

# United Nations System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation

*Uniting the UN system around water and sanitation for all*

Draft for HLCP approval - version 20 February 2024

## Summary

The *United Nations system-wide strategy for water and sanitation* (SWS) unites the UN system's work towards a world with access, availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all people and the planet. It provides a system-wide approach for UN entities to work collaboratively on water and sanitation, not as a sector in a 'silo', but holistically to address the inter-related cross-sectoral aspects of water and sanitation.

The goal of the SWS is to enhance the coordination and delivery of water and sanitation priorities in support of countries to accelerate progress on national plans and priorities, internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, the realization of human rights, and transformative solutions to current and future challenges for the benefit of people and planet. Its aim is to fully operationalize inter-agency coordination, capitalize on reforms of the United Nations development system, and leverage upscaled water and sanitation action of UN entities to provide more strategic, effective, coherent, and efficient support to Member States.

Through five entry points for collaborative action, the strategy adds value to the UN system's work on water and sanitation by strengthening collective leadership, enhancing demand-driven support to countries, improving policy coherence, mainstreaming into inter-governmental processes, accelerating progress and transformative change through five SDG 6 global accelerators (finance, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance), and strengthening accountability for progress through joint review and learning.

Member States adopted General Assembly Resolution 77/334 that requests the Secretary-General to present a United Nations system-wide water and sanitation strategy in consultation with Member States before the end of the seventy-eighth session. The SWS has been developed by UN-Water, the United Nations' inter-agency coordination mechanism for water and sanitation, under the leadership of the UN-Water Chair, as requested by the Secretary-General. It is submitted for consideration and approval to the High-Level Committee on Programmes during the 47<sup>th</sup> Session.

## I. Context<sup>1</sup>

1. At the midpoint of the *United Nations Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), the world is not on track to achieve water-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets at the global level by 2030.<sup>2</sup> Progress on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all,” continues to be well below the pace needed to meet the targets by 2030 for all eight targets.<sup>3</sup> In some regions and countries, for some indicators, progress on SDG 6 is stagnated or even relapsing.<sup>4</sup> Billions of people still lack access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, despite improvements in the provision of those basic services. Water scarcity is a growing

<sup>1</sup> A detailed summary of the global situation of water and sanitation and SDG 6 is available in Annex 2.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution 77/334

<sup>3</sup> UN-Water (2023). *Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023*. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>; and United Nations (2023). *The Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart 2023*. Available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/progress-chart/Progress-Chart-2023.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> UN-Water (2023). *Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023*. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>. For latest global, regional and country-level data see SDG 6 Data Portal available at <https://www.sdg6data.org/en>.

problem in many parts of the world and conflicts and climate change are exacerbating the issue.<sup>5</sup> In addition, water pollution is a significant challenge that affects both human health and the environment in many countries.<sup>6</sup> Achieving universal coverage by 2030 will require a six-fold increase in current global rates of progress on drinking water, a five-fold increase for sanitation, and a three-fold increase for hygiene.<sup>7</sup>

2. Water and sanitation challenges are amplifying. Many impacts of climate change are felt through water: more intense and frequent droughts, more extreme flooding, more erratic seasonal rainfall and accelerated melting of glaciers. Current levels of groundwater use are unprecedented.<sup>8</sup> Aquifer degradation from overexploitation, pollution, salination and subsidence hinder safe water access and economic development in many regions.<sup>9</sup> Coastal and inland wetlands are experiencing ongoing loss, with more than 80 per cent of wetlands estimated to have been lost since the pre-industrial era.<sup>10</sup> In addition, scientific evidence indicates the Earth's water cycle is changing,<sup>11</sup> alongside continued human activities such as unsustainable land management and ecosystem degradation that aggravate the 'global water crisis'.<sup>12</sup> These global trends have cascading effects on economies, ecosystems, biodiversity and societies. With the growing complexity and intensity of risks on the horizon, lack of progress on water and sanitation threatens hard-won development gains, other human rights and peace, and disproportionately negatively affects women and girls, forcibly displaced, stateless, migrants and other populations in vulnerable situations.

3. Consequently, there is not only a need to accelerate progress, but also to make transformative changes in the way water and sanitation are perceived, valued, understood, used and managed. These changes cannot be brought about by the water and sanitation sectors alone, or through 'siloed' approaches. Instead, collective, cross-sectoral leadership will be needed to provide integrated, innovative solutions that leverage synergies and manage trade-offs across sectors. The availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation is an essential solution to tackle pressing global challenges like extreme poverty, food insecurity, gender inequality, disease, disasters; contribute to sustaining peace; and build resilient services and societies. Water and sanitation interlink the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental,<sup>13</sup> are fundamental human rights,<sup>14</sup> and underpin the six key transitions that can have catalytic and multiplier

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the Secretary-General: Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: towards a rescue plan for people and planet (A/78/80-E/2023/64) para 34. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2023/secretary-general-sdg-report-2023--EN.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> United Nations, The United Nations World Water Development Report 2022: Groundwater: Making the invisible visible. UNESCO, Paris; and UN-Water Joint Message and Call for Action Groundwater: The Invisible Resource for Sustainable Development (2022) available at <https://www.unwater.org/news/joint-message-un-water-summit-groundwater-2022>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Progress on Integrated Water Resources Management: Global Indicator 6.5.1 Updates and Acceleration Needs. Nairobi. Available at [https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/app/uploads/2021/09/SDG6\\_Indicator\\_Report\\_651\\_Progress-on-Integrated-Water-Resources-Management\\_2021\\_EN.pdf](https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/app/uploads/2021/09/SDG6_Indicator_Report_651_Progress-on-Integrated-Water-Resources-Management_2021_EN.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Allan, R.P., Barlow, M., Byrne, M.P., Cherchi, A., Douville, H., Fowler, H.J., Gan, T.Y., Pendergrass, A.G., Rosenfeld, D., Swann, A.L.S., Wilcox, L.J. and Zolina, O. (2020), Advances in understanding large-scale responses of the water cycle to climate change. *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.*, 1472: 49-75. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14337> and Van Dijk, Albert, and others (2022). Global Water Monitor: 2022 Summary Report. Global Water Monitor Consortium. Available at [https://wenfo.org/globalwater/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GlobalWaterMonitor\\_2022\\_SummaryReport.pdf](https://wenfo.org/globalwater/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GlobalWaterMonitor_2022_SummaryReport.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Resolution A/RES/78/1 para 38 f, Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly. Official reference to 'global water crisis.'

<sup>13</sup> UN-Water (2016). Water and Sanitation linkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Analytical Brief. Geneva Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/water-and-sanitation-interlinkagesacross-2030-agenda-sustainable-development>.

<sup>14</sup> Resolution 64/292 which gave explicit recognition of these rights. Since then, a number of subsequent resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly gave further affirmation and clarified the human rights to water and sanitation, most recently A/C.3/78/L.47.

effects across the SDGs including for food systems; energy access and affordability; digital connectivity; education; jobs and social protection; and climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.<sup>15</sup>

4. UN-Water is the UN system’s inter-agency coordination mechanism for water and sanitation issues.<sup>16</sup> As a response to the slow pace of progress on SDG 6, UN-Water developed the **SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework**<sup>17</sup> as a unifying initiative to deliver fast results at an increased scale, contributing to the UN Secretary-General’s ‘Decade of Action’ to deliver the SDGs by 2030. It was noted by the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in May 2020 and launched by the Secretary-General during the 2020 High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF). The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework focuses on five accelerators of progress: *financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation and governance*.

5. Several key milestones in 2023 shaped the context for the **UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation (SWS)** including the UN 2023 Water Conference<sup>18</sup> and the over 830 voluntary commitments in the Water Action Agenda,<sup>19</sup> the in-depth review of SDG 6 at the 2023 HLPF, the UN-Water report, “*Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report for Water and Sanitation 2023*,” and the subsequent recognition of water in the Political Declaration (78/1), in which Member States committed to “*address water scarcity and stress and drive transformation from a global water crisis to a world where water is a sustainable resource, ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.*” Member States adopted Resolution 77/334 that requests the Secretary-General present a United Nations system-wide water and sanitation strategy in consultation with Member States before the end of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly (see Box 1).

## II. Purpose and scope

6. The SWS responds to the **mandate** provided in Resolution 77/334 (see Box 1) and the decision taken by UN-Water Members at the UN-Water 38th Meeting.<sup>20</sup> The SWS has been developed by UN-Water<sup>21</sup> under the leadership of the UN-Water Chair, as requested by the Secretary-General. The **process** for the development of the strategy included technical briefings, meetings, and consultations with UN entities at global, regional and country level; Member States; partners; and stakeholders. Further information on the strategy development process is available in Annex 3.

### Box 1. Mandate for the UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation

<sup>15</sup> UNSDG (2023). Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs, <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/six-transitions-investment-pathways-deliver-sdgs>

<sup>16</sup> UN-Water – United Nations’ Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism for Water and Sanitation, version 1 February 2019. See <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-terms-reference>.

<sup>17</sup> UN-Water (2020). SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>

<sup>18</sup> 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; 22-24 March 2023, New York, USA

<sup>19</sup> Water Action Agenda, See <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/action-networks/water>.

<sup>20</sup> UN-Water, Decision from 38<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Stockholm, Sweden, “In response to the outcomes of the UN 2023 Water Conference and building on the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, the SPMs decide to support the development of a UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation. This work will be led by the UN-Water Vice-Chair with the support of the SPMs and should be completed by mid-2024 (e.g., to be possibly launched at the High-level Political Forum’s SDG 6 Special Event in July 2024).

<sup>21</sup> UN-Water is comprised of Members representing UN entities and Partners representing non-UN system actors. Thirty-five UN entities are UN-Water Members, as of November 2023: FAO, IAEA, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UN CBD, UNCCD, UNCDF, UNCTAD, UN DESA, UNDP, UNDRR, UN ECA, UN ECE, UN ECLAC, UNEP, UN ESCAP, UNESCO, UN ESCWA, UNFCCC, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNOOSA, UNU, UN Women, UN Tourism, WFP, WHO, WMO, and World Bank Group.

5. Requests the Secretary-General to present a **United Nations system-wide water and sanitation strategy** in consultation with Member States before the end of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, in order to enhance the coordination and delivery of water priorities across the United Nations system, and in this context to place particular emphasis on the water-related needs of the developing countries, including those related to finance, technology transfer and capacity-building, and also requests the Secretary-General to provide adequate support, within existing resources, to the United Nations system-wide water and sanitation strategy.

Source: A/RES/77/334, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 1 September 2023. *Follow-up to the 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.*

7. The **goal** of the strategy is to enhance UN system-wide coordination and delivery of water and sanitation priorities across the UN system in support of countries to accelerate progress on national plans and priorities, internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, the realization of human rights, and transformative solutions to current and future water and sanitation challenges for the benefit of people and planet. Its aim is to fully operationalize inter-agency coordination, capitalize on reforms of the United Nations development system (UNDS), and to leverage upscaled water and sanitation action of UN entities to provide more strategic, effective, coherent and efficient support to Member States.

8. The SWS expresses the common UN system **vision** for *a world with access, availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all people and the planet*. Through the strategy, UN entities individually and collectively have committed to raise the level of ambition and step-up efforts to collaborate effectively on water and sanitation, drawing on all the assets, expertise, skills and capacities of the UN system. The intention is to work on water and sanitation not as another sector in a 'silo', but as one UN system working holistically to address the inter-related cross-sectoral aspects of water and sanitation as a driver for sustainable development, human rights and peace.

9. The **scope** encompasses all freshwater related matters, including sanitation. It includes surface and groundwater resources and the interface between fresh- and sea water, and freshwater resources in terms of their quality and quantity, their development, assessment, sustainable management, monitoring, and use (including, for example, domestic uses, agriculture including the interface with soil, and ecosystems requirements); the sanitation cycle (i.e. both access to and use of sanitation by populations, the interactions between sanitation and freshwater, as well as the safe treatment of waste for reuse, including circular economy aspects); disaster risk; emergencies; and climate-related water and sanitation challenges.

10. The SWS **focus** is on sustainable development, notably on SDG 6 and the interlinkages of water and sanitation across the 2030 Agenda. The strategy places emphasis on the water and sanitation needs of developing countries, notably least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked LDCs (LLDCs) and countries with other special circumstances in accordance with Resolution 77/334. It follows orientations from Member States in Resolution 75/233, the *Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system* (QCPR), recognizing "the positive role that sustainable development can play in mitigating drivers of conflicts, disaster risks, humanitarian crises and complex emergencies, and also recognizes that a comprehensive whole-of-system response, including greater cooperation, coherence, coordination and complementarity among development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace, is fundamental to most efficiently and effectively addressing needs and attaining the Sustainable Development Goals" (QCPR, paragraph 16), and "the United Nations contribution to the promotion of all human rights for sustainable development" (QCPR, paragraph 28).

11. As a UN system-wide strategy, the SWS is designed to be implemented by UN entities working on water and sanitation within their mandated areas at global, regional and country levels, in collaboration with Member States and diverse partners and stakeholders, particularly the most marginalized.<sup>22</sup>

12. The UN system's global network of expertise and capacity at global, regional, country and sub-national levels can make a unique and valuable contribution to advancing progress on water and sanitation. The SWS will add value to the UN system's work on water and sanitation through the achievement of the following **expected outcomes**:

- Strengthened UN system-wide leadership on water and sanitation issues.
- Enhanced demand-driven support to countries on water and sanitation through the mobilization of available capacities and resources of the UN system and its partners at all levels to leave no one behind, with emphasis on the needs of developing countries.
- Improved policy coherence on water and sanitation through UN system support to integration across sectors and mainstreaming into Member State-led intergovernmental processes.
- More impactful UN system support to countries to accelerate progress and transformational change through the five SDG 6 accelerators: *finance, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance*.
- Strengthened accountability for progress through joint review and learning.

13. The **impact** will be *"a more holistic, integrated approach to the sustainable management of water and sanitation that accelerates progress towards internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, and leaves no one behind."* The SWS contributes to progress on internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDG 6 and its eight targets.<sup>23</sup> It further supports the achievement of other goals and targets related to water and sanitation across United Nations conventions, treaties, agreements, frameworks and decades, as well as human rights frameworks with reference to the human rights to water and sanitation and a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment (see Annex 2).

14. The SWS is prepared within the present context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is envisaged that the strategy will be reviewed and updated based on the post-2030 global sustainable development agenda.

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<sup>22</sup> According to CEB Common Principles, stakeholders include governments parliaments, scientific and academic community, civil society, the private sector, the international community and the United Nations System. Available at <https://unsceb.org/ceb-common-principles-guide-un-systems-support-implementation-2030-agenda-sustainable>. Additionally, supporting actions at all levels can promote multi-stakeholder involvement, including civil society, concerned populations, local communities, private sector, women, and youth (para. 149). This includes recognizing and supporting Indigenous knowledge holders, women, and youth in national, local, and international water and sanitation policies and decision-making processes (para 84). Report of the 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. [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf))

<sup>23</sup> SDG 6 is comprised of eight targets that include drinking water (target 6.1), sanitation and hygiene (6.2), wastewater treatment and ambient water quality (6.3), water-use efficiency and level of water stress (6.4), integrated water resources management (IWRM), including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate (6.5), water-related ecosystems (6.6), international water cooperation, including (6.a) and community participation (6.b).

15. The SWS supports the implementation of the *Secretary-General's Action Plan for the Water Action Decade*.<sup>24</sup> It is aligned with other UN system-wide strategies, common approaches, frameworks and action plans that address water and sanitation issues.<sup>25</sup> The SWS incorporates the latest findings on global progress on water and sanitation at the halfway point of the 2030 Agenda<sup>26</sup> and the latest data, information and scientific evidence. It draws on the vast breadth and depth of experience of UN entities that have been leading and implementing water and sanitation programmes for decades. The SWS is designed to be complementary to existing water and sanitation strategies and plans of UN entities and contribute towards the achievement of high-level organizational targets for water and sanitation. It builds upon the learning from UN-Water's more than 20 years of experience as the United Nations inter-agency coordination mechanism on water and sanitation.<sup>27</sup>

### III. Entry points for UN system-wide collaboration on water and sanitation

16. The SWS will be delivered through five **entry points** for collaboration on water and sanitation: (1) lead and inspire collective action on water and sanitation; (2) engage better for countries by leveraging “whole of UN system” support and mobilizing stakeholders and partnerships for water and sanitation; (3) align UN system support to integrate water and sanitation issues across sectors and mainstream into intergovernmental processes; (4) accelerate progress and transformational change through unified UN system support for the five SDG 6 global accelerators:<sup>28</sup> financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation and governance; and (5) account through joint review and learning.

17. Fourteen **outputs** will be the direct results of the SWS and lead to the achievement of the five expected outcomes. These outputs represent specific areas where the UN system will enhance its support for countries, help unify the international community's support, and maximize the impact of local and international cooperation to accelerate progress and foster transformative change for water and sanitation. A summary of the results chain for the SWS is presented at the end of the document in Figure 1.

