Water and Beyond
EU transformative approaches for international partnerships
Session 1 - Water as an equalizer: realizing impact for human development

Content

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- Sara Ahrari, Programme Manager, Simavi
- Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, Member of the European Parliament – Renew Europe Group (France), Vice-President of the Committee on Development (DEVE) (TBC)
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- Sok Silo, Secretary-General of Cambodia’s Council for Agriculture & Rural Development (CARD) - (TBC)
- Tripti Rai, Country Director of WaterAid Nepal
- Maria Pilar Palmero Vaquero, Head of Unit – Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Burkina Faso
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Session 1 - Water as an equalizer: realizing impact for human development

Schedule: 14:00 - 15:30
Number of participants: 378

Women and girls, as well as older people and persons with disabilities lack access to water. In the current health crisis, access to safe water and decent sanitation facilities has never been as urgent. The session shows how water is critical to guarantee equality. How water-related actions enable equal opportunities will be illustrated through keynotes, inputs and presentations in the session.

Pillar 5: EU International Partnership Priority on ‘Governance, Peace and Security

Introduction
Facilitator: Sara Ahrari, Programme Manager, Simavi

Keynote by Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, Member of the European Parliament – Renew Europe Group (France), Committee on Development (DEVE) (TBC)

Panel discussion

- Kelly Ann Naylor, Associate Director, WASH, UNICEF
- Sok Silo, Secretary-General of Cambodia’s Council for Agriculture & Rural Development (CARD) - (TBC)
- Tripti Rai, Country Director of WaterAid Nepal
- María Pilar Palmero Vaquero, Head of Unit – Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Burkina Faso
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Slido

1. Which region do you come from? (15 answers)
   a. Europe : 87%
   b. Sub-Saharan Africa : 7%
   c. Middle East/Central Asia : 7%

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- d. North Africa: 0%
- e. Asia-Pacific: 0%
- f. Latin America: 0%
- g. North America: 0%

Additional comments: Simavi is active in Africa and Asia. Comment from Chris Burns: we could see on Slido that 10% of the viewers come from these areas; this is one of the beauty of these hybrid events where we have a global reach.

2. Which sector do you represent? (26 answers)
   - a. Water/WASH: 69%
   - b. Other: 23%
   - c. Education: 4%
   - d. Health: 4%
   - e. Nutrition: 0%

Additional comments: this is also the main aim of this session.

3. Which type of entity are you from? (27 answers)
   - a. Government/Authority: 41%
   - b. NGO: 33%
   - c. Other: 15%
   - d. Business: 11%
   - e. Water utility/service providers: 0%

4. What do you think – in 1 word only - is the most vital contribution of WASH to human development? (29 answers – given by order of importance)
   - a. Health
   - b. Dignity
   - c. Life
   - d. Quality of Life
   - e. Equality
   - f. Human rights
   - g. Security
   - h. Gender equality
   - i. Resilience
Interaction with participants

- Sara Ahrari, Programme Manager, Simavi:

The main aim of this session is to better understand how WASH is related to human development. And the EU is currently working on creating, developing a definition of what human development is. It’s wonderful to have our panelists who shed light on our contribution to WASH, or contribution to the realization of SDG6, which is to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for everyone everywhere and contribute to human development. I work in the last sector so I believe that it is one of the key principles, but it is also good to have another point of view from the panelists to see how it can also contribute to removing inequalities.

- Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, Member of the European Parliament – Renew Europe Group (France), Vice-President of the Committee on Development (DEVE) (TBC):

This is a topic that is dear to my heart. When I was a surgeon in gynecology, each time I entered the operation room, I wore a mask and washed my hands with soap and water. This is part of the chirurgical disinfection of our hands. For doctors, it is routine to wash hands with soap and water. We’ve seen that since 2020, this routine has been imposed on all, from the elderly to young people. The sanitary crisis has shown the importance of washing hands because it is the main barrier against the virus. It has become a reflex, a habit, it has become the normality again. We had to learn these actions from scratch to protect the people we love, these are simple gestures, but they are the best barrier against viruses and pandemics. However, washing hands with soap and water is a luxury for the most part of the population worldwide. Almost 3 billion people have no access to water and soap, which represents 3 out of 5 people on a world scale.

