in the country and to encourage use of data e.g. for CCAs.

### **MANY STAKEHOLDERS AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL**

Within a country, data on water and sanitation are collected by a wide variety of stakeholders. For example, the Ministry of Environment may look after data on ambient water quality, whereas water use may be under the Ministry of Agriculture. Basin authorities may be involved in the monitoring of integrated water resources management and transboundary cooperation. And the national statistical office has overall responsibility for SDG reporting.

Within each country, for each SDG indicator there is a specific 'technical focal point' (sometimes more than one) who is the main point of contact for the custodian agencies. Often, the technical focal points are working with colleagues within and outside their organization to compile the data and report them to the custodian agencies. Given the many stakeholders, it is recommended that countries also identify an 'overall focal point' who can work with technical focal points and promote coordination and collaboration across the indicators. By the end of 2020, 125 countries had nominated an overall focal point for SDG 6 monitoring.

<sup>2</sup> UN Member States reporting on five or less indicators during the last five years and with an appointed overall focal point.

### **VALUE OF COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION**

The large number of stakeholders is both a challenge and an opportunity. A key objective of the monitoring effort is to collate all the information from across sectors and make data available to all stakeholders. By doing so, countries can increase data availability at minimum cost. This could also include tapping into data from non-governmental sources, e.g. from research institutions, business associations or civil society.

Bringing together stakeholders serves to reduce institutional fragmentation, and bringing together their datasets enables a comprehensive and consistent assessment of the state of water resources, which is necessary to be able to manage the resource in an integrated manner and to achieve SDG 6 as a whole.

### **Reporting on global progress**

The IMI-SDG6 outreach strategy was finalized in 2020 and a new acronym (IMI-SDG6) and visual identifier were agreed. Due to the COVID-19

crisis, face-to-face outreach was severely limited, and although it was partly replaced through various online events and workshops, a number of planned activities had to be cancelled.

The SDG 6 Data Portal was expanded with additional features identified in the 2019 user testing, and preparations started for a multi-language site. The products of the Data Portal were used to reach out to country focal points as well as UN country offices, to highlight the current status and to motivate engagement in the 2020 Data Drive.

In 2020, the UN-Water Senior Programme Managers decided to produce a short and comprehensive publication targeting the 2021 high-level discussions on SDG 6 led by the PGA, and the IMI-SDG6 Steering Committee agreed to fast-track the validation and analysis of the compiled data to be able to provide updated evidence in the publication. In the autumn, a dedicated working group worked closely with the custodian agencies to develop a first draft of the brief, including materials for social media outreach to ensure a broad uptake.



# Building knowledge and inspiring people to take action

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For UN-Water’s communications, the new situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic demanded a pivot to a focus on hygiene-related information as handwashing is a first line of defence against a virus. The global campaigns, their themes and the drastically increased need for digitized content gave an opportunity to show flexibility and the launch of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and other initiatives required ingenuity to address the overall digital fatigue and complexity that developed during the year. Overall, the communications challenges were handled by UN-Water Members’ and Partners’ availability, flexibility and solidarity.

## **Supporting the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028**

In December 2017, UN Member States adopted UNGA resolution 71/222 on an International Decade for Action on ‘Water for Sustainable Development’ 2018-2028. In response to the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Water Action Decade accelerates efforts towards meeting water-related challenges, including limited access to safe water and sanitation, increasing pressure on water resources and

ecosystems, and an exacerbated risk of droughts and floods. The mandate for planning, organizing and facilitating the implementation of the Decade at global, regional and country level is given to the Secretary-General with the support of UN-Water. In response to this mandate, UN-Water established a Task Force on Water Action Decade Implementation, co-coordinated by UNU and the UN-Water Secretary, with 14 members.