18. A collaborative implementation plan (CIP) will be developed with timebound activities and progress indicators to guide the operationalization, localization, and monitoring of the SWS. The CIP will help UN entities to be more effective and efficient in delivering water and sanitation programming through improved coordination, enhanced complementarity, identification of joint areas for accelerated action, addressing gaps, and avoiding duplication of efforts. The terms of reference for the CIP are included in Annex 1. Additionally, Annex 1 includes a summary table of **illustrative supporting actions** that provide concrete, practical examples of how the SWS can be implemented by the Resident Coordinator system including UN Country Teams,

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<sup>24</sup> United Nations Secretary-General's plan: Water Action Decade 2018-2028. Available at [https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan\\_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf](https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Annex 2 global policy landscape will include a list of references of the related UN system-wide strategies, plans and approaches (e.g. biodiversity and nature-based solutions, disaster risk reduction for resilience, climate change action, the environment, pollution, urban development as well as those that address inclusion including gender, disability, Indigenous Peoples, and youth, among others)

<sup>26</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>; and United Nations (2023). Report of the Secretary-General: Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: towards a rescue plan for people and planet (A/78/80-E/2023/64) para 34. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2023/secretary-general-sdg-report-2023--EN.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> UN-Water (2020). UN-Water 2030 Strategy. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-2030-strategy> and UN-Water external review 2018. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-external-review-2018>.

<sup>28</sup> UN-Water (2020). SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>.

Regional Commissions and other UN regional offices, UN entities working on water and sanitation within their mandated area, as well as through inter-agency partnerships and coordination.

19. The issue, solutions for UN system-wide action, and outputs for each entry point are set out below.

### Entry Point 1. Lead and inspire collective action on water and sanitation

#### Outcome 1: Strengthened UN system-wide leadership on water and sanitation.

20. *Issue:* The need for increased leadership and political will to act was cited on numerous occasions as a critical success factor to accelerate progress and transformative change on water and sanitation during the UN 2023 Water Conference.<sup>29</sup> Within the UN system, there is no single agency, fund, programme or office dedicated exclusively to water issues. Currently, over thirty-five United Nations entities carry out water and sanitation programmes through different mandates. Responding to the increased level of ambition with a more holistic system-wide approach will require increased collaborative leadership across UN entities and collectively, within the UN system. The UN 2023 Water Conference, future UN water conferences in 2026 and 2028 and other high-level summits, conferences and meetings offer unique and timely opportunities to galvanize political will and societal attention for action.

*Solutions - what the UN system can do:* In response, the UN system aims to increase system-wide leadership at all levels and boost communication and advocacy on water and sanitation issues interlinked with major global topics through its extensive, world-wide networks.

#### Output 1.1. Water and sanitation issues are a strategic leadership priority for the UN System.

Engagement with leadership across the whole UN system is paramount to elevate and sustain water and sanitation as a central priority across the work of the United Nations.<sup>30</sup> UN entities working on water and sanitation within their mandated areas will elevate water and sanitation issues to be included among the top organizational priorities and promote stronger interlinkages between water and sanitation with their respective mandated areas. This can be done, for example, through strengthening water and sanitation programmes in strategic plans, results frameworks, resource allocations, staffing structures and partnerships. Strengthening of United Nations entity mandates and results frameworks, as well as ensuring adequate resources, will need to be supported through the respective governance bodies.<sup>31</sup>

The **Chair of UN-Water** represents UN-Water at the CEB<sup>32</sup> and will convene an annual **UN executive level meeting of UN-Water on water and sanitation** to discuss actions entities are taking to strengthen water and sanitation programmes, set UN system priorities, identify opportunities and interlinkages, and address emerging issues, gaps, and resourcing requirements. The appointment of a **United Nations Special Envoy for Water** will help raise the visibility of the importance, urgency and interconnectedness of water and sanitation for sustainable development and will help catalyse engagement of the United Nations system, financial institutions, Member States and stakeholders.

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<sup>29</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the 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 (Advance unedited version). Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>

<sup>31</sup> UN-Water Inventory: An Overview of the UN-Water Family's Work on Water and Sanitation. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-inventory-overview-un-waterfamily%E2%80%99s-work-water-and-sanitation>.

<sup>32</sup> UN-Water external review 2018. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-external-review-2018>.

**Output 1.2. Action is inspired by compelling and unified UN system communications and messaging on water and sanitation.**

The UN system aims to be a compelling voice on global water and sanitation issues so that the public, Member States, civil society and the private sector will be better informed and inspired to act.<sup>33</sup> The UN system will increase its capacity to provide global, up-to-date information and latest evidence on the status of the world's water resources and progress on water and sanitation goals and targets, with an increased focus on the interrelations between water and sanitation and priority global issues. Communication efforts will use a range of tactics to reach different audiences, with an emphasis on youth engagement, that will be tailored to regional and local communication contexts. Advocacy by the UN Special Envoy for Water can also help elevate and amplify the UN system's voice and visibility on water and sanitation issues. The UN Communications Group at the global, regional and country levels will help ensure that communications on water and sanitation are cross promoted.<sup>34</sup>

**Entry Point 2. Engage better for countries by leveraging “whole of the UN system” support and mobilizing stakeholders and partnerships for water and sanitation**

**Outcome 2: Enhanced demand-driven support to countries on water and sanitation through the mobilization of available capacities and resources of the UN system and its partners at all levels to leave no one behind, with emphasis on the needs of developing countries.**

21. *Issue:* Expertise related to water and sanitation is significant across the UN system and its partners.<sup>35</sup> This technical knowledge and implementation capacities are based within a wide range of UN entities that include specialized agencies, funds and programmes, Secretariat offices and departments, other entities and bodies, and related organizations<sup>36</sup> physically located in over 4,000 locations in 162 countries and territories.<sup>37</sup> This current fragmentation across sectors and institutions means that the potential benefits of UN system support and international cooperation to address country-level water-related needs and priorities are often not fully realized. The engagement of these stakeholders and partners, with their expertise, experience and capabilities, technology, and financial resources is critical to achieve integrated, impactful and sustainable improvements in water and sanitation.

*Solutions - what the UN system can do:* Establishing a United Nations system-wide strategy for water and sanitation that is built on a strong foundation of inter-agency coordination, partnership and implemented in close collaboration with the Resident Coordinator (RC) system is a crucial pathway for the UN system to scale-up water and sanitation action and results, particularly at country level through United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) under the leadership of the RCs. This approach also aligns with the Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda* initiative “UN 2.0”, which envisages “more agile, diverse, responsive and impactful United Nations entities.”<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> UN-Water (2020). UN-Water 2030 Strategy. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-2030-strategy>

<sup>34</sup> United Nations Department of Communications, Global Communications Strategy 2020: A world where everyone thrives in peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet.

<sup>35</sup> *UN-Water Inventory: An Overview of the UN-Water Family's Work on Water and Sanitation*. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-inventory-overview-un-water-family%E2%80%99s-work-water-and-sanitation>.

<sup>36</sup> The UN System Chart. Available at <https://www.un.org/en/delegate/page/un-system-chart>

<sup>37</sup> United Nations (2023). Our Common Agenda Policy Brief UN 2.0. Available at [https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/un-2.0\\_policy-brief\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/un-2.0_policy-brief_en.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> United Nations (2023). Our Common Agenda Policy Brief UN 2.0. Available at [https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/un-2.0\\_policy-brief\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/un-2.0_policy-brief_en.pdf).



The two output areas below aim to demonstrate, through practice, new and more effective and efficient ways of partnerships and collaboration among the UN system entities and partners. This approach will lead to strengthened engagement with countries by unifying multi-sectoral expertise and support from the UN system together with the local and international community around government-led plans and priorities, and with local authorities, civil society, particularly local communities and those affected by lack of access to drinking water, sanitation, pollution and other water and sanitation issues through a people-centred approach to leave no one behind and focus on those furthest behind first.<sup>39</sup>

**Output 2.1. Expertise and resources are fully leveraged by the UN system to support countries, with emphasis on the water and sanitation needs of developing countries.**

Each part of the UN system, normative and operational, resident and entities not physically present in the country,<sup>40</sup> programmatic and support, will contribute its specialized expertise, skills and assets on water and sanitation in a coherent and complementary manner.<sup>41</sup> The RC/UNCTs are on the front line delivering coordinated, country-led support on water and sanitation to governments based on national plans, priorities and needs and in accordance with UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF). UN Regional Collaborative Platforms (RCPs), UN Regional Coordination Mechanisms (RCMs), Issue Based Coalitions (IBCs) and UN entity regional offices will provide coordinated support to countries via the RC and UNCT, including relevant inter-agency results/thematic groups, based on available regional capacities and structures, which vary from region to region. Support can include issues related to transboundary cooperation for river basins, lakes and aquifers upon request from the concerned countries, as well as assistance to countries that express interest in acceding to United Nations Water Conventions.<sup>42</sup>

Requests for support on water and sanitation issues from RC/UNCTs, Regional Economic Commissions, and other UN offices can be channelled to UN-Water.<sup>43</sup> UN-Water will connect requests for support to the diverse water and sanitation expertise, technical assistance, and initiatives of UN-Water Members and Partners and the international community. UN-Water will expand its support to respond to requests for water and sanitation data, policy, and technical advice for the Common Country Analysis (CCA), UNSDCF design, and water and sanitation-related Results Groups, in addition to maintaining an updated **UN-Water Inventory** to provide a mapping of the expertise and resources available across the UN system (see Annex 4). This output directly contributes to operationalizing reforms of the UN Development System through enhanced demand-driven country-level support effectively channelled through the RC/ UNCTs.

**Output 2.2. Diverse stakeholders and partnerships are mobilized by the UN system to support countries' progress on water and sanitation.**

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<sup>39</sup> UN-Water (2020). SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>

<sup>40</sup> UNSDG (2021). Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System. Available at: <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/MAF%20-%20Final%20-%202015%20September%202021.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> CEB Common Principles to Guide the UN System's Support to the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development | United Nations - CEB (unsceb.org). Available at <https://unsceb.org/ceb-common-principles-guide-un-systems-support-implementation-2030-agenda-sustainable-development>

<sup>42</sup> United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, 1997 and the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, 1992.

<sup>43</sup> UN-Water Country Level Engagement. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/country-engagement>

The UN system will engage in partnerships at global, regional, national, as well as river basin, lake and aquifer levels to mobilize public and private entities across different sectors for greater cooperation, foster innovation, and promote effective, sustainable and peaceful management of water resources.<sup>44</sup>

The UN system will champion the need for robust civil society participation in all related processes. UN entities at all levels will promote and facilitate the participation of diverse stakeholders in water and sanitation policies and decision-making processes, in line with the human right to participate in public affairs and following the principles of the human rights-based approach, to facilitate that all voices are heard and no one is left behind, with particular attention to the inclusion of civil society, local communities, concerned populations, women, youth, persons with disabilities,<sup>45</sup> forcibly displaced, stateless, migrants, as well as Indigenous Peoples, in accordance with Resolution 61/295, “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,”<sup>46</sup> and any other people in vulnerable situations.

**UN-Water Partners** will diversify the expertise of the network and help increase outreach across levels, including at sub-national level, and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders. UN-Water Partners will be involved in the identification and sharing of best practices and lessons learned, leading to the identification of integrated solutions spanning thematic areas. Additionally, UN entities and partners will strengthen international cooperation by facilitating South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, and private sector engagement on water and sanitation to exchange knowledge and transfer technological solutions<sup>47</sup> and support capacity enhancement of national technical and academic institutions. Governments, the UN system and a broad range of stakeholders have registered water and sanitation voluntary commitments on the *Water Action Agenda*<sup>48</sup> platform and the *SDG Action Space*, strengthening the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.<sup>49</sup>

### **Entry Point 3. Align UN system support for integration of water and sanitation issues across sectors and mainstreaming into intergovernmental processes**

#### **Outcome 3. Improved policy coherence on water and sanitation through UN system support to integration across sectors and mainstreaming into intergovernmental processes.**

22. *Issue:* Water and sanitation are highly interlinked with all dimensions of sustainable development.<sup>50</sup> SDG 6 has been identified in the *Global Sustainable Development Report 2023* as one of seven particularly synergistic goals repeatedly associated with co-benefits or identified as drivers of progress.<sup>51</sup> However, the management of water and sanitation issues across different sectors also can become a source of conflict, lead to negative

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<sup>44</sup> UN-Water (2020). SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>

<sup>45</sup> UN-Water. Roadmap for the Integration of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/water/unwater-roadmap-hr-watsan.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup> Resolution 61/295, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous. Available at <https://social.desa.un.org/issues/indigenous-peoples/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>.

<sup>47</sup> United Nations Secretary-General’s plan: Water Action Decade 2018-2028. Available at [https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan\\_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf](https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Water Action Agenda. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023/action-agenda>

<sup>49</sup> UN SDG, Sustainable Development Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal17>.

<sup>50</sup> UN-Water (2016). Water and Sanitation Interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/app/uploads/2016/08/Water-and-Sanitation-Interlinkages.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General (2023). Global Sustainable Development Report 2023: Times of crisis, times of change: Science for accelerating transformations to sustainable development. Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/FINAL%20GSDR%202023-Digital%20-110923\\_1.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/FINAL%20GSDR%202023-Digital%20-110923_1.pdf).

externalities, and involve trade-offs.<sup>52</sup> Policy and institutional fragmentation between levels of governance, actors and sectors is a major bottleneck.<sup>53</sup> It means that decisions taken in other sectors (e.g. agriculture, energy, health, environment, finance) often do not consider the associated impacts on water availability and water quality,<sup>54</sup> which disproportionately affect women and girls and other people facing vulnerable situations. This fragmentation cascades through government structures, internationally agreed conventions, treaties, frameworks and their respective intergovernmental processes, and the UN system.

Solutions – what the UN system can do: A far more aligned and integrated UN system approach is needed. This will require the UN system to work together more collaboratively and effectively across mandated areas. The SWS proposes a three-pronged approach: (1) align UN system operational and financial strategies, policies and approaches to harness complementarity; (2) support integrated policy frameworks across sectors; and (3) under the guidance of Member States, support the mainstreaming of water and sanitation issues across intergovernmental processes for greater coherence.

**Output 3.1. Operational and financial strategies, policies and approaches of the UN system are aligned to harness complementarity.**

The SWS and the accompanying CIP provide a system-wide basis for UN entities to update and align water and sanitation components of their respective strategic plans, work programmes and results, and resources frameworks to maximize effectiveness and complementarity of interventions across levels, entities, pillars, other system-wide strategies, ensure synergies, address gaps, and avoid duplication of efforts.

UN Development System (UNDS) country programmes are an important convergence point for the coordination of UN system support to countries.<sup>55</sup> During the design of new country programmes, the development of the CCA and the UNSDCF will be an opportunity to jointly analyse water and sanitation risks and opportunities, determine strategic priorities, select results and indicators, and prepare plans. When water and/or sanitation are identified as a priority area, RC/UNCTs can consider establishing a thematic results group or a sub-group to coordinate cross-sectoral aspects of water and sanitation issues.

Throughout the programming cycle, UNCT members can align and collaborate to work on water and sanitation areas together to implement through **joint programming**, including joint work plans (JWP), and more formalized **joint programmes**, while making interlinkages and ensuing complementarity and coherence with other UN country-level plans and processes (e.g. in countries with humanitarian emergencies these include UN humanitarian needs overviews, humanitarian response plans, and related funding appeals).

This output directly contributes to the repositioning of the UNDS as outlined in Resolution 72/279. It also includes alignment of water and sanitation-related programming and operations with the *Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management*.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> UN-Water (2016). Water and Sanitation Interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/app/uploads/2016/08/Water-and-Sanitation-Interlinkages.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup> UN-Water (2020). SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> In humanitarian and mission settings, UN teams at country-level can work together to contribute to all UN country plans strengthening coherence and complementarity among development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding efforts.

<sup>56</sup> Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management, See <https://www.unsystem.org/content/addendum-strategy-sustainability-management-united-nations-system-2020-2030>.

**Output 3.2. Integrated policy frameworks to manage water and sanitation across sectors are supported by the UN system using latest data and evidence.**

The UN system provides integrated policy advice and implement multi-sectoral programming approaches to managing water and sanitation across sectors that draw on their respective mandates and expertise. The UN system and its partners will continue to develop and operationalize multi-sectoral approaches that address water and sanitation issues across sectors (e.g. water-energy-food-ecosystem nexus<sup>57</sup>, climate change-pollution-biodiversity loss<sup>58</sup>, gender-responsive<sup>59</sup>, resilient infrastructure,<sup>60</sup> nature-based solutions<sup>61</sup>, One Health<sup>62</sup>, among others), across geographies (e.g. source-to-sea approach), and in different contexts (e.g. desertification, urban development, humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises).

In response to national needs and priorities, RC/UNCTs will provide holistic cross-government advice on policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks with clear roles and responsibilities for addressing water and sanitation challenges, managing trade-offs, and promoting cooperation and social cohesion.

Integration of water into **Regional Forums on Sustainable Development**, led by regional economic commissions, will be an opportunity for regional dialogue and experience-sharing on integrated approaches to sustainable management of water and sanitation. UN Regional Commissions have cross-disciplinary expertise that provide a basis for the promotion of integrated approaches to water and sanitation issues.

UN-Water will provide thought leadership and integrated policy guidance based on latest scientific, technical and policy developments in water and sanitation, led by UN entities with mandates for the respective areas and its partners.<sup>63</sup> Implementing integrated approaches through joint strategies, programmes and projects will add value through cross-UN entity capacity and expertise-sharing as well as building skills, knowledge and experience to break down the silos between key areas such as safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and integrated water resources management (IWRM).

