



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

NEW YORK
22-24
MARCH
2023



WASH Cluster
Water Sanitation Hygiene



SANITATION
AND WATER
FOR ALL

March 2023

Joined-up Action for Humanitarian and Development Collective Outcomes to Accelerate SDG 6

Introduction

The escalation of humanitarian crises has increased by 17 per cent since 2022, reaching an all-time high of 339 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection globally¹. In 2022, 171 million of people in need of life-saving water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance for those facing complex and protracted conflict and displacement, climate-related disasters and shocks, and large-scale public health emergencies². The evolving nature of crises requires 'joined-up' action for collective outcomes by humanitarian, development, and peace actors, to maximize gains that leave no one behind, reduce needs and vulnerabilities, achieve sustainable development and sustained peace³.

The business-as-usual approach is not delivering the results needed and requires a "new way of working" that fosters partnership and increases collaboration across humanitarian, development and peace actors. Humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding are not siloed processes and should be layered and coordinated, at the same time, to reduce needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Collaboration that leads to collective outcomes, optimizes the principles of partnership and harnesses the comparative advantage of a diverse range of actors, including local actors and authorities. This can be achieved through joint context and risk analysis, complementary planning and programming, and a recalibration of financing modalities.

Collective outcomes are the most effective framework for closer collaboration across humanitarian, development and peace actors, in accordance with respective mandates. These set a concrete and measurable result that promote synergy and complementarity and is an approach that calls for aligned and well-coordinated action by all actors. Effective leadership and coordination play a central role in attaining collective outcomes. The UN coordination architecture that guides humanitarian action and development cooperation is the entry point for strengthening existing country-level processes and lays the foundation for system-wide change.

Leaving no one behind, ending needs by reducing risks and vulnerabilities, achieving sustainable development and peace are a shared commitment of the United Nations and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. This requires 'joined-up' action for collective outcomes by the humanitarian, development, and peace actors, and effective leadership and coordination plays a central role.

The **Global WASH Cluster (GWC)** and **Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)**, leading respectively the largest humanitarian and development WASH multi-stakeholder platforms, commit to deliver on collective outcomes for the Water Decade Action Plan and work collectively with their partners on bringing together development, humanitarian, and peace actors.

¹ Global Humanitarian Overview 2023 - OCHA, December 2022

² Global WASH Cluster Humanitarian Response Plan Dashboard 2022 - GWC 2023

³ IASC Collective Action HDN Notes - 2019



A Closer Look

Outcomes of the UN Water 2023 conference:



A **summary of proceedings** from the President of the General Assembly that will feed into the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) where SDG 6 will be reviewed.



A set of **voluntary commitments** – in a **Water Action Agenda** to get the world back on track to achieving the SDG targets.

- Scale up and replicate what works
- Discontinue or change what does not work
- Innovate what needs to be improved
- Fund what merits funding



A Roadmap for SDG 6 towards 2028 (end of the Water Action Decade) and 2030 (SDGs).

The UN 2023 Water Conference aims to strengthen the global response to the water-related sustainable development goals, specifically *Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all*. It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to raise awareness, define a roadmap and advance the water agenda. Critically, the **Water Action Agenda** is expected to be an influential document in the 2023 High Level Political Forum (July 2023), the UNGA SDG Summit (September 2023), along with the SDG 6 Voluntary National Reviews – for which governments will make concrete commitments.

For the GWC and SWA, the conference Water Action Decade theme is a strategic opportunity to advocate for and commit to a collective humanitarian and development action. It also creates a very powerful culminating moment to foster innovative partnerships.

We invite member states and decision-makers at the UN Water Conference to use the following initiative on collective outcomes and position the WASH sector as a catalyst and thought leader to operationalize joint commitments and further develop the operational modalities of this collaboration.

Coordination as mandated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee

The IASC is the primary mechanism for the coordination of inter-agency humanitarian action, bringing together both United Nations (UN) and non-UN entities to save lives and reduce suffering. Established in 1992 by UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution 46/182, the IASC's value and critical role as the mandated forum for principled humanitarian response, enables the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and member organizations to more effectively assist and protect people affected by conflict, disasters and other emergencies.

