

## **UN WATER Conference 2026 Organisational Session**

### **UN, New York – 3 March 2025**

### **AquaFed Statement**

#### **Neil Dhot, Director, AquaFed**

I am Neil Dhot and I represent AquaFed, the global federation of private water operators, engineers and water tech companies, SMEs and start-ups.

The 2026 Water Conference is our opportunity to finally deliver the necessary governance and financing, which in turn enable the partnerships, projects and solutions the world needs.

The Global Commission on the Economics of Water report said: “The water sector must enhance its financial sustainability, improve consumption efficiency, and evaluate new capital investments' benefits and costs in light of climate change”

We are all responsible for this. We all need to show leadership.

December 2026 is not the start or finish; it is a milestone.

We must start now. Today.

Member States must develop plenaries and interactive dialogues that share best practices to achieve SDG6 and related targets.

They must show the paths for pragmatic, implementable solutions that:

- meet health standards, with special attention to vulnerable populations
- manage water demand
- minimize pollution
- reuse water
- restore natural habitats.

Solutions are, almost all, at the interface, between regions, between state and non-state actors, between public and private entities.

We collaborate with willing partners and member states, to develop and grow pipelines of sustainable and investable projects and programmes.

Ones that:

- deliver the human right to water and sanitation
- increase our resilience to climate change

- truly understand and respect water's diverse values

AquaFed has already started working on the Conference.

We are developing a programme of activities to help governments and stakeholders, design and implement well targeted, well-balanced public-private-partnerships.

Our intention is to launch these activities this summer. Yes, summer 2025.

And for December 2026 in Dubai, we will organise dynamic events focused on private sector participation. We hope you will join us.

Regarding the Interactive Dialogues, the first four themes from the 2023 Conference remain relevant. Other themes could be:

- accelerating achievement of SDG6 targets.
- a plan for water in the post-2030 agenda
- the multiple opportunities from wastewater.

It is also essential the Dialogues bring water users from other sectors to the table – agriculture and food production, energy, and the big corporate users from manufacturing and data and tech.