**Output 3.3. Mainstreaming of water and sanitation-related issues into Member States-led intergovernmental processes is supported by the UN system.**

Water and sanitation-related issues are relevant to a substantial number of internationally agreed conventions, treaties, frameworks and their respective intergovernmental processes. There is increasing recognition across these intergovernmental processes of the centrality of water and sanitation issues to achieving the goals and targets and an increasing number of Member State decisions on water and sanitation that require follow-up and support by the UN system. Examples include, inter alia, the United Nations General Assembly, World Health Assembly, the United Nations Environmental Assembly, the United Nations human rights mechanisms,

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<sup>57</sup> A/CONF.240/2023/5, Interactive dialogue 2: Water for sustainable development: valuing water, water-energy-food nexus, and sustainable economic and urban development (Sustainable Development Goal targets 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 and Goals 2, 8, 9, 11 and 12): Concept paper prepared by the Secretariat. Available at <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FCONF.240%2F2023%2F5&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

<sup>58</sup> What is the Triple Planetary Crisis? UNFCCC website, 13 April 2022. Available at: <https://unfccc.int/news/what-is-the-triple-planetary-crisis>

<sup>59</sup> G. Azcona et al. From Commodity to Common Good: A Feminist Agenda to Tackle the World's Water Crisis. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/from-commodity-to-common-good-a-feminist-agenda-to-tackle-the-worlds-water-crisis-en.pdf>.

<sup>60</sup> Principles for resilient infrastructure, See <https://www.undrr.org/publication/principles-resilient-infrastructure>.

<sup>61</sup> UN World Water Development Report, Nature-based Solutions for Water, 2018. <https://www.unwater.org/publications/world-water-development-report-2018>

<sup>62</sup> World Health Organization. One health. Available at [https://www.who.int/health-topics/one-health#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/one-health#tab=tab_1)

<sup>63</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>

including the treaties and the Human Rights Council, in addition to Conferences of the Parties for the United Nations Climate Change Convention, the Convention on Biodiversity, and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

In support of these Member State decisions, the UN system will assist the mainstreaming of water and sanitation-related issues into relevant intergovernmental processes such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, desertification, food and agriculture, health, biodiversity, pollution, oceans, environment, education, urban development, women's empowerment, finance, international cooperation,<sup>64</sup> and human rights mechanisms.<sup>65</sup>

This output will require specific engagement with the secretariats of relevant UN conventions, multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), frameworks, and other intergovernmental bodies, including the HLPF (see Annex 2), to coordinate approaches for the respective water and sanitation related elements. UN-Water will highlight and raise awareness of water and sanitation issues that are relevant to these global policy discussions and will strengthen support to the respective UN-Water Members affiliated with these processes. Relevant UN-Water Expert Groups will share timely information across the UN system, develop coherent policy advice, advocate with a "common UN system voice," and coordinate inputs from the UN system for United Nations-convened summits, conferences and meetings, as well as for relevant UN system global reports and initiatives.

At country level, the RC/UNCT can support linkages between intergovernmental processes and country-level development plans including through support for Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) at city-level<sup>66</sup> of water and sanitation goal and targets. RC/UNCT can support Member States to involve partners, ensure strong civil society participation and include diverse stakeholders in providing inputs and feedback through these processes. UN Regional Commissions and other UN regional offices will facilitate and promote interlinkages with Regional Sustainable Development Forums and regional and sub-regional intergovernmental bodies and processes. Given the emphasis of the SWS on developing countries, support will also be provided to connect water and sanitation issues with intergovernmental processes and conferences related to least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked LDCs (LLDCs), and countries with other special circumstances, including Middle Income Countries (MICs).

**Entry Point 4. Accelerate progress and transformational change by unifying UN system support to the five SDG 6 accelerators: *financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance***

**Outcome 4. More impactful UN system support to countries to accelerate progress and transformational change, including through the five SDG 6 accelerators- *finance, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance.***

23. *Issue:* At the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, progress towards internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including SDG 6, is off track.<sup>67</sup> For all SDG 6 targets, the current rate of progress is not fast enough

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> UN-Water. Roadmap for the Integration of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/water/unwater-roadmap-hr-watsan.pdf>.

<sup>66</sup> SDG Localization and the Voluntary Local Reviews, See <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews>.

<sup>67</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>

to close the gap before 2030.<sup>68</sup> In some regions and countries, for some indicators, progress has stagnated or is regressing.<sup>69</sup> Swift and purposeful action is needed to change course and accelerate progress on SDG 6.

*Solutions - what the UN system can do:* In support of the Secretary-General's Decade of Action for Sustainable Development, UN-Water launched the *SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework* which identified five 'accelerators' to unify support from the international community to speed up the pace of progress on water and sanitation: *financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance*.<sup>70</sup> The SWS includes a dedicated output for each SDG 6 accelerator.

These accelerators reflect the building blocks of the means of implementation (MoI) for sustainable development,<sup>71</sup> which include the mobilization of both financial and non-financial resources necessary to create a favourable enabling environment for progress towards the achievement of water-related goals and targets and a comprehensive approach to the realization of rights.<sup>72</sup>

Accelerated progress on water and sanitation also underpins the six key SDG transitions identified by UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) to deliver interconnected investment pathways to accelerate SDG progress within and across countries.<sup>73</sup> The 'SDG 6 accelerators', are also closely aligned with the four 'engine room actions' through which UNCTs can propel SDG progress: policy and regulatory shifts, financing, and capacity building.<sup>74</sup>

This entry point responds to the call from Member States in Resolution 75/233 to the UNDS to "improve their support to strengthening the mobilization of the means of implementation of the SDGs in line with 2030 Agenda and Addis Ababa Action Agenda outcomes including through capacity building, integrated policy advice and programmatic support."<sup>75</sup>

#### **Output 4.1 Financing strategies, frameworks and plans for investing in water and sanitation across sectors are prepared and implemented with UN system support, with particular emphasis on the financing needs of developing countries.**

The UN system will work closely with governments, domestic and international finance institutions (IFIs), and other public and private financing partners, to close the financing gap for water and sanitation. The water and sanitation financing needs of developing countries will be prioritized, in accordance with Resolution 77/ 334.

<sup>68</sup> United Nations (2023). Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart 2023. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/progress-chart/>

<sup>69</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>; and UN-Water SDG 6 Data Portal available at: <https://www.sdg6data.org/en>

<sup>70</sup> UN-Water (2020). SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>

<sup>71</sup> UN SDG, Sustainable Development Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal17>.

United Nations (2015). Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. Available at [https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA\\_Outcome.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf).

<sup>72</sup> A/HRC/45/10, Available at: <https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=A/HRC/45/10&Lang=E>

<sup>73</sup> UN SDG (2023). Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs. Available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf>. Six key transitions include: include: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. Four engine rooms: (1) drive shifts across policy and regulatory frameworks, (2) pipelines of bankable and market-ready national projects (3) attract the needed financing from all sources, (4) enhanced national public sector capabilities to deliver and implement policy action.

<sup>75</sup> Resolution 75/233. Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, Available at: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/233>

Key areas where the UN system will support the acceleration of financing are convening partnerships, knowledge and data sharing, and supporting countries to strengthen the investment enabling environment, including preparation and implementation of financing strategies, frameworks and plans, and reform of legal and regulatory frameworks.<sup>76</sup>

Support from the UN system and its partners will help speed up project preparation time and support participatory, inclusive processes. RC/UNCTs can work with line ministries and parliaments to include the financing requirements for water and sanitation in national and sub-national budgets and financing frameworks, including *Integrated National Financing Frameworks*.<sup>77</sup> UN entities will increase collaboration on climate finance proposals for water and sanitation areas to help unlock new resources from climate funds, particularly for developing countries and fragile contexts impacted by climate crises.

This output will support the implementation of recommendations and decisions relevant for water and sanitation from the Financing for Sustainable Development<sup>78</sup> meetings and conferences, global financing initiatives, the Secretary-General's SDG Stimulus to Deliver Agenda 2030<sup>79</sup> and UNSDG's Six 'Transitions' engine room actions related to financing (e.g. 'pipelines' of bankable and market-ready national projects and 'deal rooms' to attract financing from all sources),<sup>80</sup> among others.

**Output 4.2. High-quality, disaggregated water and sanitation data and information are available and shared transparently through strengthened national and sub-national monitoring systems and regional and global platforms with support from the UN system.**

The UN system will champion the value of data and information for decision-making on policy, investment, planning, and management, as well as other benefits like harmonization of information, standardization, transparency, accountability and sharing lessons.

UN entities will support countries to strengthen national monitoring systems to collect, analyse and report water and sanitation-related data, with a particular focus on demographic data disaggregated by "income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, displacement and migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts" to leave no one behind.<sup>81</sup> A focus will also be placed on spatial disaggregation of data by basins (e.g. river, lake, aquifer, biotypes, and administrative units to further support analysis for policy and decision-making. Improved data interoperability across water and sanitation areas will provide countries and their respective UNCTs with comparable and comprehensive data, on which to derive indicators and monitor progress effectively. In addition to fostering high-quality data collection and dissemination, international standards play a crucial role in setting benchmarks and facilitating the gathering of valuable data and information for decision-making, planning, and management in the water and sanitation sector. By providing a common framework for data collection, these standards ensure consistency, accuracy, and reliability across different regions and stakeholders.

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<sup>76</sup> Consultation with World Bank Group on Fast Track Water Security and Climate Adaptation Global Challenge, 13 December 2023.

<sup>77</sup> *Integrated National Financing Frameworks*. Available at <https://inff.org>.

<sup>78</sup> United Nations. *Financing for Development*. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/financing-for-development/>.

<sup>79</sup> UN SG (2023). *United Nations Secretary-General's SDG Stimulus to Deliver Agenda 2030*. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/SDG-Stimulus-to-Deliver-Agenda-2030.pdf>.

<sup>80</sup> UN SDG (2023). *Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs*. Available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf>.

<sup>81</sup> United Nations (2015). *SDG 17.18*. By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

UN entities will assist policy and decision-makers at all levels to use data and information in a holistic manner to inform policies not only for water and sanitation, but also for water-dependant sectors. In addition, the UN system will support improved data availability and sharing for use by other sectors that rely on water and sanitation data, such as climate national adaptation plans, disaster risk reduction strategies and plans, sustainable food system strategies, and sustainable tourism, among others. Specialized agencies and other UN entities will provide scientific support to countries to improve understanding of surface and groundwater resources and ensure data and information, including forecasting and Earth observations on accessible platforms for use by Member States and stakeholders. UN entities will contribute to global water and sanitation information systems and science validation processes for their respective mandated areas.<sup>82</sup>

The UN-Water **Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (IMI-SDG6)**<sup>83</sup> coordinates global monitoring and reporting for water and sanitation. The main areas of work include coordinating 'data drives' to collect information from custodian agencies for SDG 6 indicators, supplying and advising on data components of global progress reports, providing capacity building support to countries, promoting data use at all levels, and hosting the SDG 6 Global Data Portal.<sup>84</sup> Support for data-sharing as part of transboundary water cooperation is also a key aspect of the UN system's support for the two United Nations Water Conventions.

The UN system will support capacity development programmes on data and information measurement, monitoring, analysis, and management and support for strengthening national monitoring systems as part of strategies, plans and work programmes. UN entities will promote inclusive approaches to knowledge generation, integration and collaboration, such as citizen science and will make efforts to bridge knowledge systems to include Indigenous and traditional knowledge<sup>85</sup>, women and girls, youth expertise,<sup>86</sup> and other relevant knowledge sources.

**Output 4.3 Institutional and human resources capacity development support that responds to national needs and priorities is provided by the UN system, contributing to a skilled water and sanitation workforce.**

UN entities will support capacity development programmes within organizational strategies, plans and programmes, including programmes and opportunities for young professionals and other under-represented groups to participate in national, regional and global capacity development activities. UN entities will develop new and updated capacity development programmes related to their respective mandated areas, including inter-disciplinary approaches for sustainable water and sanitation systems. UN entities will deliver these programmes through partnerships with academic and other expert partners, and will promote decent working conditions, in terms of professionalization, safety and remuneration, and safe, dignified, equal opportunity, and non-discriminatory employment opportunities in water and sanitation related fields. The water and sanitation

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<sup>82</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the 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 (Advance unedited version). Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)

<sup>83</sup> UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/integrated-monitoring-initiative-sdg-6>

<sup>84</sup> UN-Water SDG 6 Global Data Portal. Available at <https://www.sdg6data.org/en>

<sup>85</sup> United Nations (2015). System-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2015/11/System-wide-action-plan.pdf>

<sup>86</sup> United Nations (2023). Water for Health and Cooperation: Youth Priorities, Challenges, and Success Stories (SDG 6) - 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum, Thematic Breakout Session 1A. Available at <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1p819892h#:~:text=The%20objectives%20of%20the%20thematic,and%20intergenerational%20cooperation%20for%20water>



capacity development needs of developing countries should be prioritized, in accordance with Resolution 77/334.

The **UN-Water SDG 6 Capacity Development Initiative**<sup>87</sup> will continue to provide a coordinated entry point for countries requesting UN-Water's support. The initiative supports countries in undertaking a capacity gap assessment through inter-sectoral, inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder approaches and facilitates access to capacity development support from UN-Water Members and Partners, tailoring them as needed, and ensuring follow-up of capacity development activities. Within the UN system programmes and operations, UN entities will work together to increase opportunities and support for staff to increase knowledge and develop skills across water and sanitation domains to better facilitate inter-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approaches that consider technical, social, economic, environmental and political domains. Human resources strategies are needed to address gender gaps in the UN system water and sanitation workforce,<sup>88</sup> support mobility within and across entities, and attract and retain young water and sanitation professionals.<sup>89</sup>

**Output 4.4. Enabling environments for water and sanitation innovation are supported by the UN system, including policies, partnerships, and transfer of technology to remove barriers, with emphasis on technology transfer needs of developing countries.**

The UN system will use its convening power at all levels to help bridge the gap between innovators and those in need of innovative solutions and approaches. The UN system will support the development of the innovation-enabling environment to support the local contextualization and operationalization of innovations at scale through partnerships. UN entities at all levels, including RC/ UNCTs can use their convening power to bring together diverse stakeholders and form partnerships to harness innovation coming from the private sector. UN entities will help scale-up innovations through their programming to leverage the global reach of the UN system. For instance, UN entities will continue to scale-up partnerships to develop and use Earth observations to increase predictability of water and sanitation disaster events for early warning systems and support digital transformation, including the use of smart technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs) to advance solutions to current and future water and sanitation challenges.

UN entities and partners will facilitate North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation on science, technology and innovation to promote knowledge and technology transfer and upgrading,<sup>90</sup> and advocate for inclusive approaches to innovation that involve Indigenous Peoples, women, youth,<sup>91</sup> and other under-represented groups. International standards play a crucial role in enabling environments that facilitate the transfer of technology, particularly to developing countries. Support to developing countries to facilitate the transfer of technology should be prioritized, in accordance with Resolution 77/334.

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<sup>87</sup> SDG 6 Capacity Development Initiative. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-capacity-development-initiative>

<sup>88</sup> UN System-Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Available at: <https://unsceb.org/un-system-wide-action-plan-gender-equality-and-empowerment-women-swap>

<sup>89</sup> United Nations (2023). Water for Health and Cooperation: Youth Priorities, Challenges, and Success Stories (SDG 6) - 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum, Thematic Breakout Session 1A. Available at [https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1p819892h#:~:text=The%20objectives%20of%20the%20thematic,and%20intergenerational%20cooperation%20for%20water](https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1p819892h#:~:text=The%20objectives%20of%20the%20thematic,and%20intergenerational%20cooperation%20for%20water;); and United Nations (2018). Youth 2030: The UN Youth Strategy- Working with and for Young People. Available at [https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080\\_UN-Youth-Strategy\\_Web.pdf](https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf).

<sup>90</sup> UNCTD (2023). Ensuring Safe Water and Sanitation for All a Solution through Science, Technology, and Innovation. Available at [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2022d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2022d1_en.pdf).

<sup>91</sup> United Nations (2023). Water for Health and Cooperation: Youth Priorities, Challenges, and Success Stories (SDG 6) - 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum, Thematic Breakout Session 1A. Available at <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1p819892h#:~:text=The%20objectives%20of%20the%20thematic,and%20intergenerational%20cooperation%20for%20water>.

**Output 4.5 Governance of water and sanitation is improved through UN system support, including with emphasis on the needs of developing countries.**

The UN system will support governments based on national needs and priorities to build the capacity of institutions at national, regional and local levels with clear roles and responsibilities to deliver and implement policy action across water and sanitation-related and water and sanitation-dependant sectors.<sup>92</sup> UN entities working on water and sanitation within different mandates will support governments and regional bodies to establish dedicated mechanisms or platforms that facilitate systematic cross-sectoral dialogue, coordination and collaborations.<sup>93</sup> Cross-sectoral coordination can enhance consistency across interlinked decision-making processes and help manage trade-offs.<sup>94</sup>

The UN system will advise and offer support to governments on how to ensure water and sanitation policies, regulatory arrangements, strategies, and implementation models are inclusive and gender sensitive. RC/UNCTs can provide support to governments at national and sub-national levels to establish and operationalize policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management<sup>95</sup>.

