



# REPORT ON AFRICA REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

*This document presents the key messages and recommendations from the Africa Regional Consultation workshop on the International Decade of Action – Water for Sustainable Development held 13 – 14 May 2022 at the UN-Economic Commission for Africa.*

## Acknowledgments

This report is a summary of the African Regional Consultations in preparation for the Mid-Term Review of the International Water Action Decade ‘Water and Sustainable Development’ 2018- 2028. Sincere thanks go to the co-Chair Institutions the African Union, AMCOW, AfDB and the host and convener UNECA. The hard work of the Director of TCND Mr. Jean Paul Adam and Mr. Frank Rutabingwa, the Inter-Regional Adviser both of ECA is sincerely acknowledged. Special appreciation goes to H.E, H.E Mr. Motuma Mekassa, Special Adviser to the Minister for the warm welcoming remarks on behalf of the Minister of Water and Energy of Ethiopia as Host Country. Special thanks also go to the co-Chairs Dr Oswald Chanda, Director AfDB and Dr Rashid Mbaziira, Executive Secretary of AMCOW who despite their busy schedules delivered opening speeches virtually from Abidjan and Abuja respectively.

Commendable was the intense facilitating and rapporteur work of the Drafting Committee comprising:

1. Dr. Abdulkarim H Seid, Representative of IWMI for East Africa
2. Dr. Nico Elema, Executive Programme Manager of the AUDA-NEPAD Southern African Network of Water Centres of Excellence.
3. Dr. Azzika Tanko, Senior Policy Adviser, AMCOW
4. Dr. Alexandros Makarigakis, Regional Hydrologist, UNESCO
5. Dr. Stephen Max Donkor, Senior Consultant, UNECA
6. Dr. Kodwo Andah, Senior Consultant

Special thanks also go to all the Thematic Leads, especially from ECOWAS, UNECE, UNEP, FAO, UN Habitat, UNESCO WWAP, UNCCD, IGRAC, GWP, UNICEF, ICLEI, SWA, VBA, OKACOM, OMVS, IUCN, and many others who volunteered to lead Sessions and facilitate the rich discussions based on sound knowledge of the Africa region and the many partners who participated online and in-person in all the sessions.

## Executive Summary

In December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) unanimously adopted the resolution [“International Decade \(2018–2028\) for Action – Water for Sustainable Development”](#) to help put a greater focus on water during the ten years ahead. Emphasizing that water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger, UN Member States expressed deep concern over the lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene and over water related disasters, scarcity and pollution being exacerbated by urbanization, population growth, desertification, drought, and climate change.

*Deeply concerned that lack of access to a safe drinking water source, basic sanitation and sound hygiene, water-related disasters, water scarcity and water pollution will be further exacerbated by urbanization, population growth, desertification, drought and other extreme weather events and climate change, as well as by the lack of capacity to ensure integrated water resource management*

For Africa the gap in the ambition to achieve the SDGs by 2030, and the reality in 2022 is to quote an AUC colleague, Dr, Ahmed Eldaw (2022);

***“The gap is huge and frightening: population of 1.3 billion - 418 million lack basic level of drinking water service, 779 million lack basic sanitation services (including 208 million open defecation) and 839 million still lack basic hygiene services. I know there is a gap - never thought of this magnitude.”***

It is within this context that the main Africa regional institutions, African Union Commission (AUC), African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) decided to respond to the UNGA resolution for the Mid Term Review of the Water Action Decade by co-Chairing the African Regional Consultations. It follows their joint approach to global matters in which they form a “three-legged African stool” which attains stability when all its legs (effort) work in tandem, synergy, linkage, coordination, and complementarity.

The specific objectives they set out for the Consultations were:

- a) To assess the midterm progress made by various African countries towards achievement of the targets and goals of the water related Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 6
- b) To determine options for building and strengthening partnership to accelerate implementation of objectives of Decade of Action for Water.
- c) To develop a Plan of Action to support countries lagging targets to redouble their efforts to catch up in the second half of the decade.
- d) To ensure that a harmonized approach is adopted in presenting Africa’s inputs to the Mid-Term Review of International Water Decade; “Water for Sustainable Development” in March 2023.

The Africa Regional Consultations took place on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and provided a platform for African stakeholders (both governments and civil society), the international community and UN agencies to take stock and reaffirm their commitment to solving Africa’s water crisis and to collectively implement the actions envisaged in the African Water Vision, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2030) on water (SDG 6) and the AU Agenda 2063. It

also contributed to common approach, based on updated data/information from the SDG custodian agencies to the Mid-Term Review Conference and set out a Road Map for effective preparations.

After the unprecedented impact of the covid -19 pandemic which has among others reversed progress made in achieving the Targets of the SDG Goals, the African Regional Consultations provided an opportunity for WASH transformation and building back better from covid. These opportunities include:

1. Increased access towards progressive realization of human right to water and sanitation.
2. Enhanced communication and coordination between Water and other sectors.
3. Increased innovation and efficiency in processes and resource use.
4. Advocating the earmarking of additional financial, institutional and human resources to the water sector.

The Final Plenary Session resulted in the following Recommendations:

1. The landscape at the time the resolution was adopted in 2018 and now has completely changed. There is more focus on health due to COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. In both, water is a critical aspect in addressing the related challenges. In fact, water is at the center of adaptation and mitigation on the effects of climate change. Water should be at the center stage for financing the sector.
2. The messages should be targeted to the right levels for decision-making. For example, the messages on financing requirements should be addressed to the Ministers of Finance in addition to the line water and sanitation ministers and ministries.
3. There is a need to mainstream cities into national dialogues.
4. There is a need to build the infrastructure for climate resilience, incl. by de-risking agriculture through the irrigation spectrum. In addition, climate-resilience must be mainstreamed in all policies and strategies at local, national, and regional levels.
5. There is a need to strengthen the existing legal frameworks.
6. There's a need to build the capacity to support negotiators on water matters.
7. There is a need to mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) in water infrastructure development.
8. There is a need to support the water Integrity Networks to improve accountability, efficiency, and transparency in the water sector.
9. There is a need to enhance and mainstream Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) across programmes and activities, and use that to build synergies among all national coordination systems (incl. ministries), and support this by filling in the gaps in data incl. on gender...
10. There is a need to enhance all water-related human resources and institutional capacity development focusing in particular on water storage at smallholder farmer to family levels, on infrastructure development and operation, data collection, etc.
11. There is need to build legislation that promote access to water by people with disability, conserving water as a human right.
12. There is a need to build the human and institutional capacity to develop and run bankable projects, dams, etc. experienced professionals who are retirees are important resources that can be used to train, mentor, build the capacities, and support youth development plans in the water sectors.
13. There is need to harness the potentials of creating more jobs, and businesses incl. through business incubation and innovation in the water sector.

14. There is a need to have an open and constructive dialogue on how to channel efficiently the increased ODA into the right targets, i.e. get the large percentage of financial resources on the ground.
15. There need to develop voluntary national water plan sustained or supported by (1) national dialogues, (2) involvement of all ministries strongly connected with water.
16. There is a need for more (1) commercial/private finance in the areas of water and sanitation in general, and (2) micro-finance to support successful small businesses.
17. There is a need to increase investment in wastewater management, and dissemination of more treatment plants (both medium and small-sized).
18. There is a need to increase the institutional capacities to mobilize resources that are more domestic and have private sector play an important role in those resource mobilization processes.
19. There is a need to consider the gender issue across different vulnerable and marginalized groups: women, youth, indigenous communities, etc.
20. The current network of water experts should create an online African Journal of Water leveraging the development of digitization, and the ISBN created in the past for that purpose and that is still owned by ECA. The AUPAD Network of Centres of Excellence can be requested to host it.

## Contents

Acknowledgments .....	1
Executive Summary .....	2
SECTION ONE .....	2
1. Introduction.....	2
1.1 Background.....	2
1.2 Policy Framework and Linkages with MDGs and SDGs .....	3
1.2.1 Policy Framework .....	3
1.2.2 Linkages with MDGs and SDGs .....	4
1.2.3 African Union Commission and AMCOW.....	5
1.3 Objectives of the Regional Consultations .....	6
1.4 Structure and Scope of Consultations.....	7
1.5 Themes and Sub Themes .....	7
SECTION TWO .....	14
2. Session key messages .....	14
2.1 Opening and Special Session.....	14
2.1.1 Opening Session .....	14
2.1.2 Special Session on Groundwater .....	15
2.2 Themes and Sub Themes of the Consultations.....	16
2.2.1 Themes of Sustainable Development.....	16
2.2.2 Sub Themes and Lead Organizations.....	16
2.3 Main (Sub) Thematic Recommendations for HPLF and Mid Term WAD Review .....	18
2.3.1 Social Theme.....	18
2.3.2 Economic Theme .....	23
2.3.3 Environment Theme .....	30
2.4 Outcomes of the regional consultation – Key messages per theme.....	33
2.4.1 Opening plenary .....	33
2.4.2 Special session on Groundwater .....	34
2.4.3 Social.....	34
2.4.4 Economic .....	39
2.5 Challenges and Lessons Learnt .....	42
2.5.1 Social.....	42
2.5.2 Economic .....	43
2.5.3 Environment .....	44
SECTION THREE .....	46
3.1 Road Map and Milestones to UN Water Conference 2023 .....	46
3.1.1 Towards the UN 2023 Water Conference .....	46
3.1.2 Post Water Action Decade Conference .....	47
3.2 Level of Participation in Consultations.....	47
3.3 Accelerating Progress after Mid Term Review.....	47

---

3.3.1 Proposed Actions per Theme .....	47
3.3.2 Revival of UN Water Africa and its Technical Instruments .....	49
3.4 Final Summary Recommendations .....	49

## SECTION ONE

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Background

In December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution [“International Decade \(2018–2028\) for Action – Water for Sustainable Development”](#) to help put a greater focus on water during the ten years ahead.

Emphasizing that water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger, UN Member States expressed deep concern over the lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene and over water related disasters, scarcity and pollution being exacerbated by urbanization, population growth, desertification, drought, and climate change.

**Box 1: 71/222. International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–202**

...

*Deeply concerned that lack of access to a safe drinking water source, basic sanitation and sound hygiene, water-related disasters, water scarcity and water pollution will be further exacerbated by urbanization, population growth, desertification, drought and other extreme weather events and climate change, as well as by the lack of capacity to ensure integrated water resource management,*

...

The Decade focuses on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives and on the implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects. It is also to scale up cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is important as the water crisis is classified as one of the top 3 of global risks for the third consecutive year by the World Economic Forum. Failing to respond effectively to these challenges will have devastating global effects.

The United Nations General Assembly, in its [resolution 73/226](#), decided to convene, in New York, from 22 to 24 March 2023, 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” (United Nations 2023 Water Conference). Furthermore, the UN General Assembly adopted in resolution 75/212 the modalities and agenda of the UN 2023 Water Conference. Resolution 75/212 set the focus of the UN 2023 Water Conference, including its interactive dialogues, to accelerate the achievement of the water-related goals and targets contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDG 6.

Para 14 of GA resolution 75/212 states that the Conference in 2023 is to be preceded by Regional Consultations to review progress and challenges faced at the midpoint of the Decade. The outcomes of the Regional Consultations will feed into the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) held in July 2022.

The Africa Regional Consultations took place on 13th and 14th June 2022 and provided a platform for African countries, the international community and UN agencies to take stock and reaffirm their commitment to solving Africa’s water crisis and collectively implement the actions envisaged in the African Water Vision, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2030) on water (SDG 6) and the AU Agenda 2063. It also harmonized a common approach to the Mid-Term Review Conference and set out a Road Map for effective preparations. The Meeting was convened by the UN Economic Commission for



Africa (UNECA), the African Union Commission AUC, the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) as co-chairs.

Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) targets on water, sanitation and hygiene in Africa requires a dramatic acceleration in the current rates of progress, according to a UNICEF/WHO special report focused on Africa, launched at the World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal in March 2022. This special report calls for urgent action to be taken on a continent where water scarcity and weak sanitation and hygiene services can threaten peace and development.

Between 2000 and 2020, Africa's population increased from 800 million to 1.3 billion people. About 500 million people gained access to basic drinking water and 290 million to basic sanitation services, according to a report of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), launched during a session of the World Water Forum hosted by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and UNICEF. On the continent, however, 418 million people still lack even a basic level of drinking water service, 779 million lack basic sanitation services (including 208 million who still practice open defecation) and 839 million still lack basic hygiene services (UNICEF, Africa needs to Drastically Accelerate Progress on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – Report, World Water Forum, Dakar, March 22).

## 1.2 Policy Framework and Linkages with MDGs and SDGs

### 1.2.1 Policy Framework

The overall Policy Framework for the Consultations was provided by the African Union Agenda 2063- The Africa We Want ***“an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in an international arena”*** and the UN General Assembly Sustainable Development Goals with a particular focus on SDG 6 and related goals. At the African regional level, the guiding seminal policy document is the African Water Vision 2025 which aims at:

***‘An Africa where there is equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation and the environment by 2025’ (UNECA, 2003)***

It is a Vision of an Africa where there is sustainable access to a safe and adequate water supply and sanitation; food and energy security are readily available; Water for sustaining ecosystems and biodiversity is adequate in quantity and quality; Water basins serve as a basis for regional cooperation and development, and are treated as natural assets for all within such basins and there is an effective and financially sustainable system for data collection, assessment and dissemination for national and trans-boundary water basins; There are effective and sustainable strategies for addressing natural and man-made problems affecting water resources and their use, including climate variability and change.

The African Union have taken decisions at the Summit level which have reinforced this Vision. Some of the Policy Actions adopted at the AU Summit include:

1. A Continental Africa Investment Program Water (AIP) as part of Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa – Priority Action Plan 2 (PIDA-PAP 2) (2021)
2. An International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa to champion and develop actionable pathways for mobilizing resources for implementing the (AIP) and closing the existing water investment gap in Africa (2022)

3. Climate change and resilient development strategy adopted in 2022
4. Integrated African strategy on meteorology, weather and climate approved in 2022.
5. As part of COVID recovery – AU adopted the green recovery action plan.
6. AMCOW/AMCOST approved the establishment of Networks of Centres of Excellence in Water Sciences (2005). Currently three regional networks in Southern, Western and Central/Eastern Africa (Currently 20 Universities and research institutions that fulfil national and regional roles with AUDA-NEPAD as Implementing Agency)

### 1.2.2 Linkages with MDGs and SDGs

The vision was developed, by the UNECA, AFDB and the AU, through a multi-stakeholder process (at National and Sub Regional levels) based on the Dublin Principles, driven by the World Water Vision independent commissions report ([Cosgrove & Rijsberman, 2000](#)) and the growing awareness of the potential impact of climate change. The AWW 2025 highlights issues surrounding water availability and security for communities in Africa and links factors of food supply, human health, prosperity, economic development and the protection of existing ecosystems. The framework of the AWW 2025 contains four main goals, which are to be achieved by 2025 in order to improve sustainable water management in Africa ([UNECA, 2003](#)). After these goals being set, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were established as global aims. Currently, SDG6 represents the global overarching umbrella of the internationally agreed water related goals and targets with regional specifications adopted for implementation.