In our partner countries, the lack of access to soap and water in health centers is an insurmountable obstacle when it comes to fighting against COVID-19 and many other diseases. Water and hygiene are the basis of public health. We may encounter viruses as dangerous and lethal as coronavirus, other pandemics may break out. All eyes are on the vaccine and its availability worldwide; this is legitimate, but our response to COVID must include the strengthening of our resilience against the future sanitary crises: water access, sanitation and hygiene. There is no possible human development without water.

Therefore, it is important to reduce inequalities in terms of water and hygiene and access to WASH services and its consequences in terms of menstrual hygiene. One out of three women in the world has no access to toilets during her period. The lack of infrastructure and access to water, including in schools, results in numerous young girls missing school a couple of days each month. It is inconceivable in 2021 that so many girls are missing school and compromising their future because they have their periods. Girls and women are facing discrimination, and the EU must contribute to menstrual hygiene management in education infrastructures. This must be done by granting access to WASH services and also fighting against stereotypes and taboos around menstruations.

This is an example among others that emphasizes that access to water and hygiene is linked to other themes and must be addressed as a global vision as a necessary
condition to human development. Now more than ever, water and hygiene must be at the center of the European development policy. I’m happy that today we have experts, including experts from the UNICEF, from the European delegation in Burkina Faso who will share with us their field experience. You can count on my engagement in that matter and as said before, access to water is a health, human right, equality, and dignity issue.

You said that we can count on your support. Considering your experience with WASH and human rights, what do you think the EU can prioritize in their different WASH and women issues policies, that are pretty much interlinked?

I’ll answer your question with a personal example. I travelled to Rwanda in 2020 before the coronavirus and I have visited a school. As part of the WASH program, there was a room in which girls could change their sanitary towels, take a shower. This means there was access to water in that school. I spoke to the director of the school and he told me that since the implementation of this infrastructure, everything has changed in terms of education. He noticed that 12-year-old girls continue to come to school. There is no need for children to walk several kilometers to reach water. I would like the EU continues to promote and invest in such structures so girls can continue to go to school. It can change the life of millions of girls.

We will now go through the second session. Two panelists will talk about how WASH can be seen as an intersectoral sector that links with education and nutrition. We will hear how different multilateral and international organizations and government institutions act for WASH and its development.

- Kelly Ann Naylor, Associate Director, WASH, UNICEF:

I think that the connection is obvious: for children, water is life. It’s essential to survive even before their first moments of life, and of course, to thrive as they take their journey to become adults. Our work is based on the UN convention of the rights of the child, this links two of the human rights; water and sanitation.

Human development has many definitions, but it relates to how people have the freedom and opportunity to have the life that they value. Water sanitation and hygiene contributes to many human development objectives. We can contribute directly to how nutrition, water sanitation, and hygiene are basic essential services. There is a growing interest in water collaboration and how this contributes to SDG6; Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. This is coming at a time that is more important than ever. I think with the impact of COVID-19, it is estimated that an additional 88 to 115 million people will fall into extreme poverty this year. This can also rise to 150 million people at the end of 2021 and this is the first time in the last 2 decades that poverty has reached such a high level. This can threaten decades of progress in human development.

WASH contributes to the cycle of life. The need for water and sanitation is constant. WASH is a requirement for life, but also in healthcare centers when babies are born, or the need for adolescents to be able to manage menstruation. This is also true as we move through the different stages of life.
There are many benefits to implementing WASH. There is solid evidence that WASH in school improves students’ health, reduces diarrhea, etc. It has also been proved that WASH improves attendance. Some studies even show that when women have access to water and sanitation infrastructures, they show increased enrolment. Teachers say they spend more time in class and less time searching for water, it also increases safety and reduces this harassment and creates much more comfort in managing menstruation.

WASH in school is necessary; this is part of the reality of many schools around the world. A recent report from WHO and UNICEF looked at the situation of WASH access in schools before the pandemic, and as you can see, we found that 1 out of 3 schools had a limited water service or no drinking water at all. Almost 700 million children lacked basic sanitation service in school.

In the 60 countries with the highest risk for COVID-19, we found that 4 out of 5 children lacked basic handwashing services at school. UNICEF has estimated that around 1.5 billion children have been infected during the COVID-19.

EU funding has been instrumental in increasing access to WASH in schools in many countries. As part of the UNICEF WASH programs, we have already worked in countries like the Central African Republic, Yemen, Nigeria, and Vietnam, to close the gaps at school. Having access to WASH at school before the pandemic was also a key to getting kids back to school when the time came for them to do that safely.