Operational arrangements for transboundary basins are pivotal for managing water, protecting ecosystems and promoting peace.<sup>96</sup> To support progress on transboundary water cooperation at river basin, lake and aquifer level, the UN system will assist Member States expressing interest in acceding to, implementing and complying with the *United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses* and the *1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes*, serviced by UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Upon request from Member States, Regional Commissions and regional offices can support regional, sub-regional and transboundary river basin, lake, and aquifer-level coordination, as well as supporting them to develop agreements, set-up and strengthen river, lake and aquifer-based organizations and facilitate operational arrangements for cooperation. When interest is expressed by the government, RC/UNCTs can include support for transboundary water cooperation in their UNSDCFs.

**Entry Point 5. Account through joint review and learning**

**Outcome 5. Strengthened accountability for progress through joint review and learning.**

24. *Issue:* Member States have called for a UNDS that is more strategic, accountable, transparent, coherent, collaborative, efficient, effective, and results oriented.<sup>97</sup>

Additionally, the UN system supports follow-up and review processes for many intergovernmental agreements, frameworks and voluntary commitment platforms globally, regionally and at country level, as well as country-level processes related to national plans and policies.

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<sup>92</sup> UN SDG (2023). Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs. Available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf>; and UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>

<sup>93</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Progress on Integrated Water Resources Management: Global Indicator 6.5.1 Updates and Acceleration Needs. Nairobi. Available at [https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/app/uploads/2021/09/SDG6\\_Indicator\\_Report\\_651\\_Progress-on-Integrated-Water-Resources-Management\\_2021\\_EN.pdf](https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/app/uploads/2021/09/SDG6_Indicator_Report_651_Progress-on-Integrated-Water-Resources-Management_2021_EN.pdf) SDG indicator 6.b.1

<sup>96</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>.

<sup>97</sup> See A/RES 75/233.

Solutions - what the UN system can do: The UN system will take a dual approach. First, internally, the UN system will increase accountability and transparency of its work on water and sanitation through joint UN system reviews and learning at technical and leadership levels. Second, progress on water and sanitation goals and targets can be reviewed through joint learning and exchange among all actors, with support from the UN system.

**Output 5.1. Progress on the implementation of the SWS is reviewed jointly by the UN system at technical and leadership levels.**

UN-Water biannual meetings will be the technical level platform to review progress on the implementation of the strategy, based on the agreed CIP. The outcomes of these reviews will be reported in the UN-Water Annual Report and annual UN-Water progress report to the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP). The annual **UN executive level meeting of UN-Water on water and sanitation** will be the leadership platform for UN system-wide joint review. Additionally, UN entities will review progress on their water and sanitation-related activities through their respective governing bodies and with partners. RC/UNCTs will follow the joint review and learning processes established for the UNSDCF together with the respective governments and partners, and report through existing UNDS mechanisms. More detail on the modalities and operational arrangements for joint review, monitoring, reporting modalities for the SWS are included below in Section IV.

**Output 5.2. Progress on water-related goals and targets are reviewed through joint learning and exchange among all actors with support from the UN system.**

The UN system is uniquely positioned to provide support to Member States and partners to review progress on internationally agreed water-related goals and targets globally through existing Member State-led platforms such as the United Nations HLPF Special Event, HLPF in-depth reviews of SDG 6, as well as at national and sub-national levels through Voluntary National Reviews (VNR), Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR), and other stock-take exercises. At the HLPF annual SDG 6 and Water Action Agenda Special Event, UN-Water and UN DESA, as secretariat of the HLPF, will continue to support the preparation of documentation such as the monitoring and analysis of progress, facilitate self-reporting on commitments, document success stories and lessons learned, and support the registration of new commitments.<sup>98</sup> This annual HLPF Special Event will be a key moment to follow up and review progress on SDG 6 and the Water Action Agenda commitments jointly between the UN system, Member States and stakeholders.

This outcome area contributes to the implementation of the *Secretary General's Action Plan for the Water Action Decade*, particularly workstream 1 on "facilitating access to knowledge and the exchange of good practices."<sup>99</sup> The UN system can support dialogue and exchange between countries to enhance international cooperation contributing to the means of implementation for water and sanitation.<sup>100</sup>

## **IV. Implementation, coordination, monitoring and accountability**

25. Implementation of the strategy will be supported through the development of a CIP. The CIP will be developed by UN-Water, under the leadership of its Chair, after the approval of the strategy by the HLCP. The responsibility for implementing, coordination and monitoring the UN system-wide strategy rests with different parts of the UN system.

<sup>98</sup> Water Action Agenda: Concept note outlining its operations. Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Water\\_Action\\_Agenda\\_operations\\_concept\\_note.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Water_Action_Agenda_operations_concept_note.pdf).

<sup>99</sup> United Nations Secretary-General's plan: Water Action Decade 2018-2028. Available at [https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan\\_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf](https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> UN SDG, Sustainable Development, Goal 6, Target 6.a. Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal6#targets\\_and\\_indicators](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal6#targets_and_indicators)

## A. Implementation mechanisms

26. Supporting actions will be undertaken by UN entities individually and together, building on existing mandates and strategies through various implementation mechanisms. Annex 1 provides a summary table of illustrative supporting actions that can be taken up by different levels of the system, based on needs and priorities.

- **UN entity own strategies and workplans.** UN entities working on water and sanitation through their mandated areas are encouraged to incorporate the UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation and the CIP into their respective frameworks, strategies and work programmes, maximizing its implementation, in line with their established mandates, procedures and processes. Where feasible, individual UN entities may consider issuing at the global level some standard guidelines or examples for incorporating the strategy into their regional/national frameworks, strategies and work programmes.
- **UN country programmes.** Based on national priorities and needs, RC/UNCTs are encouraged to use the SWS and its collaborative implementation plan to develop and guide UN joint country programming, starting at the CCA stage and throughout the development and implementation of the UNSDCF. The SWS can also inform water and sanitation elements in other UN inter-agency assistance planning and support mechanisms at country level including for humanitarian, human rights, and mediation support depending on the local context and needs.
- **Regional Action Plans.** Regional Commissions are encouraged to mainstream the SWS into the work of their regional platforms, subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental meetings as deemed appropriate and feasible. UN Regional Coordination Mechanisms can support the implementation and mainstreaming of the SWS at the regional and country levels, including through the work of United Nations Regional Collaborative Platforms, Issue-based Coalitions, and Regional Sustainable Development Forums.
- **Joint initiatives, inter-agency partnerships and joint programmes.** The strategy will catalyse and enable collaboration among United Nations system entities to develop joint initiatives, joint programming, joint programmes and reinforce existing inter-agency collaboration and partnerships.
- **Inter-agency mechanisms.** UN-Water will mobilize the UN system through inter-agency coordination to develop and implement the CIP, support inter-agency initiatives and activities, and facilitate on-demand support for regions and countries drawing on the vast expertise and capacities of UN-Water Members and Partners.
- **Partnerships.** Diverse and multi-stakeholder partnerships will be essential to the implementation and success of the strategy. **UN-Water Partners** bring unique contributions to UN-Water's activities, both in terms of diversifying the expertise of the network, and by enabling increased outreach across levels. Continuously optimizing Partners' engagements by increasing the opportunities for constructive contributions will remain a focus, to enable Partners' networks to have a multiplier effect for UN-Water. Partners' extensive, diverse networks and their expertise are key to the scaling of UN-Water's impact to regional and country levels through their support for the implementation of the SWS.
- **Voluntary Commitments.** UN entities can support the implementation of voluntary commitments made by Member States, multi-stakeholder partners and UN entities to support SDG acceleration, including those registered in the Water Action Agenda<sup>101</sup> and SDG Action Platform.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Water Action Agenda. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023/action-agenda>

## B. Coordination and operational arrangements

27. The following coordination and operational arrangements will ensure the timely and effective implementation of the strategy:

- The UN-Water Chair is designated by the Secretary-General to provide high-level **leadership**, guidance and coordination support for the implementation of the Strategy, including development of the CIP.
- The UN-Water Chair will convene, at least once a year, a **UN executive level meeting of UN-Water on water and sanitation**. The senior leadership will: 1) oversee strategic and policy aspects on the operationalization of the system-wide strategy; 2) review progress, agree on priorities and address gaps and issues related to the implementation of the Strategy; and 3) ensure linkages and coherence with processes related to water and sanitation goals and targets, intergovernmental meetings and Conferences and UNDS policy and processes. A report will be produced from this meeting and circulated to all UN entities.
- The **HLCP** is invited to consider and approve the SWS, towards its finalization and onward transmission to CEB for endorsement.
- **UN-Water** will coordinate the technical level implementation of the Strategy. **UN-Water Expert Groups, Task Forces and initiatives**<sup>103</sup> will provide technical guidance and support to operationalize and implement the Strategy.
- **UN-Water Management Team**<sup>104</sup> will support the high-level leadership for the strategy, inter-agency coordination, and will be the technical-level interface for engagement with UN entities that are not UN-Water Members as well as other inter-agency coordination mechanisms including UN-Oceans, UN-Energy, and others as appropriate. Coordination with the Environmental Management Group can help take forward the strategy through linkages to UN system-wide strategies related to the environment, pollution and other areas of intersection with water and sanitation issues, such as the Common Approach to Biodiversity.
- **UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams** will support country-level inter-agency coordination, joint implementation and monitoring of SWS-related activities with governments, partners, and stakeholders according to the context-specific priorities and needs.
- Regional coordination will build on existing Regional Coordination Mechanisms, Regional Collaborative Platforms and issue-based coalitions convened by **UN Regional Economic Commissions** together with regional offices of UN entities and partners.
- The **Development Coordination Office**, in collaboration with United Nations regional offices, can help support implementation of the SWS at the regional and United Nations country team levels through UNSDCF and CCA guidance and accompanying documents and monitoring frameworks. UN-Water and DCO can develop user-friendly resources, for example, sharing UNCT case studies of good practice that can be adapted and replicated.
- In contexts with humanitarian emergencies, including complex emergencies, and in conflict and post-conflict situations, complementarity and coherence of UN system's support for water and sanitation will be coordinated with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Inter-Agency Standing

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<sup>102</sup> SDG Actions Platform. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships>

<sup>103</sup> UN-Water Expert Groups and Task Forces. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/about-un-water/governance/expert-groups-and-task-forces>

<sup>104</sup> The UN-Water Management Team consists of the UN-Water Vice Chair (rotating Senior Programme Manager), Secretary (DESA), and UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit (TAU).

Committee (IASC) Clusters and sectors, including the Global WASH Cluster, and UN integrated missions, depending on the context.

- **Communication and knowledge management** will be enhanced to raise awareness and support operationalization of the strategy and included as part of the CIP.
  - UN-Water will communicate about the launch of the SWS and support outreach to ensure its operationalization at global, regional and country level. UN-Water will coordinate and support production and dissemination joint knowledge products, advocacy, messages and communications about the SWS through its existing communications network. These plans and activities will be coordinated with the UN Communications Group and reinforce and contribute to the achievement of the *Secretary-General's Plan for the Water Action Decade*.<sup>105</sup>
  - A knowledge management plan will be developed and coordinated by UN-Water to document learning and good practices of UN system-wide collaboration on water and sanitation.
  - The UN-Water website<sup>106</sup> will be updated regularly to support dissemination and act as the main entry point to the UN system's work on water related issues and as a repository of UN-Water publications, policy and analytical briefs, SDG 6 global progress reports, SDG 6 Global Data Portal, flagship reports by UN-Water Members and Partners, highlight country acceleration case studies and other success stories, and latest news about UN system water and sanitation-related activity.
  - Communications plans will be developed to engage with other sectors that interlink with water and sanitation domains to raise awareness and highlight the cross-sectoral approach of the SWS. The websites for the water and sanitation-related United Nations international observances, World Water Day and World Toilet Day, will be developed jointly by the UN-Water Task Forces and the UN Department of Global Communications and updated every year with new content developed by UN-Water.
- **Resourcing the strategy.** The strategy aims to optimize the efficient use of financial and other resources across the UN system by aligning current resources and mobilizing additional joint financing. Resources are needed for UN entities to bolster coordination and implementation capacity at all levels to fully operationalize the strategy. Funding and capacity requirements and gaps will be assessed during the review processes at technical and leadership levels. Opportunities will be explored to allocate resources for joint water and sanitation programmes through thematic and inter-agency pooled funds, including the Joint SDG Fund,<sup>107</sup> peacebuilding fund, and others.

### C. Monitoring, review, and accountability measures

28. The ownership of the SWS is equally shared by all members of the UN system at the global, regional and country levels. The SWS and its accompanying CIP will serve as the basis for joint progress review, monitoring and accountability.

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<sup>105</sup> United Nations Secretary-General's plan: Water Action Decade 2018-2028. Available at [https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan\\_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf](https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> UN-Water website. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/>

<sup>107</sup> Joint SDG Fund website. Available at <https://jointsdgfund.org/>



## *United Nations System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation*

- Within the UN system, progress will be reviewed at the technical level through the UN-Water inter-agency coordination mechanism during its biannual meetings. Progress will be reviewed annually at the leadership level during the annual **UN executive level meeting of UN-Water on water and sanitation**.
- In-depth UN system-wide ‘stock-take’ exercises will be undertaken periodically to review progress and update the strategy to be aligned with the latest global UN system policies and international frameworks. The strategy will be reviewed and updated based on the post-2030 global sustainable development agenda.
- The UN system will have the opportunity to jointly review progress and learning with Member States and relevant stakeholders during the HLPF SDG 6 and Water Action Agenda Special Event, forthcoming United Nations water conferences, as outlined in Resolution 77/334, and future in-depth reviews of SDG 6 at the HLPF.
- The reporting will build on existing UN system monitoring mechanisms including UN entities’ own results-based management systems, UN country team reporting (UN INFO), the UNSDG Output Indicator Framework,<sup>108</sup> among others.
- UN-Water will provide summaries of main achievements, highlights and challenges in its Annual Report and include an update on progress in the implementation of the strategy in the annual UN-Water progress report to the HLCF. The report of the annual UN system executive level leadership meeting of UN-Water on water and sanitation will be circulated by the UN-Water Chair to all UN entities.
- Monitoring and reporting analysis from the SWS can also inform recommendations and actions to improve UN entity cohesion and effectiveness in delivering more integrated policy advice and support to countries on water and sanitation development priorities. This information could also inform the Secretary-General’s reporting on implementation of the General Assembly’s QCPR of operational activities for development. Reporting on results and impacts from the SWS presents an opportunity for the United Nations to showcase increased operational effectiveness and system-wide delivery of water and sanitation support through a collaborative plan for operational implementation with a country-level focus.
- Resolution 77/334 invites the Secretary-General to submit a report taking into account actions, initiatives, best practices and lessons learned, as well as obstacles and constraints encountered, to assess progress on the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its eighty-first session, which can include an update on progress and main achievements from the SWS.

## **ANNEX**

Annex 1. Approach to the collaborative implementation plan (CIP)

Annex 2. Context of the UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation

Annex 3. Strategy development process

Annex 4. Annex 4 consists of two-online resources:

- 1- The report, ***UN-Water inventory. An overview of the UN-Water family’s work on water and sanitation***, available on-line at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-inventory-overview-un-water-family%E2%80%99s-work-water-and-sanitation>

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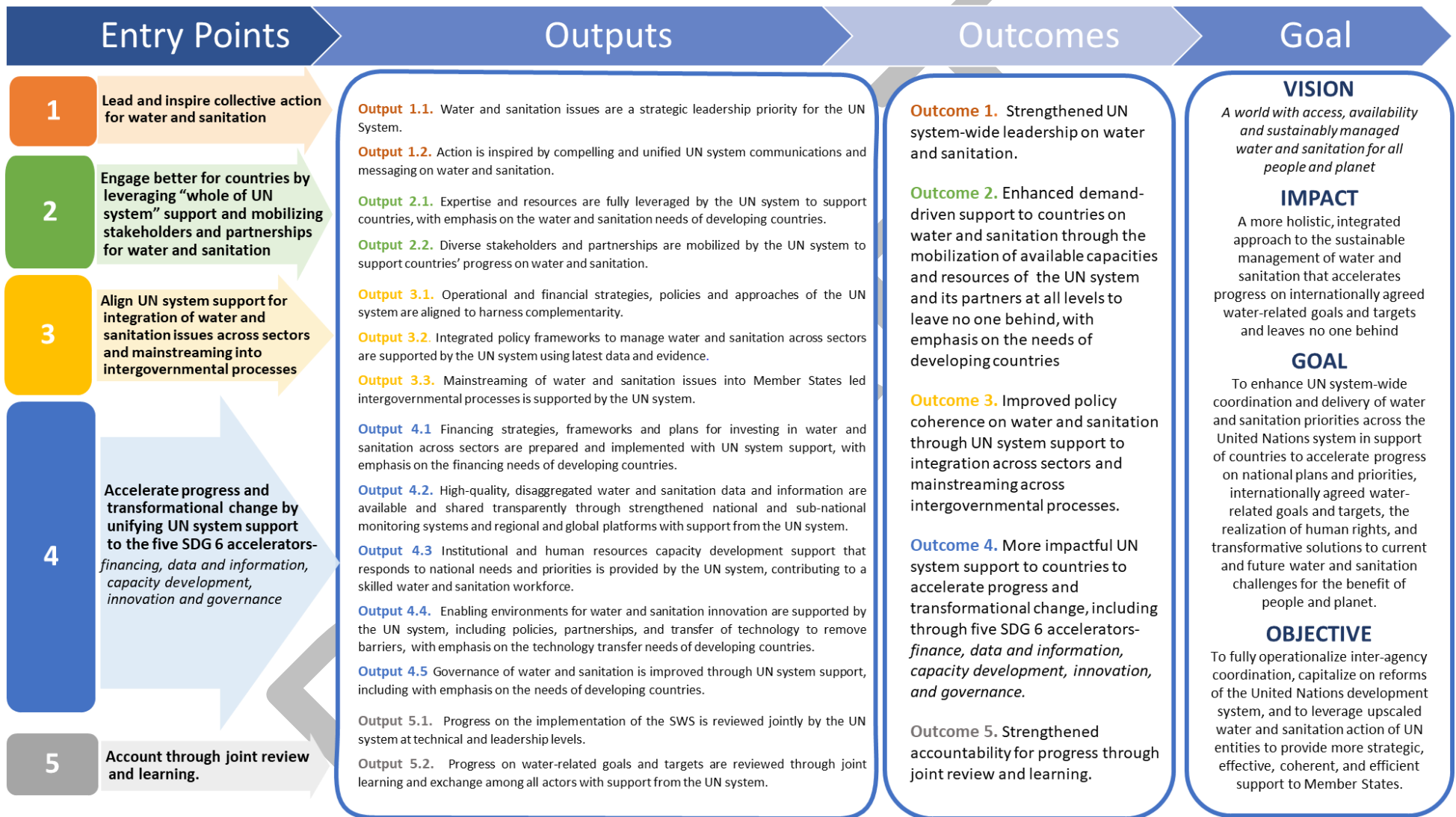
<sup>108</sup> UNSDG, Measuring the UN Contribution towards SDG achievement: Summary deck of the Output Indicator Framework, February 2023.