Fig.1<sup>1</sup>: Linkages between the Africa Water Vision, the MDGs and the SDGs

<sup>1</sup> Source: [Kristin Mutschinski; Neil A. Coles, Water Policy, 2021](#)

### 1.2.3 African Union Commission and AMCOW



### 1.3 Objectives of the Regional Consultations

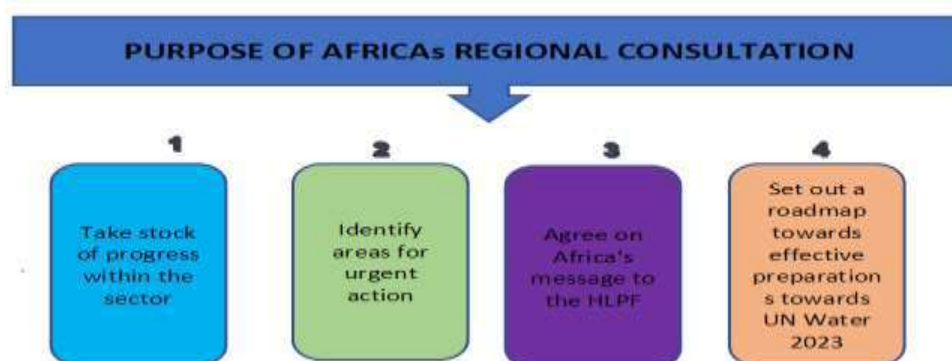
The **main theme** of the regional consultations reflects the main goal of the Mid-Term Decade Review, 2023 Conference, which is:

*“a greater focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives, the implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects, as well as on the furtherance of cooperation and partnerships at all levels, in order to help to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. (A/RES/73/226, OP4)*

*The universal commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centered set of common and transformative Goals. Furthermore, as enshrined in para 4 (d) of GA resolution 75/212, the focus of the UN 2023 Water Conference, including its interactive dialogues, should be to accelerate the achievement of the water-related goals and targets contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Sustainable Development Goal SDG 6.*

*Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, the Regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as other relevant partners, including the private sector, to contribute to the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028, Encourage building on the momentum gained during the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005 — 2015, in order to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018—2028, **UNGA, A/RES/71/222, New York, 2017**)*

The African regional activities are to also consider the overarching needs of water in Africa as postulated in the Africa Water Vision 2025 and Agenda 2063. The experience of UNECA (UN Water/Africa), AUC/AMCOW and AfDB acquired in organizing Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), convened by the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW) and the UN Water/Africa which was held at UNCC at Addis Ababa from December 8-13, 2003, served as a guide to the Regional Consultations.



The specific objectives of the Regional Consultations were:

- a) To assess the midterm progress made by various African countries towards achievement of the targets and goals of the water related Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 6

- b) To determine options for building and strengthening partnership to accelerate implementation of objectives of Decade of Action for Water.
- c) To develop a Plan of Action to support countries lagging behind targets to redouble their efforts to catch up in the second half of the decade.
- d) To ensure that a harmonized approach is adopted in presenting Africa's inputs to the Mid-Term Review of International Water Decade; "Water for Sustainable Development" in March 2023.

## 1.4 Structure and Scope of Consultations

The consultations were structured with an Opening Session which comprised of High-Level Policy messages by the co-Chairs AUC, AMCOW, UNECA and the AfDB as well as a Special Session to introduce the Groundwater Summit by UNESCO. This was followed by Thematic Lead presentations to set the scene for the various themes of particular relevance to Africa in the lead up to the Mid-Term Review of the Water Action Decade. The structure is illustrated in the Fig. 2.



**Fig.2:** Structure of the regional consultation

The Structure fostered an engaged, inter-active and participatory consultations following short and concise presentations by the thematic lead agencies.

## 1.5 Themes and Sub Themes

The thematic sessions were dedicated to the challenge areas defined in the African Water Vision 2025, including: water supply, sanitation and hygiene, human settlements; water and food security; protecting ecosystems and livelihoods; water and climate; financing water infrastructure; integrated water resources management (IWRM); water allocation; water wisdom; and water governance.

Specific themes reflecting the three dimensions of sustainable development, as referred to in the UN General Assembly resolution [A/RES/73/22](#) - social, economic and environmental, will include the following:

Table 1: Themes of the regional consultation

Plenary - Social Theme	Plenary- Economic Theme	Plenary- Environmental Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)-AMCOW&amp; UNICEF&amp;UN HABITAT</li> <li>Water and Gender, Inclusion and Equity-AMCOW &amp; UNESCO WWAP &amp; UN Women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water and Agriculture (Water-Food-Energy Nexus) – FAO&amp;IWMI</li> <li>Water and Urban settings-UN HABITAT &amp; ICLEI</li> <li>Finance, Investments, and Infrastructure- AfDB &amp;AUPAD</li> <li>Transboundary (Ground)Water Cooperation-AMCOW&amp;ANBO/&amp;/UNESCO&amp; UNECE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Conservation- UNEP/GWP</li> <li>Water and climate-WMO AMCOMET</li> <li>Water and Knowledge and Technology, Education – UN SDG Acceleration Framework -AMCOW&amp;UNESCO &amp;AUDA-NEPAD Water CoEs</li> </ul>

## A. Social Theme

**The Social Theme comprised the following topics:**

### 1) Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)

Multiple stakeholder involvement in WASH programs and projects cover all African countries and must therefore be given prominence during the conference to exchange best practices across the continent. The issue of affordability becomes the more important if public private partnerships can be promoted to manage such projects sustainably.

### 2) Inclusion, equity, and education

Interactive dialogues to address inclusion and equity regarding water resources. Additionally, the challenges faced by women, and socially vulnerable to access water should be featured in the Conference's debates. It is widely agreed that indigenous knowledge on water and climate must be integrated into decision and policy-making processes on water and environment. Interactive dialogue sessions can also cover strengthening inclusive, equitable water policies as well as education and awareness to conserve water resources.

### 3) Water and gender

It is generally accepted that water and gender are inextricably linked and features at all important water meetings such as the UN 2023 Water Conference and closing the gender gap in water, sanitation and hygiene is therefore critical.

### 4) Clean water as a basic development component

The level of water resources development with its corresponding access to clean water is an indicator of the level of socioeconomic development of a society. As part of the midterm review, all countries must accelerate the legal processes towards declaring water and sanitation as human rights that must be available to all. Water and local action can be an important topic to be addressed during the UN 2023 Water Conference which can take care of corruption and mismanagement connected to water supplies and sanitation services.



*“Corruption in the water and sanitation sector affects the fulfillment of human rights and generates serious environmental impacts such as contamination and over exploitation of water sources.” (Parlamento Mexicano Juvenil pr el Agua, Mexico*

Priority was also given to humanitarian issues that arise from physical and economic water scarcity, such as conflicts and migration, with an emphasis on water security.

## **B. Economic Theme**

The Economic theme comprised the following topics:

### **1) Water resource management**

Water resources management, in its simplest form, must have the objectives to ensure water use for all purposes in order to achieve harmonious economic, social and environmental goals for a country's sustainable development as a whole and also for its component regions (AWDR, 2006).

For water management to be effective, it must be dynamic in essence and the planning must be a continuous process that aims to meet the requirements of all sectors of water use as regards water availability, quality and environmental flows. A long-term water resources plan should provide a comprehensive analysis of sectoral inter-relationships, their effect on the national economy and, where appropriate, on international provisions for water use. Such a plan must also recognize regional needs and objectives, and provide a mechanism whereby, and a framework within which, they can be fulfilled on a more decentralized basis with the necessary feedback, which calls for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). The challenge for Africa is to reverse the present trends of rapid natural resources degradation through an integrated approach to land and water resources management within a holistic framework. A prerequisite for successfully addressing the pressing water problems is to, therefore, change from the fragmented approach to an integrated approach to water resources management (AWDR, 2006).

### **2) Water and Agriculture**

In many parts of Africa, irregular weather patterns (drought, floods), isolation of agricultural regions and environmental degradation all contribute to significantly reducing the rate of growth of agricultural and food production.

Climate change impacts are exacerbating the existing uncertainties in the prediction of the onset of rainfall seasons with its attendant negative effects on agriculture. One of the key challenges to agricultural production in Africa is the high uncertainty in the prediction of the onset of rainfall seasons.

### **3) Water-Energy-Food Nexus**

Water is essential for life. It is required to ensure food security and plays an important role in the energy mix of countries. It is fundamental to national, regional and global economies and integration. Water related activities are interlinked in multiple ways, and the term “nexus” captures the interconnections. The nexus has been discussed, debated, researched, and

advocated widely but the focus is often on the pairings of “Water- life and health” or “water-energy” or “water-food” or “energy-food” or “Water- environment”. To really benefit from the nexus approach in terms of resource use efficiency it is essential to understand, operationalize and practice the nexus “Water- Food- Energy” . As demand for water increases worldwide, using it sustainably is a critical concern for scientists and citizens, governments and policy makers.

#### **4) Water and urban settings**

For any metropolitan city, one of the basic and essential services by all standards is efficient service of water supply. Unless and until this demand is efficiently met, the health of the community and development activities will be highly affected. The inefficient organization of many water supply agencies is a serious deficiency. If the organizational structure does not promote or allow efficient operation, then the overall management will function poorly. The key issues contributing to poor performance of water supply facilities were identified as (AWDR, 2006):

- Inadequate data on operation and maintenance.
- Insufficient and inefficient use of funds.
- Poor management of water supply facilities.
- Inappropriate system design.
- Low profile of operation and maintenance.
- Inadequate policies, legal frameworks and overlapping responsibilities; and
- Political interference.

#### **5) Finance, investment and infrastructure**

Generally, most countries of Africa exploit only up to 13% of their annual internal renewable water resources due to low level of investment in conservation technologies, infrastructure and systems. It is therefore urgent to highlight themes related to financing, investment and infrastructure including innovative and diverse sources of financing for the implementation of SDG 6, sustainable development and climate action (FAO, AQUASTAT, 2018).

#### **Transboundary Water Cooperation**

Most of the fresh surface water resources of Africa are to be found in a number of major transboundary river/aquifer/lake basins – some shared by as many as ten African countries. The continent has over 80 major transboundary rivers and lakes and 106 transboundary aquifers, some of which are among the largest in the world. About 55 of the world’s 200 major international rivers are in Africa - a number greater than in any other continent. Some of these basins are shared by as many as ten or more African countries and ten major river basins are shared by more than four African countries. However, the majority of those transboundary basins still lack transboundary mechanisms for the management of the water resources. Developing or strengthening transboundary water cooperative arrangements is essential for reaching the water-related SDG targets and the broader sustainable development goals.



River/Aquifer/Lake basins know no boundaries, be they ethnic, regional, national or international. It is within this concept that transboundary river basins must be considered and analyzed from all its various aspects within an integrated framework (Andah, 2002).

The political boundaries of fourteen African countries almost entirely fall within the catchment areas of one or more transboundary river systems. The overriding basic principle of IWRM is the holistic approach to combine water resources management with ecosystem needs, using the river/aquifer/lake basin as the base unit. Integrated development of these transboundary natural resources will therefore not only contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of the riparian countries sharing these rivers, aquifers, and lakes but they will also promote and enhance peaceful and equitable basin, subregional and regional cooperation for economic integration in Africa. However, integrated development of these resources on the basis of win-win principles needs to be enhanced and concerted cooperation created among the riparian countries sharing these resources (AWDR, 2006). Africa needs to implement integrated water resources management, at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation, in order to ensure a sustainable supply of water for life, agriculture and food production, energy and other ecosystem services and benefits.

### **C. Environmental Theme**

The Environment theme comprised the following topics

#### **1) Water and climate**

The main climatic mechanism that influences moisture flows into Africa is the movement of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) over the continent. The distribution of rainfall over Africa, therefore, exhibits extreme unevenness, both spatially and temporally. Climate change impacts are exacerbating the existing uncertainties in the prediction of seasonal rainfalls, increasing risks in the management of water resources systems.

Climate change affects water availability, demand, as well as land quality through increasing temperatures, declining rainfall, rising salinity, poor soil fertility, and the increasing likelihood and frequency of floods, droughts, and prolonged dry periods. Climate change further aggravates water scarcity particularly in regions that are already water-stressed. Its impact on the hydrological cycle leads to biodiversity loss, and adversely affects the provision of water-related ecosystem services, such as water purification, as well as the provision of water for drinking, agriculture, and fisheries.

The IPCC working group 2 report clearly identifies water-related climate hazards, such as water-scarcity, floods and droughts are already affecting billions of people worldwide and will further increase in frequency and intensity. Climate change and extreme weather events are disrupting the hydrological cycle, affecting water security and availability worldwide. This gravely threatens food security, livelihoods and ecosystems, causing loss and damage and particularly affecting populations already in vulnerable situations. It severely impacts the world's Deltas, where rising sea levels threaten to inundate densely populated cities.

This is particularly true for Africa which is, indeed, a paradox, since Africa has contributed least to the climate crisis, yet it is the most vulnerable to its devastating consequences. The African stakeholders are therefore keen to address Africa's priorities in this year's COP in Sharm-El-

Sheikh as well as make this the COP in which the shift made from pledges to delivery and implementation.

## **2) Enhancing Water Resilience**

Decision-makers need to have access to high-quality information, consistent data and the capacity to use this information to inform infrastructure planning and management solutions. The long-term goal is to enhance the resilience of infrastructure against the threats of climate change, including using nature-based solutions and hence to ensure that infrastructure development is integrated across different sectors. This approach can be a key step in supporting efforts to develop resilient infrastructure and related management systems that is aligned with national priorities, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Information about water quantity, quality, distribution, access, risks, and use is essential for effective decision-making. Yet major gaps in water data and decision-making systems exist, and science-based climate change informed water data is required. We need to enable policymakers to utilize quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated, fit-for-purpose data, smart technologies and strong and robust monitoring mechanisms to develop effective cross-sectoral policies, in order to leave no one behind in achieving the SDGs.

## **3. Water and Knowledge and Technology**

The prevalent emphasis for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is based on the realization that water is both of an economic and social good and its development and management must be carried out in harmony with the environment. IWRM therefore calls for a holistic approach and a process which aims to ensure the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources to optimize economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of environmental systems.

Up-to-date knowledge bases and modern technologies are needed for:

- the development of an integrated perception of the interconnected processes involved in the hydrological cycle.
- the quantification of the elements of the hydrological cycle at all scales and their interrelations, is needed for the planning, design and operation of water resources projects and for various applications in agricultural and environmental activities.
- for hydro-meteorological data collection, management and network design, and also for the monitoring of processes such as climate change, desertification, freshwater availability, environmental degradation and natural disaster prevention.
- information communication towards enhancing the growing role of the public in water decision-making.

An effective water resources development and management framework depends on the sufficiency, quality, and management of the data on the various components of the hydrological cycle and the environment. Technologies are still needed to overcome the differences between the temporal and spatial scales of the physical phenomena like rainfall and discharge and the mode of measurement. For example, rainfall is a spatial process while the mode of measurement is at a point, and it is still difficult and expensive to have a continuous measurement of discharge in the form of the most needed time series. Even though there are software technologies to effect the necessary conversions, the further

development of the rather expensive radar and satellite technologies is expected to augment data resolution and coverage.

## SECTION TWO

### 2. Session key messages

#### 2.1 Opening and Special Session

The Regional Consultations began with an Opening Session and a Special Session on Groundwater due to the prominence accorded to Groundwater at the World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal in March 2022 and the focus of the UN Water through the World Water Development Report 2022. This was also a prelude to the planned Groundwater Summit due to be held under the auspices of UNESCO in Paris in December 2022 as part of the Preparatory process for the Mid-Term Review of WAD in 2023 by the UN General Assembly officially called the UN 2023 Water Conference.

##### 2.1.1 Opening Session

The Session began with a warm welcoming speech by H.E. Motuma, Special Adviser to the Minister of Water and Energy of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia as the host country. The key points of the speech were the following:

- All countries must accelerate the legal processes towards declaring water and sanitation as human rights that must be available to all.
- Priority must be given to humanitarian issues that arise from physical and economic water scarcity, such as conflicts and migration, with an emphasis on water security.
- A long-term water resources plan should provide a comprehensive analysis of sectoral inter-relationships, their effect on the national economy and appropriate, international provisions for water use based on IWRM principles.
- Enhance the resilience of infrastructure against the threats of climate change including the implementation of nature-based solutions to complement infrastructure development
- High quality information, consistent data for planning and management solutions for policy and decision makers
- Action on operationalization and practicality on Water-Energy-Food Nexus.