On 28 May 2020, the Task Force on Water Action Decade Implementation supported a high-level event on accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda through water, sanitation and climate action under the framework of the Water Action Decade. Member States, the UN system, and relevant stakeholders discussed water and climate-related actions. Participants identified transformative solutions to address systemic gaps in the implementation of related SDGs and determine “accelerators” necessary to drive progress on the 2030 Agenda. The UN-Water Chair joined discussions along with Ministers from Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Tajikistan.

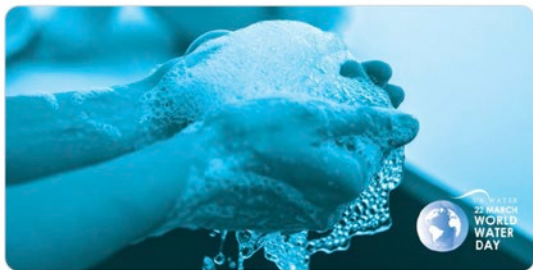




3 billion people live without basic handwashing facilities at home. In the face of #COVID19, they are among the most vulnerable & the at risk.

Help mobilize action for access to hand hygiene on Sunday's #WorldWaterDay: [bit.ly/2xRHZbj](https://bit.ly/2xRHZbj) #coronavirus

Traducir Tweet



Flood, drought and rising sea levels threaten sanitation systems – from toilets to septic tanks to treatment plants.

Everyone must have sustainable sanitation that can withstand climate change and keep communities healthy and functioning.

#WorldToiletDay [worldtoiletday.org](https://worldtoiletday.org)

Traducir Tweet



## Managing a knowledge hub on water and sanitation

When the coronavirus pandemic spread across the globe in early 2020, hand hygiene was early on presented as a first line of defence. In combination with the uncertainty over the possibility of the virus spreading through water, it was important to gather all the UN-Water Members and Partners' latest coronavirus-related information in a special section of the UN-Water website. The page was updated daily and was part of the UN Global Communications Department which coordinated regular outreach to media and the public at large. This coordination and sharing of joint information became especially important in the battle against rumours and reflected a need for credible and verified information. A dedicated hand hygiene page was also created by the UN-Water Expert Group on WASH; it was among the most visited pages in 2020 and regularly referenced by major media.

The need for information-sharing was also reflected in the growth of the UN-Water LinkedIn group 'Pipe Professionals' and the general

UN-Water LinkedIn page. At the end of 2020, the professional group had grown by 20 per cent reaching 14,000 members, and the page had 6,270 followers. Much of the content was coronavirus-related but in the latter part of the year, the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework was also regularly discussed as a tool to use for the water sector. As in 2019, around 80 per cent of the content was advice-related and around 20 per cent was promotion-related content, such as jobs and profiles. In addition to the broad community, a special group was also set up for IMI-SDG6. At the end of 2020, the group had 70 members sharing information regularly and helped focal points in countries communicate with each other and with the UN.

In 2020, the UN-Water website had 2.2 million page views, a 10 per cent increase. In 2019, there was a gap in the interest between the three campaign websites (World Water Day, World Toilet Day and Water Action Decade). This gap decreased in 2020, which may indicate that more attention is given to sanitation issues through the rise of visitors to the World Toilet Day page.

The partnership with International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) was maintained in 2020 and the knowledge hub continues to be a pathway to in-depth analysis, opinion and news, especially with a UN angle. The UN-Water Chair's opinion editorial at the UN's seventy-fifth anniversary was published on the platform, with multiple UN-Water's Members and Partners contributing as guests. IISD continued to report on the UN-Water Meetings enabling the wider community to get rapid insight into conversations and decisions.

## **Informing, engaging and inspiring action**

Climate change was the theme for World Water Day and World Toilet Day in 2020. The theme was chosen for the year due to the strong links with the five-year-pledge-and-review cycle in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. One of the objectives of the campaigns was to position water and sanitation as solutions to climate change instead of solely focusing on the dire effects climate change has on them. The campaigns also showed the public at large how small everyday water and sanitation actions can have effects on climate change. UN-Water's Expert Group on Water and Climate Change, co-coordinated by UNECE, UNESCO and WMO, carried out the World Water Day campaign. Together with UN-Water's Expert Group on WASH, it also co-coordinated the World Toilet Day campaign.