- 2- The UN-Water '**Member and Partner Activities**' database, available on-line:  
<https://www.unwater.org/our-work/member-and-partner-activities>

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Figure 1. Summary of the Results Chain for the UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation



## Annex 1- Approach to the Collaborative Implementation Plan

### A. Terms of Reference

- Context.** United Nations General Assembly Resolution 77/334 requests the United Nations Secretary-General to present a UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation in consultation with Member States before the end of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General delegated the development of the strategy to UN-Water under the leadership of the UN-Water Chair. The implementation of the strategy is guided by an action plan - the *Collaborative Implementation Plan* (CIP).
- Purpose and objectives.** The CIP will be an action-oriented, periodically reviewed and evolving part of the UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation (SWS). Its aim is to support UN system-wide action and prioritization for water and sanitation, including common areas of work, joint programming and programmes, and agreed progress indicators for the implementation of the SWS. The CIP will support the implementation of the strategy in the following ways:
  - identify time-bound actions towards the achievement of SWS outputs and outcomes;
  - show the respective contributions by UN entities and partners and collectively by the UN system to facilitate synergies, address gaps, and avoid duplication of efforts;
  - provide a basis for the alignment of water and sanitation components of UN entity respective strategic plans, work programmes and results and resources frameworks; and,
  - serve as a common agreed framework to jointly review and monitor progress on the SWS.
- Structure and Format.** The CIP will follow the SWS results chain structure. It will be organized in sections based on the five “*entry points for UN system collaborative action on water and sanitation*”.<sup>109</sup> Each section will include the expected outcome, outputs, UN system-wide and entities’ supporting actions and activities, as well as progress indicators and targets at outcomes and output-level and their means of verification for the respective area.
- Roles and Responsibilities.** The development of the CIP is delegated to the UN-Water inter-agency coordination mechanism under the leadership of the UN-Water Chair.
- Timeframe.** The CIP cycle will ideally align with the cycle of the *Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system* (QCPR) to facilitate the incorporation of orientations and decisions from Member States into the plan. As such the first CIP cycle is proposed to cover 5 years from mid-2024 to mid-2029). This period will additionally provide an opportunity for the consideration of any key messages, recommendations and decisions resulting from the UN water conference in 2028 mandated by Resolution 77/334. After the first CIP cycle, the next CIP timeframe will help orient the development framework for water and sanitation post-2030.

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<sup>109</sup> The five “entry points for UN system collaborative action : (1) lead and inspire collective action for water and sanitation; (2) engage better for countries by leveraging “whole of UN system” support and mobilizing stakeholders and partnerships; (3) align UN system support to integrate water-related issues across sectors and mainstream into intergovernmental processes; (4) accelerate progress and transformational change through unified UN system support to the five SDG 6 global accelerators- financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation and governance; and (5) account through joint review and learning.

6. **Process.** The development of the CIP (A) and progress review (B) will take places as follows:

- **CIP development process:** After the approval of the SWS by the HLCP, the first CIP will be prepared by UN-Water under the leadership of the UN-Water Chair.
  - The draft CIP will be developed as an agenda item during the 39th UN-Water meeting. The UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit will coordinate with UN system actors, including DCO and the RC system, that are not participating in the UN-Water Meeting to provide their timely contribution to the CIP for their respective areas.
  - The draft CIP will be endorsed during the **UN executive level meeting of UN-Water on water and sanitation**, convened under the leadership of the UN-Water Chair.
  - Following endorsement, UN entities will incorporate the CIP activities into their respective work plans and inter-agency elements into the UN-Water biennial work programme.
  - Contributions by UN entities to the CIP can be further supported, endorsed, and resourced through their respective governing bodies (e.g. Executive Boards, etc.) and corporate planning processes.
- **CIP progress review and reporting.** The CIP is intended to be an agile “living document” that can be reviewed, amended and updated regularly to adapt to changing needs and new opportunities.
  - **Technical level.** Within the UN system, progress will be reviewed at the technical level through the UN-Water inter-agency mechanism during the UN-Water biannual meetings. The outcomes of these reviews will be reported in the UN-Water annual report and UN-Water’s annual report to the UN High-Level Committee on Programmes. Maximum efforts will be made to keep reporting light touch and use existing monitoring and reporting systems.
  - **Leadership level.** Progress will be reviewed annually at the leadership level during the annual UN executive level meeting. The report of this meeting will be circulated by the UN-Water Chair to UN entities.
  - **International community.** The UN system will have the opportunity to jointly review progress and learning with Member States and relevant stakeholders during the High-Level Political Forum SDG 6 & Water Action Agenda Special Event, forthcoming United Nations Conferences on Water, as outlined in A/RES/77/334, and in-depth reviews of SDG 6 at the HLPF.

## **B. Summary of illustrative supporting actions**

To support the operationalization and implementation of the SWS at all levels, a limited number of **illustrative supporting actions** have been identified for each output that provide examples of areas where the UN system can use its comparative advantage to support countries and help unify support from the international community to enhance the impact of local and international cooperation. These actions are indicative and are not meant to be prescriptive, nor exhaustive, but are offered as suggestions that can be adapted based on context, needs, and mandates.

## Entry Point 1: Lead & inspire collective action for water and sanitation across the UN system

*Expected Outcome: Strengthened UN system collective leadership on water and sanitation.*

### Output 1.1. Water-related issues are a strategic leadership priority for the UN System.

- **Country-level:** RC/UNCTs can facilitate joint, strategic UN system-wide leadership on water-related issues in countries. In response to national needs and priorities, RC/UNCTs can advocate with governments for greater prioritization of water and sanitation in national development plans and budgets.
- **Regional Level:** Executive Secretaries of Regional Commissions and Executive Heads of other UN regional offices (e.g. Regional Directors) can support integration of water-related issues into Regional Sustainable Development For a, Commission Sessions, and Regional Collaborative Platforms. They can support contextualization and localization of the global water dialogue to address regional and local water-related issues and use their coordination and convening role to promote water cooperation as an opportunity for regional integration.
- **Globally:** The Executive Heads of UN entities can provide global leadership for their respective mandated areas on linkages between water with major global topics ranging from climate change, biodiversity, desertification and pollution to sustainable cities, finance for development and food systems to health, renewable energy, resilience and humanitarian response among all others. All entities are mandated to do this with due consideration for human rights,<sup>110</sup> gender equality and disability inclusion.

### Output 1.2. Action is inspired by compelling and unified UN system communications and messaging on water and sanitation.

- **Country-level:** RC/UNCTs/ UN Information Centres can amplify and adapt water-related communications materials and campaigns to engage and mobilize key stakeholders and the public to share knowledge, demand ambition and find solutions.
- **Global and Regional levels:** UN entities, individually and collectively through the UN-Water inter-agency mechanism, will play an active role in raising visibility of through communications and advocating for the prioritization of water and sanitation issues, particularly where these can serve to strengthen interlinkages between water and sanitation with major global topics and build bridges between the various components of the global and regional policy landscape (Annex 2).
- **Inter-agency, including partners:** Through the extensive networks of its Members (UN entities) and Partners, UN-Water will coordinate and disseminate unified, clear and coherent United Nations messaging on water and sanitation issues to Member States.
- Communications plans will be made for major international conferences and other events, with emphasis on opportunities in other sectors that use and impact water and sanitation to raise greater awareness on the important interlinkages with sustainable management of water and sanitation. Targeted communication efforts can be organized around major high-level UN Conferences and events in close collaboration with the main affiliated UN entity to highlight attention on water and sanitation aspects of the issue.
- The UN-Water Task Forces on World Water Day and World Toilet Day will continue to coordinate the United Nations international observances.

<sup>110</sup> United Nations (2020). The Highest Aspiration: A Call to Action for Human Rights. See <https://www.un.org/en/content/action-for-human-rights/index.shtml>

## Entry Point 2: Engage better for countries by leveraging “whole of the UN system” support & mobilizing stakeholders and partners to leave no one behind

*Expected Outcome: Enhanced demand-driven support to countries through the mobilization of available capacities and resources of the UN system and its partners at all levels, with emphasis on the water-related needs of developing countries and to leave no one behind.*

**Output 2.1.** Expertise and resources are fully leveraged by the UN system to support countries, with a particular focus on the water-related needs of developing countries.

- **Country-level:** RC/UNCTs can actively seek and utilize expertise and data available from UN resident and non-resident entities, regional commissions, and UN-water task force on country engagement to inform country programme planning processes including CCAs and UNSDCFs, and other UN plans. In contexts with specific water-related risks, RCs can involve specific, non-resident expertise to contribute risk analyses.
- Throughout programming cycles, when new needs or requests for support are received that cannot be responded to within the capacity of the UNCT resident and non-resident entities, RC/UNCTs can solicit on-demand support from UN-Water task force on country engagement.
- **Inter-agency, including partners:** UN-Water Members and Partners can respond to requests from RC/UNCTs for data, policy, and technical advice for the Common Country Analysis, Cooperation Framework design and water-related Results Groups or sub-groups. The mechanism will ensure that RC/UNCTs and other country and regional level UN mechanisms and structures can readily draw on the full expertise of the UN-system and its partners- resident and non-resident when needed.\_.

**Output 2.2.** Diverse stakeholders and partnerships are mobilized by the UN system to support countries.

- **Country-level:** RC/UNCTs can work with partners and inclusive, diverse multistakeholder groups to support the implementation of the UNSDCF, voluntary commitments (e.g. Water Action Agenda), and decisions from UN inter-governmental processes and mechanisms. Relevant stakeholders can include local communities, private sector, scientific and academic institutions, civil society, and underrepresented groups women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and people in vulnerable situations, among others based on the local context. .
- RC/UNCTs can support national and local governments to establish and operationalize policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management (SDG Target 6b)
- **Partners: UN-Water Partners** are an integral part of UN-Water and bring unique contributions to UN-Water’s activities, both in terms of diversifying the expertise of the network, and by enabling increased outreach across levels through their diverse multi-stakeholder networks. Continuously optimizing Partners’ engagements by increasing the opportunities for constructive contributions will remain a focus, to enable Partners’ networks to have a multiplier effect for UN-Water initiatives. Partners and their expertise are key to the scaling of UN-Water’s impact to regional and country levels.<sup>111</sup>
- UN entities can support solidarity-based partnerships and water operators’ partnerships.
- Other UN system partnership mechanisms can also be engaged to ensure coherence and complementarity, for example in humanitarian settings through the Inter-agency Standing Committee Clusters (e.g. WASH Cluster, among others).

## Entry Point 3. Align UN system support for integration across sectors and mainstreaming into intergovernmental processes

*Expected Outcome 3. Improved policy coherence on water and sanitation through UN system support to*

<sup>111</sup> UN-Water (2020). UN-Water 2030 Strategy. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-2030-strategy>

integration across sectors and mainstreaming across inter-governmental processes.

**Output 3.1. Operational and financial strategies, policies and approaches of the UN system for water and sanitation are aligned to harness complementarity.**

- Country-level: RC/UNCT can implement water-related priorities from the UNSDCF through **joint programming**, including implementation through joint work plans. Joint programming as part of UNDSFCF preparation can lead to joint programmes that require closer joint work and have specific requirements.<sup>112</sup> **Joint programmes** can be an instrument to mobilise inter-agency and cross-sectoral expertise and policy support and financial resources through inter-agency pooled fund mechanisms.
- Throughout programming cycles, RC/UNCTs can promote **country-level inter-agency coordination** for water-related programming across the UNSDCF. While coordination around WASH often exists in UNCTs, there are needs and opportunities to strengthen coordination across the water cycle and break silos between sectors. RC/UNCTs can consider establishing a thematic results group or a sub-group on water-related issues to coordinate programming on “water-related issues” across the water cycle, including sanitation, or respond on an ad hoc basis to provide joint support in response to requests from government.<sup>113</sup>
- Inter-agency, including partners: UN-Water can coordinate with other inter-agency mechanisms including UN-Oceans, UN-Energy, Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE), Environmental Management Group, among others across the UN system<sup>114</sup> to ensure that approaches to water-related issues are coordinated, coherent and complementary across the UN system’s work.
- Within UN system programming and operations: Water and sanitation-related programmes and operations with “Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management”<sup>115</sup> initiative and *System-wide Environmental and Social Safeguards*<sup>116</sup> standards. UN entities can share good practices from across the UN system, together with implementing partners and suppliers, on managing the water and waste footprint of UN operations.
- UN entities can incorporate water-related risk considerations in strategies and programmes, as called for in the UN system-wide Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.<sup>117</sup>

**Output 3.2. Integrated water-related policy frameworks to manage water and across sectors are supported by the UN system.**

<sup>112</sup> Frequently Asked Questions UNSDG Joint Programme Guidance, Guidance Note on a New Generation of Joint Programmes October 2022

<sup>113</sup> UN-Water (2022). UN-Water Country Level Engagement – Insights from 2020-2021 pilot phase and proposed way forward. Available at [https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/Lessons-learned-and-way-forward\\_UN-Water-Country-Level-Engagement-Pilot\\_v4Apr2022.pdf](https://www.unwater.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/Lessons-learned-and-way-forward_UN-Water-Country-Level-Engagement-Pilot_v4Apr2022.pdf).

<sup>114</sup> Other UN system inter-agency coordination mechanisms that might be relevant include the UN OCHA/ IASC Cluster Coordination in settings with a UN-supported humanitarian response and the UN Climate Security Mechanism (See [https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-10/climate\\_security\\_mechanism\\_brochure\\_may\\_2023.pdf](https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-10/climate_security_mechanism_brochure_may_2023.pdf)).

Example approach presented by the Global WASH Cluster at the UN 2023 Water Conference side event-

[https://www.washcluster.net/sites/gwc.com/files/inline-files/UN%20Water%2023%20-%20Global%20Advocacy%20Brief4\\_1.pdf](https://www.washcluster.net/sites/gwc.com/files/inline-files/UN%20Water%2023%20-%20Global%20Advocacy%20Brief4_1.pdf)

<sup>115</sup> Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030, Phase I: Environmental Sustainability in the Area of Management. See <https://www.unsystem.org/content/addendum-strategy-sustainability-management-united-nations-system-2020-2030>

<sup>116</sup> UNEP (2020). System-wide Environmental and Social Safeguards. Available at

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/32022/ESSFEN.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>117</sup> UN CEB (2016). UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development. Available at <https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/UN%20PoA%20on%20Disaster%20Risk%20Reduction%20for%20Resilience-ODS.pdf>.



- **Country-level:** RC/ UNCTs can use their convening power to promote cross-sectoral processes across line ministries to address interconnected water-related issues in strategies, policies, plans, budgets, and financing plans for new investments in water-related and water dependent projects. Support countries to develop and adopt national mechanisms for cross-sectoral coordination and mutually agreed policies, including with the inclusive participation of diverse partners and stakeholders.<sup>118</sup>
- **Regional level:** Regional economic commissions and regional offices can promote integrated cross-sectoral approaches during the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development and other regional high-level meetings, dialogues and events and address the transboundary dimensions as an opportunity to strengthen regional integration, including with the inclusive participation of diverse partners and stakeholders.<sup>119</sup>
- **Inter-agency, including with partners:** UN-Water inter-agency coordination mechanism can develop policy briefs to share lessons and good practices on integrated, transformative policy approaches and case studies of good practices and lessons learned to continue to the evidence base for integrated policy development.