This was followed by brief remarks by the Director of Water and Sanitation of the AfDB, Dr. Oswald Chanda which focused on the following key messages:

- The need for increased investment for water and sanitation.
- Climate financing and the need to bring onboard the private sector (true partners) to help increase impact.
- Improved efficiency in the use of existing funding and financing resources to increase impact and widen the coverage of WASH facilities.
- Partnership- Improve capital mobilization through Public-Private Sector Partnerships and utilize opportunities of working together.
- Local private sector focus on domestic resource mobilization to fill funding gaps due to the changing landscape for external funding sources consequent to the Covid pandemic.

The AMCOW Executive Secretary, Dr. Rashid Mbaziira followed with a short speech in which he set out some benchmarks for the Regional Consultations which included:

- Motivate action to attain water and sanitation goals.
-

- Setting the target points for the role of WASH in Africa's economic growth, prosperity and inclusive approach

He also urged the participants to formulate key messages based on their:

- Practicality
- Appropriateness
- Partners to bring in to support the region.
- Implementation of solutions to achieve or meet 2030 SDG Goals
- Set Milestones for solutions that can be implemented beyond the WAD 2023 conference
- To highlight the key messages and fundamental approaches to go forward.

This was followed by remarks on behalf of the AUC by Dr. Ahmed Eldaw for Dr Harsen Nyambe, the Director, which among others were the following points:

- Framework Policy for Water Security in Africa, especially to guide the work of the African Union Commission – looking forward post Africa Water Vision 2025
- Support mechanisms for tracking progress and enhancing mutual accountability reports (WASSMO) to update AU Heads of States on how the continent is progressing
- Develop tracking and reporting mechanisms for climate change commitments, towards the Paris Agreement
- Deliberations on how to implement ongoing partner supports and initiatives
- Support inter-departmental coordination on water, climate, gender, blue economy, and biodiversity
- Multi-Country Water Resilience Program.

The Opening Session was closed with a keynote speech by Mr. Jean-Paul Adam, Director of the Technology, Climate and Natural Resources Division of the UNECA on behalf of the Executive Secretary Dr. Vera Songwe. The key issues raised in the speech were on the need to:

- Exchange best practices in the water sector across the continent,
- Promote public-private partnerships,
- Address inclusion and equity with regard to water resources,
- Address the challenges faced by women and socially vulnerable to access water,
- Mobilize Indigenous knowledge on water and climate to be integrated into decision and the policy-making processes on water and environment,
- Closing the gap in the access to water, sanitation and hygiene

### 2.1.2 Special Session on Groundwater

A presentation by Mr Neno Kukuric provided information on the global efforts of the UN-Water family to raise awareness of groundwater, starting with the launch of the World Water Development Report on Groundwater in Dakar, Senegal during the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum and will peak at the first-ever Groundwater Summit. The Summit will be held from 7 to 8 December 2022, at UNESCO's HQ in Paris. The summit will be a unique opportunity to present groundwater to high-level policy- and decision-makers globally and will unify the statements from all major groundwater-related events into one, comprehensive groundwater message for the UN 2023 Water Conference. Africa will have two dedicated sessions: one as part of the Regional Dialogues and a second one "Groundwater Focus on Africa".

Following Mr Kukuric presentation, Ms. Michela Millete, Director of UNESCO's World Water Assessment Program (WWAP) presented the World Water Development Report dedicated to groundwater. She provided the following facts and figures, which were customized to the African continent:

- Although most of the total freshwater we use comes from groundwater, its full potential remains largely untapped
- Africa possesses large groundwater resources; their volume is estimated more than 100 times that of the annual renewal of its freshwater resources.
- Only 3% of the total cultivated land in Sub-Saharan Africa is under irrigation, and only 5% of that land is irrigated with groundwater. The development of groundwater could act as a catalyst for economic growth.
- Groundwater withdrawal is low, mostly due to insufficient financial means for exploration and infrastructural investments, and lack of specialized capacity
- Africa possesses 106 transboundary aquifers covering 42% of the region and 30% of the population, and they are largely unexploited
- Policies, strategies, and plans should be based on the priorities and aspirations of local population. It is observed that in Africa regulatory frameworks to protect and safeguard groundwater at national levels are still weak and need to be enforced

The takeaway messages of the session were summarized as follows:

- The abundance of groundwater resources will prove essential in meeting increasing global demands for water, especially during periods of severe water stress and due to the effects of climate change. This depends on the availability of the groundwater resource, as in some geographical contexts, surface water remains the only reliable, available and affordable supply for the population.
- Improved groundwater management and governance are needed to avoid overexploitation and contamination
- Groundwater systems support valuable ecosystem services and can play a critical role in climate change adaptation and mitigation
- The development of under-exploited groundwater resources in places like Sub-Saharan Africa offers opportunities for food security and economic growth
- Given its common-pool nature, all data and information about aquifer systems should be made available to groundwater managers

## 2.2 Themes and Sub Themes of the Consultations

### 2.2.1 Themes of Sustainable Development

The main Themes for the Africa Regional Consultations were classified as Social, Economic and Environmental. This is in line with the definition of Sustainable Development as adopted by the UN General Assembly.

### 2.2.2 Sub Themes and Lead Organizations

For the Africa Regional Consultations, various sub-themes of relevance were further defined, and lead organizations selected to facilitate the discussions.

Social Theme (Dr Azzika Tanko-	Economic Theme (Dr. Abdulkarim H Seid)	Environmental Theme (Dr. Nico Elema)
-----------------------------------	---	---

Rapporteur)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)-AMCOW&amp; UNICEF&amp;UN HABITAT</li> <li>• Water and Gender, Inclusion and Equity-AMCOW &amp; UNESCO WWAP &amp; UN Women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water and Agriculture (Water-Food-Energy Nexus) – FAO&amp;IWMI</li> <li>• Water and Urban settings-UN HABITAT &amp; ICLEI</li> <li>• Finance, Investments, and Infrastructure- AfDB &amp;AUPAD</li> <li>• Transboundary (Ground)Water Cooperation-AMCOW&amp;ANBO/&amp;/UNESCO &amp;UNECE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Conservation-UNEP/GWP</li> <li>• Water and climate-WMO AMCOMET</li> <li>• Water and Knowledge and Technology, Education – UN SDG Acceleration Framework - AMCOW&amp;UNESCO &amp;AUDA NEPAD Water CoEs</li> </ul>

## 2.3 Main (Sub) Thematic Recommendations for HPLF and Mid Term WAD Review

### 2.3.1 Social Theme

#### 2.3.1.1 *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)*

Water is a matter of life and source of existence. The critical importance of water has been highlighted by the COVID 19 pandemic, as access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygiene are amongst the first lines of defense in situations of unavailability of a vaccine, particularly in many developing countries. Therefore, the human rights to water and sanitation must be promoted, protected, and fulfilled at all times

The inadequate access to these important services in a fast-urbanizing Africa has greatly slowed the pace of social and economic development of urban areas and cities. Cities and local governments in Africa are today confronted with a rising urban population resulting in an increased demand for water and sanitation services, increasing urban poverty, growing financial resource constraints, and uncertainties and risk implications of climate change. The situation is even worse for the urban poor population living in informal settlements and low-income areas. The UN estimates that 2.1 billion people lack safe drinking water at home and more than twice as many lack safe sanitation<sup>2</sup>

Access to water can affect a range of human rights such as the right to life, property, health, food, safe drinking water, sanitation, decent work, a healthy environment, an adequate standard of living, cultural and other rights. It is essential to promote access to water as a human right and to pay particular attention to the disproportionate effects on people in disadvantaged and vulnerable situations, particularly women, rural communities, people living in both extremes of aridity and flooding. This includes those facing water scarcity, desertification, drought, frequent flooding and land degradation.

The key issues contributing to poor performance of water supply facilities were identified as (AWDR, 2006): Inadequate data on operation and maintenance, insufficient and inefficient use of funds, poor management of water supply facilities, inappropriate system design, low profile of operation and maintenance, inadequate policies, legal frameworks and overlapping responsibilities, climate change and political interference. Unless and until this demand is efficiently met, the health of the community and development activities will be highly affected. There is therefore a need to fast-track interventions that aim at improving legal, institutional and policies environments, increase sector financing, improved planning, and resilient infrastructure design in the face of climate change, strengthened coordination and sector governance, improved capacities and accountability of utilities and authorities, strengthened and standardised monitoring methodologies, indicators and data management, and inclusion. The session on WASH was co- chaired by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN Habitat.

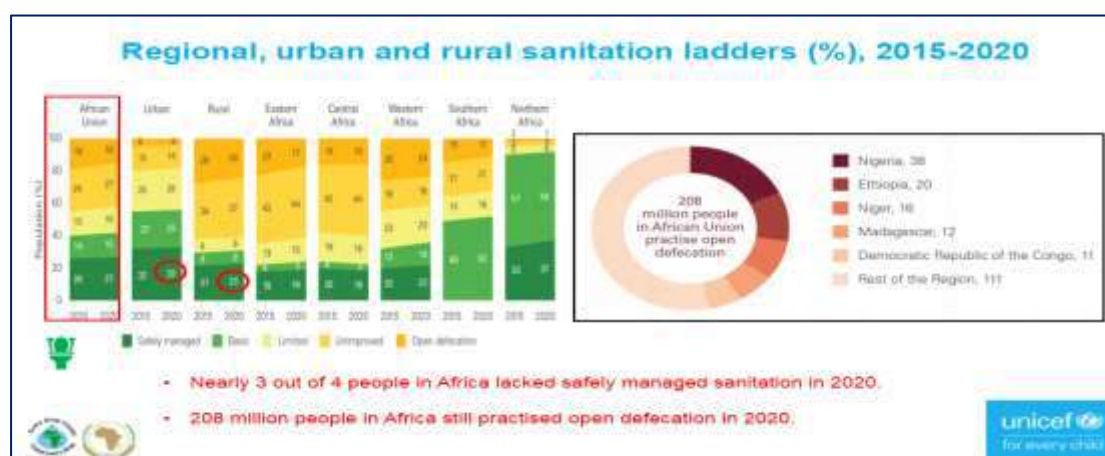
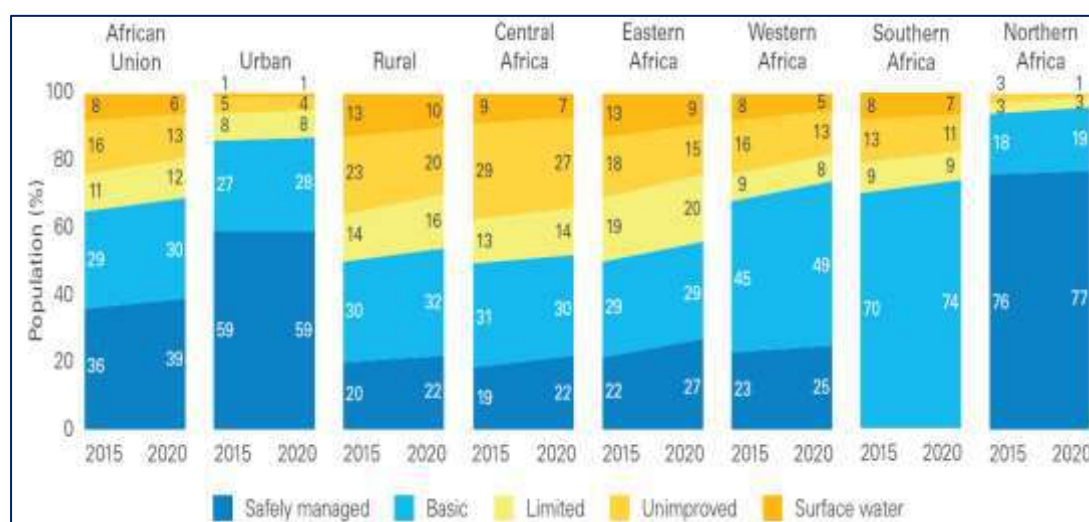
---

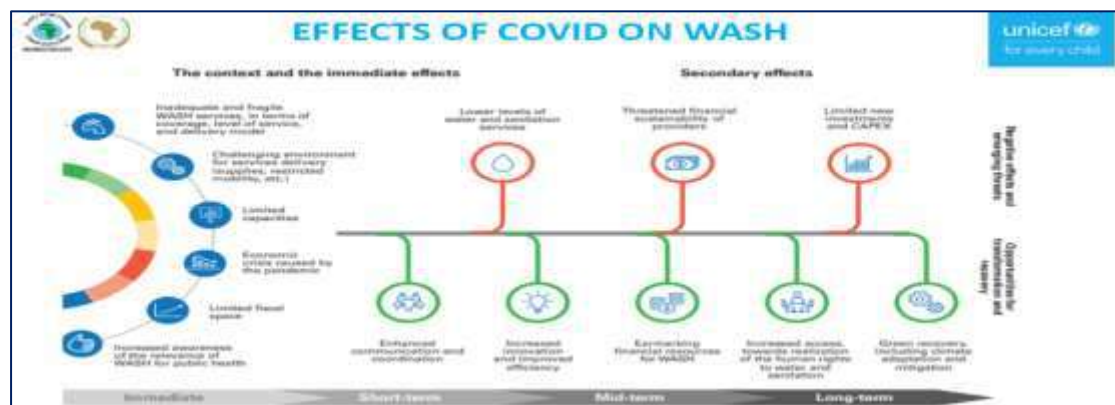
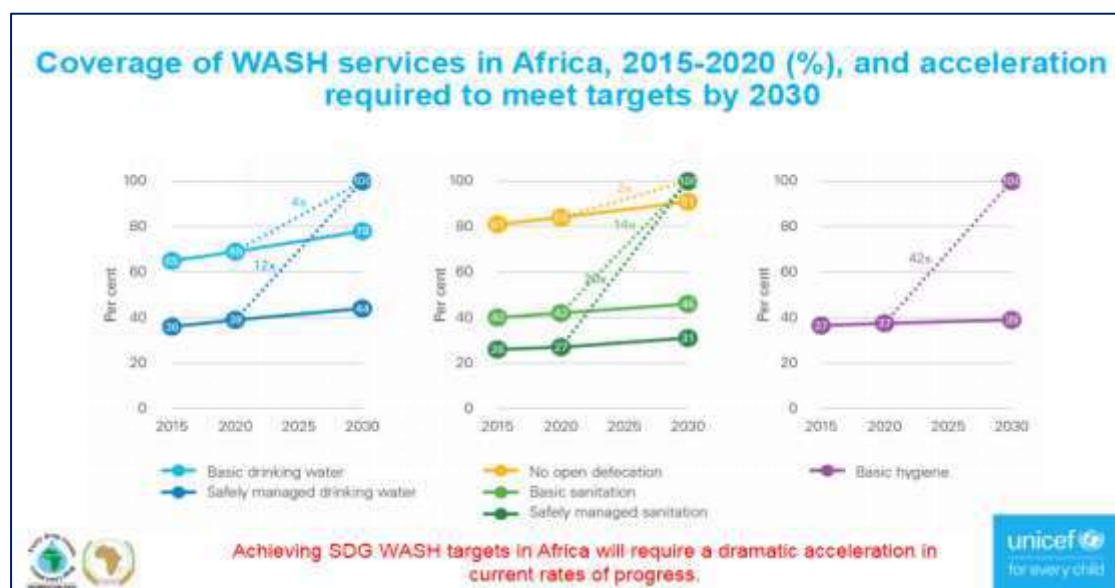
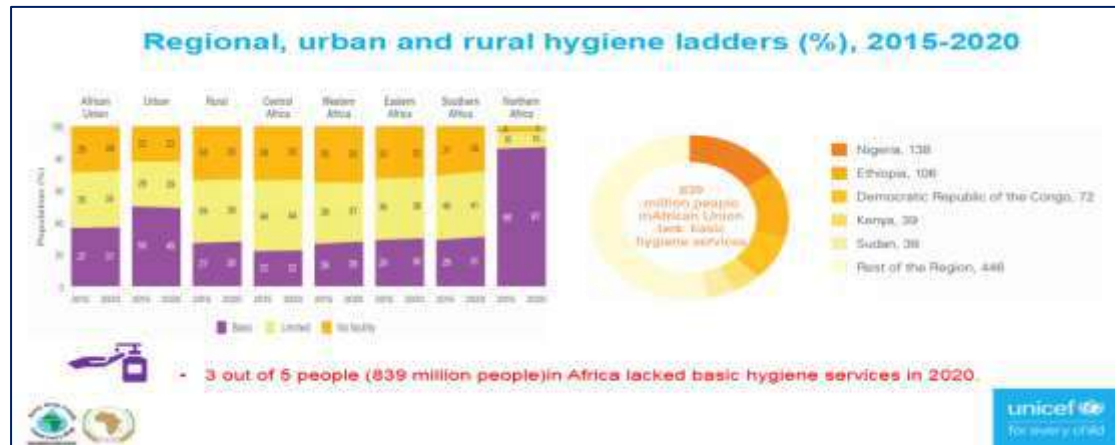
<sup>2</sup> Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: 2017 Update and SDG Baselines. Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2017