In October 2021, the IASC endorsed its biennium Strategic Priorities (SP) for 2022-2023, to collectively improve, among others, the Humanitarian-Development Collaboration and its Linkages to Peace by contributing to durable solutions, while safeguarding humanitarian space and principles. The IASC Task Force 4 was mandated to “support the understanding and implementation of humanitarian development collaboration, and its linkages to peace, consistent with humanitarian principles”.

With the commitment of IASC and partners to a Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN/ Nexus) approach, cluster and sector leads are expected to proactively advance responses quickly beyond lifesaving provisions into a joined-up approach contributing to and coordinating with development and peace outcomes. **The vision of the GWC** is that enhancing and strengthening effective and accountable humanitarian coordination for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) will result in timely, predictable and high-quality WASH outcomes that are inclusive and equitable, for the people most affected by and vulnerable to crises. These most vulnerable people are at the heart of collective action that is required across humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding to reach the SDGs.



Photo: World Bank | Dominic Sansoni



Advocacy Goals for Collective Outcomes

Humanitarian and Development Nexus Definition

The nexus definition adopted in the 2020 IASC Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes describes the HDPN/Nexus as a collective effort by humanitarian, development and, where relevant and appropriate, peace actors to reduce people's humanitarian needs, risks and vulnerabilities by working towards 'collective outcomes' priority areas as follows:

- 1. Joint analysis or sharing of analyses to obtain a shared understanding of need, risk and vulnerability.***
- 2. Articulation of 'collective outcomes' or HDP priority areas based on the areas of greatest need, risk and vulnerability.***
- 3. Joined-up planning and programming in support of these collective outcomes or priorities.***
- 4. Financing that is aligned or harmonized around these collective outcomes or priorities.***

To achieve these objectives, the approach calls for complementary, aligned and well-coordinated action by all key actors in planning, programming, implementation and financing of operations, preferably

formulated in commonly agreed measurable results (collective outcomes) over multiple years.

The approach requires the simultaneous, or at least rapid and progressive, engagement and shared responsibility of a diverse range of actors, based on their comparative advantages. While it encourages joined-up efforts, the approach does not imply that humanitarian, development, peace and other actors should merge their activities or integrate roles.

The Global WASH Cluster's commitment

The Global WASH Cluster (GWC) members and its National Coordination Platforms (NCPs) are best placed to address the increased demand for humanitarian water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) coordination, caused by the evolving face of crises and the need for inclusive and equitable WASH outcomes. For the past 15 years, the GWC has driven humanitarian WASH coordination, supporting NCPs across preparedness, anticipatory action, response, monitoring, and transition. The GWC has fostered partnership and collaboration to effectively deliver life-saving assistance.

The GWC is a convener at the global and country levels and is well-positioned to strengthen collective action in the coordination of and response to the unprecedented challenges that lie ahead. At this critical junction, the GWC is:

1. renewing its focus on excellence in effective and accountable humanitarian WASH coordination for the people most affected by and vulnerable to crises

2. committing to spearhead the future of humanitarian and development WASH collective action.

The GWC commits to supporting over 30 countries for over 100 million people annually in humanitarian contexts until 2025 by:



Strengthening collective action and advocating for the WASH sector to provide timely, predictable, and high-quality water, sanitation and hygiene outcomes by providing thought-leadership and by spearheading coordination.



Calling for the recalibration of financing mechanisms to support humanitarian and development priorities as defined by collective outcomes.



Promoting joint analysis or sharing of analyses to obtain a shared understanding of need, risk and vulnerability and the optimization of relevant data and information to understand gaps and make evidence-based decisions.



Advocating for innovative partnerships and coordination of an integrated humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach through “joined up” action and collective outcomes.



Incorporating pathways that link the strategic direction of national priorities across humanitarian and development planning processes, including HNOs and HRP to the CCA and the UNSDCF;



Contributing to creating a professional and a motivated work force with expertise in coordination that drives innovative and transformative WASH outcomes across humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding.

The key challenges that must be overcome to achieve collective outcomes include:

GWC Key Advocacy Challenges and Messages

01 Humanitarian action that is layered and coordinated with complementary development and peacebuilding approaches for the WASH sector to sustain recovery and to enhance resilience are siloed.