On 11 March 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. During the month of March, leading up to World Water Day, the Task Force focused on shifting the encouragement from organizing face-to-face events – one of the major contributions from people around the world – to online events. In order to keep people

safe, this shift was important and meant that messaging and supporting tools needed to be reworked. The planned physical meeting was cancelled, and the UN World Water Development Report was therefore launched online.

Given the strong link between the coronavirus and hygiene, an additional set of messaging was added to the focus on climate change. This enabled UN-Water Members and Partners to unify their voices and channel digital conversations to, for example, initiatives like the WHO Director General Dr. Tedros' #Safehands challenge. This hashtag dominated the mentions together with conversations on how to protect oneself from the coronavirus through washing hands with soap and water. To that end, Twitter created a new handwashing emoji to encourage the practice.

In terms of results, the total number of mentions decreased by 11 per cent from the previous year and the potential reach went down 28 per cent from 2019. This indicated that less influential authors were talking about the campaign, which can be explained not only by the dominating focus on the virus but also because, during the crisis, many celebrities and influencers were criticized for appearing to be removed from the hard realities of the pandemic.

Geographically, most of the mentions stemmed from India, followed by the United States of America and the United Kingdom. In the United States, environmental questions were at the forefront, while in India and in the United Kingdom the focus was on access to water and water safety. Users engaged in the campaign were 1,000 times more likely to participate if their interest was 'climate' or 51 times more likely if their interest was 'climate change'. Campaign participants also had an expanded interest in nature, wildlife and agriculture. In combination with political issues, such as foreign affairs,

poverty and human rights, this indicated the width of the topic and highlights the potential to tailor messages for specific groups of people.

World Toilet Day was celebrated on 19 November on the topic of sustainable sanitation and climate change. Although the theme had already been chosen beforehand, the crafting of the campaign reflected the global challenge of COVID-19, not only linking it to hand hygiene but also to sustainable sanitation as a contributor to tackling the social and economic dimensions and recovering better. As part of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, the campaign informed policy makers and other stakeholders about the opportunity to use sustainable sanitation as a tool to mitigate the effects and adapt to climate change. One of the activities organized to this end was a virtual event hosted by the Permanent Mission of Singapore to the UN in New York. During the event, which also featured the launch of the State of the World's Sanitation Report by WHO and UNICEF, Nigeria and India presented their experiences in accelerating progress by focusing on sanitation. The PGA gave opening remarks to the 34 Member States present and the discussion centred on the importance of including sanitation in the forthcoming UN high-level meetings in 2021 and 2023.

One of the most important communications initiatives of the year was the development and launch of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. One of the characteristics of the Framework is the potential for a multitude of stakeholders to contribute. It was important to develop concrete channels for this to happen while being careful not to duplicate existing initiatives. The UN-Water Action Space was developed together with UN DESA with a three-pronged approach: 1) inform stakeholders about the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework; 2) enable organizations to contribute to the

global SDG online platform which holds over 5,000 voluntary commitments in support of the SDGs. (Through this tailored function and pre-selection, organizations can easily register their SDG 6 activity as part of 'SDG Acceleration Actions'); and 3) enable individuals to add their name in support to water and sanitation.

In view of the launch, a shorter simplified version of the Framework was developed to ensure a broad reach and comprehension. On social media, the UN Principals' and other Heads of organizations' support was featured as part of a special series. This enabled the UN-Water Members' and Partners' communications departments to easily communicate the importance of water and sanitation at the highest level.

2020 also marked the ten-year anniversary of UNGA resolution 64/292, recognizing the human rights to water and sanitation. UN-Water supported the celebration organized by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, including a Commemoration on the margins of the High-level Political Forum. It was also decided that a roadmap to further promote the human rights to water and sanitation would be developed by the Special Rapporteur and the UN-Water family. In September, the newly elected Special Rapporteur Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo, took office.