## Continental Commitments on Water and Sanitation under the WASSMO: AWV2025, Sharm El Sheikh, AfricaSan Ngor

Reference in political commitments	Indicators
AWV 2025, PANAFCON 2003, Tunis 2013, SDG-6.1	Percentage of population with access to a basic drinking water service. (SDG-6.1.1)
AWV 2025, PANAFCON 2003, Tunis 2013, SDG-6.1	Percentage of population using safely managed drinking water services. (SDG-6.1.1)
AWV 2025, PANAFCON 2003, Tunis 2013, N'gor 2015 SDG-6.2	Percentage of population with access to basic sanitation service. (SDG-6.1.1)
AWV 2025, PANAFCON 2003, Tunis 2013, N'gor 2015 SDG-6.2	Percentage of population using safe sanitation services. (SDG-6.1.1)
AWV 2025, PANAFCON 2003, Tunis 2013, N'gor 2015 SDG-4a.1	The percentage of primary and secondary schools with a school sanitation program under which needs of girls are taken into consideration.
N'gor 2015, SDG-6.2, AWV 2025, PANAFCON 2003	Percentage of population practicing open defecation.
AWV 2025, Sirte 2004, Sirte 2008, AMCOW 2007, SDG 7.2	Installed hydropower capacity as a percentage of economically feasible potential





### *2.3.1.2 Water, Gender, Inclusion and Equity*

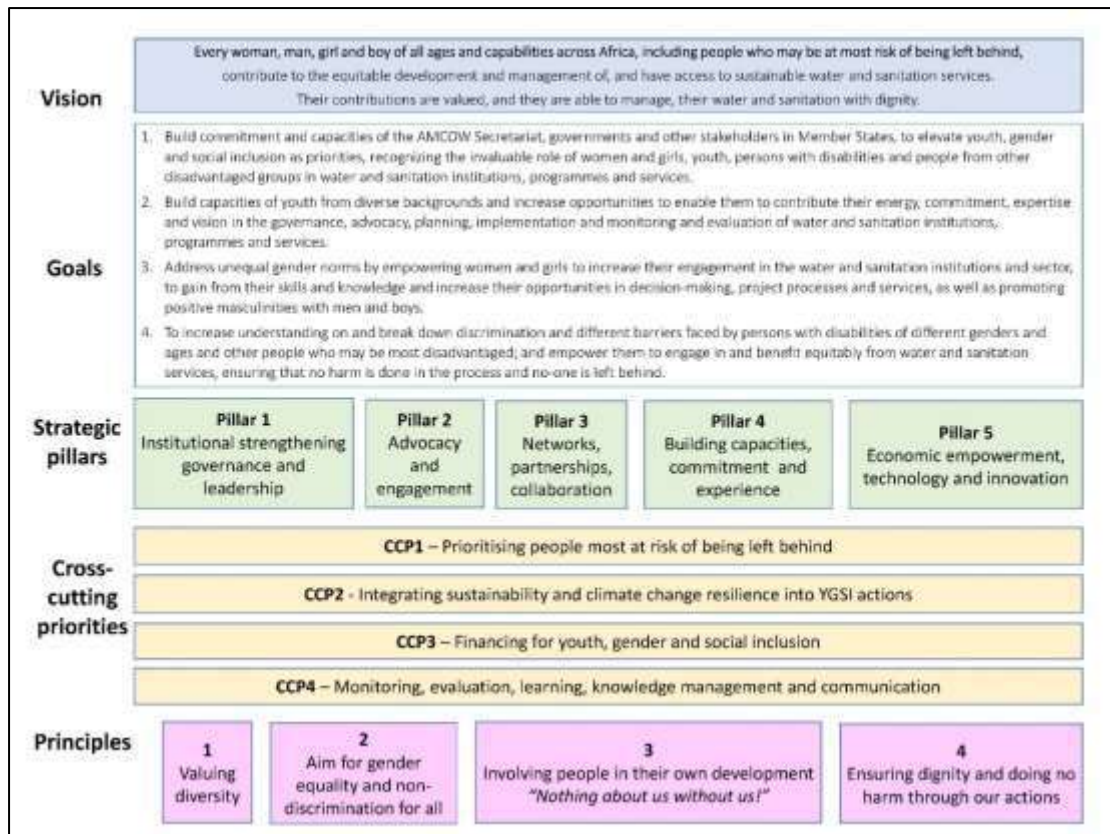
The 'Water, Gender, Inclusion and Equity' subtopic under the social component was opened by three presentations that aimed at reporting on the status and challenges of gender equity and inclusion in the water sector, setting the scene for the open discussion.

Mr. Emmanuel Uguru from AMCOW reported how AMCOW's 2011 Policy and Strategy for gender and in 2013 for youth informed the prioritization of youth and gender equality as key cross-cutting aspects of the strategy. Between 2021-2022, an integrated strategy for youth, gender and social inclusion has been developed, to be presented for approval by the 13<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee (EXCO) Governing Council meeting of AMCOW.

Demographics show us how Africa will account for 57% of the global population growth (1.4 billion people) by 2055. The population in most of Africa is projected to double by 2050 (99% increase) with almost 60% of Africa's population being under the age of 25, making Africa the world's youngest continent in terms of demography. Generally, men and boys face less barriers than women and girls to participate and benefit from water and sanitation institutions and programmes. Apart of women and girls being disadvantaged, there exist multiple 'excluded groups': people who are most likely to be left behind in relation to accessing water and sanitation, such as people with disabilities. The majority of Africans with disabilities are excluded from schools and opportunities from work. School enrolment for children and young people with disabilities is estimated at no more than 5-10%.

To go beyond acknowledgments or consultations, vulnerable groups (women, girls, people living with disabilities and elderly people) must be explicitly included and be given a chance to contribute to decision making which ultimately affects their future.

The figure below represents an overview and the vision of Africa's Youth Gender and Social Inclusion (YGSI) strategy for the water and sanitation sector.



Next, UNICEF reported on the progress made with respect to inclusion of gender and youth in water as well as the particular attention given to menstrual health under SDG 6.2. (73% of countries are implementing MHM in schools), guidance for climate-related education integration into extracurricular activities, support to stakeholders in setting and implementing standards to address climate change and disaster risk in a comprehensive manner.

A number of key challenges were pointed out:

- In MENA region, 35 million children in the region lack access to safely managed drinking water services, over 1.25 million children use untreated water for drinking purposes.
- Gender issues: responsibility for water management, including its contribution to school dropout, negative outcomes in maternal and menstrual health and hygiene management.
- Lack of funding for human resources
- Lack of sector collaboration

Some solutions were proposed according to 4 key domains:

- Establish coordination groups at country level
- Partner with relevant organizations
- Develop information and communication plans and tools
- Support capacity building opportunities

Laurens Thuy from the UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) presented the results of the two-years global assessment on the advancement of gender equality in the water domain, executed by WWAP and its Water and Gender Working Group. Mr Thuy highlighted the main findings with respect to the African region, among others:



- In 2017, 785 million people worldwide were still using unimproved water sources. The large majority of them are in sub-Saharan Africa (51%) and especially women are at significant risk of water quality issues.
- 5% of deaths in low-income countries can be attributed to infections and unsafe sanitation. Particularly pregnant women and young children are susceptible.
- Despite their heavy involvement and skills in agricultural work, only 15% of land is managed by women in Africa.
- Several African countries are characterized by legal pluralism between civil law and customary law. This may lead to unequal property rights (land and water), that usually disadvantages women
- Women are disproportionately underrepresented in water-related jobs as consequence of traditional gender roles, cultural norms and stereotypes and the small proportion of female graduates in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematic (STEM) areas. For instance, a 2012 study found an academic gender gap in Rwanda as no women at the time held an academic degree in emerging water-related disciplines. These challenges are not atypical of other countries in Africa.
- Climate change affects the quality and quantity of water available, exerting disproportionate pressure on women and girls. Research in Uganda estimates that a household without water on premises spends 13% more time collecting water during a drought year.
- By 2050, it is expected that more than 143 million people from Africa, South Asia and Latin America will migrate because of the effects of climate change, most notably water scarcity. Women may be subject to additional layers of constraints and burdens when they migrate, being exposed to sexual harassment, hazardous jobs, and trafficking.
- Public finance and gender-disaggregated data fall short in progressing gender equality. The funding provided to women's organizations has been decreasing over the past years. Less than 0.1% of all grants in 2014 by foundations, women's funds and other institutional donors went to activities supporting women and environment, or similar initiatives led by women. Only 11% targeted 'water access and sanitation', and 54% specifically targeted the region of sub-Saharan Africa.
- To fill the data gap, Citizen's data can be collected (by women's groups).
- Ensuring money for the purpose is not only enhanced but also reaches "the ground" / local groups – here a new mechanism is needed.
- Increase in capacity development at a Technical Vocational level (TVET) especially by / for females; recognition of earlier acquired competencies

The effects of COVID on WASH have been either immediate and secondary or short to medium term and mainly negative (e.g., inadequate, and fragile WASH services jeopardized the ability to handle WASH needs; service delivery was challenged by limited supplies and restricted mobility; increased water demand resulted in limited capacities; worsened the already present economic crisis in Africa). Nevertheless, a positive outcome has been an increased awareness of the relevance of WASH for public health. Other effects were secondary (e.g., Lower levels of sanitation services; threatened financial sustainability for providers and limited new investments).

## 2.3.2 Economic Theme

### 2.3.2.1 Water and Agriculture (Water-Food-Energy Nexus)

The sessions on Water and Agriculture started with two presentations. The first presentation was given by Valere Nzeyimana, FAO, and focused on **Water Management and Sustainable**

**Agriculture**, while the second one was made by Dr. Abdulkarim H Seid, IWMI, with the title: **Water – Energy – Food Nexus, manage trade-offs and build synergies**.

The presentation by FAO underscored that Africa is not on track to meet food security and nutrition targets of SDG2. After a long period of improvement between 2000 and 2013, hunger has worsened substantially and most of this deterioration occurred between 2019 and 2020. Africa, with 60% of world arable land but only 12% that is irrigated (4% to 6% irrigated in Sub Saharan Africa), imports more than 85% of its food. The number of undernourished people in Africa, which stood at 281.6 million in 2020, showed an increase of 89.1 million between 2014 and 2020. In 2020, 21 percent of Africans were still undernourished. Central Africa (with 31.8 per cent of the population) and East Africa (with 28.1 per cent of the population) are the most affected by undernourishment.

Table 2: Number of people undernourished (millions)

	2000	2010	2014	2015	2019	2020
World	800.3	636.8	606.9	615.1	650.3	768.0
Africa	200.9	187.4	192.5	199.7	235.3	281.6
Central Africa	39.8	38.0	41.8	44.3	52.9	57.1
Eastern Africa	102.7	96.3	93.6	96.5	111.3	125.1
Northern Africa	15.7	14.8	13.0	13.6	15.5	17.4
Southern Africa	3.0	3.6	4.2	4.7	5.1	6.8
Western Africa	39.6	34.7	39.8	40.5	50.6	75.2

SOURCE: FAO.

The session on Water-Food-Energy nexus highlighted that interconnectedness is ideal for synergy, and remains crucial for rural/urban livelihoods, food and nutrition security and economic development. A few examples were presented that demonstrate the efforts being made by various actors across Africa in addressing the sectoral trade-offs and enhancing synergies, i.e., following the nexus approach, it was underscored that a lot needs to be done.

The nexus approach has been recognized as critical for ensuring that achievements in one target doesn't lead to negative impact on others, there is no nexus focused target under the SDGs. Further, there is a lack of consistent methodology and tools for monitoring and reporting on progress towards realization of the nexus approach. The session presented examples of projects in Africa in energizing food and water systems, boosting productivity in water, energy and food systems, advancing innovation within the context of the nexus, availing capacity development to countries to implement nexus initiatives, monitoring and cross-sectoral governance, research and development in nexus solutions, and the importance of gender and social inclusion. In linking with the private sector for investment in the nexus, developing the right business models was emphasized.

In the discussions that followed, participants provided their feedbacks on the topics presented and provided suggestions on how to address the water, food, and energy challenges of Africa. It was noted that, with respect to applying the nexus approach, southern Africa is advanced compared to other parts of the continent. It was also highlighted that lack of infrastructure for managing climate variability on Africa's agricultural system is one key challenge. Use of groundwater and, for that matter, sustainably energizing agri-food systems is an important area of intervention to de-risk the food production system in most of Africa. It was also recognized that water – energy – food – ecosystem nexus issues are highly context specific. Therefore, Africa needs to define its nexus research in context specific manner.

### 2.3.2.2 Water and Urban settings

Next followed the intervention of UN HABITAT by Simon Okoth. Several key points with respect to water and sanitation, and urban settings were pointed out:

- 1 billion people live in informal settlements and slums in overcrowded and inadequate housing
- 2.2 billion people lack adequate access to safe water
- 3.6 billion people lack safely managed sanitation services, including 494 million practicing open defecation

Key issues are the old and deteriorated infrastructure for water in contrast to rapidly increasing urban growth and climate change impacts.

Key strategies to confront these issues may for instance include :

- Committing to universal access to drinking safe water and sanitation (principle of leaving no one behind).
- Adopting and scaling city wide inclusive approaches
- Prioritizing equity and social inclusion: strengthening citizen engagements including specific focus to the most marginalized, vulnerable and gender considerations.
- considering a range of all applicable and suitable technological options for urban areas of all sizes and social strata.
- Mainstreaming WASH in overall urban development framework
- UN-Habitat's Water and Sanitation Programme towards United Nations General Assembly's 2018-2028 International Decade for Action

The objective of the Water and Sanitation Programme of UN-Habitat is to provide an update on the UN-Habitat's urban water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in Africa as a commitment towards supporting efforts towards realization of Africa Water Vision 2025, achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, the Africa Union' Agenda 2063- the African we want, and the water and sanitation aspects of the New Urban Agenda (NUA). As UN Member Agency, UN-Habitat also aligns itself and activities in WASH to the United Nations General Assembly's 2018-2028 International Decade for Action under which "Water for Sustainable Development" is a priority in order to accelerate efforts towards tackling water-related challenges. The initiatives includes:

- **The Water and Sanitation Trust Fund:** To support the implementation of the above programme activities, UN-Habitat launched the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund (WSTF) in 2003. The Trust Fund (now called Urban Basic Services Trust Fund) was initiated in response to two major international calls: Millennium Development Goal 7, Target 10 which aims *"to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by the year 2015"*, and an appeal in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which added a target on *"reducing by half the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015"*. The Trust Fund has enabled UN-Habitat to leverage funds in partnership with regional development banks such as the African Development Bank, and European Investment Bank to implement Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Initiative (LVWATSAN) phases one two in the East African Community (EAC).

