



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

A Linchpin for Global Resilience: Water security, especially drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, for climate resilience, food security, economic growth, global health, and gender equality

March 22, 2023, 9:30-10:45, Conference Room 8

Organised by: the United States of America, WaterAid, African Development Bank (AFDB), Diageo, European Commission Joint Research Centre (EU JRC), WFP, WMO

Background on the event (one paragraph)

Water security, especially access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, underlies global, national and household resilience, and can transform economies, agriculture and nutrition, public health, gender equality, and the environment. In the face of a changing climate and the growing impact of water-related disasters, including floods and drought, systemic risk management is critical to realizing SDG6, as well as SDG2 (hunger), SDG3 (health), SDG5 (gender equality), SDG10 (inequalities), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDG13 (climate), and SDG17 (global partnerships). This event, jointly led by the United States Agency for International Development, the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and WaterAid, featured high-level multi-stakeholder discussions on the role of water security, including WASH, and data for decision-making to equitably achieve multiple SDGs.

Water Action Agenda (one paragraph, if possible, please include the link to your commitment in the [Water Action Agenda database](#))

At the World Water Forum in 2022, the United States announced a three-year, \$1.2 billion investment of foreign assistance for water security and sanitation, USAID's first-ever multi-year commitment to the sector. For the UN Water Conference, USAID will work with

Congress to allocate more than \$700 million of these funds in support of its 22 High-Priority Country Plans under the U.S. Global Water Strategy. These funds will support USAID field Missions in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa to support local solutions to water resources management, drinking water, sanitation, hygiene, and climate change challenges over the next three years. At least 50 percent of those reached with this investment will be women and girls, and will include many people who have never before had access to these basic services due to a range of local vulnerabilities.

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- SDG6 is a foundation to Agenda 2030, in particular to creating global, national and household resilience, and realising SDG2 (hunger), SDG3 (health), SDG5 (gender equality), and SDG13 (climate change).
- Water and sanitation insecurity create systemic risks to food security, global health security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and economic growth. Taken together, these risks can lead to conflict.
- Water security and food security cannot be separated, and climate change is causing hunger levels to rise - impacting water availability and WASH access.
- Water insecurity has significant impacts on macro economies. For example, without addressing water security, Indonesia's GDP will be reduced by an estimated 7.3% in 2024.
- Climate-smart data and interventions - including climate monitoring and forecasting and promoting climate-resilient catchment areas and ecosystems - underpin the success of SDG6.

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- Assess and respond to risks at the systems level - leverage data for decision-making and analyse links between SDGs to ensure that water security (including drinking water, sanitation and hygiene) is climate-resilient, equitable, and benefiting linked systems, such as food, economic, and health systems.
- Bring water security into all global conversations where they happen. Make water security a guiding theme of other global engagements, such as the UN Food Systems Summit, the UN Climate Change Conference, the Biodiversity Conference, the Commission on the Status of Women, and more. The infrequency of UN Water conferences make it particularly important to prioritize water in these places.
- Develop additional opportunities for engagement on systemic climate and water risk assessment and governance, and build on the launch of the High-Level Ministerial on Drought Resilience +10 in partnership with the International Drought Resilience Alliance, WMO/Global Water Partnership International Drought Management Programme, the World Bank, the European Union, and the United States, among others.

- Target the most marginalised with specific investments to ensure gaps are closed on the road to universal access to water security, sanitation, and hygiene.
- Mobilise financing to the sector to close the estimated annual gap of \$1 trillion to achieve global water security, including universal access to WASH, by 2030. This includes domestic resource mobilisation, private sector partnerships, improved efficiencies and performance among service providers and water basin managers, and efforts to improve accessibility of commercial finance, climate finance, and other sources of capital.