## **Strengthening the UN-Water corporate brand**

In early 2020, the Department of Global Communications of the United Nations launched a new overall strategy to be applied across the UN system to generate awareness, empathy, and support for all causes. The audience-focused approach aims to inform the public what is happening, use relatable

storytelling and highlight how challenges can be overcome. One of the main shifts was from being messengers of danger and disasters to conveyors of hope and solutions. UN-Water had already used this approach for a few years, but a unified UN system approach helped strengthen UN-Water's brand as a credible information bearer that helps lead the water and sanitation narrative, inspires people to care, and mobilizes action. The expanded UN guidelines for a unified and consolidated brand identity, running across all platforms and products (such as publications, presentation material, and websites) further enabled UN-Water to be part of ensuring that the work of the UN is easily identifiable and its platforms are trusted.

One prominent example of this approach to brand strengthening can be illustrated through the communications work around IMI-SDG6 and the 2020 Data Drive. Presenting dry data often results in 'psychic numbing' and almost never in feelings of empathy, which is why a communications approach was developed explaining the reasons behind the drive and the need for data, with a set of messaging that also reflected what data will contribute to: hope and solutions. This approach was also taken for the communications around the SDG 6 Data Portal.

Having started in 2019, reaching outside the sector remained a focus for 2020 with the UN-Water Office Bearers participating in selected activities like the SDG Business Forum, the G20, and the World Economic Forum. Due to the COVID crisis, this was at the same time simpler and more complex: the simplicity being in the ability to connect virtually to events, and the complexity in there being more (virtual) possibilities to network and thereby spread water and sanitation messaging.

The UN-Water communications network The Pipe did not hold its five regular meetings in 2020 but communicated on an ad-hoc basis.

This was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and urgent priorities for its members. However, the information-sharing in the group increased and the group's members were instrumental in helping pivot to include additional messaging in a swift and coordinated way for World Water Day, which then influenced the later World Toilet Day campaign.

UN-Water's social media engagement remained strong in 2020 with a steady growth across its channels Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The two most popular channels were Facebook and Twitter, where the former had a 25 per cent increase in followers. UN-Water's Instagram also grew substantially with a 41 per cent increase in followers and a 40 per cent increase in impressions per post. This indicated that the content was relevant to followers who also saved the posts 35 per cent of the time – a sign of a growing audience. UN-Water's followers showed most engagement in topics related to climate change, environment, human rights, COVID-19 and health, SDG 6, gender, and equality.

The hashtag #SDG6 generated the highest proportion of positive mentions across all topics. The information shared about actions and initiatives and the tips were well received, which was also the case for the posts for World Water Day's #Water2me social media campaign. On the UN-Water LinkedIn page, the activity generated a 134 per cent increase in interactions, where posts about the SDG 6 Data Portal were among the most clicked and shared content.

One quarter of the followers who interacted with the content on UN-Water's social media came from India, followed by the United States and the United Kingdom. Many followers also come from mostly Nigeria and South Africa, indicating a trend in activating countries facing water challenges and the importance of local and national relevance to generate engagement.

# Governance and financial aspects

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## Documents

UN-Water's activities in 2020 were guided by the newly approved UN-Water 2030 Strategy and UN-Water Work Programme 2020–2021. All governance documents can be accessed at <http://www.unwater.org/about-unwater/governance/>

## Annual UN-Water Meetings

The thirty-second Meeting was held on 28 and 29 January at IFAD Headquarters in Rome, Italy. Main items under discussion included the UN-Water 2030 Strategy, the development of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework in view of its launch later in the year, and the process leading up to the UN high-level events on water and sanitation in 2021 and 2023. UN-Water Members and Partners agreed to support UN-Water's engagement at the country level by helping raise awareness of the UN-Water offer and responding to countries' requests via Resident Coordinators. The Senior Programme Managers also approved the main recommendations in the UN-Water technical advice paper on freshwater-biodiversity linkages to inform the post-2020 global biodiversity

framework, which was then submitted to the CBD Executive Secretary and the open-ended working group chairs and delegations.