- **Building strategic partnerships with financing institutions:** Partnerships are established with development banks and international financing institutions which fund huge infrastructure projects. By providing pre-investment planning and capacity development to partner countries, UN-HABITAT ensures that such projects benefit from faster appraisal and preparation, stronger focus on the poor, greater ownership by recipient cities and sustainability of investments through capacity building.
- **Programme activities and achievements:** The Water and Sanitation Programme of UN-Habitat supports a combination of operational field projects and normative work. Core elements of the Programme include engagement in policy and institutional reforms to support national and local governments in developing appropriate legal and institutional frameworks for integrated urban water and sanitation management, implementing field projects to demonstrate innovative approaches that can effectively and sustainably improve access for poor people to clean water and basic sanitation in targeted communities, strengthening the technical and management capacity of urban water and sanitation operators to ensure institutional efficiency, effectiveness and resilience in service provision and to provide adequate levels of service for the urban poor, and tracking progress in the achievement of relevant SDG targets and the NUA.
- **Policy and institutional reforms programmes:** Technical and advisory support is given to partner countries through policy dialogue, sector review and strategy development. UN-Habitat has implemented a number of field projects aimed at demonstrating innovative approaches that can effectively and sustainably improve access for poor people to clean water and basic sanitation in targeted communities.
- **Improving sanitation in the Low-Income Settlements of Mwanza, Tanzania:** The LVWATSAN-Mwanza project is supported through financial assistance by the European Investment Bank and Agence Française de Développement (AFD) worth 13.1 million Euros. The ongoing sanitation project is delivering over 300 sanitation facilities to meet the sanitation needs of about 250,000 persons, including 150 schools. UN-Habitat's role include: i) coordination between the key institutional stakeholders on the project, made up of the Ministry of Water, the Mwanza Urban Water and Sanitation Authority, the Mwanza City Council, the Illemela Municipal Councils, as well as the councils for Magu, Misungwi, and Lamadi; ii) setting up management and coordination structures to include the preparation and operationalizing of MoUs between MWAUWASA and the Mwanza City/Illemella Municipal Councils; and satellite towns of Magu, Misungwi and Lamadi; a Sanitation Project Steering Committee (SC) and a Sanitation Task Force (STF) for the project; iii) preparation and facilitation for the adoption of a stakeholder engagement plan (SEP); as well as the set up and operationalizing of Multi Stakeholder Forums (MSFs).
- **Improving WASH in Peri-urban Areas of Mzuzu City and Karonga Town in Malawi:** UN-Habitat through cooperation with European Union Delegation in Malawi, UN-Habitat have implemented water supply and sanitation projects in Mzuzu city and Karonga town of Malawi. Key outcomes of the project include increased access to sustainable water supply for 21, 000 people and 30,000 school children, increased access to improved sanitation to 51,000 persons as well as hygiene and sanitation awareness promotion and practice through CLTS approaches in 8 communities and SLTS approaches in 11 schools, strengthened capacity of four local institutions and communities to operate and manage WASH facilities, and boosting the financial standings of poor women and improve their livelihoods through adapting sanitation technological options and marketing approaches that focus on the sanitation value chain.



- **Building flood resilient WASH infrastructure in Disaster-prone Communities in Ghana:** With support from Global Affairs Canada (GAC), UN-Habitat is improving sustainable access to disaster-resilient WASH facilities in 265 disaster prone communities of 24 Districts to benefit a total population of 200,000 beneficiaries including 50,000 school children in Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions of Ghana. The WASH in DPC Programme, aims to strengthen community resilience in disaster-prone regions by building human and institutional capacity in disaster risk management and expanding access to resilient WASH services. The Programme is being implemented as a collaborative effort by four UN agencies, led by UN-Habitat.
- **Global Water Operators Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA):** Through the Global Water Operators Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA), UN-Habitat is supporting the performance improvement of urban water and sanitation operators and makes linkages with investments needed for infrastructure upgrade, particularly related to extension of services to the poor, the circular economy, and adaptation to climate change. In Africa, GWOPA finalized the implementation of a project in nine countries in which a series of WOPs were implemented to enhance the capacity of nine urban water operators in areas such as non-revenue water, human resource policy, GIS, extension of services, customer relations, billing, and many others. GWOPA is currently working with the utilities on the mobilization of the needed financial resources to implement these plans in follow up technical assistance and capacity building interventions. GWOPA has partnered with AfWA with the aim of building capacities of WOPs and making them take up more of sanitation activities thus creating more sanitation operators' partnerships (SOPs). UNICEF and GWOPA/UN-Habitat has also joined forces to build the capacity of Ethiopian water service providers through WOPs.
- **Capacity building and technical assistance to water service providers:** Capacity building and technical assistance are provided to local authorities, water utilities and other service providers to improve their capacity to deliver effective and efficient services while addressing the needs of the urban poor. Key areas of focus include poverty mapping, development of strategic business plans, gender mainstreaming and women empowerment, preparation and implementation of performance improvement plans, water demand management, billing and revenue collection, and customer care and block mapping. Peer-to-peer exchange mechanisms have also created opportunities for practical exchange of experiences among service providers. Under the Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Initiative Phase II (LVWATSAN II), UN-Habitat has strengthened the capacity of 15 local authorities and 15 water utilities since 2012 to ensure the efficient delivery of water, sanitation and refuse collection and disposal services and the long-term sustainability of programme investments. LVWATSAN II is a regional programme .

Moreover, it was highlighted that reported indicator values for WASH are low in line with earlier reported data, but also a number of countries are not reporting .at all on sanitation, and those reporting claim the availability of data is low. Root issues here may be weak policies and legislative framework, lack of clarity of mandate among relevant government ministries, lack of integration between spatial plans and infrastructure plans, inadequate national/subnational data.

A number of Opportunities for transformation and recovery were presented:

- Enhanced communication and coordination
- Increased innovation and improved efficiency through digital transformation, increased water recycling/reuse, stakeholder engagement, leakage detection
- Earmarking financial resources for WASH.
- Increased access towards finalization of the human rights to water and sanitation coupled to financing (to meet all targets of SDG 6 and funding for sanitation and hygiene lag that for water)
- Green recovery, including climate adaptation and mitigation: build back better, water conservation policies linkages with response

### 2.3.2.3 Finance, Investments, and Infrastructure

Africa has 411 million people who lack basic drinking water services, 779 million lack basic sanitation services and 839 million lack basic hygiene services. There are significant inequalities between and within countries, including between urban and rural, between sub-national regions and between the richest and the poorest.

There are key drivers for water risks. *Firstly*, population growth and urbanization. It is estimated that by 2050, the population in urban areas will double to 1.49 billion from 599 million. This will result in an increase in slums and poor water supply and sanitation infrastructure. *Secondly*, slow economic growth particularly in transition states exacerbated by COVID-19 induced economic losses will result in underfunding for the required infrastructure in the water and sanitation sector. *Thirdly*, the climate variability and change has not only destroyed the limited water and sanitation infrastructure but also the risk for recurrent drought which is limiting more people in accessing safe drinking water and improved sanitation services. In fact, many African countries suffer either absolute (North and Southern regions) or economic water scarcity (West, Central and East regions).

According to the latest GLAAS report of 2022, the access to basic water supply in 2020 in Africa was 68% leaving 32% without access. It also reported that only 40% of the population has access to basic sanitation leaving 60% with have no access. In order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goal #6, Africa will require a 12x increase in current rates of progress on safely managed drinking water, 20x increase for safely managed sanitation and a 42x increase for basic hygiene services. However, the challenges remain which include:

- (i) Limited access to investment finance. While US\$ 13.3 billion was committed to water infrastructure in 2018, according to ICA report of 2019, Africa had a financing gap of between US\$ 43 and US\$ 53 billion annually. The COVID-19 pandemic has also, changed the financing landscape, influenced the change in priorities and diverted the financing commitments and now coupled with war in Ukraine.
- (ii) High level of fragmentation and low financing allocations; Inadequate pipeline of bankable projects; and Limited knowledge about trends in sector finance (especially with respect to Climate Finance)
- (iii) The need for technology transfer and innovations in providing water, including through financing water treatment for reuse and desalination.
- (iv) Shortage of water resources in the arid regions of Africa and the increasing water stress and scarcity.

#### *2.3.2.4 Transboundary Water Cooperation.- “ Making the Invisible Visible”*

There are more than 106 identified Transboundary Aquifers in Africa and more than 46 basins, covering over 40% of the continent area, where more than one third resides. Therefore, a session was organized on Transboundary (Ground)water cooperation, based on the results of the SDG indicator 6.5.2, “Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation” in the continent. UNESCO (Mr Aurelien Dumont) and UNECE (Mr. Komlan Sangbana) as the co-custodians of the indicator, presented their latest findings. Their presentation was followed by one made by Ms. Karen Villholth and Mr. Moshood Tijani on AMCOW’s APAGroP.

An overall improvement has been observed with 43 out of 48 countries sharing water resources responding to the SDG 6.5.2 survey (compared to 37 in 2017) and the received responses had an increased quality. The reporting benefited from AMCOW, SADC and UNECA concerted efforts (e.g., Progress report on transboundary water cooperation in Africa in progress), however, the information provided on shared aquifers is still a challenge.

Only two countries have all of their transboundary waters covered by operational arrangements (11 countries with all surface waters covered 3 countries with all aquifers covered). The session concluded that there is a need to:

1. Strengthen: legal frameworks (based on the water conventions and the draft articles on transboundary aquifers) and basin governance in all RBOs and RECs, as called for by the Dakar Action Plan
2. Strengthen Africa’s human resources capital at all levels (with a focus on gender) and professional knowledge, including in negotiating and operational arrangements and raise awareness of decision-makers and communities. Current mechanisms and programmes should be utilized like AMCOW’s -Groundwater Programme, AUDA-NEPAD’s Centres of Excellence in Water, UNESCO’s Chairs and Centres in Water (in Africa), SADC’s GMI among others.
3. Strengthening transboundary water cooperation is essential for achieving water-related SDGs and the broader sustainable development goals (SDGs). Transboundary water cooperation needs to be based on the rules and principles of international law and conventions. Cooperation should include sharing data, monitoring, forecasting and warning, and capacity building, among other measures as exemplified by the SADC Protocol for Transboundary Watercourses and the OMVS. Water is by nature cross-cutting and knows no boundaries and, if properly managed, it will be a catalyst for Regional Cooperation and Economic Integration towards achieving SDG 6 and beyond, promoting climate resilience, protecting and fulfilling human right to water, and promoting the Africa We Want.
4. Address the vast data and knowledge gaps, especially in groundwater, and develop mechanisms for information gathering and sharing, investing in open source, open-access tools in transboundary water management. Innovative ways of data gathering including remote sensing should be employed and telemetry, artificial intelligence and Internet of Things should become part and parcel of data collection, analysis and use.
5. There is a need to support AMCOW’s Groundwater Program to enhance information, data and knowledge base for effective groundwater management and governance in the Member States
6. The establishment of an AMCOW Multi-Donor Trust Fund and a Partners Platform for transboundary water cooperation would help facilitate transboundary cooperation.

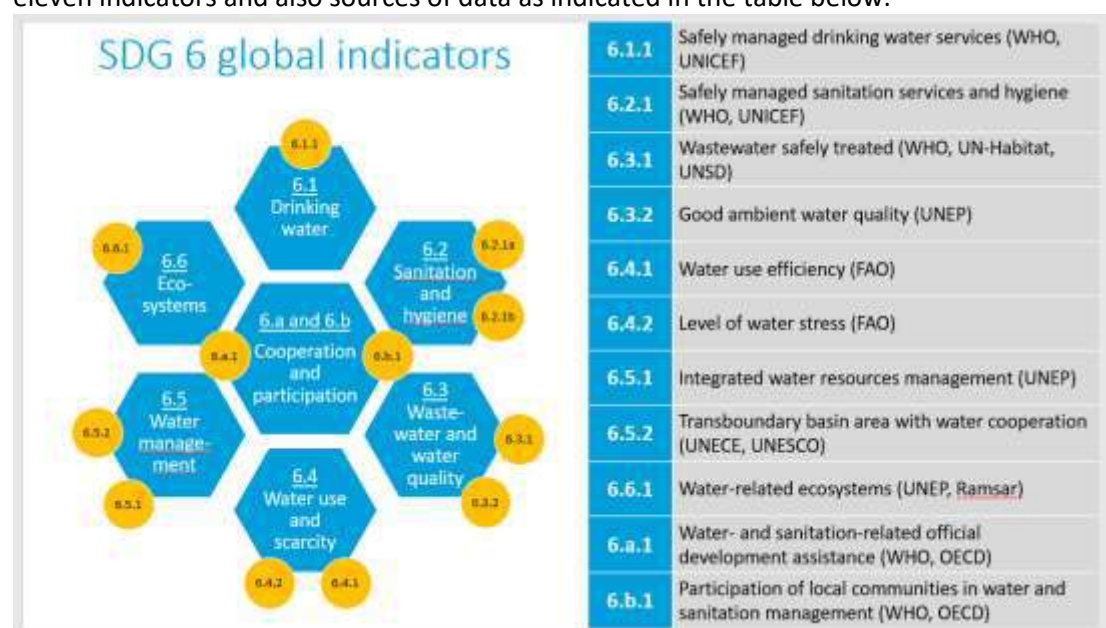
7. Investment should be guided to scientific and innovative, actionable research in order to enhance the understanding of the resource and the links between research, policy, and governance of transboundary water resources including Transboundary Aquifers
8. Last but not least, there is a need for an increase in the investment (from public, private or PPP) in the development of transboundary (ground)water resources for regional cooperation and sustainable development

## 2.3.3 Environment Theme

### 2.3.3.1 Water Resources Management, Ecosystem Conservation and Climate

The session was co-convened by the AUDA-NEPAD Water Centers of Excellence, UNESCO and AMCOW, and provided the opportunity to discuss three sub-topics namely 1) Integrated Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Conservation, 2) Climate and 3) Water and Knowledge and Technology, Education. Eventually, sub-topics were merged into 1) Integrated Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Conservation and Climate and 2) Water and Knowledge and Technology, Education.

The session was opened by Liz Mullin Berhardt (UNEP) who provided an overview of the progress of SDG6 – Sustainable water and sanitation for all. She provided an overview of the eleven indicators and also sources of data as indicated in the table below:



The global status is as follows:

- SDG 6.3.1 Wastewater: that less than 50% of domestic wastewater is safely treated in 24 out of 75 reporting countries (where most countries are high-income countries),
- SDG 6.3.2 Water Quality: over 3 billion people are at risk because the health of their river, lakes and groundwater is unknown
- SDG 6.5.1 Integrated Water Resource Management: 129 countries are not on track to have sustainably managed water resources by 2030
- SDG 6.6.1 Ecosystems: 1/5 of the world's river basins are experiencing rapid changes in the area covered by surface water

It was indicated that change can happen through

- Regional and sub-regional learning exchanges whereby regional organizations potentially take lead?
- Improved Investment (incl. donor) coordination platforms
- Improved Coordination / consultation mechanisms at a national level.
- The implementation of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme
- The implementation of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework

The presentation was followed by Kidanemariam Jembere, Technical Advisor, GWP Africa Coordination Unit who focused on the African implementation of SDG 6.5.1 Integrated Water Resources Management. From the presentation it is evident that Africa is lagging behind the implementation of SDG 6.5.1 – IWRM with regional differences in terms of the Enabling Environment; Institutions and Participation; Management Instruments and Financing

- **Enabling Environment:** Here, the SADC Region has done well followed by Eastern African and Central Africa. The SADC Region has implemented the following policies, plans and regulations in this regard:
  - The Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses (2000) -1995 emphasizes the equitable use of water resources, using the guiding principles of IWRM
  - Regional Water Policy (2005)
  - Regional Water Strategy (SADC, 2006)
  - Guidelines for Strengthening RBOs (SADC, 2010a)
  - Climate Change Adaptation in SADC, Strategy for the Water Sector (2011)
  - Regional Strategic Action Plan. IWRM V: 2021-2025
  -
- **Institutions and Participation:** Again, the SADC Region has done well in terms of institutional organisation and participation, followed by West and North Africa.
- **Management Instruments:** Here, North-, West- and Southern Africa have done well, followed by Eastern- and Central Africa
- **Financing** at a national-, sub-regional-, basin level and budgeted for. In this regard, North- and Southern Africa has done better relative to Western- and Central Africa.