### **Output 3.3. Mainstreaming of water-related issues into Member States led inter-governmental processes is supported by the UN system.**

- **Country-level:** RC/UNCT can support Members States to engage in global and regional intergovernmental processes by providing countries with technical support, data and information to prepare commitments and engage in preparatory processes and aligning UN country programming and resources to support implementation of relevant decisions and national commitments.
- RC/UNCT can support follow-up on the achievement of national goals and targets for example those from country level climate related frameworks e.g., Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation plans (NAPs), biodiversity frameworks e.g., National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and voluntary commitments e.g. Water Action Agenda, among others. RC/UNCTs can support countries to adopt measures to realize the human rights to water and sanitation (HRWS), a clean and healthy environment and other related human rights.
- **Regional level:** Regional commissions and regional offices can help amplify the dissemination of information, support regional consultations and preparatory processes, and develop region-specific advocacy and policy advice.
- **Inter-agency, including with partners:** The UN system can provide mapping of water-related issues in different global and regional inter-governmental processes and undertake analysis of water-related elements in official texts and decisions. UN-Water inter-agency mechanism with the UN entities affiliated with these processes (UN-Water Members) can provide policy advice, technical and operational support.
- The UN system can help facilitate informal dialogue on water and sanitation policy issues, for example as official and unofficial side events, that span across existing inter-governmental processes, for example the three “Rio Conventions” (UNFCCC, CBD, and UNCCD), to help promote understanding of interlinkages and improve policy coherence on water-related goals and targets.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>118</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the 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 (Advance unedited version). Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)

<sup>119</sup> UN-Water (2023). Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023. Available at: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/sdg-6-synthesis-report-2023>

<sup>120</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the 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 (Advance unedited version). Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)

**Entry Point 4. Accelerate progress and transformational change by unifying UN system support to five accelerators - *financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation, and governance.***

*Expected outcome 4. More impactful UN system support to countries to accelerate progress and transformational change, including through five SDG 6 key accelerators.*

**Output 4.1 Financing strategies, frameworks and plans for investing in water and sanitation across sectors are prepared and implemented with UN system support, with particular emphasis on the water-related financing needs of developing countries.**

**The blueprint for finance.** A widespread absence of enabling environments for efficient investment and spending, and a lack of well-prepared bankable projects and sustainable financing models make the water sector unattractive for investment. New investments must be attracted by better enabling environments, and existing finances must be used more efficiently and effectively. The global development finance architecture needs to be reformed to provide more funding to governments.

- Excerpt from UN-Water, *The Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report for water and sanitation 2023- Executive Summary*

- **Country level:** RC/ UNCTs can support countries to prepare costed and inclusive financing strategy for water and sanitation, in accordance with international human rights standards. They can work with line ministries and parliaments to include the financing requirements for water and sanitation in national budgets and financing frameworks, including Integrated National Financing Frameworks.<sup>121</sup>
- RC/UNCTs can help strengthen the national enabling environment for financing, including policies and legal and regulatory frameworks, to make investment in water and sanitation more attractive. They can provide technical support to develop a pipeline of bankable projects and ensure implementation capacity to manage the project and sustain post-project operations.
- RC/UNCTs can use their convening power to help connect the demand for finance with the supply of finance.<sup>122</sup> This can be done in close collaboration with global and regional funds, IFIs, philanthropic foundations, and other sources of public and private capital.
- **Regional level:** Regional commissions and regional offices can support countries to exchange experiences on financing. They can use their convening power to help support financing proposals and mechanisms for regional and sub-regional/ basin-level transboundary programmes and projects.
- UN entities can collaborate with countries and partners to develop innovative financing mechanisms<sup>123</sup> and investment strategies that promote integrated solutions, include those that are water-smart, circular, resilient, inclusive, and nature-based.<sup>124</sup>
- **Inter-agency, including with partners:** UN-Water Members and Partners support multi-stakeholder platforms that address water financing issues.
- UN entities can increase collaboration on climate finance proposals for water-related areas can help unlock new

<sup>121</sup> Integrated National Financing Frameworks. Available at <https://inff.org>.

<sup>122</sup> UN SDG (2023). Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs. Available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf>.

<sup>123</sup> UNCTD (2023). Ensuring Safe Water and Sanitation for All a Solution through Science, Technology and Innovation. Available at [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2022d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2022d1_en.pdf).

<sup>124</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the 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 (Advance unedited version).

Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)

[10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)



resources from climate funds, particularly for developing countries and fragile contexts. UN entities can collaborate to provide data, scientific information, and other technical assistance on the preparation of proposals, support implementation of climate-funded projects and programmes, as well as act as accredited entities to receive climate funds. For example, UN entities that are accredited entities with the Green Climate Fund can coordinate with other UN entities for multi-sectoral projects that leverage UN expertise and capacities in respective mandated areas.

**Output 4.2. High-quality, disaggregated water and sanitation data and information are available and shared transparently through strengthened national monitoring systems, regional and global platforms with support from the UN system.**

**The blueprint for data and information.** In too many countries, policymakers lack credible and timely data for decision-making due to inadequate monitoring and reporting systems, and insufficient resources. National monitoring, reporting and data dissemination systems must be strengthened to cover all SDG 6 global indicators, combining data sets from all stakeholders. Earth observation technologies and improved data practices, such as standardization and disaggregation, can improve decision-making and reduce inequalities.

- Excerpt from UN-Water, *The Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report for water and sanitation 2023- Executive Summary*

- **Country level:** RC/ UNCTs can use latest data and information in preparation of UN Country programmes (CCAs, UNSDCFs) and plans. UN entities can provide support to strengthen national monitoring systems. Data collection activities can be supported in workplans and budgets including capacity building support. RC/UNCTs can support governments to use latest data and information in developing national and sub-national evidence-based policies, strategies, plans and programmes.
- UNCTs can link with UN Humanitarian Country Team (UNHCT) counterparts to consider linkages between development and humanitarian data and monitoring systems to support resilience and preparedness planning.
- **Regional level:** Regional commissions and regional offices can undertake regional assessments to inform policy and decision-makers and provide support and facilitate sharing between country-level national data collection and analysis with global and regional monitoring and reporting efforts.
- **Global level:** UN entities with mandated roles for global monitoring and reporting on water and sanitation targets and indicators include related data and information activities in strategic plans and ensure sufficient resourcing.
- **Partners:** Partners can support data collection, analysis and promote the use of data and evidence in water and sanitation policy and decision-making processes.

**Output 4.3 Institutional and human resources capacity development support that responds to national needs and priorities is provided by the UN system, contributing to a skilled water and sanitation workforce.**

**The blueprint for capacity development.** There are growing gaps in the water and sanitation workforce due to limited access to education, weak supportive frameworks, and poor rates of recruitment and retention of skilled staff, particularly women. Education and employers need to collaborate to promote water and sanitation “literacy” in curricula and to attract, train and retain workers, especially women and youth. There is a need for national-level workforce assessments and studies to determine current in-demand and future skills, with a view towards emerging technologies.

- Excerpt from UN-Water, *The Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report for water and sanitation 2023- Executive Summary*

- **Country-level:** RC/ UNCTs support countries to understand and respond to capacity development needs for water and sanitation through undertaking national-level workforce assessments and studies to determine current in-demand and future skills, with a view towards emerging technologies and expanding capacity among women, youth, Indigenous People, and other underrepresented groups.
- Support for human resources and institutional capacity development, based on local needs, can be included as a vital

part of UN country programme components for water and sanitation.

- **Global and regional level:** UN entities can develop new and update capacity development programmes related to the mandated areas through partnerships with academic and other partners with new and latest areas of expertise.
- UN entities can work with public and private sector partners promote dignified, professionalized, equal and safe employment in water and sanitation related fields, related to their respective mandated areas.
- **Inter-agency, including partners.** UN entities and partners can collaborate on cross-agency capacity building initiatives, skills transfers, and consider secondments of staff on water and sanitation related issues between entities to support staff learning and greater multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary capacities across the UN system. Efforts can also be made to increase human resources mobility between UN entities and partners to diversify career pathways for UN system staff with expertise in areas related to water and sanitation.

**Output 4.4. Enabling environments for innovation are supported by the UN system, including policies, partnerships, and transfer of technology to remove barriers, with particular emphasis on the water-related innovation and technology transfer needs of developing countries.**

**The blueprint for innovation.** From planning to implementation, innovation is too limited and slow to meet the need for rapid, transformative change. Innovative approaches can be sped and scaled up through supportive policies, utilizing technology such as artificial intelligence, and customizing innovations to local contexts.

- Excerpt from UN-Water, *The Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report for water and sanitation 2023- Executive Summary*

- **Country-level:** RC/UNCTs can support countries to strengthen the enabling environment for innovative approaches and use of innovative technologies through policy advice on improving policies, legal and regulatory frameworks and use their convening power to help foster the innovation enabling environment through diverse partnerships<sup>125</sup>. RC/UNCTs can help countries and partners identify areas where innovative solutions are needed and facilitate exchange of knowledge, practices, and transfer technology, including support to customize it for local needs.
- **Regional level:** Regional Commissions and other UN system regional offices can provide support and facilitate sharing of innovative practices, policies, institutional models, and technologies between countries in the region.
- **Inter-agency, including partners:** The UN-Water Task Force on innovation can document learning and good practice, build evidence, and develop policy briefs to inform the work of the UN system, Members States and the international community.

**Output 4.5 Governance of water and sanitation is improved through UN system support, including with emphasis on the needs of developing countries.**

**The blueprint for governance.** Water governance is ineffective due to institutional weakness and fragmentation, and poor regulation, accountability and transparency. Improving policy coherence and collaboration across different sectors and national borders will magnify the effectiveness of water and sanitation management and support social cohesion and international peace.

- Excerpt from UN-Water, *The Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report for water and sanitation 2023- Executive Summary*

- **Country- level:** RC/ UNCT members already support government-led and inter-Ministerial coordination on water and sanitation in many countries, this can be further reinforced and enhanced, particularly cross-sectoral coordination

<sup>125</sup> UNCTD (2023). Ensuring Safe Water and Sanitation for All A Solution through Science, Technology and Innovation. Available at [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2022d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2022d1_en.pdf).

linking WASH with economic and environmental aspects of integrated water management and increasing inclusive, multi-stakeholder participation.

- RC/UNCTs can provide holistic cross-government advice on policies, strategies, and regulatory frameworks with clear roles and responsibilities for addressing water and sanitation challenges and managing trade-offs.
- UNCTs can support the uptake and application of human rights-based approaches for water and sanitation in policies and promote inclusion of diverse partners and stakeholders in decision-making processes including civil society, concerned populations, local communities, private sector, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and other underrepresented groups.<sup>126</sup>
- *Regional level:* Regional Commissions and regional offices can support multi-stakeholder coordination on water and sanitation issues at the regional, sub-regional levels, including support for transboundary river basin, lake and aquifer level coordination and exchange to support regional integration.
- The UN system can support countries that express interest in acceding, implementing, and complying with the United Nations Water Conventions. In countries that express interest, RCs/UNCTs can include support for transboundary cooperation into CCAs and UNSDCFs.

### Entry Point 5. Account through joint review & learning

*Expected outcome 5. Strengthened accountability for progress through joint review and learning.*

#### Output 5.1. Progress on the implementation of the SWS is reviewed jointly by the UN system at technical and leadership levels.

- Specific agreed actions to monitor and review the SWS are included in Section IV of the main document.
- *Country-level:* RC/UNCTs can organize reviews of joint work plans (JWPs) for water and sanitation-related joint programming with partners to learn lessons and exchange experiences. UNCTs can document case studies of good examples and success stories for sharing as part of the SWS “toolbox” of supporting resources for Country Teams.
- UN entities can coordinate and share programme evaluations and management response action plans and periodically undertake joint evaluation synthesis exercises for water and sanitation.<sup>127</sup>
- *Inter-agency, including partners:* UN-Water biennial meetings can be an opportunity for UN entities and partners to exchange experiences on the implementation of the SWS – what is working, what is not, and document learning and case studies of good examples and success stories.

#### Output 5.2. Progress on water-related goals and targets are reviewed through joint learning and exchange among all actors with support from the UN system.

- *Country-level:* RC/UNCT members can support government-led joint sector reviews to assess progress on national plans, as well as internationally agreed-goals and targets including voluntary national reviews and stock-take processes. They can use their convening power to facilitate country-level learning opportunities for dialogue and exchanges of experience between local governments, communities and diverse partners and stakeholders, with particular attention to include local communities, concerned populations, Indigenous People, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.
- RC/UNCTs can support countries to document lessons learned and good practices that can be presented and shared

<sup>126</sup> UN-Water. Roadmap for the Integration of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/water/unwater-roadmap-hr-watsan.pdf>.

<sup>127</sup> For example, United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Evaluation Synthesis of United Nations System and Development Bank Work Towards SDG 6’, UNICEF Evaluation Office, New York, 2021.

during regional and global exchanges, and as part of South-South and Triangular cooperation arrangements. Country-level reviews and reporting on voluntary commitments to the Water Action Agenda and SDG Action Space can also be supported through multi-stakeholder joint review and learning processes.

- *Global and regional level:* UN entities can facilitate transparent and timely exchange and dialogue on good practices and lessons learned that governments could draw upon in implementing their own context specific policies and strategies. The results from these experiences can be documented and shared during inter-governmental meetings and conferences to enhance knowledge management and international cooperation.
- *Inter-agency, including partners:* UN-Water Members and Partners can support joint review opportunities at national and regional level by making available data and reports on progress towards the SDG 6 targets by the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6. This data is publicly available and can be used by national and regional bodies to review progress.
- UN-Water Members and Partners can undertake an analysis of the VNRs to identify 1) the commitments Member States have made on water and sanitation and offer support and 2) to identify the issues, gaps, good practices, and successes in work related to water and sanitation progress, including the rights to water and sanitation.

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## Annex 2: Context of the UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation

### A. SDG 6 at the midpoint of 2030 Agenda

[Excerpted from the report, 'The Blueprint for Acceleration: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023', UN-Water]

*“Water is humanity’s lifeblood. From the food we eat. To the ecosystems and biodiversity that enrich our world. To the prosperity that sustains nations. To the economic engines of agriculture, manufacturing and energy generation. To our health, hygiene and survival itself. Water is a human right — and a common development denominator to shape a better future.”*

*António Guterres, Secretary-General, 22 March 2023 (United Nations, Secretary-General, 2023a)*

#### Global water challenges

The first United Nations Water Conference (held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1977) warned about an impending water crisis if action was not taken.<sup>128</sup> The New York conference in 2023 acknowledged that the water crisis is already here, and that it is becoming worse.

Global water challenges comprise all freshwater-related matters. These include: surface water and groundwater resources; the sanitation cycle; the interface between fresh water and seawater; freshwater resources in terms of their quality, quantity, development, management, monitoring and use (i.e. domestic uses, agriculture and ecosystem requirements); disaster risk; and climate-related water challenges.<sup>129</sup>

“Too little, too much, and too dirty water” has become the mantra for the global water crisis<sup>130</sup>:

- **Too little water** (due to drought, depletion of water resources, or lack of infrastructure and services) means people cannot get enough to drink, wash or irrigate crops. Lakes and rivers can run dry – harming plants, fish and other wildlife, and eventually leading to desertification. Economic growth can be limited when there is insufficient water supply for agriculture, industry or urban development. Water shortages can also be a trigger for social tension and unrest within and among communities, and water disputes across international borders in the case of transboundary waters and aquifers.
- **Too much water** (from excessive rainfall, rapid melting of snow and ice, or rising sea levels, preventing drainage) means communities and ecosystems around the world are facing challenges. These include: loss of life and displacement; costly damage to homes, buildings and roads; polluted drinking water systems; spread of waterborne diseases related to overflowing sewerage; upsurges in disease-carrying mosquitos and pests; malnutrition and food insecurity; destruction of crops and livestock; flash floods; contaminated and eroded soils; landslides; and mudslides.

<sup>128</sup> United Nations (1978). Water Development and Management: Proceedings of the United Nations Water Conference. Water Development, Supply and Management Series. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

<sup>129</sup> UN 2023 Water Conference FAQ. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023/faq>.

<sup>130</sup> Chen, Guangze (2018). Tackling a crisis of too much, too little, too polluted. Available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/water/tackling-crisis-too-much-too-little-too-polluted#comments>; Boyd, David (2020). Too dirty, too little, too much: the global water crisis and human rights. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-environment/too-dirty-too-little-too-much-global-water-crisis-and-human-rights>; and Global Commission on the Economics of Water (2023). The What, Why and How of the World Water Crisis: Global Commission on the Economics of Water Phase 1 Review and Findings. Paris. Available at <https://watercommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Why-What-How-of-Water-Crisis-Web.pdf>.

- **Too dirty or polluted water** (caused by accelerated urbanization, population growth, economic development, the quantity of domestic and industrial wastewater being generated and its overall pollution load) is increasing globally. Pollutants enter rivers, lakes and oceans, fertilizing blooms of algae that deplete oxygen, thus creating dead zones where little can survive. This further degrades freshwater biodiversity and species populations, and contaminates drinking water.

Many impacts of climate change are felt through water: more intense and frequent droughts, more extreme flooding, more erratic seasonal rainfall and accelerated melting of glaciers. These can have cascading effects on economies, ecosystems, biodiversity and societies. In addition, scientific evidence indicates the Earth's water cycle is changing, alongside continued human activities that aggravate the global water crisis<sup>131</sup>. The water emergency spans many levels – from local to national – crossing borders through transboundary rivers and aquifers, affecting everyone and every living thing.

