

Sanitation and Water for everyone, everywhere! Let's make SDG 6 a reality!

On the occasion of [World Water Day 2017](#), UCLG, in collaboration with its partners ICLEI, GWOPA and the World Water Council, reaffirms that people's access to sanitation and water are key priorities of local and regional governments. The responsibility for Sustainable Development Goal 6 on access to water and sanitation for all falls principally to local authorities and cannot be achieved without good local governance, the sustainable management of natural resources and effective urbanization.

Effective local-level water management is critical to the achievement of many of the important global agendas that have been adopted by the international community, together with local and regional governments and their associations, over the past two years. The full achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the New Urban Agenda all depend on local governments' capacity to address pressing urban water challenges.

Within the Sustainable Development Goal Framework, the commitment to "**ensure access to water and sanitation for all**" (**SDG 6**) is a priority, as the availability of water and sanitation for all citizens is a matter of dignity, health and development. Local and regional governments need to be at the helm of any strategy that will lead to the achievement of this goal, also in view of SDG 11, "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"

2030 - the date that the international community has chosen for achieving the SDGs - is coming fast! Each one of us must assume our responsibilities and put the necessary means in place in order to meet it; no effort should be spared and no decision or action postponed.

Local and regional governments can work towards SDG 6 by:

- ◆ **Applying the principles of good governance**, and particularly the principles of equity, transparency and accountability in sanitation water management, including the enforcement of existing laws on water and wastewater;
- ◆ **Linking water and waste water management** more closely with urban planning, design and development, as well as with other relevant urban management sectors;
- ◆ **Using a tariff system** to regulate water demand and encourage water conservation while ensuring the affordability of water and sanitation services for all;
- ◆ **Accepting that long-term investments** in the water and waste water may yield their benefits only beyond local elective mandates and will need the courage of local elected officials in the short term;

- ♣ **Managing water at local and regional level** c
- ♣ **Creating widespread public awareness** about the value of water including so-called 'waste' water, in order to treat it as a precious and limited resource.

Although local governments play a critical role in providing these services, the support of national governments is needed to ensure they can fulfil their responsibilities. States are therefore encouraged to recognize sanitation and water as sound investments and to finance the needed infrastructure. States must also support local governments to successfully carry out the tasks entrusted to them by ensuring they have sufficient and appropriate resources to do so. In this respect, increasing transfers from the State, local taxation and appropriate tariffs are required in order to develop high-quality public water and sanitation services that are available to all. Considering the significant needs, it is also essential, in the short term, to increase the use of pre-financing, loans and, more generally, mechanisms of financial intermediation.

It is crucial for Local and Regional authorities to recognize the important role of water resources in other sectors; and to strengthen their resolve to improve water security to assure social, economic and environmental well-being in the face of a myriad of pressures, such as demographic trends, climate change and others.

On the occasion of **World Water Day**, we would like to recognize the efforts that have been made by local and regional governments around the world, particularly in small municipalities, to ensure their communities get access to sanitation services. We congratulate them and encourage them to continue their work and efforts.

ICLEI: www.iclei.org

GWOPA: www.gwopa.org

WORLD WATER COUNCIL: www.worldwatercouncil.org

UCLG: www.uclg.org

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