### *2.3.3.2 Water and Knowledge and Technology, Education*

Within the context of the broader African Higher Education, Knowledge and Technology sector, various initiatives exist that support research and capacity development on the African continent. As far back as September 2000, African countries and the international community adopted the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations Millennium Summit. African leaders have identified water scarcity and related water insecurity as one of the sources of the Continent's underdevelopment and increasing socio-economic decline.

The first conference of the African Ministers Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST), held in Johannesburg in 2003, adopted Water Science and Technology (S&T) as one of the main flagship programs of NEPAD. Thus, in the framework of the NEPAD, the leaders have committed themselves to “ensure sustainable access to safe and adequate clean water supply and sanitation, especially for the poor” and they adopted that S&T will play an important role in water development, supply and management and that S&T is crucial for assessing, monitoring, and ensuring water and sanitation supply, conservation and quality. The flagship program should strengthen the Continent's capabilities to harness and apply S&T to address

the challenges of securing adequate clean water as well as managing the Continent's resources to become a basis for National and Regional cooperation and development.

On 22 November 2006, the African Ministers responsible for Science and Technology and Water (AMCOST and AMCOW) met in Cairo, Egypt. By resolution, delegates committed themselves to establish an African Network of Excellence in Water Sciences and Technology Development with the (then) NEPAD being the implementing Agent. Currently, there are 20 universities and research institutions in three networks (Southern African - SANWATCE; Western Africa – WANWATCE and Central/Eastern Africa (CEANWATCE), collectively forming the AUDA-NEPAD NEPAD Networks of Water Centres of Excellence, which focus on a broad spectrum of water research and capacity development

Other continental initiatives, such as the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), the World Bank Centers of Excellence and the UNESCO Research Chairs initiative build research and capacity in the water and related fields. In the SADC region, WaterNet, as a subsidiary institution of the SADC Secretariat, has contributed significantly through its Master's Program in IWRM since 2000.

More recently, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) also established five Centers of Excellence across the African continent addressing key development priorities in Agenda 2063. The five Centres are 1) Rural Resources and Food Systems (Dakar, Senegal); 2) Climate Resilience (Cairo, Egypt), 3) Science and Technology and Innovation Hub (Stellenbosch, South Africa), 4) Human Capital and Institutions Development (Nairobi, Kenya) and 5) Supply Chain and Logistics (to be determined in Central Africa). These Centers will undertake home-grown research, capacity development, technology development and technology transfer to the benefit of the African continent

It is further important to note the strides AMCOW has made to establish the AMCOW Knowledge Hub to collect and disseminate Africa's water and sanitation sector information and knowledge not just to decision-makers, but to the knowledge community at large

The session itself was initiated with a presentation by Jorge Ellis (UNESCO) providing an overview of the indicator for Water Education, developed by UNESCO. Here, the indicator proposed is:

***water professionals by sex by total inhabitant per million.***

Alice Aureli (UNESCO) further provided detail of the Global Acceleration Framework with online and in-person participants providing feedback.

#### ***2.3.3.3 UN SDG6 Acceleration Framework***

The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework aims to deliver fast results in countries at an increased scale as part of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030. The Framework will assist countries in raising their ambition to rapidly accelerate towards national targets for SDG 6 and, in doing so, contribute to progress across the 2030 Agenda: poverty reduction, food security, health, gender equality, peace, sustainability and climate resilience of communities, ecosystems and production systems.

The multilateral system and its partners will dramatically improve its support to countries for SDG 6 on water and sanitation through swift and well-coordinated responses to country



requests, coordinated action under five accelerator themes to unlock bottlenecks, and strengthened accountability:

- **Financing** – Optimize financing to the sector
- **Data & information** – Build trust through data generation and exchange for decision-making and accountability
- **Capacity development** – Focus on the human capacity to deliver sustainable services
- **Innovation** – Leverage innovation to accelerate SDG 6
- **Governance**

The session discussed the implementation of the Acceleration framework in the African region. The accelerator themes were considered relevant for the continent, as shown by the outcomes of the different themes discussed at the conference.

The role of ECA, AU Commission /AMCOW and AfDB as pivotal organizations traditionally supporting countries' efforts in the water sector in Africa in close collaboration with other leading UN entities such as UNICEF, UNEP, and UNESCO, was recalled by participants. However, SDG 6 is alarmingly off track on the continent and the continuous concerted efforts of these organizations and others in providing support to countries to address pressing and urgent challenges were stressed. Revitalizing the UN-Water Africa should contribute to responding efficiently and effectively to country and regional requests by facilitating connection to expertise, technical assistance, and support. Partnerships should also be scaled at regional and river, lake and aquifer basin scales, including better integration of RECs, inclusive RBOs, local stakeholders and communities, to generate and sustain political will, to mobilize public and private entities for cooperation, innovation, and reform and to foster effective, sustainable and peaceful management of water resources and prevent conflicts.

## 2.4 Outcomes of the regional consultation – Key messages per theme

### 2.4.1 Opening plenary

- a) The member states should put in place systems and mechanisms to improve the water sector performance and efficiency to attract more finance to the sector to ensure water for life, food security, livelihoods, and agriculture, as well as sustainable development and regional economic and social integration.
- b) The member states, Development Partners (DPs) and private sector should increase investments in climate-smart water management interventions for enhancing resilience of member states to climate change to alleviate poverty and preserve ecosystems.
- c) The DPs and private sector should strengthen capacities of member states in the preparation of bankable programs and projects; and
- d) Governments and Heads of State support and promote the African Water Facility through investments.

The meeting also agreed to have targeted messages to the member states, DPs and private as follows:

#### ***UN member countries***

- a) Facilitate and diversify mobilization of domestic finance.
- b) Mobilize public and concessional funds into the water sector and target those funds to accelerate the achievement of the sustainable development Goals and Targets.
- c) Encourage the most productive uses of water resources while taking into account their effective and cooperative management to accelerate regional integration ; and



- d) Create an enabling environment for public private partnership in water sector – legislation and regulation to promote the human right to water is affected for all segments of society

#### ***Development Partners***

- a) Orient support toward improving efficiency and creditworthiness and mobilizing domestic finance.
- b) Deploy use of guarantees and other instruments to crowd commercial finance into the sector.
- c) Facilitate blended finance; and
- d) Support the development of bankable and sustainable programs and projects.

#### ***Private Sector***

- a) Partner with the public sector toward improving capital & operating efficiency.
- b) Reach out to the public sector to explore potential and viable financing relationships and transactions.
- c) Ensure that investments take into account environmental regulations to assure sustainability of projects and programs.

### **2.4.2 Special session on Groundwater**

At the end the following recommendations were suggested:

1. AMCOW to play a pivotal role in political commitment and institutionalization of Groundwater Governance by MS, which is critical for the sustainable development of the continent
2. Use the Groundwater Summit 2022 as an opportunity to bridge the science-policy gap and to convey a strong message to the mid-term review of the water decade.
3. Sustainable exploitation of transboundary groundwater resources requires coordinated actions and information exchanges among the countries sharing them.
4. Support existing structures like AMCOW's Pan-African Groundwater Program (APAGroP) to enhance information, data and knowledge base for effective groundwater management and governance in Member States.
5. Support actionable research that will lead to science-based decision making
6. Invest in human resources at all levels and strengthen professional knowledge and capacities.
7. Accelerate gender equality and women/girls empowerment through their participation in ground water governance and management, in scientific education and capacity, and through dedicated gender funding.
8. Development and maintenance of open source, open access groundwater databases, hydrogeological maps and regular monitoring of groundwater levels and quality
9. Explore mechanisms on how public and private investments can be deployed for groundwater resources development in Africa.

### **2.4.3 Social**

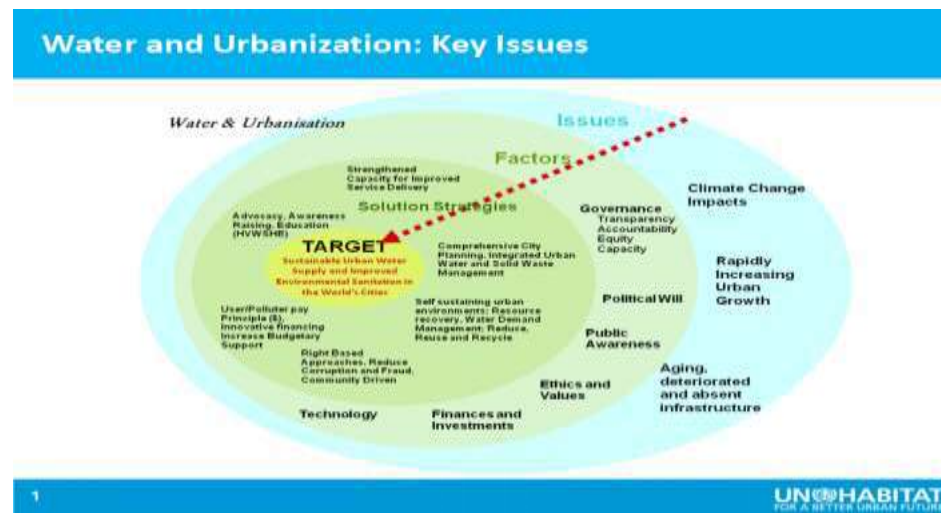
#### ***2.4.3.1 Water Resources Engagement, Ecosystem Conservation and Climate***

As an outcome of the session, the following conclusions and recommendations were provided for **Sub-topic 1: Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Conservation and Climate**:

- Need to strengthen the enabling environment, Institutions and participation, Management instruments and Financing mechanisms for African member states and R/L/A Basin Organizations to implement IWRM at all levels including through source to sea approach.
- Strengthening Legal frameworks based on strengthening RECs and RBOs in driving transboundary water governance and IWRM that takes into account all regional priorities and protects the ecosystem for future generations.
- Need to develop IWRM action plans: Regional/Transboundary/National/Sub-National IWRM Investment Plans.
- Strengthen IWRM coordination mechanisms and further need to be multi-sectoral for example the WEF Nexus and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) – Water Security
- Need for an improved accounting: consolidation/analysis of data on investments and to mobilize finance for example the new opportunity of the Continental Africa Water Investment Program (AIP), adopting new/innovative financing mechanisms—blending, climate finance.
- Utilise the new opportunity: International High-Level Panel on Water Investment in Africa launched by the AU Chairperson- H.E Macky Sall, President of Senegal during the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal.
- Support the Water and Climate Leaders’ initiative to launch an Africa-wide Water Information System, which will provide freely accessible climatological, hydrological and socio-economic data, paving the way for better water-climate adaptation.
- A need for transparency, anti-corruption and accountability
- Coordinated financing for efficient use of resources
- Need to support decision-makers to increase Advocacy increased funding for water in national budgets
- Private sector action and a need for an increase of Public-Private Partnerships not just for finance, but for the industry to be an implementation partner.
- Revenue raising with focus on domestic resource mobilization including capacity for regulation and enforcement.
- A need to mobilize and access other funding sources, for example, climate financing, COVID-19 recovery packages
- Practical implementation and evidence of IWRM as a priority and need to be accelerated
- Need for an increase in data for IWRM decision support and translation. For example, accessing and increasing HYCOS to improve regional cooperation, in the fields of water resources information, flood and drought management across the continent

#### 2.4.3.2 Water in Urban Settings

The presentation Mr. Simon Okoth of UN-Habitat noted that the agency promotes transformative change in cities and human settlements through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance and collaborative action to leave no one and no place behind. It proceeded to illustrate the key issues of WASH in Urban Setting in the figure below:



The following initiatives were briefly presented for the Water in Urban Settings sub-theme in the Africa region:

- The Water and Sanitation Trust Fund:  
To support the implementation of the UN-Habitat programme activities, UN-Habitat launched the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund (WSTF) in 2003.
  - Building strategic partnerships with financing institutions:
  - Partnerships are established with development banks and international financing institutions which fund huge infrastructure projects.
- Field Programmes

The Water and Sanitation Programme of UN-Habitat supports a combination of operational field projects and normative work. Through the Global Water Operators Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA), UN-Habitat is supporting the performance improvement of urban water and sanitation operators.

In Africa, GWOPA finalized the implementation of a project in nine countries in which a series of WOPs were implemented to enhance the capacity of nine urban water operators in areas such as non-revenue water, human resource policy, GIS, an extension of services, customer relations, billing, and many others.

GWOPA is currently working with the utilities on the mobilization of the needed financial resources to implement these plans in follow-up technical assistance and capacity building interventions. GWOPA has partnered with AfWA with the aim of building capacities of WOPs and making them take up more sanitation activities thus creating more sanitation operators' partnerships (SOPs).

UNICEF and GWOPA/UN-Habitat has also joined forces to build the capacity of Ethiopian water service providers through WOPs.

- Policy and institutional reforms:  
Technical and advisory support is given to partner countries through policy dialogue, sector review and strategy development. Some of the key issues and constraints are:

## Institutional/policy constraints to effective Urban WASH Programmes

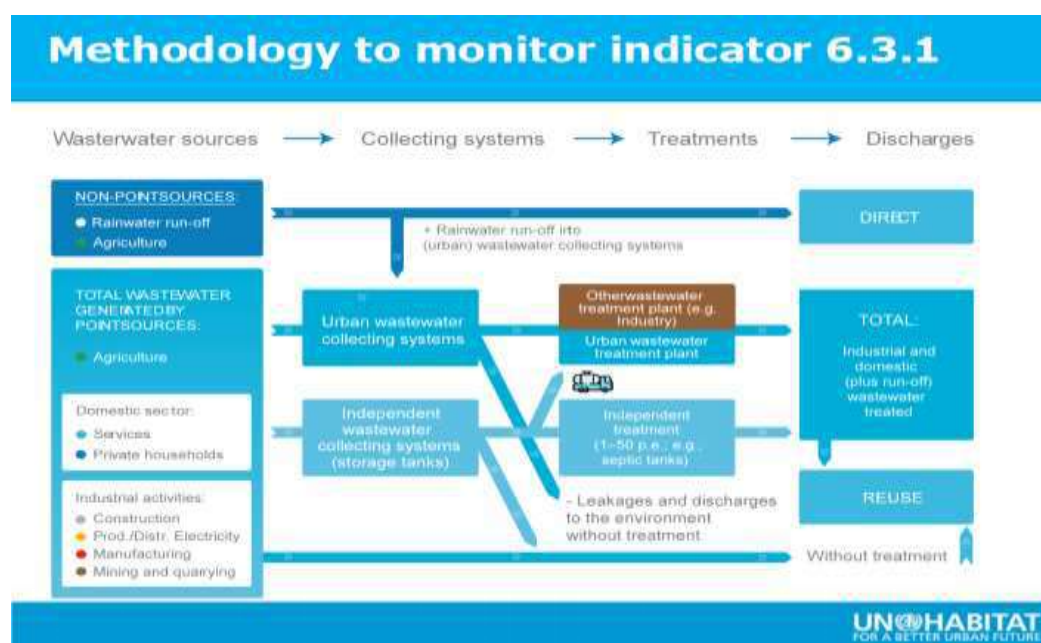
- Weak **policy & legislative framework** that promotes integration and coordination across relevant sectors.
- Lack of **clarity of mandate** among relevant government ministries and departments.
- Sub-sectors and partners working independently with plans and programs shaped by their own priorities/interests **without a holistic citywide vision**.
- Lack of integration between **spatial plans and infrastructure plans** - Planning and implementation of WASH services are often not coordinated with overall urban policies and plans.
- **Inadequate national/subnational data** to inform local service delivery, investment decision-making and national planning and accountability.