Adolescents are the key group and water and sanitation can be an incredible way to engage them to participate in positive practices in their communities.

In UNICEF’s own program, we mainstream water, sanitation, and gender-specific results; we have these specific results on menstrual hygiene, management at school, at home, and in communities.

I want to emphasize that having the availability of water and sanitation services means that everyone can have access to them. This is also part of “leaving no one behind”. We take into account the special needs of children with disabilities (around 10%). To conclude, the human right to have access to water, sanitation, and hygiene will not only save lives but also make contributions for this generation of children and future generations to come.

- Sok Silo, Secretary-General of Cambodia’s Council for Agriculture & Rural Development (CARD) - (TBC):

I would like to make a short presentation on WASH and nutrition integration in Cambodia, the National strategy for food security and nutrition for 2019-2023, the nutrition-sensitive WASH, and the sub-working group on WASH and nutrition.

Access to clean water and proper hygiene toilets are key to the survival and development of children. Improving nutrition is a cross-cutting issue that requires close cooperation, participation, intervention, investment, and commitment from relevant sectors and stakeholders. The second National Strategy for Food Sector and Nutrition 2019-2023 has identified six joint priorities: healthy diets, nutrition-sensitive WASH, food
value chains, food safety and fortification, community-led nutrition, social assistance and food security and nutrition, and food security and nutrition in disaster management and climate change.

Our strategy focuses on a twin-track approach: promote sustainable agriculture and prioritize food security.

Nutrition-sensitive WASH is one priority in the second National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019-2023. Inadequate access to sanitation impacts the socio-economic life and health of people. Water and sanitation-related disease is the leading cause of sickness and death of children. That’s why WASH is a fundamental determinant of health and nutrition, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The sub-working group on WASH and nutrition led by CARD brings all relevant representatives from MRD, MoP, MoEYS, NCDD, the donors, UN, civil society, and the private sector. The purpose of this group is to bring together WASH and the food security and nutrition sector to develop a shared vision, to improve learning and sharing experiences on WASH and nutrition integration, and to establish synergy between the sectors to improve the quality of programming and services when it comes to undernutrition. To succeed, the group created a theory of change for integrated nutrition programming and employed a study to gain understanding, a barrier, and a potential solution. The group has set three priorities for action: appoint local people who can accumulate knowledge about WASH and nutrition, develop a cross-sectoral strategy and advocate the Ministry of Economy and Finance for increasing national budget allocation to nutrition and WASH and donors for increasing merged funding opportunities.

The achievements comprise the conduction of a study on WASH nutrition, barriers and solutions whose results led to the development of a theory of change for integrated nutrition programming, the development of WASH nutrition SBCC campaign. In 2018, the government and the development partners brought the outcome of the discussion to the Cambodian villages, districts, and provinces that they support.

The national coordination mechanisms are not easily replicated at the provincial level as the WASH and nutrition technical working group has no clear structure at provincial level. Despite the Ministry of Rural Development’s efforts on building provincial coordination, CARD has no structure at provincial level. There is a need of setting up a new provincial technical reference group, which could ensure effective coordination of integrated nutrition programs between provincial departments, civil society, development partners, and the private sector.

- Considering this working outside of silos with other sectors, how can you explain the success in working together?

Kelly Ann Naylor: it is a really important question. How can we work together? My experience with UNICEF, WHO, and numerous other agents tell me that we must identify a common outcome. We work together so we can achieve those outcomes together. It is a fundamental collaboration that assures you to achieve a goal together.

Sok Silo: nutrition is at the heart of the SDG: the key is to invest in nutrition. The government must put a priority on nutrition and allocate more funds for nutrition in order to achieve human capital and social development.
- Considering that, how do you see the link between funds, investments, and collaboration?

Sok Silo: in Cambodia, the civil society works on nutrition every month to discuss, to identify the priorities linked to nutrition. Implementing an action plan that we agree to can assist the government so money can help with implementing actions.

- Tripti Rai, Country Director of WaterAid Nepal:

I would like to speak about the washing inequalities and what we are, as WaterAid, working for in terms of water, sanitation, and hygiene across the world, and what kind of solutions and experiences we have.