Owing to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic shortly after, the thirty-third UN-Water Meeting was organized in a virtual format for the first time, taking place on 29 and 30 September. At this meeting, a panel reflected on the implications of and the UN's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members and Partners discussed plans to implement the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework launched during the High-level Political Forum in July, in particular how to take it to the country level, as well as opportunities for global engagement in preparation for the high-level events in 2021 and 2023.

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### MEMBERS' AND PARTNERS' FEEDBACK IN VIEW OF FUTURE VIRTUAL UN-WATER MEETINGS

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At their meeting on 2 December 2020, Members and Partners reflected on how UN-Water could conduct meetings online. Participants proposed different virtual meeting support tools and platforms and highlighted the benefits of professional



facilitation. They agreed that virtual meetings offer far fewer opportunities for informal/social interaction. Some suggested hybrid/blended meetings including prior meetings in smaller groups, breakout rooms for smaller groups, a UN-Water Meeting structure that is more mixed, and several shorter sessions instead of one or two longer ones.

## UN-Water Joint Steering Group

The Joint Steering Group steers the operational management of UN-Water in-between UN-Water Meetings. In 2020, it met twice to discuss a UN-Water Policy for Observers, allocate funds for specific UN-Water activities, and review applications for Partner status received during the year.

## UN-Water Inter-Agency Trust Fund

The UN-Water Inter-Agency Trust Fund is administered by the United Nations Office for Project Services. The indicative financial status<sup>3</sup> in 2020 is presented below as the total for targeted and core coordination activities:

## Progress overview

UN-Water's governance and financial operations during 2019 included two well-attended UN-Water Meetings, Joint Steering Group interactions, three new donor agreements – with Sweden, the Netherlands, and France – supporting core coordination activities and one new donor agreement with Germany for targeted activities.

The approval of the UN-Water 2030 Strategy reflected UN-Water Members' and Partners' vision on how to address the water and sanitation challenges by 2030, with a focus on accelerating progress towards the SDG 6 targets and the newly launched SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Meanwhile, the willingness of long-term donors to support UN-Water's core coordination activities, as shown by the new donor agreement with Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and negotiations with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, is also important to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6.

**Balance forward (2019): : USD 2,500,918**

### Income (2020): :

France:	USD 40,167
Germany:	USD 587,250
Netherlands:	USD 1,318,262
Sweden :	USD 684,126
Switzerland :	USD 2,885,625
<b>Interest (2020):</b>	<b>USD 12,532</b>
<b>Total income including balance forward from 2019:</b>	<b>USD 8,028,879</b>
<b>Total expenditure (2020):</b>	<b>USD 5,763,181</b>
<b>Balance (31 December 2020):</b>	<b>USD 2,265,698</b>

<sup>3</sup> The figures presented in this report may be subject to minor changes in the final certified financial report.

# ANNEX 1. Members and Partners

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## Members

(33 as at December 2020)

### United Nations Secretariat

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

### Programmes and funds

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

World Food Programme (WFP)

### Regional Commissions

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)

### Specialized agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> ITU became a UN-Water Member at the 33rd UN-Water Meeting, September 2020

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	AquaFed
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	CDP
United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)	Center for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST)
United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)	Conservation International
The World Bank Group (WB)	Gender and Water Alliance (GWA)
World Health Organization (WHO)	Global Water Partnership (GWP)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)	Green Climate Fund (GCF)* <sup>5</sup>
<b>Other entities</b>	International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR)
United Nations University (UNU)	International Association for Water Law (AIDA)
<b>United Nations-related organizations</b>	International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH)
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS)
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)
<b>Conventions</b>	International Groundwater Centre (IGRAC)
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	International Hydropower Association (IHA)
Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	IHE Delft Institute for Water Education
Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
	International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
	International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC)
<b>Partners</b>	
(42 as at December 2020)	

