

WATER POLICY GROUP STATEMENT ON COVID-19: WATER AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Access to clean water and sanitation is essential for containment of COVID-19. Without water, hand hygiene is not possible and without water to the home, home based quarantine is not possible.

Yet it has been estimated three billion people have no water service to the home, 785 million people have no access to any basic drinking water service, and 12% of health care facilities globally have no water service. These facilities must either get their water service from more than 500 metres away, or from an unimproved source.

Five years ago, all Governments committed to rectify this when they agreed to *Agenda 2030* and Sustainable Development Goal 6 of ensuring access to water and sanitation for all people by 2030. But many countries are not on track to achieve this Goal.

As efforts are made through high level political processes of the G20 and United Nations to found a new 'shared responsibility: global solidarity' agenda to help with the COVID-19 response and recovery, it will be important that sustainable and equitable availability of water for all is prioritised as a core issue for increased focus and action, now and in the future.

Water Policy Group supports the recent statement by United Nations Secretary-General, the Hon Antonio Guterres, "Everything we do during and after this crisis must be with a strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies and societies that are more resilient in the face of pandemics, climate change, and the many other global challenges we face."

Achievement of universal access to water and sanitation by 2030 will be an imperative contribution to this objective. Governments will need to consider how to allow for more adaptive water governance and risk management to increase the resilience of their societies in the face of disruption from COVID-19, climate change and economic pressures.

Reliable access to fit for purpose water for all citizens is necessary for human health and all other dimensions of sustainable social and economic development.

Water Policy Group believes this goal is possible to achieve with sufficient political energy and commitment to put in place the right policies and investments at the national level, supported by the international community.

Water Policy Group
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Water Policy Group (www.waterpolicygroup.com) is a network of water sector experts with a common interest and direct experience in working with water policy issues within governments and inter-government bodies, and a common goal to serve the public interest.

Data and reference sources:

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