### The stakes

At the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, progress towards internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including SDG 6, is alarmingly off track. For most indicators, the current rate of progress is not fast enough to close the gap before 2030. In some regions and countries, for some indicators, progress is even relapsing.

With the growing complexity and intensity of water-related risks on the horizon, failing on water and sanitation undermines all three dimensions of sustainable development: society, economy and the environment. It also undermines human rights, peace and security. Lack of progress on SDG 6 and other water-related SDG targets can even threaten hard-won development gains in other areas.

Conversely, effectively managing water and sanitation is an essential solution to tackling major pressing global challenges like climate change, affordable and clean energy, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, disease pandemics and epidemics, disasters caused by natural hazards, conflict, extreme poverty and gender inequality. These are all priorities that governments and societies care about.

Water flows throughout the United Nations sustainable development agenda. SDG 6 is highly interlinked and synergistic with all other SDGs in the 2030 Agenda (see figure 1).<sup>132</sup> Accelerated progress on SDG 6 can act as a catalyst for progress on other SDGs, and vice versa. Progress on water and sanitation has a vital role in supporting the “entry points for transformation” identified by the *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019*<sup>133</sup> to achieve SDGs: human well-being and capabilities, sustainable and just economies, energy decarbonization with universal access, urban and peri-urban development, and global environmental commons.

### SDG 6 in context

The United Nations General Assembly adopted SDG 6 as a dedicated water and sanitation goal at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015. This elevated the importance of water as part of

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<sup>131</sup> Van Dijk, Albert, and others (2022). Global Water Monitor: 2022 Summary Report. Global Water Monitor Consortium. Available at [https://wenfo.org/globalwater/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GlobalWaterMonitor\\_2022\\_SummaryReport.pdf](https://wenfo.org/globalwater/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GlobalWaterMonitor_2022_SummaryReport.pdf).

<sup>132</sup> UN-Water (2016). Water and Sanitation Interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Analytical Brief. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/water-and-sanitation-interlinkages-across-2030-agenda-sustainable-development>.

<sup>133</sup> Independent Group of Scientists Appointed by the Secretary-General (2019). Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now: Science for Achieving Sustainable Development. New York: United Nations. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/publications/future-now-science-achieving-sustainable-development-gsdr-2019-24576>.



the United Nations sustainable development agenda.<sup>134</sup> This was the consequence of a concerted advocacy effort by Member States and engaged stakeholders for a broader spectrum of water and sanitation issues to be addressed in the 2030 Agenda.

By addressing the entire water cycle and striving for universal coverage of drinking water and sanitation, SDG 6 is far more comprehensive in scope and scale than previous water-related targets adopted by the United Nations. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), over the period 2000 to 2015, monitored only the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation through MDG target 7c.<sup>135</sup> The 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation<sup>136</sup> included a target to develop integrated water resources management (IWRM) plans, but they were never made part of MDGs.

The eight global targets of SDG 6 include: drinking water (target 6.1), sanitation and hygiene (6.2), wastewater treatment and ambient water quality (6.3), water-use efficiency (WUE) and level of water stress (6.4), IWRM and transboundary water cooperation (6.5), water-related ecosystems (6.6), international water cooperation (6.a) and community participation (6.b). Twelve indicators measure the eight targets, as presented in figure 2.

### SDG 6 progress and trends at the halfway milestone

Since the first SDG 6 synthesis report was published by UN-Water in 2018, it has been well documented that progress towards SDG 6 targets is alarmingly off track. Now, at the midpoint to 2030, progress towards SDG 6 continues to be well below the pace needed to meet the targets by 2030.

The key messages on SDG 6 progress at the midpoint are as follows:

- To meet the global target of universal access by 2030, progress needs to increase six times faster for safely managed drinking water, five times faster for safely managed sanitation and three times faster for basic hygiene. Access to safely managed drinking water, sanitation and basic hygiene services is still out of reach for billions of people, particularly in rural areas and least developed countries (SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2).
- A significant portion (42 per cent) of household wastewater is not treated properly. Comparable data on total and industrial wastewater flows are lacking in many parts of the world. Although 60 per cent of the world's monitored water bodies have good ambient water quality, data gaps make it difficult to assess global trends and leave many at risk (SDG target 6.3).
- Water stress has increased globally. Some regions have experienced substantial increases over the past two decades, particularly in the most arid areas, which often rely on non-renewable water resources that will eventually run out. These conditions represent a serious concern for the sustainability of food production and for the resilience of agro-systems in the face of the challenges posed by climate change (SDG target 6.4).

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<sup>134</sup> United Nations, General Assembly (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 21 October. A/RES/70/1. Available at

[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_70\\_1\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf).

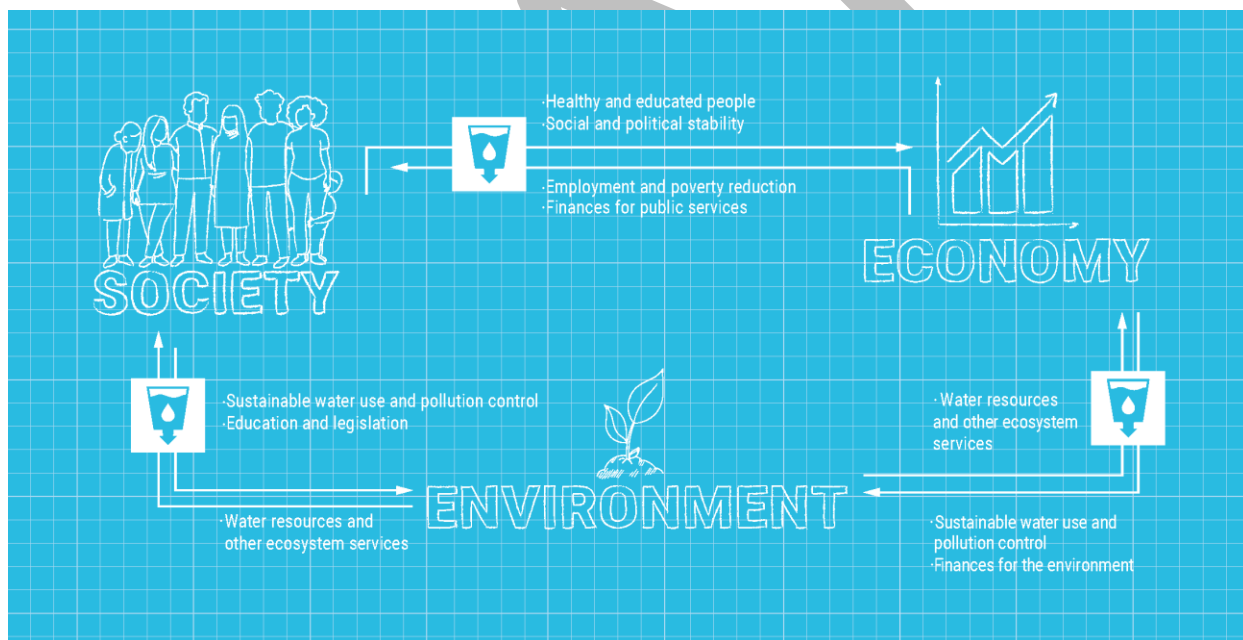
<sup>135</sup> Goal 7: ensure environmental sustainability. Available at <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/enviro.shtml>.

<sup>136</sup> The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. 4 September. A/CONF.199/L.6/Rev.2. Available at [https://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD\\_POI\\_PD/English/POI\\_PD.htm](https://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POI_PD.htm).

- Doubling the current rate of progress in IWRM implementation is necessary to meet global targets. Only one SDG region is on track to have all its transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers covered by operational arrangements by 2030 (SDG target 6.5).
- One fifth of the world’s river basins are experiencing rapid changes in the area covered by surface waters, indicating flooding and drought events, which are associated with climate change and poor water resource management (SDG target 6.6).
- Official development assistance commitments to the water sector decreased by 12 per cent from 2015 to 2021, and actual disbursements decreased by 15 per cent over the same period, despite the increased funding needed to meet SDG 6 targets (SDG target 6.a).
- National policies and laws increasingly recognize participatory procedures, but implementation has been insufficient (SDG target 6.b).
- On average, United Nations Member States have data for around two thirds of the 12 SDG 6 global indicators. While this represents a major improvement compared to earlier years, there is still a significant knowledge gap.

Seven<sup>137</sup> years remain until 2030. A business-as-usual approach will not suffice. A comprehensive step change in the pace of implementation is imperative to close the global gaps on all SDG 6 targets.

**Figure A2.1. SDG 6 interlinks the three dimensions of sustainable development**

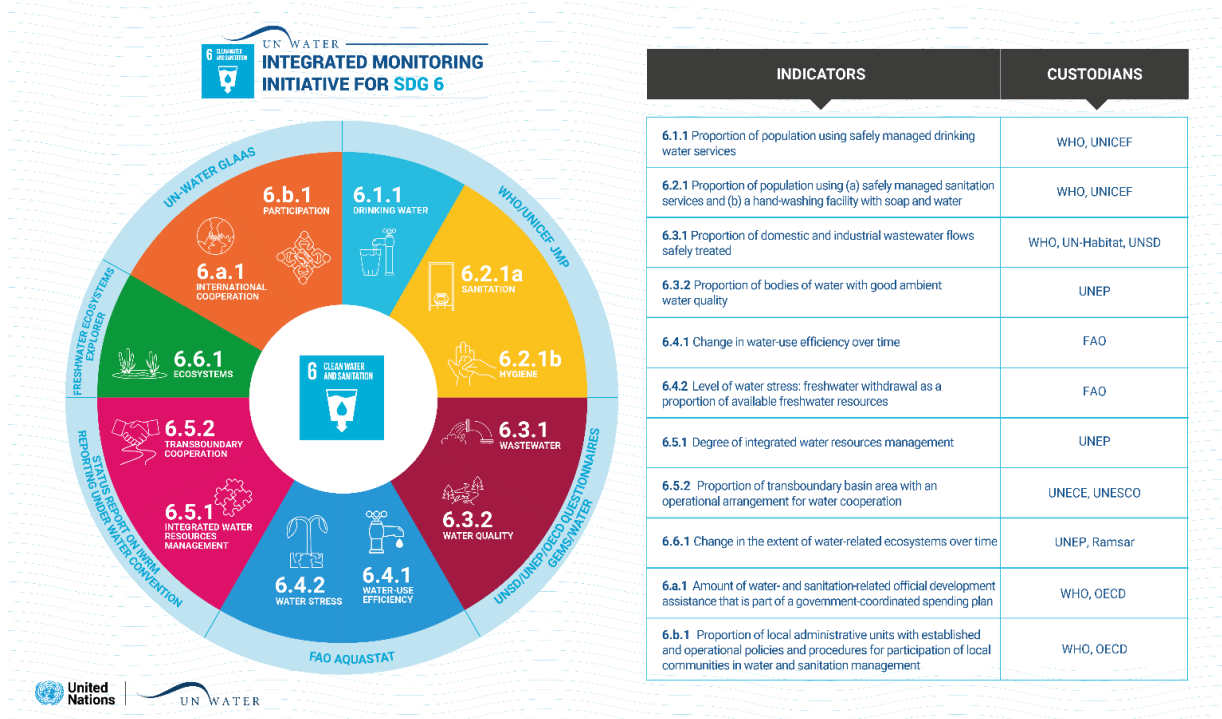


Source: UN-Water (2023), adapted from UN-Water (2016)

**Figure A2.2. SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation**

<sup>137</sup> “Seven” years was based on publication of the Synthesis Report in 2023.





Note: AQUASTAT = FAO Global Information System on Water and Agriculture; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; GEMS/Water = Global Environment Monitoring System for Water; GLAAS = Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water; IWRM = integrated water resources management; JMP = Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene; OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Ramsar = Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat; UNECE = United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme; UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UN-Habitat = United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNICEF = United Nations Children’s Fund; UNSD = United Nations Statistics Division; WHO = World Health Organization.

## B. Global policy landscape for water and sanitation

[N.B. Adapted from UN-Water 2030 Strategy<sup>138</sup>, updated for 2024]

The UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation (SWS) mandated in United Nations General Assembly Resolution, *Follow-up to the 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 (A/RES/77/334)* is positioned within the context of the global policy landscape. A number of key frameworks, which are listed below, provide opportunities and connection points to policy processes during the SWS period.

**Sustainable Development Agenda.** This landscape is defined by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs (A/RES/72/1)*<sup>139</sup> and the associated High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and updated monitoring of progress towards SDG targets. This includes the *Decade of Action* to deliver the SDGs by 2030,<sup>140</sup> *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue*

<sup>138</sup> UN-Water (2020). UN-Water 2030 Strategy. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-2030-strategy>

<sup>139</sup> Resolution 70/1. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>

<sup>140</sup> Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/>.

*Plan for People and Planet: Report of the Secretary-General*,<sup>141</sup> the in-depth review of SDG 6 during HLPF 2023, and the political declaration of the 2023 SDG Summit (A/HLPF/2023/L.1), as well as the processes related to Financing for Development<sup>142</sup>, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.<sup>143</sup>

UN General Assembly Resolution 71/222 proclaimed the period 2018 to 2028 as the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development” to further improve cooperation, partnership and capacity development in response to the ambitious 2030 Agenda. The UN system facilitates implementation of the Decade through the Secretary-General’s Plan for the Water Action Decade<sup>144</sup>. The Decade also includes the Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028 report of the Secretary General (77/249), the UN 2023 Water Conference called for in resolutions (73/226 and 75/212), the Report of the 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,<sup>145</sup> and the Water Action Agenda.<sup>146</sup>

**United Nations agreements, conventions, frameworks, and conferences addressing water-related issues.** Water and sanitation-related issues are addressed in United Nations agreements and intergovernmental processes related to climate, biodiversity, desertification, the environment, disaster risk reduction, urban development, food security, health, oceans, wetlands, gender equality, humanitarian, refugees, migrants, peace, among others.

United Nations agreements which include specific and substantive references to water-related issues include the following:

- a) Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>147</sup> including recent outcomes from United Nations Climate Change Conferences: Outcome of the first global stocktake<sup>148</sup> (COP28, 2023), Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation<sup>149</sup> (COP 28, 2023), and Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan<sup>150</sup> (COP27, 2022), as well as the findings of IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (2023), IPCC 1.5 (2018) and IPCC Ocean and Cryosphere reports (2019);

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<sup>141</sup> UN General Assembly Economic and Social Council (2023). Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: towards a rescue plan for people and planet (A/78/80-E/2023/64), Paragraph 34. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2023/secretary-general-sdg-report-2023--EN.pdf>

<sup>142</sup> United Nations. Financing for Development. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/financing-for-development/>

<sup>143</sup> Resolution 69/313, Annex. Available at [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2051AAAA\\_Outcome.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2051AAAA_Outcome.pdf)

<sup>144</sup> United Nations Secretary-General’s plan: Water Action Decade 2018-2028. Available at [https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan\\_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf](https://www.wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf)

<sup>145</sup> United Nations (2023). Report of the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028 (Advance unedited version). Available at [https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29\\_website.pdf](https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Final%20report%202023%20Water%20Conference%20%28as%20submitted%29_website.pdf)

<sup>146</sup> United Nations (2023). Water Action Agenda. Available at <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023/action-agenda>

<sup>147</sup> UNFCCC (2016). FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, Decision 1/CP.21, Annex. Available at <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/10a01.pdf>

<sup>148</sup> UNFCCC (2023) FCCC/PA/CMA/2023/L.17 Revised Advance Version. Available at [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023\\_L17\\_adv.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_L17_adv.pdf)

<sup>149</sup> UNFCCC (2023). FCCC/PA/CMA/2023/L.18 Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/636123>

<sup>150</sup> UNFCCC (2022). FCCC/CP/2022/10/Add.1, Decision 1/CP.27. Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/626561>

- b) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,<sup>151</sup> 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,<sup>152</sup> and other recently adopted United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions on nature-based solutions, on addressing plastic pollution, on sustainable lake management and on addressing water quality to protect and restore water-related ecosystems;<sup>153</sup>
- c) Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>154</sup>, the Report of the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030<sup>155</sup>, the Report of the Main findings and recommendations of the Midterm Review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030<sup>156</sup>, and the political declaration of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;<sup>157</sup>
- d) Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All, “New Urban Agenda”<sup>158</sup>;
- e) Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition<sup>159</sup> and the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit related processes, including the including the key messages from the “Water: The Game Changer for Food Systems - a Global Summit Dialogue”<sup>160</sup>;
- f) 2022 UN Ocean Conference, including the Special Event, “High-Level Symposium on Water, Bridging SDG 6 and SDG 14 – fresh and saltwater communities working together”<sup>161</sup>;
- g) World Health Assembly resolution EB144.R5, Water, sanitation and hygiene in health care facilities adopted on 30 January 2019 and UNGA Resolution 78/130, “Sustainable, safe and universal water, sanitation, hygiene, waste and electricity services in health-care facilities”<sup>162</sup>;
- h) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women<sup>163</sup>;
- i) Human rights frameworks with reference to the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation,<sup>164</sup> notably Resolution 64/292 on *The human right to water and sanitation* (2010), 70/169 on *The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation* (2015) and subsequent follow-up resolutions on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, including Resolution 78/206 (2023) and Human Rights Council Resolution 52/L.7 on *The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment* (2023).

