



A f r i c a n W a t e r A s s o c i a t i o n

A s s o c i a t i o n A f r i c a i n e d e l ' E a u

**STATEMENT FOR ACTION ON WATER AND SANITATION OF
THE AFRICAN WATER AND SANITATION ASSOCIATION**

24 MARCH 2023

AT THE UNITED NATION HEADQUATERS NEW YORK

Yes! It's time for action and the over 400 million of African people who are the more unserved in terms of drinking water and more than 780 million unserved with safe sanitation service are counting on us. In the sub-Saharan Africa region, only 24% of the population has access to a safe source of drinking water.

The situation of sanitation is worse. Indeed, access to sanitation services is one of the crucial challenges for most African countries. The quality and coverage of services by sanitation operators are inadequate due to many factors, including institutional fragmentation, lack of leadership of policy and decision makers, weak regulatory frameworks, poor skills in management, operation and maintenance of sanitation systems, and lack of sustainable financing models for on-going service provision.

The global community of water and sanitation stakeholders has discussed during these 3 days at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York on how to bridge the gap. Indeed, the challenge for sustainable universal access to water and sanitation services in Africa, as for any development sector will not be achieved without covering the priority of access to knowledge/skills and therefore, developing capacity become the stone on the roadmap toward the goal.

In order to do this, there is a strong need, in strengthening dedicated African institutions and professional associations in the water and sanitation sector

through the operationalization of efficient South-South partnerships in Africa, as well as developing North-South cooperation for knowledge transfer, and promoting mentorship.

On this journey, the African Water and Sanitation Association appear to be the ideal pan-African framework through its capacity building mandate to:

- Identify the real sectorial needs and the best partners from the North and in the continent.
- Develop and deploy a realistic active strategy through a programmatic approach centered around peer-to-peer partnership to empower professionals from all strata (young people, women, technicians, managers, small operators, and central and local governments, etc.)
- Effectively implement a dedicated and adapted training institution, the African Water and Sanitation Academy which will be at the heart of this pan-African action.

The solution will also come through the adoption new and advanced technologies for the water and sanitation sector, with the strengthening of the synergies and the partnerships but also by considering innovative financing models. Adopting those models will help us to strongly improve the efficiency of the actions and scale up the positive impact we are looking for on the targeted populations.

Succeeding in this challenge requires a united Africa speaking with one voice in the concert of nations through the African Union (AU) and the African Ministers Council's on Water (AMCOW), African donors united around the African Development Bank (AfDB), African academic institutions and their partners coordinated by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and of course the African water sector operational actors united around the African Water and Sanitation Association (AWASA)

Let's together act!