LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: 2019 CIVIL SOCIETY MESSAGES

The messages have been developed by CSO organisations part of Sanitation and Water for All
LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have set the bar higher than ever to ensure access to water and sanitation for all by 2030. This is particularly ambitious considering 2.1 billion people lack access to safely managed water and 4.5 billion people live without a safe toilet; with 892 million still defecating in the open (WHO/UNICEF 2017).

As of today, 80% of countries report insufficient financing to meet national water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) targets, let alone higher levels of service prescribed in the SDGs (SDG6 Synthesis Report 2018). According to recent reports by UN Water and the World Bank, investments in water and sanitation will have to triple to US $114 billion per year over the next decade, a figure not including operating and maintenance costs (GLASS 2017).

The majority of people lacking access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services are the most marginalised who also suffer from corollary impacts on their health, nutrition, education, environment, quality of life and equitable (social and gender) access to opportunities. Discrimination, and stigma perpetuate inequalities in access to water, sanitation and hygiene at all levels.

CATEGORIES OF INEQUALITIES

- Individual-base inequalities: inequalities based on sex/gender, age, disability and health conditions that may restrict access to water and sanitation.

- Group-related inequalities: inequalities based on ethnicity, race, nationality, language, religion and caste.

- Geographical inequalities: inequalities based on your geographic location including country and region; rural and urban; urban and peri-urban slum areas; small island communities; and forest-based communities, etc.
To ensure no one is left behind, all categories of inequalities must be taken into consideration. Honoring the commitment to 'leave no one behind' requires reaching everyone in situations of conflict, civil disorder, disaster, vulnerability and risk. In humanitarian context, immediate action is necessary to provide people with access to WASH, in order to fulfill their basic needs and to prevent the spread of easily transmissible and particularly, life threatening waterborne diseases.

Key Facts

- The wealthier generally receive high levels of WASH services at (often very) low cost in absolute terms and in proportion to their incomes, whereas the most marginalised pay much higher prices in absolute and relative terms for services of similar or lesser quality [WWAP (UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme)/UN-Water (2019)].
- Globally, 80% of the people use unsafe and unprotected water sources live in rural areas (WHO 2017).
- More than 700 children under five years of age die every day from diarrhoea linked to unsafe water and poor sanitation (WHO 2017). The majority of these deaths occur in urban slums and poor rural communities.
- Globally 31% of schools do not even have clean water (JMP 2018) and only 27% of households globally have soap and water for hand washing (WHO/UNICEF 2017).
- For the 68.5 million people who have been forced to flee their homes, accessing safe water services is highly problematic (UNHCR 2017).
Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) call upon all stakeholders, notably governments, to work together to ensure “for all” is at the forefront of the implementation of SDG strategies. The goal of ‘leaving no one behind’ is relevant for all countries, developed and developing.

- Governments should recognise and implement the human rights to water and sanitation (HRWS) as a framework for the realisation of SDG6 include specific policies, standards and targets for the elimination of inequalities.

- Governments should invest in water, sanitation and hygiene systems as an entry point for improving other public services such as health, education and livelihood.

- Governments should have clearly defined roles of key actors in line ministries, transparent communication and inter-sector coordination to effectively reach the most marginalised.

- Development partners and External Support Agencies (ESAs) should provide technical and financial support to governments and CSOs to establish and be part of formal, regular and inclusive multi-stakeholder accountability mechanisms. This would ensure that the public budget allocated for SDG6 includes the most marginalised populations, and is fully spent and effectively utilised.

- Development partners and ESAs should continue supporting joint government programs such as Sector-Wide approaches (SWApS) and not fall back to only project financing.

- CSOs should strengthen their own internal and external legitimacy and accountability, to effectively address and respond to the critical challenges that the WASH sector is facing. They must ensure that they truly represent the voice of the most marginalised.