**United Nations Conventions on international freshwater issues.** There is also increased attention on water diplomacy and specifically on the link between water, peace and security and transboundary cooperation,

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<sup>151</sup> UNEP (2022). Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4). Available at <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/>

<sup>152</sup> UNCCD (2017). ICCD/COP(13)/21/Add.1, Annex. Available at <https://www.unccd.int/convention/governance/strategic-framework-2018-2030/midterm-evaluation>

<sup>153</sup> See the resolutions from the fifth session of the UNEP Assembly in March 2022. Available at [www.unep.org/environmentassembly/unea5](http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/unea5).

<sup>154</sup> Resolution 69/283, Annex II. See <https://www.undrr.org/>

<sup>155</sup> UNDRR (2023). The Report of the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. UNDRR: Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>156</sup> Resolution 77/640

<sup>157</sup> Resolution 77/289, Annex. Available at <https://sendaiframework-mtr.undrr.org/>

<sup>158</sup> Resolution 71/256. Annex. Available at <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>

<sup>159</sup> FAO (2017). Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition. Available at <https://www.fao.org/cfs/policy-products/gsf/en/>

<sup>160</sup> Available at <https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/7541/>

<sup>161</sup> Available at <https://hlswater.sgambiente.gov.pt/>

<sup>162</sup> Resolution 78/130.

<sup>163</sup> Resolution 34/180.

<sup>164</sup> UN-Water. Human Rights to Water and Sanitation. Available at <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/human-rights/>

following the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses and the global opening of the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. The two United Nations Water Conventions (1992<sup>165</sup> and 1997<sup>166</sup>) are directly related to SDG 6 implementation through SDG target 6.5.2, with UNECE and UNESCO as the co-custodians for its global monitoring and reporting.

Additionally, the Ramsar Convention<sup>167</sup> which aims for “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation,” is also directly related to SDG 6 through SDG target 6.6 which seeks to protect and restore ecosystems. The Ramsar Convention is a co-custodian of SDG indicator 6.6.1 that monitors change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time. The Convention provides data submitted by Contracting Parties on wetlands critical to monitoring the status and taking decisions on managing water ecosystems.<sup>168</sup>

**UN agreements with a focus on action for developing countries.** In accordance with the mandate from Resolution 77/334, the SWS has a specific focus on the needs of developing countries, which contributes to the following UN action plans: The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024,<sup>169</sup> the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway<sup>170</sup> and the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2022-2031<sup>171</sup>.

**United Nations system policy and processes.** The SWS capitalizes on the process of United Nations reform<sup>172</sup>, notably the repositioning of the United Nations development system through reinvigoration of the role of the Resident Coordinator System and UN Country teams<sup>173</sup>. It builds on the policy direction provided by Member States to the UN system through Resolution 75/233 Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system through 2024 and subsequent QCPR-related processes. The SWS is also oriented by the Secretary-General’s *Our Common Agenda* report<sup>174</sup> and related policy briefs<sup>175</sup>, in particular Policy Brief 11, *United Nations 2.0: Forward-thinking culture and cutting-edge skills for better United Nations system impact*.<sup>176</sup>

**Other relevant United Nations frameworks.** Finally, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability<sup>177</sup> (nine commitments for humanitarian and development actors to measure and improve the quality and effectiveness of their assistance), the Global Compact on Refugees<sup>178</sup> (A/RES/73/151) and the

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<sup>165</sup> Available at <https://unece.org/environment-policy/water/about-the-convention/introduction>

<sup>166</sup> Available at [https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1998/09/19980925%2006-30%20PM/Ch\\_XXVII\\_12p.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1998/09/19980925%2006-30%20PM/Ch_XXVII_12p.pdf)

<sup>167</sup> Available at <https://www.ramsar.org/>

<sup>168</sup> Ramsar Convention (2018). Scaling up wetland conservation, wise use and restoration to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Available at [https://ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/wetlands\\_sdgs\\_e\\_0.pdf](https://ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/wetlands_sdgs_e_0.pdf)

<sup>169</sup> Resolution 69/137, Annex II

<sup>170</sup> Resolution 69/15, Annex

<sup>171</sup> Resolution 76/258

<sup>172</sup> Available at <https://reform.un.org/>

<sup>173</sup> Resolution 72/279. See also <https://reform.un.org/content/development-reform>

<sup>174</sup> United Nations (2021). *Our Common Agenda – Report of the Secretary General*. Available at <https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/>

<sup>175</sup> See <https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda/policy-briefs>

<sup>176</sup> United Nations 2023. *Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 11, United Nations 2.0: Forward-thinking culture and cutting-edge skills for better United Nations system impact*. See also <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/our-common-agenda-policy-brief-un-2.0-en.pdf>

<sup>177</sup> Available at <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>

<sup>178</sup> Resolution 73/151. See also <https://www.unhcr.org/the-global-compact-on-refugees.html>

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration<sup>179</sup> (A/RES/73/195), United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples<sup>180</sup> (A/RES/61/295), the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)<sup>181</sup> proclaimed by the UNGA under Resolution 73/284 also contribute to the policy context for the SWS.

**UN system-wide strategies, common approaches and frameworks.** The strategy is aligned with and contributes to other UN-System wide strategies, common approaches and frameworks such as the following:

- a) CEB common principles to guide the UN system's support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>182</sup>;
- b) Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery<sup>183</sup>;
- c) United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy<sup>184</sup>;
- d) United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action<sup>185</sup>;
- e) United Nations system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development<sup>186</sup>;
- f) System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;<sup>187</sup>
- g) UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development;<sup>188</sup>
- h) UN System-Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women;<sup>189</sup>
- i) Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy;<sup>190</sup>
- j) United Nations System-common approach towards a pollution free planet;<sup>191</sup>
- k) UN system-wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment (SWFS);<sup>192</sup>
- l) Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System, 2020–2030;<sup>193</sup> and

<sup>179</sup> Resolution 73/195. See also <https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration>

<sup>180</sup> Resolution 61/295, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous. Available at <https://social.desa.un.org/issues/indigenous-peoples/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>.

<sup>181</sup> Resolution 73/284. See also <https://www.unwater.org/the-united-nations-general-assembly-declare-2021-2030-the-un-decade-on-ecosystem-restoration/>

<sup>182</sup> UNSCEB (2016) CEB common principles to guide the UN system's support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://unsceb.org/ceb-common-principles-guide-un-systems-support-implementation-2030-agenda-sustainable-development#:~:text=The%20Common%20Principles%20emphasize%20country,of%20the%20entire%20UN%20system>.

<sup>183</sup> UNSCEB (2021). CEB/2021/1/Add.1. Available at <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=CEB%2F2021%2F1%2FAdd.1>

<sup>184</sup> UNSEB (2019). CEB/2019/1/Add.6. Available at [https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported\\_files/CEB.2019.1.Add\\_6%20-%20UNDIS\\_1.pdf](https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/CEB.2019.1.Add_6%20-%20UNDIS_1.pdf)

<sup>185</sup> UNSEB (2017). CEB/2017/4/Add.1. Available at [https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported\\_files/CEB\\_2017\\_4\\_Add1.pdf](https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/CEB_2017_4_Add1.pdf)

<sup>186</sup> UNSEB (2019). CEB/2019/1/Add.5. Available at [https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/CEB\\_2019\\_1\\_Add-5-EN.pdf](https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/CEB_2019_1_Add-5-EN.pdf)

<sup>187</sup> United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (2016). Available at [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/2016/Docs-updates/SWAP\\_Indigenous\\_Peoples\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/2016/Docs-updates/SWAP_Indigenous_Peoples_WEB.pdf)

<sup>188</sup> United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development (2016). Available at <https://unsceb.org/un-plan-action-disaster-risk-reduction-resilience-towards-risk-informed-and-integrated-approach>

<sup>189</sup> UNSEB (2006). CEB/2006/2. See also <https://unsceb.org/ceb-policy-statement-un-system-wide-policy-gender-equality-and-empowerment-women>

<sup>190</sup> Youth 2030 – United Nations Youth Strategy (2018). Available at [https://www.unyouth2030.com/\\_files/ugd/b1d674\\_9f63445fc59a41b6bb50cbd4f800922b.pdf](https://www.unyouth2030.com/_files/ugd/b1d674_9f63445fc59a41b6bb50cbd4f800922b.pdf). See also <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-un/> and

<sup>191</sup> EMGSOM.INF\_2, 29th Senior Officials Meeting of the United Nations Environment Management Group

<sup>192</sup> UN Environment Management Group (2016). System-wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment for the UN System (SWFS). Available at [https://unemg.org/images/emgdocs/UN\\_sws/Final%20final%20Version%202020516.pdf](https://unemg.org/images/emgdocs/UN_sws/Final%20final%20Version%202020516.pdf)

- m) Towards a United Nations system-wide strategic approach for achieving inclusive, equitable and innovative education and learning for all<sup>194</sup> .

Looking forward, important policy processes and major events include the UN Summit of the Future, Social Summit, Fourth Conference on Financing for Development, HLPF and other future processes that will inform the post-2030 sustainable development agenda; periodic Water Conferences notably those mandated by Resolution 77/334 in 2026 and 2028; as well as other on-going follow-up processes and intergovernmental conferences and meetings for the aforementioned United Nations agreements, conventions and frameworks.

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<sup>193</sup> UNSCEB (2021). CEB/2021/2/Add.1 Available at [https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/CEB.2021.2.Add\\_.1-Strategy%20for%20Sustainability%20Management%20in%20the%20United%20Nations.Phase%20II.pdf](https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/CEB.2021.2.Add_.1-Strategy%20for%20Sustainability%20Management%20in%20the%20United%20Nations.Phase%20II.pdf) and UNSCEB (2019) CEB/2019/1/Add.1. Available at [https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported\\_files/CEB.2019.1.Add\\_.1%20-%20Sustainability%20Management%202020-2030\\_Phase%20I\\_0.pdf](https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/CEB.2019.1.Add_.1%20-%20Sustainability%20Management%202020-2030_Phase%20I_0.pdf)

<sup>194</sup> UNSCEB (2019). CEB/2019/1/Add.4. Available at <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=CEB%2F2019%2F1%2FADD.4>

### Annex 3: Strategy Development Process

[N.B.: As the strategy development process is on-going, this document is a “working version” and will be updated accordingly once the SWS is completed.]

#### **A. Entities and actors consulted during the strategy development process:**

##### **United Nations System**

###### *UN-Water Members:*

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)  
United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA)  
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)  
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)  
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)  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)  
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)  
United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)  
United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)  
United Nations Tourism  
World Bank Group (WB)  
World Health Organization (WHO)  
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)  
United Nations University (UNU)  
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)  
International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)  
Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)  
Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



*Other UN entities contributing to the strategy development process (non-UN-Water Members):*

Secretariat, High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP)  
Secretariat, Chief Executive Board for Coordination (UN CEB)  
Sustainable Development Unit, Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EoSG)  
Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UN DPPA)  
United Nations Development Coordination Office (UN DCO)  
UN Office of Coordination on Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)  
Operational Activities and Policy Branch Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)  
Department for Global Communications (UN DGC)

*UN Resident Coordinator's Offices and UNCTs:*

Brazil	Indonesia	Philippines
Cambodia	Iraq	Sierra Leone
Chad	Jordan	Uganda
Chile	Kazakhstan	Multi-country office
Costa Rica	Kenya	– Malaysia, Brunei
Ethiopia	Pakistan	and Singapore
Ghana	Peru	

**Member States:**

Member States maintaining permanent missions at Headquarters\*

Non-member states having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly\*

Afghanistan	Bhutan	China
Albania	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Colombia
Algeria	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Comoros
Andorra	Botswana	Congo
Angola	Brazil	Costa Rica
Antigua and Barbuda	Brunei Darussalam	Côte D'Ivoire
Argentina	Bulgaria	Croatia
Armenia	Burkina Faso	Cuba
Australia	Burundi	Cyprus
Austria	Cabo Verde	Czechia
Azerbaijan	Cambodia	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Bahamas	Cameroon	Democratic Republic of The Congo
Bahrain	Canada	Denmark
Bangladesh	Central African Republic	Djibouti
Barbados	Chad	Dominica
Belarus	Chile	Dominican Republic
Belgium		Ecuador
Belize		
Benin		

Egypt	Lebanon	Poland
El Salvador	Lesotho	Portugal
Equatorial Guinea	Liberia	Qatar
Eritrea	Libya	Republic of Korea
Estonia	Liechtenstein	Republic of Moldova
Eswatini	Lithuania	Romania
Ethiopia	Luxembourg	Russian Federation
Fiji	Madagascar	Rwanda
Finland	Malawi	Saint Kitts And Nevis
France	Malaysia	Saint Lucia
Gabon	Maldives	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Gambia	Mali	Samoa
Georgia	Malta	San Marino
Germany	Marshall Islands	Sao Tome and Principe
Ghana	Mauritania	Saudi Arabia
Greece	Mauritius	Senegal
Grenada	Mexico	Serbia
Guatemala	Micronesia (Federated States of)	Seychelles
Guinea	Monaco	Sierra Leone
Guinea-Bissau	Mongolia	Singapore
Guyana	Montenegro	Slovakia
Haiti	Morocco	Slovenia
Honduras	Mozambique	Solomon Islands
Hungary	Myanmar	Somalia
Iceland	Namibia	South Africa
India	Nauru	South Sudan
Indonesia	Nepal	Spain
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	Sri Lanka
Iraq	New Zealand	Sudan
Ireland	Nicaragua	Suriname
Israel	Niger	Sweden
Italy	Nigeria	Switzerland
Jamaica	North Macedonia	Syrian Arab Republic
Japan	Norway	Tajikistan
Jordan	Oman	Thailand
Kazakhstan	Pakistan	Timor-Leste
Kenya	Palau	Togo
Kiribati	Panama	Tonga
Kuwait	Papua New Guinea	Trinidad and Tobago
Kyrgyzstan	Paraguay	Tunisia
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Peru	Türkiye
Latvia	Philippines	Turkmenistan

Tuvalu	United States of	Viet Nam
Uganda	America	Yemen
Ukraine	Uruguay	Zambia
United Arab Emirates	Uzbekistan	Zimbabwe
United Kingdom	Vanuatu	Holy See
United Republic of	Venezuela (Bolivarian	State of Palestine
Tanzania	Republic of)	

\* As per UN Protocol and Liaison Service, <https://bluebook.unmeetings.org/>, accessed on 22 December 2023)

**Regional and other organizations:**

European Union

**Partners and Stakeholders:**

*UN-Water Partners with Special Status:*

Green Climate Fund (GCF)  
Mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation  
Sanitation and Hygiene Fund (SHF)  
Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)  
UN Global Compact

*UN-Water Partners:*

Aquafed  
CDP  
Center for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST)  
Conservation International Gender and Water Alliance (GWA)  
Geneva Water Hub (GWH)  
Global Water Partnership (GWP)  
Human Right 2 Water (HR2W)  
International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH)  
International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS)  
International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR)  
IHE Delft Institute for Water Education  
International Association for Water Law (AIDA)  
International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)  
International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC)  
International Hydropower Association (IHA)  
International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)  
International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)  
International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO)  
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)  
International Water Association (IWA)  
International Water Management Institute (IWMI)

International Water Resources Association (IWRA)  
International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC)  
Public Services International (PSI)  
Ramsar Convention  
Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN)  
Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future  
Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)  
Toilet Board Coalition  
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)  
WaterAid Water  
Environment Federation (WEF)  
Water Integrity Network (WIN)  
Water.org  
Women for Water Partnership (WfWP)  
World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)  
World Council of Civil Engineers (WCCE)  
World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO)  
World Resources Institute (WRI)  
World Water Council (WWC)  
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)  
World Youth Parliament for Water (WYPW)

## **B. Consultation and Review Processes:**

### **Consultations and Briefings:**

- 37<sup>th</sup> UN-Water Meeting on 18-19 August 2023, Stockholm, Sweden
- 1<sup>st</sup> Technical Consultation with UN-Water Members on 22 November 2023, virtual
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Technical Consultation with UN-Water Members on 17 January 2024, virtual
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Technical Consultation with UN-Water Members on 1 and 2 Feb 2024, virtual
- Member States Informal Technical Briefing on 19 December 2023, UNHQ New York & virtual
- Member States Consultation on 23 Jan 2024, UNHQ New York & virtual
- Technical Consultation with UN-Water Partners (IGOs NGOs and stakeholders) on 17 Jan 2024, virtual
- Consultation with United Nations High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) on 5-13 February 2024, virtual by email

### **Review of the draft strategy:** *(version 22 December 2023)*

- United Nations System, 22 December 2023 to 22 January 2024
- Member States, 22 December 2023 to 29 January 2024
- UN-Water Partners (IGOs NGOs and stakeholders), 22 December 2023 to 22 January 2024

Comments received on the draft strategy are available on the UN-water website:

<https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-system-wide-strategy-water-and-sanitation>

## Annex 4: UN-Water Inventory

Annex 4 consists of two-online resources:

- 3- The report, ***UN-Water inventory. An overview of the UN-Water family's work on water and sanitation***, available on-line at <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-inventory-overview-un-water-family%E2%80%99s-work-water-and-sanitation>
- 4- The UN-Water '***Member and Partner Activities***' database, available on-line: <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/member-and-partner-activities>

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