**Official Launch of The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework**

**UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner**

**9 July 2020**

**Opening**

*Thank you for the floor and I congratulate you and Mr. Liu for co-chairing today.*

*Dear General Assembly President,*

*Dear Secretary-General*,

This pandemic has dealt progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) a grievous blow.

The full impact of COVID-19 has yet to be seen as it continues its ravenous spread.

But one thing is clear: the virus has brought into sharp relief the importance of access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for everyone.

This is why today’s launch of the SDG6 Accelerator Framework is so timely, and UNDP is delighted to join with you all.

We know that handwashing with soap is a first line of defense against COVID-19, as it is against many other diseases, including diarrheal disease which kills over half a million children every year.

Yet globally, three billion people do not have access to basic hand washing facilities at home.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Addressing this chronic problem cannot be tackled in isolation. It will take action across the SDGs.

On poverty – SDG 1 – because if a person’s toilet is not clean and safe, or if they have to walk long distances to get clean water to drink, they face poverty.

On governance – SDG 16 -- because delivering these basic services in so many parts of the world depend on transparent, accountable government systems and institutions.

On climate change, life on land, and sustainable consumption and production – SDGs 12, 13 and 15 - because the sustainable management of water resources in the face of the climate crisis goes hand-in-hand with access to safe water and sanitation.

At UNDP, we work with local, national and regional authorities to strengthen water governance in over 70 countries, with UNICEF and other partners to instill accountability into the way water services are delivered, and with partners across the UN family to tackle the impact of climate change on access to water.

We are helping the Maldives, for example, to bring safe and reliable water services to over 100,000 people on the country’s outer islands, and with Comoros to revise water codes for the equitable use of water and protection of water sources, both with the support of the Green Climate Fund.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The SDG6 Acceleration Framework being launched today is **designed to address this complexity**, to look at the accelerators through which progress can be made, including financing, data and innovation, capacity development and governance challenges.

We are committed to bringing our experience in tackling complexity in and across the SDGs to this challenge, because this is about **water for a healthy life**, **water for healthy livelihoods**, and **central role access to water will play in going beyond recovery** from COVID-19, to build a future that is sustainable, just and fair.

**Thank you.**

**==END==**

1. <https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/un-working-fight-covid-19-and-achieve-global-goals> Also: children under-five are on average more than 20 times more likely to die from illnesses linked to unsafe water and bad sanitation, than from conflict. See: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035171> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/project/fp007#overview> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)