The inequalities we face in Nepal are linked to geography and demography. This is a small country, but with plains, fields, and mountains. Often in the mountainous regions, you have to take long walks in very difficult conditions several times a day and then waiting for hours to fetch water for domestic use. We’ve been working very closely with the local government and organizations to provide technical support. The government of Nepal has a one house, one tap policy, which is to ensure that everybody has water in its house. This means working in remote places; we’ve seen that it really helps women and girls, especially because they are mainly responsible for getting water. When you are looking at boys and girls, you see that this has an impact on their education.

If we look at the local context in Nepal, we can see that some groups are historically exploited and discriminated against, that is in such communities where you often see poverty. We have worked there to see how we can provide safe water access where it is not possible to provide a tap in every house.

I want to reemphasize that gender, age and disability pose a serious barrier to access water sanitation and hygiene. Young girls are waiting in line to get to the toilet facilities, and it is not easy to use these toilet facilities for girls in wheelchairs for example.

In such a condition, we have tried to look at gender and age and child-friendly WASH facilities in schools and we’ve had great success, as it addresses gender issues both in terms of discrimination and taboos against for example menstruation periods that you often find in many contexts in Nepal. It is important to ensure that girls and women are informed, it enables their abilities to pursue their potential. And you see young girls that are very happy to see WASH facilities that are gender-friendly.

With the right to water and sanitation as a fundamental principle for us, we’ve worked both at community level so communities are aware of their right to have access to water and sanitation, to be able to engage with the duty barriers. We’ve also worked with the duty barriers, local governments, and institutions to be able to understand and prioritize hygiene in budgets and plans. And the goal was to ensure that there is an accountability mechanism to promote the use of accountability tools (public hearing, budget tracking, etc.) and better WASH services. And it also creates interaction on platforms, for the government as well as the communities to talk about WASH issues in their local communities. This is mainly guided by human rights principles.

A video was showed in which a woman explains that before WaterAid’s actions, children were dirty when they had no access to water, their clothes were also dirty, they were
suffering from allergies, they were infected by dysentery after they drank water. They had a lot to lose with no access to water. It is better now that they have a tap in their house.

- Maria Pilar Palmero Vaquero, Head of Unit – Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Burkina Faso:

In Burkina Faso, for the EU, water and sanitation sectors are key areas of our interventions and approach in development and cooperation.

The situation in Burkina Faso is not easy, the country is going through a difficult crisis, with more than 1 million internally displaced persons. In the past 2 years, the EU delegation responded in the most flexible ways to the crisis.

In terms of the policy, the SDG6 is important; we are supporting the water national strategy of the country. This strategy is composed of 5 national programs: governmental sector governance, access to water, sanitation, integrator water management, hydraulic amenities.

The main priority is to ensure access to water and sanitation for all, so our program in the period 2014-2020: we approve the water and sanitation sector policy. It is an important investment, together with health. So the main objective is to improve access to water, sanitation for the population within an integrated water management framework.

This policy supports the national policy focused on building capacity of actors, on a right-based approach to water and sanitation. We’re talking about 54 million euros for this big program whose aim was to reduce inequalities and disparities in the country. There has been special attention to sanitation, in particular house sanitation in rural areas, with a focus on the rural population. The investments must be sustainable. The World Bank and key member states have invested too. There has been a lot of emphasis on this policy dialog and huge investments in water and sanitation. The policy dialog is our key indicators. This is not only about access to water in houses but also linked to other sectors. For the future, we must keep this in mind in this approach. We have also concrete projects with implemented partners. We have signed a grant in December with the National Water and Sanitation Agency. There are also projects in particular areas, for example in the Sahel region.

The territorial approach will be key for future programs beginning this year, for the period 2021-2027 in Burkina Faso. We will place huge importance on going local and trying to develop and support local authorities, and we will continue doing it. It is at the center of our action in Burkina Faso, because in a crisis situation, like the one the country is experiencing, we really need to respond to the needs of the population; we really need to find the right mix of instruments on how to continue the dialog at the national level and also work at local level. At territorial level, we will be able to combine health, education, water in a multispectral approach.

- What I understand when we speak about leaving no one behind, you mention target investments for the disadvantaged groups to get WASH facilities. There was also the question of addressing the taboos and the barriers that these disadvantaged groups are facing. It is very difficult to measure; to desegregate the
results so how have you been able to reach disadvantaged groups. How do you know you have reached them?