1

UNO HABITAT  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

As the Custodian Agency for the SDG Target 6.3.1 on Wastewater Disposal, the Methodology for the assessment was also summarized in the figure below:



Finally the progress made for some parts of Africa to date as compared with other SDG 6 indicators was presented in the figure below:

## WASH SDG Global Indicators for SSA %

6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	30
6.2.1a Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	21
6.2.1b Proportion of population with a handwashing facility with soap and water available at home (%)	26
6.3.1 Proportion of domestic wastewater flow safely treated (%)	28
6.3.1 Proportion of industrial wastewater flow safely treated (%)	-

1

UN HABITAT  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

### Key recommendations

1. Encourage inter-governmental (national and subnational/municipalities/cities authorities) coordination. SDG 6 has several indicators that are multi-sectoral in nature both at the national and sub-national levels which calls for strengthened coordination,
2. Need for development of more robust monitoring systems to support longer term data collection and management. 1) for cities where this data does exist, we need clear mechanisms to feed this into national government processes, and @) where data is absent there is need to identify mechanisms to build capacity, mainstream it across sectors such as collection of data through climate risk and vulnerability assessments and funding for effective monitoring and data management. Also linked to mechanisms to improving data management and access is the need to **localize the SDGs and their targets** – while a great deal of work has been done on this there is not a continent level push to localize the SDG targets and to harness urban centres contributions to these national and global targets and to formally identify mechanisms and roadmaps for subnational governments to actively contribute.
3. Cities are **incubators and catalysts of action at scale** if we build the capacity of cities to actively contribute to these targets, we could accelerate progress across international agreements and targets.
4. Need for out of the **box solutions** including harnessing nature-based solutions and decentralized approaches to addressing water and sanitation challenges and building local resilience and enhancing water management at the local level.

5. Promote initiatives that provide networks of partnerships critical in addressing urban water and sanitation resilience in Africa

#### *2.4.3.3 Water and Knowledge and Technology, Education*

In terms of **Sub-topic 2: Water Knowledge and Technology, Education, the following was concluded with key recommendations:**

- Monitor and evaluate: Global Indicator on water education – indicator number of water professionals by sex by total inhabitants (/per million) (UNESCO)
- Accelerate support for existing African Research and Capacity Development platforms and Networks, such as AUDA-NEPAD Centres of Excellence in Water Sciences (AMCOW/AMCOST Mandated), UNESCO Research Chairs, and Research Networks in Disaster Risk Reduction (PERIPERI-U) to support research and capacity development initiatives across the continent
- Mobilise African researchers to develop African WASH Research and Capacity Development Agendas and identification of priorities, which involve broad stakeholder engagements
- Strengthening Universities and Research Institutions to support member states in the provision of indicator data for AMCOW Monitoring Platform (WASSMO)
- Increase science for policy utilization and strengthen the capacity of researchers and policymakers to utilize research to the benefit of society
- Increase in capacity development at a Technical Vocational level (TVET)
- Increase education and research opportunities for youth and emerging scholars by developing specific programmes to address national and regional challenges and priorities. Here, considerations related to gender equality and vulnerable communities should be a priority
- Strengthen AMCOW Knowledge Management and Information sharing Platform as a source of WASH research and technical reports for better science-informed decision-making

#### *2.4.4 Economic*

##### **a) Water and Agriculture and Water-Energy-Food**

The recommendations and key messages from the discussions that followed are summarized below:

##### **Enhancing the knowledge base on the water resources base:**

- a. Most of the African countries do not have complete knowledge on the available water resources, including groundwater, in their respective countries. Therefore, there is a need to invest in expanding surface and groundwater monitoring infrastructure.
- b. There is a need for raising awareness on water both surface and groundwater conservation together with promoting its use. This should be reflected in the strategies, policies, programmes, and management practices.
- c. Science is critical to achieving the SDGs. In parallel to scaling of known solutions, expand Research and Development to develop new ways of providing food and nutrition security, and to deal with Climate Change

##### **Infrastructure for climate resilience: de-risking agriculture across rainfed – irrigation spectrum:**

- a. Accelerate and sustainably manage small-scale irrigation.



- b. Invest in enhancing productivity and climate resilience of small-scale food producers across the rainfed-irrigation spectrum
- c. There is a need to strengthen irrigation planning Quality Management systems for sustainable irrigation development and management.
- d. There is also need to strengthen planning, operation and Quality Management of rural water infrastructure to ensure their climate resilience and enhance their sustainability.
- e. Groundwater is essential for irrigation as well as it is for domestic water supply. Therefore, there is the need to further streamline groundwater policies and strategies into agricultural policies, and poverty reduction strategies for the crucial role water plays in Africa's rural areas.
- f. Sustainably expand the use of solar irrigation pump systems to strengthen small-scale irrigation
- g. Concerted efforts are needed to speedup covid-19 recovery and progress toward the SDGs

#### **Enhance awareness and capacity to mainstream nexus approach**

- a. Nexus issues are context specific. Therefore, Africa needs to define and work on its own nexus agenda to help it progress toward the SDGs.
- b. Expand actionable WEF (research to inform planning and management of water, energy, food systems while preserving ecosystems.
- c. Expand and nurture science – policy – practice dialogue on critical water – energy – food and ecosystem nexus challenges.
- d. Closer linkages (at policy and implementation levels) between water resources and other natural resources management sectors are needed to provide water for life, energy, livelihoods and food security.
- e. Invest in and adopt nexus assessment frameworks, tools, and innovative data infrastructure for assessing inter-sector trade-offs, enhancing synergies and ensure sustainable SDG outcomes across multiple interrelated targets.
- f. Mainstream WEFE Nexus issues in curricula of higher educational institutions

At the end of the discussions, the following recommendations were forwarded:

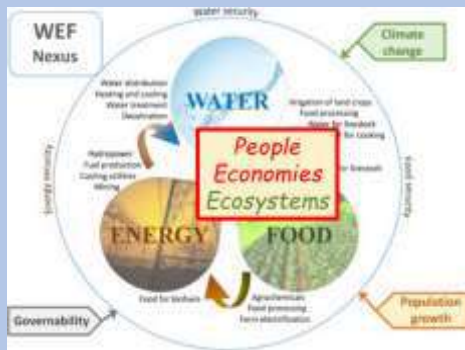
#### **Water and Agriculture: Key Recommendations**



1. Develop harmonized policies/strategies to enhance water productivity across rainfed – irrigation spectrum.
2. Develop and sustainably manage water storage and irrigation infrastructure for growth and agriculture productivity.
3. Strengthen data systems and mechanisms for the collection of real time information for decision making:



### Water – Energy – Food-Ecosystem Key Recommendations



1. Develop and implement assessment frameworks, tools and innovative data infrastructure for addressing inter-sector trade-offs, enhance synergies and ensure sustainable SDG outcomes across water – energy – food related targets.
2. Invest in actionable research to develop innovative and synergistic solutions for enhancing resources use efficiency across the water – energy and food nexus.
3. Develop member countries' capacities (human, institutional) for effectively mainstreaming the nexus approach across the water – energy – food – ecosystems.

### b) Finance, Investments and Infrastructure

Closing the financing gap is not a matter of spending more, but also spending with greater quality and efficiency. considering competing national goals and the characteristics of water infrastructure that make its financing challenging.

The meeting in Addis explored several actions to close the financing gap and agreed on the following key messages:

- a) The member states should put in place systems and mechanisms to improve the water sector performance and efficiency to attract more finance to the sector.
- b) The member states, Development Partners (DPs) and private sector should increase investments in climate-smart water management interventions for enhancing resilience and preserving the ecosystems considering climate change and its impacts.
- c) The DPs and private sector should strengthen capacities of member states in the preparation of viable and bankable programs and projects; and
- d) Governments and Heads of State should support and promote the African Water Facility through investments.

The meeting also agreed to have targeted messages to the member states, DPs and private as follows:

#### *UN member countries*

- a) Facilitate and diversify mobilization of domestic finance.
- b) Mobilize public and concessional funds into the water sector and target those funds to the most productive uses.
- c) Encourage capital efficiency in the water sector; and
- d) Create an enabling environment for public private partnership in water sector – legislation and regulation.

#### *Development Partners*

- a) Orient support toward improving efficiency and creditworthiness and mobilizing domestic finance.
- b) Deploy use of guarantees and other instruments to crowd commercial finance into the sector.
- c) Facilitate blended finance; and
- d) Support the development of bankable programs and projects.

### *Private Sector*

- a) Partner with the public sector toward improving capital & operating efficiency.
- b) Reach out to the public sector to explore potential and viable financing relationships and transactions.

### **c) Groundwater**

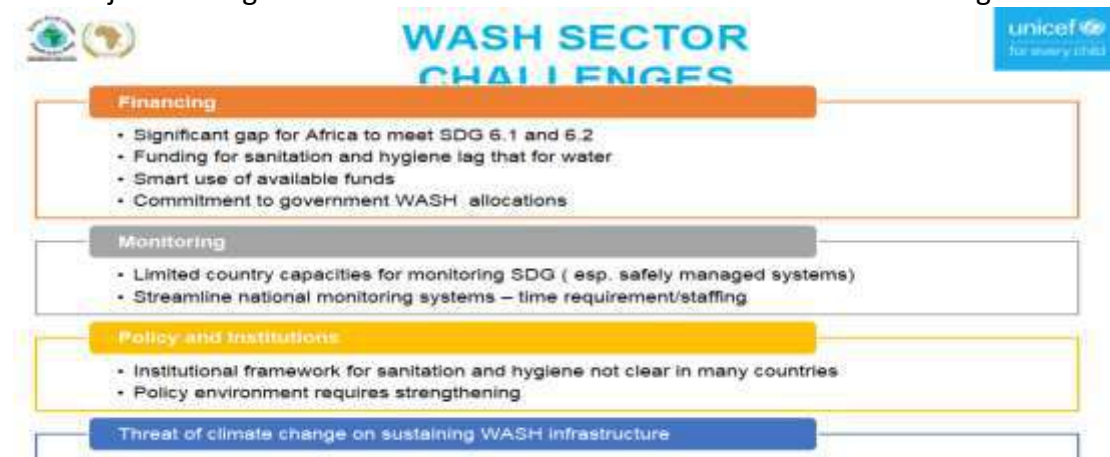
AT the end the following recommendations were suggested:

1. AMCOW to play a pivotal role in political commitment and institutionalization of Groundwater Governance by MS, which is critical for the sustainable development of the continent
2. Use the Groundwater Summit 2022 as an opportunity to bridge the science-policy gap and to convey a strong message to the mid-term review of the water decade.
2. Sustainable and effective development and management of transboundary groundwater resources requires coordinated actions and information exchanges among the countries sharing them.
3. Support existing structures like AMCOW's Pan-African Groundwater Program (APAGroP) to enhance information, data and knowledge base for effective groundwater management and governance in Member States.
4. Support actionable research that will lead to science-based decision making
5. Invest in human resources at all levels and strengthen professional knowledge and capacities.
6. accelerate gender equality and women/girls empowerment through their participation in ground water governance and management, in scientific education and capacity, and through dedicated gender funding.
7. Development and maintenance of open source, open access databases, hydrogeological maps and regular monitoring of all water resources especially groundwater levels and quality
8. Explore mechanisms on how public and private investments can be deployed for groundwater resources development in Africa.

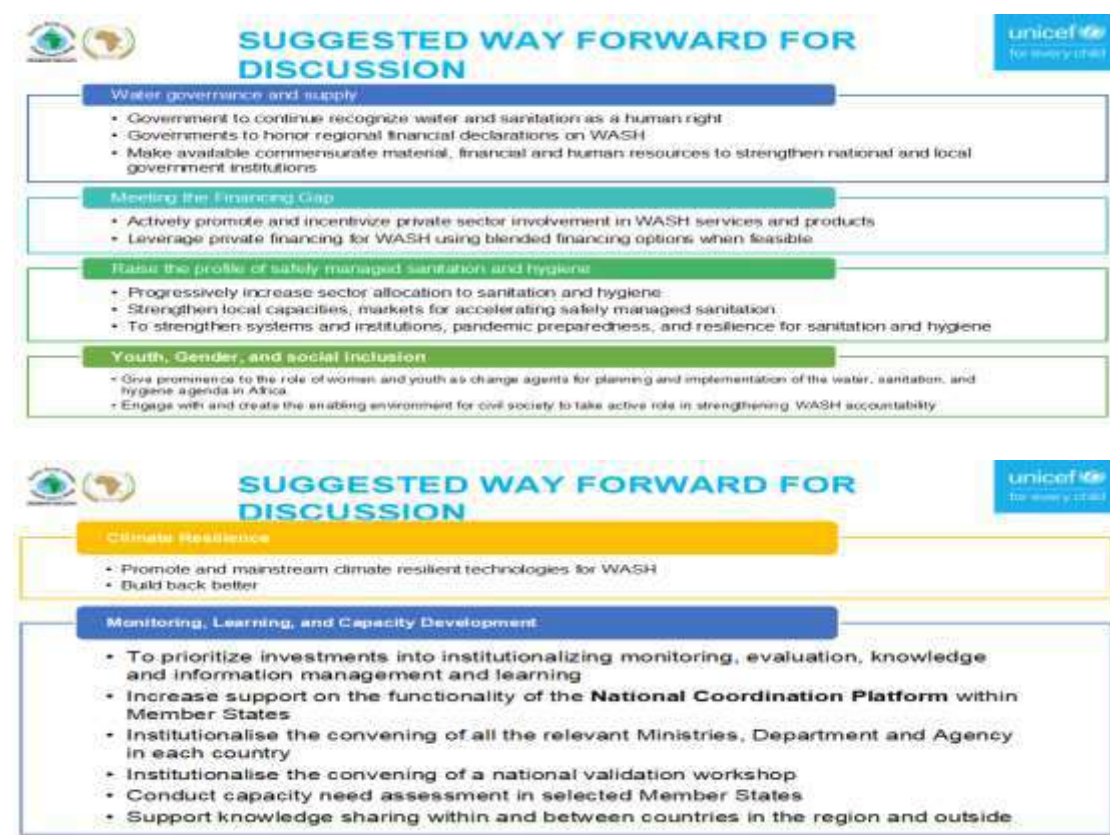
## **2.5 Challenges and Lessons Learnt**

### **2.5.1 Social**

The major challenges for the WASH sector in Africa are summarised in the figure below:



The lessons learnt and the focus of the working group led to the following lessons as the suggested way forward by the various stakeholders.



## 2.5.2 Economic

### 2.5.2.1 Water and Agriculture and Water-Energy-Food Nexus

The following main challenges were identified in the discussions that followed:

- Climate variability and extremes, and conflict,
- COVID-19, causing economic downturn in Africa and contributed to the worsening food security situation,
- Rapid population growth,
- Lack of relevant data and information exchange
- Sectoral fragmentation and deficient coordination at national level..
- Resource constraints (financial and human)
- Environmental degradation, especially taking into account that the Ecosystem preservation is one of the critical enabler of the Water- Food- Energy Nexus.

### 2.5.2.2 Finance, Investments, and Infrastructure

The main challenges in mobilizing and accessing Finance for Implementing the African Water Vision 2025 and the SDG 6 and other water related Goals include:

- Limited access to investment finance. While US\$ 13.3 billion was committed to water infrastructure in 2018, according to ICA report of 2019, Africa had a financing gap of between US\$ 43 and US\$ 53 billion annually. The COVID-19 pandemic has also, changed the financing landscape, influenced the change in priorities and diverted the financing commitments and now coupled with war in Ukraine;

- Inadequate pipeline of bankable projects;
- High level of fragmentation and low financing allocations;
- Limited climate financing; and
- Limited knowledge about trends in sector finance.

#### 2.5.2.3 *Groundwater*

The session went over the main challenges faced with groundwater in the African context:

- regulatory frameworks to protect and safeguard groundwater at national levels are still weak and need to be enforced
- Groundwater development is not limited by a lack of groundwater, but rather by a lack of:
  - a. investment, most notably in infrastructure,
  - b. institutions,
  - c. trained professionals and
  - d. knowledge of the resource.
  - e. Limited data collection and sharing of information.