<sup>5</sup> GCF became a UN-Water Partner with Special Status at the 32nd UN-Water Meeting, January 2020



International Water Association (IWA)	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)*
International Water Management Institute (IWMI)	Water.org
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)	WaterAid
Mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation*	Women for Water Partnership (WfWP)
Public Services International (PSI)	World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)
Ramsar Convention	World Council of Civil Engineers (WCCE)
Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN) <sup>6</sup>	World Resources Institute (WRI)
Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)*	World Water Council (WWC)
Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)	World Youth Parliament for Water (WYPW)
United Nations Global Compact*	
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)	
Water Environment Federation (WEF) <sup>7</sup>	

\* Partner with Special Status

<sup>6</sup> RWSN became a UN-Water Partner at the 33rd UN-Water Meeting, September 2020

<sup>7</sup> WEF became a UN-Water Partner at the 33rd UN-Water Meeting, September 2020

# ANNEX 2. Expert Groups and Task Forces

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## Expert Groups<sup>8</sup>

### *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [UNEP]*

With a focus on the 2030 Agenda, this Expert Group advises on the strategic scope of UN-Water's engagement in the 2030 Agenda and coordinates interventions among UN-Water's Members and Partners. During 2020, the Expert Group focused on the development of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, and has been supporting the implementations and activities around the Framework (see section on "SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework"). The Expert Group members and relevant experts also developed an input paper in response to the Zero-Draft document on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (see section on "Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework").

### *Drinking-Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) [UNICEF, WHO]*

This Expert Group brings together the technical experience of United Nations and other relevant experts to support ongoing global initiatives on WASH. In 2020, the Expert Group reviewed its TOR and aligned them with the SDG 6 Global

Acceleration Framework through three flagship initiatives: the Hand Hygiene for All Initiative (including Global Handwashing Day); the State of the World's Sanitation report (launched on World Toilet Day 2020), making the case for acceleration on sanitation and framed around the Framework's five accelerators; and WASH in health care facilities including the global progress report. It participated in a consultation on the new Sanitation and Hygiene Fund and drafted a statement at the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Finance Ministers' Meeting.

### *Regional Level Coordination [UNESCWA, UNESCAP]*

The Expert Group on Regional Level Coordination was formed in 2019 from the former Task Force on Regional Level Coordination. The Terms of Reference and workplan of the Expert Group were approved during 2020. The Expert Group started establishing five Regional Discussion Groups (Africa, Arab States, Europe and Central Asia, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean) and developing a Contact Database to populate the Regional Discussion Groups.

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<sup>8</sup> Expert Group coordinators in square brackets.

### *Transboundary Waters [UNECE, UNESCO]*

The UN-Water Expert Group on Transboundary Waters provides a platform to coordinate inputs to policy processes related to transboundary waters. The Group coordinates awareness-raising and outreach efforts supporting transboundary water cooperation and promotes coherence in activities by UN-Water Members and Partners in the area of transboundary waters. In 2020, the Expert Group drafted a UN-Water Policy Brief: The United Nations global water conventions: Fostering sustainable development and peace. The brief is planned to be published in early 2021.

### *Water and Climate Change [UNECE, UNESCO, WMO]*

This Expert Group strengthens United Nations system coordination of activities related to water and climate change to support Member States in assessing the impacts of climate change on water and to adopt strategies for meeting the challenges of climate change in terms of both adaptation and mitigation in the related water sub-sectors. The Task Force coordinated the campaigns around World Water Day and World Toilet Day 2020 on the theme of ‘Water and Climate Change’ (see section on “Informing, engaging and inspiring action”). The Expert Group also worked on responding to Mexico’s request following UN-Water’s offer to UN RCOs in the context of UN-Water’s country-level pilot. The Expert Group has facilitated input to the law reform for human rights to water and sanitation, and coordinated with the results group for green economy and climate change on how the water and sanitation related work of the Cooperation Framework could be supported in the country.