- Maria Pilar Palmero Vaquero: in the programs implemented by partners, we need to rely on data that these partners can provide us. The Ministry of Water and Sanitation in Burkina Faso provides data quite accurately; they have pretty well-established statistic systems and detailed information. This is the work we can monitor, to see what's happening. There is also room for improvement, but I'm positively surprised by the information received from the Ministry of Health on the situation, number of people, etc.

- Tripti Rai: we cannot say that it's difficult to reach the unreached or to know who the unreached are. That is a job that we have to do. Through our work, with a targeted approach, we look at the different layers of inequalities. I started with geographic barriers, and then you go into gender and disability and all those locations. Having worked with communities unreached, I can say that this is possible. We use disaggregate data, and we use this evidence generated to advocate with the policymakers and the government. We have received a lot of support from the national level to keep working on identifying the unreached and finding how we can collect better data. And we are trying to do that and influence a larger scale. Of course, it could be difficult, but it is our job to make people who are unreached visible, so there is actually no one left behind.

I think the COVID-19 has made us more aware of how WASH is linked to public health. Let's see what our next panelists have to say about that.

- María Neira, Director of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health, WHO:

We are in a very exceptional sanitary situation where we require exceptional decisions and exceptional people and an exceptional response as well. This is the right time to discuss this because we have different governments including the EU ones designating funds with new financial support to the COVID-19 recovery. And this is the time where we need to influence investments, we need to make sure that these investments are going to the right destination to avoid what people call building back, I don't think we should build back, I think we need to build forward.

A couple of months ago, when we were in the critical phase of the COVID-19 response, we did what we call the manifest of our healthy recovery. We have identified 6 prescriptions to find a strategic direction for the recovery; the first prescription was about recovering our relationship with nature and stop destroying whatever we touch and pollute be it water or air. But the second prescription for this recovery was about providing essential services and of course, providing water, sanitation and hygiene were among the basics of the basics; this is the first line defense not only against COVID-19, but for any infection that will be transmitted by contamination of food or water, or by lack
of hygiene in our hands. It is the best prevention for preventing problems like typhus fever or any type of diarrhea.

We are trying to tell the government that it is time to act if they want to recover from COVID-19 and we all know that it is highly important not only for health but also for the economy. The arguments are here and they are really really strong. This is a very economic argument too. Health is a cost, but I think now more than ever, please we need to stop stating that health is a cost. Health is an investment and I think we know it. We also know how good an investment it is. If you invest in sanitation, your economic benefits will be 5 times the cost. And if you invest in hygiene, on washing your hand's facilities, your benefits will be 15 times the costs, so I think there is any ground for discussion on how it is an economic investment that is perfectly reasonable, logical, common sense in our recovery after COVID-19 and we will provide these basic services that we were not able to provide to our societies.

This session is called “leaving no one behind” well, unfortunately, we are leaving a lot of people behind. We are leaving people without services on water and sanitation, we are leaving people behind. This is a lack of dignity, this is a lack of basic human rights, this is a lack of decency for any country that wants to get out of poverty, that wants to engage in developments. I hope that with this kind of engagement and discussion, we will be able to correct that! And this is not now that we are trying to recover from a pandemic that puts us in a situation where we realize how vulnerable we are as a society. There must be an investment in reducing that vulnerability by creating walls that will protect us from the attack. This would be a fantastic investment. Those walls have to be on our renewable energy, protecting and making sure that we create a greener wall but another very powerful wall is the one created by WASH. If we invest in water, sanitation, and hygiene, we are reducing dramatically our vulnerability to any other type of infectious agents, on new outbreaks, new epidemics, and other crises that are now clearly threatening us. If we invest in the basics of WASH, I think we can all gain a lot, and respond to society after this crisis by telling them “don’t be afraid, we’ll make investments on reducing our vulnerability”. If we invest, for sure, we are putting a very strong wall in terms of reducing our risks in front of any other potential outbreak, infectious agent, or any crisis that will be threatening us now.

You’ll find a lot of responses in the report recently published by UNICEF, we are providing plenty of arguments of what will be the investments that you need to make. It might look expensive to invest in WASH, but according to our report, it will cost one US dollar per capital to enable all 47 less-developed countries to establish basic water services and health facilities. So it is something that is so logical, that when I see the title of this conference, Europe, a Water Global Leader, I thought well, if you want to be a leader, you show the evidence, you show the arguments to take the best decisions. I hope that Europe will do it, and we are sure it will be the case.