#### 2.5.2.4 *Transboundary water Management*

A number of **challenges** were identified with Transboundary Water Management specifically:

- Difference between National administrative and legal frameworks
- lack of relevant data and information exchange
- Sectoral fragmentation at the national level
- Language barriers
- Resource constraints (financial and human)
- Environmental pressures
- Sovereignty concerns
- Lack of conjunctive (ground and surface) transboundary water management
- Stakeholder/gender representation and engagement

Despite the challenges there are rays of hope. Primary examples of cooperation in Africa include (but are not limited to) the Stampriet Transboundary Aquifer System (establishment of a Multi-Country Cooperation Mechanism (STAS MCCM) hosted within Orange-Senqu River Commission's (ORASECOM) Ground Water Hydrology Committee (GWHC)); the Niger Basin – and its Iullemeden-Taoudeni /Tanezrouft Aquifer; the Buzi River Basin – Agreement (Mozambique and Zimbabwe (2019)); the Senegal-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin (SMAB) cooperation; the Nubian Aquifer and the Convention for the Protection and Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts concerning the Management of Shared Water in Central Africa – 2020, signed by 11 ECCAS states. SADC is leading the transboundary cooperation with a more mature mechanism and tools in place.

#### 2.5.3 *Environment*

The session concluded by identifying the following main challenges:

- There are different levels of implementation and capacity of IWRM in different African regions
- In general, lack of coordination, communication, advocacy
- There is a fragmented approach in IWRM Governance and operations (silos)

- Need for assessing environmental impacts prior to water program/project implementation.
- Need for increased transparency, anti-corruption and accountability
- Limited private sector participation
- Need to increase research, knowledge management and capacity development
- Limited translation of science to policy for benefit of society
- Lack of IWRM data and decision support tools
- Limited youth participation and gender equity in addressing IWRM, Education, Knowledge management

## SECTION THREE

### 3.1 Road Map and Milestones to UN Water Conference 2023

The Roadmap to the UN2023 Water Conference when the Mid Term status of Implementation of the SDG 6 and related Goals will be reviewed, has many activities and Milestone planned in which the Africa Region stakeholders will be making their voice heard.

#### 3.1.1 Towards the UN 2023 Water Conference

The key events/milestones (<https://SDGs.un.org/conferences/water2023/meetings>) ahead to UN2023 Water Conference which were reported from the multi-stakeholder Africa Regional Consultations included:

- 1) **HPLF** in New York 5- 12 July 2022
  - 2) **The 4<sup>th</sup> African Climate Talks (ACT!)**, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 27-29 July, Maputo, Mozambique. (The event offers marginalized groups space to deliberate on just transition and climate resilience).
  - 3) International Symposium on ice, snow, and water in a warming world 21-26 August
  - 4) **The 10<sup>th</sup> Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA-X)**, October, Windhoek, Namibia (To shape Africa's key messages to COP27).
  - 5) **The 4<sup>th</sup> African Climate Talks (ACT!)**, 2nd Session, tentatively mid-September, Niamey, Niger (offers marginalized groups space to deliberate on just transition and human insecurity).
  - 6) **Africa Climate Week**, Thematic Session, 29 August to 02 September, Virtual, on discussions on advancing climate action.
  - 7) **World Water Week** (Stockholm, August)
  - 8) World Water Week 29 August to 2 September
  - 9) **UNESCO - IWRA Online Conference "Water Quality and Emerging Pollutants"** 24-26 October UNESCO HQ
  - 10) **Global Water Museums Network's (WAMU-NET)** 24-28 October Marrakech, Morocco
  - 11) **30th Anniversary UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme International Conference** 3-4 November UNESCO HQ
  - 12) **UN Climate Change Conference COP27**, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt 7 November Egypt
  - 13) **World Toilet Day** 19 November Theme "Groundwater" – Celebrations and campaign in coordination with UN-Water
  - 14) **AMCOW Executive Committee meeting** in Johannesburg. South Africa, November 2022
  - 15) **Cairo Water Week**
  - 16) **PGA Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Comprehensive Review Conference**, (New York, November)
  - 17) **Groundwater Summit** (Paris, 7 - 8 December)
  - 18) **Preparation of UN Secretary General Report** on the Water Action Decade.
-

## **19) UNESCO- EU H2020 Limnoplant conference      6-8 March 2023 UNESCO HQ**

### **3.1.2 Post Water Action Decade Conference**

Pan African Accelerated Implementation and Partnership Conference (PANAFCON II), Addis Ababa, December 2023 (tbc). This is proposed using the format and lessons learnt-from the PANAFCON I, which was held exactly 20 years earlier in 2003 to spur Action on the MDGs. It is proposed to be convened by AUC/AMCOW as co-Chair with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

It is envisaged to be a multi-stakeholder forum of all African stakeholders in the water sector focused primarily on solutions and actions at the national, basin and sub-regional levels.

### **3.2      Level of Participation in Consultations.**

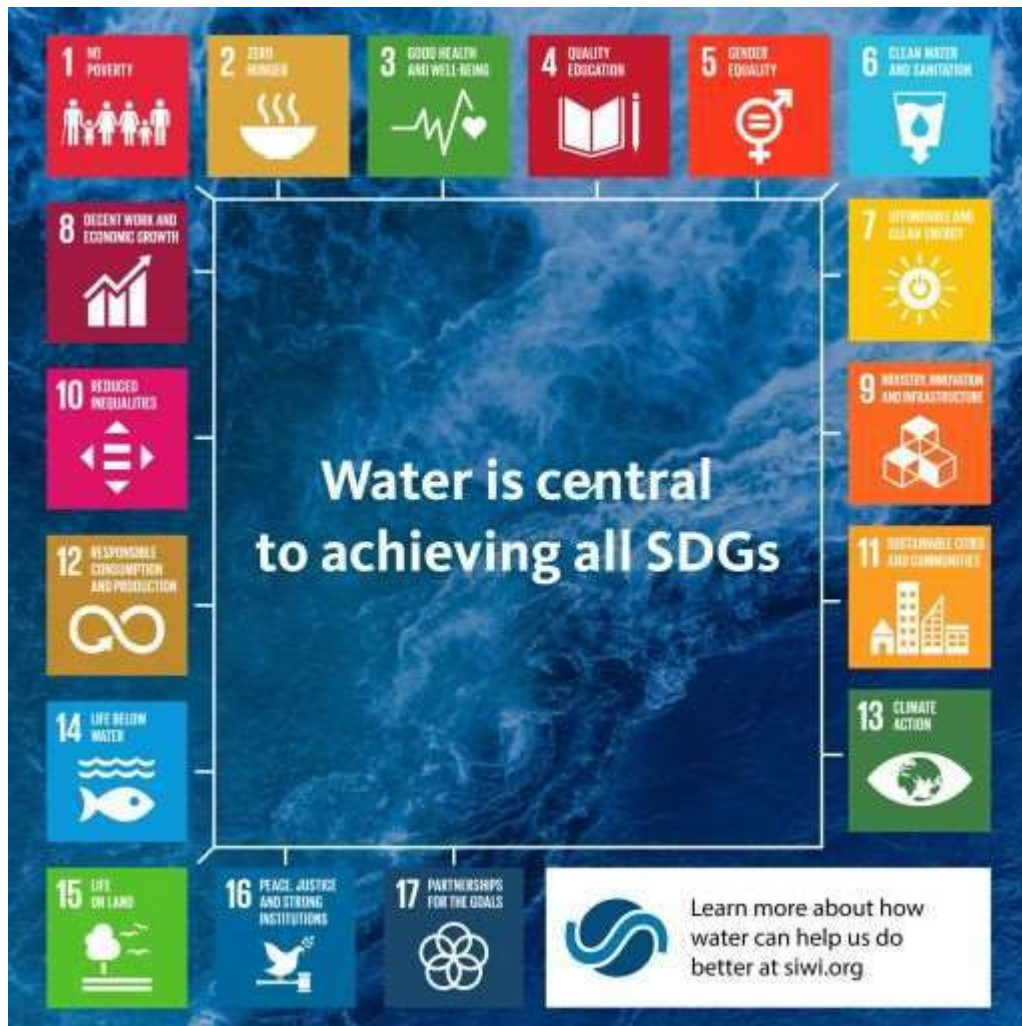
Participation in the Africa Regional Consultations was higher than expected both in person and online via ZOOM. On both Day 1 and Day 2, there were more than 300 participants with about 70 participants in person at the UN Conference Centre at ECA. The list of participants and their affiliations as in Annex 1.

### **3.3      Accelerating Progress after Mid Term Review.**

#### **3.3.1 Proposed Actions per Theme**

Water is central to achieving all SDGs. Water accelerates action across the whole SDG agenda because of its interconnections with a range of sectors such as health, agriculture, protection of biodiversity and enhancing climate action, energy, sustaining peace and regional integration ,, , and, as such, can supply life, food security, livelihoods as well as transform the global economy. The centrality of water for all the other SDGs is illustrated in the figure below.





### Summary progress on the Call for Action – July 2022

In mid-2021, WWAP launched the [Global initiative Call for Action](#): Accelerating progress towards gender equality in the water domain, together with an international Multi-stakeholder Coalition. Through this Coalition, a number of Member States (so far 14 from Europe, Africa, LAC, and Asia) have officially supported the Call, including The Netherlands and Tajikistan, as well as more than 140 individuals representing different institutions, NGOs, UN agencies and regional organizations, academia, among others.

The Call for Action and the supporting publications were presented to **UNESCO Permanent Delegates and Observers through an online information meeting in early July 2021**, and **officially launched at the 2021 Stockholm World Water Week**. At regional level, the Call was pre- launched in LAC in July 2021. In October 2021, it was launched for Europe in a dedicated high-level EU Conference co-organized by the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2021, UNESCO WWAP and the Women for Water Partnership. In November 2021, the Initiative was launched at the **Africa Water Forum**. It has also been presented in national events in Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, Spain, Italy, Kenya and Ivory Coast.

The Initiative was noted and supported by **Resolution XXIV-7 of the IHP inter-governmental Council** (Nov 30 – Dec 4, 2020). Report on the progress of the Call for Action was presented in the 25th IHP IC in April 2021.

Numerous mentions to the Call for Action and expressions of support have been made at other important instances for example at the **7<sup>th</sup> International Day of Women and Girls in Science**, and in the new Youth, Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to be validated and launched in 2022.

In preparation of the 2023 UN Water Conference, the dissemination of the Call for Action has continued with the launch of the Initiative in the African Continent at the **9th World Water Forum in Dakar, in Asia-Pacific during the Asia Water Week and in Central Asia during the 2022 World Water Conference in Dushanbe**. In the latter, the Call for Action and the need to sex-disaggregated data have been recorded in the final declaration of the Dushanbe Water Process (page 4) where it is mentioned as follows:

"We acknowledge the need to address gaps in gender data and agree to strengthen reporting on sex-disaggregated data in the water domain and to strive to make this data available and accessible to all for evidence-based decision-making to promote gender equality in water-related domains and we note favourably the multi-stakeholder "Call for Action to Accelerate Gender Equality in the Water Domain"

The Call has been also presented at the regional consultations towards 2023 UN Conference, in LAC, organized by ECLAC and in Africa, organized by AMCOW.

Both **The Netherlands and Tajikistan** are among the first Member States that joined the Multi-Stakeholder Coalition for the Call for Action. They have conveyed messages of support at all launch events, starting from last year at the WWW in Stockholm, until at the WWF in Dakar, last March. The Call for Action actions and progress can potentially be presented at the UN 2023 Water Conference.

Most recently, the Call for Action has been included in the agenda of the **SDG 6 Special Event Virtual Dialogue organized during the HLPF of New York**, where WWAP will be presenting the progress on the initiative together with Women for Water Partnership. The next key events in which the Call will be presented will be the 2022 WWW and the Groundwater Summit of December 2022.

### 3.3.2 Revival of UN Water Africa and its Technical Instruments

The African Regional Consultations called upon the UNECA to initiate the revival of the UN Water/Africa by strengthening its secretariat function and using its convening mandate to mobilize all the UN agencies plus the African Development Bank to provide experience, capacity building and support including technical and financial, to the member states regional economic communities, river/lake/aquifer basin organizations and the African Union in accelerating implementation Actions for the achieving the targets of SDG 6 and related Goals. The framework of UN Water/Africa should be modeled and the formal linkages must ensure that Africa remains a Focus for UN Water activities both in word and deed.

## 3.4 Final Summary Recommendations

The Final Plenary Session resulted in the following Recommendations:

- 1) The landscape at the time the resolution was adopted in 2018 and now has completely changed. Resolution 75/212 of December 2020 took that into account to set the agenda of the conference, however COVID-19 pandemic and climate change became more challenging aspects in the following years. In both, water is a critical in addressing the

related challenges. In fact, water is at the center of adaptation and mitigation on the effects of climate change.

- 2) The messages should be targeted to the right levels for decision-making. Water requires proper involvement from the highest political levels. Furthermore, water is multidisciplinary in nature, so it requires handling from different ministers, including water resources management, agriculture, health, environment, and financing as well as other ministers.
- 3) There is a need to mainstream cities into national dialogues
- 4) Climate-resilience must be mainstreamed in all policies and strategies at local, national, and regional levels. infrastructure are needed for climate resilient, incl. by de-risking all aspects of water usage
- 5) There is a need to promote, foster and comprehend inclusive legal framework and strengthen the existing ones, by making them acceptable to all.
- 6) There's a need to build the capacity to support negotiators on water matters.
- 7) There is a need to mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) in water polices and infrastructure development and operations
- 8) The Human Right to water must be promoted, protected and fulfilled. water Integrity Networks should lead to improve accountability, efficiency and transparency in the water sector.
- 9) There is a need to enhance and mainstream Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) across programmes and activities, and use that to build synergies among all national coordination systems (incl. ministries), and support this by filling in the gaps in data incl. on droughts, floods, and gender...
- 10) There is a need to enhance all water-related human resources and institutional capacity development focusing in particular on water storage at smallholder farmer to family levels, on water infrastructure development and operation, data collection, etc.
- 11) There is need to build legislation that promote access to water by all people, including those with disability, conserving water as a human right.
- 12) There is a need to build the human and institutional capacity to develop and run bankable projects, dams, etc. This extends to water resources management projects that sustain water for life and economic development
- 13) Experienced professionals who are retirees are an important resource that can be used to train, mentor, build the capacities, and support youth development plans in the water sectors. They can be organized as "the African Water Elders" under AMCOW.
- 14) There is need to harness the potentials of creating more jobs, and businesses incl. through business incubation and innovation in the water sector.
- 15) There is a need to have an open and constructive dialogue on how to channel efficiently the increased ODA into the right targets, i.e., get the large percentage of financial resources on the ground.
- 16) There need to develop voluntary national water plans sustained or supported by (1) national dialogues, (2) involvement of all ministries strongly connected with water
- 17) There is a need for more (1) commercial/private finance in the areas of water and sanitation in general, and (2) micro-finance to support successful small businesses.
- 18) There is a need to increase investment in wastewater management, and dissemination of more treatment plants (both medium and small-sized).
- 19) There is a need to increase the institutional capacities to mobilize resources that are more domestic and have private sector play an important role in those resource mobilization processes.
- 20) There is a need to consider the gender issue across different vulnerable and marginalized groups: women, youth, indigenous communities, etc.

- 21) The AUPAD CoE was proposed as a home under AMCOW for reviving the African Journal of Water (AWJ) as an online publication leveraging the development of digitization, and the ISBN created in the past for that purpose and that is still owned by ECA. The AUPAD Network of Centres of Excellence can be requested to host it.
- 22) Finally, it was strongly recommended that these proceeding be submitted to serve as a working paper for the AMCOW EXCO meeting due in November 2022.

## **ANNEXES**

- I. Gallery of Participants (participants list)
- II. Speeches and Statements
- III. ToR for the regional consultations

**end**