



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Cross-sectoral partnerships to accelerate progress towards inclusive sanitation

March 22nd, 11:00 to 12:15 EST, UN HQ, Conference Room B

Organized by:

1. International Water Association
2. Brazilian National Water and Sanitation Agency (ANA)
3. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
4. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
5. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)
6. Grundfos
7. African Global Networks
8. Water Youth Network
9. International Secretariat for Water (SIE-ISW)

Background on the event

The 2022 Sustainable Development Goals Report exposed some very concerning data about the world's progression towards SDG6, showing that meeting WASH targets by 2030 will require a fourfold increase in the pace of progress. Metrics about safely managed sanitation are particularly alarming, sending a clear message that current policies and practices are not working, and immediate action must be taken. There is an urgent need for an accelerated and inclusive approach to expanding safe sanitation service coverage. Multiple technologies are available for achieving this – both sewerage or onsite, centralised or decentralised. But mere technology choices do not ensure the end users will benefit as they should. Governments must lead by taking a wider perspective into consideration, including the governance mechanisms, the laws and regulations that clarify the mandate for safe and inclusive services, understanding how authorities and private sector operators can be organized and incentivized, and how individual contributions and needs must be aligned and supported to also ensure that environmental public health goals are being met.

Key Issues discussed

- People's perception of services such as access to toilets and sanitation is a challenge due to cultural, logical, or religious beliefs. Thus, creating barriers that hinder the provision sanitation services especially in rural and indigenous communities.
- Synergies and collaborations in sanitation services delivery at different levels of society (local, national, regional, global).
- Lack of youth involvement in decision-making and service provision. Youth entrepreneurship as a mode of providing adequate workforce for sanitation services delivery.
- Knowledge transfer and adaptation of standards to local contexts.
- Shit flow diagram as a useful tool to assess wastewater generation and management.
- Positive impacts of tackling sanitation problems are immediate and improves quality of life.
- Service providers must feel confident about their operations and consumers must be happy about the services they receive.

Key recommendations for action

- Organizations and governments need to work together, have a holistic approach, and educate people before implementing the programs.
- Bridging between different sectors, making sure coordination is planned.
- Stakeholders must agree on collecting data, in order to move faster toward accelerating the partnerships and solving sanitation issues globally.
- Communication of sanitation issues need to be holistic, starting from the problem to the solution by using localized case studies.
- Generational barriers must be removed, and the youth trained to provide the needed workforce for the implementation and management of sanitation solutions.
- Need for strong governance systems to ensure sanitation resources are equitably distributed from the national to the local levels.
- End users must be included in the development of sanitation innovations to ensure acceptability and sustainability of solutions.