- Ion Salaru, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, Public Health Specialist, Republic of Moldova

For me, water sanitation is an important issue. We are convinced now that without good and adequate management in investment in water and sanitation we cannot achieve good protection against infections, in this case, COVID-19. Water is considered the most important factor for a good environment and public health.
A few words of the Republic of Moldova WASH country profile; around 86% of locations of the country already have water supply systems, 75% of those locations are supplied by small scale water supply systems with specific requirements for those systems and also difficulties with the equipment. Centralized sanitation systems are functioning in almost 800 locations, but only a quarter of them are operating wastewater treatment plans. In this case, we have some serious problems with wastewater collection and treatment.

Water supply and sanitation are considered one of the most priority areas for health, environmental and sustainable development. It was particularly the case in the last decade when the quality of life improved when a lot of people understood that you cannot have good hygiene without water and sanitation.

We have quite a big gap, but it is still good indicators for education institutions, for schools and kindergarten where almost 94% of schools are connected to the public supply system. That means that we achieve good conditions for educational institutions when it comes to water. But when it comes to safely manage water sanitation, we see an even bigger gap.

In Moldova, the whole population has access to basic sanitation, according to GNP definition. But regarding safely managed services, we have some problems. We developed in recent years a quite strong legal frame. We consider the very crucial role of the protocol on water and health for our country. The Republic of Moldova is part of the European process on the protocol implementations. And the protocol is seen as an instrument to grant access to safely managed water supply sanitation and reduction of diseases since 2005. At European level, this is the first national program for protocol implementation.

Some of our national targets for 2025 are the development of specific policies, implementation of guidance, achieving water quality in social institutions. Actions to improve WASH in schools were provided in the National program and a lot of them were implemented in the last 5 years. Water supply and sanitation projects were implemented in more than 300 schools and kindergartens. We have to develop and implement water supply projects by small operators.

All schools and kindergartens in Moldova are functioning at their full capacity with a physical presence, and we continue to maintain this situation under control with COVID-19 in schools and kindergartens. We initiated the revision of the national program under the EUWI+ program with kind EU support in 2019. This was finalized in 2020. The period of implementation has been extended until 2030. The national targets and action plan were revised and extended to achieve those targets. Moldova is putting more focus on WASH issues by setting national targets for WASH in healthcare facilities, planned to carry a survey on WASH in healthcare facilities after the pandemic. It has been neglected in other versions. The draft program was published in November 2020 for Public Debates, it will be sent to the Government for approval in the coming months.

In the last 10 years, national authorities have acted properly, which significantly improved the situation, but there is still a lot to do. Many institutions in rural areas do not offer safe conditions for sanitation and hygiene, which increases the risk of infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases. They will start as soon as possible the process of amendment of the law on drinking water quality in line with Directive 2020/2184 of the European Parliament and the Council of 16th December 2020 on the quality of water.
intended for human consumption which entered into force last week. We are happy that this new Directive is focused on offering affordable access in particular for vulnerable and marginalized groups and we will use it as a model tool for equitable access even for vulnerable people taking into account that COVID hits much the poorest part of the population.

- A question was asked, but as we are running out of time, it will be answered later. In a conclusion, thanks to all panelists who shared their experiences and wonderful ways of working on how WASH can contribute to human development and reduce inequalities. What would be your recommendation to have a holistic approach on WASH, climate change; you brought these different topics in your intervention. What is the thing that they need to keep in mind for the 7 years to come?

- María Neira: they need to do a budget and make sure that they will allocate some funds and think about the priorities: water and access to sanitation and hygiene cannot be more priority, more basics and more human rights-related and more related to protecting our health. With all these arguments in your hands, it’s just a question of being pragmatic and positive and investing where you will have plenty of assurance that you will have enormous benefits not only for the people but also from a society point of view and human rights, gender, etc.

- Chris Burns: we need clean air to breathe, we need clear water to drink and as Chrysooula mentioned, it is not just a question of health, of course, that’s the biggest thing in the world (as you could see on Slido), but second comes to dignity for women. This is a very important topic that was discussed in the last hour.