Leaving no one behind

Improved water resources management and access to safe water and sanitation for all is essential for eradicating poverty, building peaceful and prosperous societies, and ensuring that ‘no one is left behind’ on the path towards sustainable development.

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Elena Tsay

UNESCO Tashkent Office
On 28 July 2010, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted a historical resolution recognizing “the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights” (UNGA, 2010, para. 1).
Billions are being left behind in access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)
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People affected*
- Inadequate water and sanitation: No data
- Drought: 55 million
- Flooding: 106 million
- Earthquake and epidemics: 6 million
- Conflict: 65 million

People killed
- Inadequate water and sanitation: No data
- Drought: 780,000 (deaths from diarrhoea and cholera)
- Flooding: 1,100
- Earthquake and epidemics: 6,000
- Conflict: 56,000 (war deaths)

Economic damage
- Inadequate water and sanitation: No data
- Drought: US$5.4 billion
- Flooding: US$31.4 billion
- Earthquake and epidemics: US$30 billion
- Conflict: No data

*People affected are defined as those requiring immediate assistance during a period of emergency; this may include displaced or evacuated people.

Source: Adapted from PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2018, p. 14). Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported (CC BY 3.0).
Drivers and consequences of poverty and discrimination

Population growth
Drivers and consequences of poverty and discrimination
Drivers and consequences of poverty and discrimination

Extreme poverty

*Extreme poverty is defined as living with per capita household consumption below US$1.90 per day (2011 PPP).

Notes: International dollars are adjusted for inflation and for price differences across countries. Consumption per capita is the preferred welfare indicator for the World Bank's analysis of global poverty. However, for about 25% of the countries, estimates correspond to income, rather than consumption.

Source: Adapted from Ross and Ortiz-Ospina (2018), based on data from World Bank PovcalNet. Licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-SA 4.0).
Drivers and consequences of poverty and discrimination

Income inequality
Drivers and consequences of poverty and discrimination

Education and employment
Who is being ‘left behind’?
Urban Settings
Rural Poverty
Refugees and forcibly displaced people
Walking the Walk
Socio-economic dimensions: Funding and financing

Funding gap in WASH
### Socio-economic dimensions: Funding and financing

**Multiple benefits for vulnerable groups**

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**Table 5.1 The relative possibility of gaining selected benefits from WASH interventions, by vulnerable population group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population group</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Living environment</th>
<th>Convenience and time savings</th>
<th>Dignity (social)</th>
<th>Educational outcomes*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People below national poverty line</td>
<td>↑↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
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<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slum dwellers</td>
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<td>↑↑↑</td>
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<td>Remote and isolated populations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women and female-heads of households</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>↑↑↑</td>
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<td>↑↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elderly, sick, and physically disabled people**</td>
<td>↑↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency contexts</td>
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<td>↑↑</td>
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<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prison population</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Due to reduced stunting, reduced illness-related absence, and higher enrolment and completion rates (especially among girls).

**Buildings and other facilities, including toilets, are often not accessible to persons with mobility limitations due to the lack of an accessible design, such as an entrance ramp, retrofitted bathrooms, or improved signage (ILO, 2017b).**

***Educational gains for disabled children.

Note: The number of arrows is meant to illustrate the magnitude of the outcome expected for each population group.

Socio-economic dimensions: Funding and financing

**WASH makes good socio-economic sense**
Socio-economic dimensions: Funding and financing

Reaching the furthest behind first
Socio-economic dimensions: Funding and financing

Funding sources:
- Subsidies
- Structured tariffs
- Blended finance
- National government
- Official development assistance (ODA)
- Commercial finance
- Private sector
Good Governance: The ‘invisible’ part of the water cycle

Human Rights Based Approach
Takeaway messages

- Access to safe, affordable and reliable drinking water and sanitation services are **basic human rights**.
- **Billions are being left behind** in terms of access to water and sanitation.
- The wealthy generally receive high levels of service and often at very low price, while the **poor often pay a much higher price** for a service of similar or lesser quality.
- Ensuring that water is affordable to all requires policy recommendations **tailored to specific target groups**.
- Equitable access to water for agricultural production, particularly for **supplemental irrigation**, can make a difference for farmers’ livelihoods.
- **Mass displacement** can strain water-related services for both existing populations and new arrivals, creating inequalities and potential conflicts.
- Investing in water supply and sanitation in general, and for the vulnerable and disadvantaged in particular, makes **good economic sense**.
- **Good governance** overcomes vested interests and exclusionary practices.
Coda

Improved water resources management and access to safe water and sanitation for all is essential for eradicating poverty, building peaceful and prosperous societies, and ensuring that ‘no one is left behind’ on the road towards sustainable development.

These goals are entirely achievable, provided exclusion and inequality are addressed in both policy and practice. Otherwise, water interventions will fail to reach those most in need and who are likely to benefit most.
Good news: momentum is already growing!
Thank you

More info about the WWDR at:

en.unesco.org/water-security/wwap/wwdr

Download the report on 19 March at:

en.unesco.org/water-security/wwap/wwdr/2019

More info about World Water Day at:

www.worldwaterday.org