Gaps in cultivating partnerships and enhancing ways of working to increase knowledge exchange for humanitarian-development-peace collaboration for effective and sustainable WASH outcomes are hindered.

02

03 Humanitarian action, development cooperation, and peacebuilding timelines, mandates and methodologies for joint analysis, data collection, strategic planning, geographic focus areas and financing for WASH outcomes are misaligned.

Capacity and resources to drive innovative and transformative WASH outcomes across humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding are divided.

04

05 Advocacy for ‘joined-up’ action for collective outcomes by the humanitarian, development, and peace actors, to influence policy change are disconnected.

To address these challenges, all WASH partners, coordination mechanisms play a key role as key champions in this process. Together, we can join forces to call upon governments/member states to strengthen coordination and deliver collective action to achieve the SDGs.

CALL TO ACTION!



We call upon governments/member states to strengthen collective action for the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector to consistently provide timely, predictable, and high-quality water, sanitation and hygiene outcomes. There is a need to **ensure effective and accountable coordination to achieve collective WASH outcomes** that promote synergy and complementarity and requires aligned and well-coordinated action by across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors to meet the needs of the people most affected by and vulnerable to crises.



We call upon governments/member states to **ensure joint analysis or sharing of analyses to obtain a shared understanding of need, risk and vulnerability**. There is a need to articulate these as collective outcomes that prioritize the areas of greatest need, risk and vulnerability. Special focus should be given to countries with limited progress on the achievement of SDG 6, and populations without access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene services. It is only by starting with the most vulnerable that we can reach the SDGs.



We call upon governments/member states to **ensure they have relevant data and information to understand gaps and make evidence-based decisions**. This includes the institutionalization of data collection and monitoring within national systems and at all levels (community, utilities, subnational and national), the use of consistent methodologies, including standardized terms and questions by identifying and prioritizing gaps in data collection and analysis, particularly in vulnerable communities.



We call upon governments/member states to **ensure humanitarian and development complementary strategic planning**. There is a need to align and harmonise socio-economic and development frameworks with humanitarian strategic plans. Incorporating pathways that link the strategic direction of national priorities and plans, such as the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) to the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) is vital.



We call upon governments/member states to **ensure that humanitarian and development financing are aligned or harmonized** around these collective outcomes or priorities. There is a need to influence funding mechanisms to shift towards flexible, multi-year financing for the sector and transparent resource mobilization and funds monitoring that support advocacy efforts.



We call upon governments/member states to build a professional, motivated workforce through a range of capacity development approaches. There is a need for **capacity and resources to drive innovative and transformative WASH outcomes across humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding**. This includes strengthening capacity in technical areas specific to water, sanitation and hygiene service delivery and coordination, including competence in long-term planning and budgeting, improved cost recovery, revenue generation and financial sustainability.

Country-level resources



- [GWC advocacy template](#) for GWC members, national coordination platforms and other partners
- [GWC UN Water 2023 Comms Toolkit](#)
- [UN water key resources](#)

Sources

- [OECD, DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#), OECD/LEGAL/5019 - 2023
- [Policy - Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes](#) - Developed by IASC Results Group 4 on Humanitarian-Development Collaboration in consultation with the UN Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration - June 2020
- [Mapping good practices in the implementation of Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approaches](#), IASC, 2021
- [Key Messages on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus and its Links to Peace](#), UNSDG and IASC TASK TEAM ON STRENGTHENING THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS with a focus on protracted contexts March 2019
- The [Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration \(JSC\)](#), 2020
- Outcome of the [World Humanitarian Summit Report](#), UNGA, 2016
- [Global WASH Cluster Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#)
- [Strategic Framework 2020-2030 - Sanitation and Water for All](#)
- UNICEF Technical Advocacy Brief Notes
- [UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water \(GLAAS\) 2022 report](#).

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Joined-up Action for Humanitarian and
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Wednesday 22 March 2023 8-10 AM EST / 1-3 PM CET

UNICEF, Danny Kaye Visitor Centre - New York

Organized jointly between the *Global WASH Cluster* and *Sanitation and Water for All*,
during the UN Water 2023 Conference.



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