### *Water Quality and Wastewater [UNEP]*

This Expert Group brings together the United Nations and other relevant expertise on water quality and wastewater. It also provides the platform to share information on and convene interested parties to join the World Water Quality Assessment (mandated by United Nations Environment Assembly). In 2020, the World Water Quality Assessment demonstrated a First Global Display of a Water Quality Baseline. The pilot cases in Africa enabled a bottom up co-design of water quality information products to achieve sectoral improvements. A global perspective paper on groundwater in view of pollution and climate change was published in 2020.

### *Water Scarcity [FAO]*

This Expert Group brings together expertise on water scarcity and droughts, working closely with and in support of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG), launched by FAO in 2017. In 2020, the Expert Group developed a UN-Water Analytical Brief on Water Use Efficiency. The brief is a comprehensive document that provides several examples of, and makes the case for, putting in place policies to increase water use efficiency to allow for more water to be “freed” to the environment.

## **Task Forces<sup>9</sup>**

### *Country Level Engagement [UNDP, UNICEF]*

The Task Force developed a strategy to strengthen UN-Water’s engagement at the country level. This was in direct response to a recommendation made during the most

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<sup>9</sup> Task Force coordinators in square brackets.

recent external review of UN-Water. The Task Force developed and circulated UN-Water's offer to UNCTs and RCOs on UN-Water's support for providing data and insights into water and sanitation, connecting expertise, and advocacy for a better, coordinated response. The Task Force has been supporting eight pilot countries that expressed interest during 2020 (see section on "Country level engagement to accelerate SDG 6").

#### *Unconventional Water Resources [UNU]*

The Task Force aims to develop a global vision on unconventional water resources in order to trigger international and regional cooperation among Member States and to harness the potential of such water resources to address global, regional and local water scarcity challenges. In 2020, the Task Force published and launched the UN-Water Analytical Brief on Unconventional Water Resources on

World Environment Day at the Dresden Nexus Conference (see section on "UN-Water Analytical Brief on Unconventional Water Resources").

#### *Water Action Decade Implementation*

*[UN DESA, UNU]*

Given the alignment of the 2018 UN General Assembly resolution on the "Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, 'Water for Sustainable Development' 2018-2028", the Task Force led preparations for the Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action to be convened in New York from 22 to 24 March 2023. In 2020, the Task Force continued to support the Water Action Decade processes in New York (see section on "Supporting the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028").

# ANNEX 3. Human Resources

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## Members of the UN-Water Joint Steering Group

Gilbert F. Houngbo, Chair, UN-Water

Olcay Ünver, Vice-Chair, UN-Water  
(until September 2020)

Kelly Ann Naylor, Vice-Chair, UN-Water  
(from September 2020)

Madhushree Chatterjee, Secretary, UN-Water

Marianne Kjellén, UNDP (from February 2019)

Rio Hada, OHCHR (from August 2019)

Daniel Tsegai, UNCCD (from February 2020)

Youssef Filali-Meknassi, UNESCO  
(until September 2020)

Abou Amani, UNESCO (from September 2020)

## UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit and others

Federico Properzi, Chief Technical Adviser

Daniella Boström Couffe,  
Communications Manager

Leanne Burney, Programme Officer

William Reidhead, Global Monitoring Officer

Maria Schade, Global Monitoring Specialist

Cheng Li, Programme Specialist

Nicolas Franke, Special Assistant  
to the Secretary (UN DESA)

Klas Moldéus, Associate Expert

Tamara Slowik, Administrative Assistant

Sarah Fragnière, Administrative Assistant

# ANNEX 4. Acronyms used in the report

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UN

United Nations

UNGA

United Nations General Assembly

SDG

Sustainable Development Goal

RCs

Resident Coordinators

UNCTs

United Nations Country Teams

DCO

United Nations Development Coordination Office

IMI-SDG6

UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6

COP

Conference of the Parties

CBD

Convention on Biological Diversity

IISD

International Institute for Sustainable Development









