



# GLOBAL ADVOCACY CONSULTATION

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## Preliminary synthesis

October 2021

Consultation and synthesis led by :



# Purpose of the consultation

The Butterfly Effect launched this summer 2023 an online consultation as part of its advocacy activities in order to develop a core set of policy messages representing the voices and priorities expressed by NGOs and CSOs worldwide.

This consultation is part of an advocacy strategy to support its members and other CSOs and NGOs active in the water sector to express their high-level views and influence decision-makers for positive, ambitious and concrete systemic changes in the way water and sanitation are managed, while contributing to the implementation of SDG6.

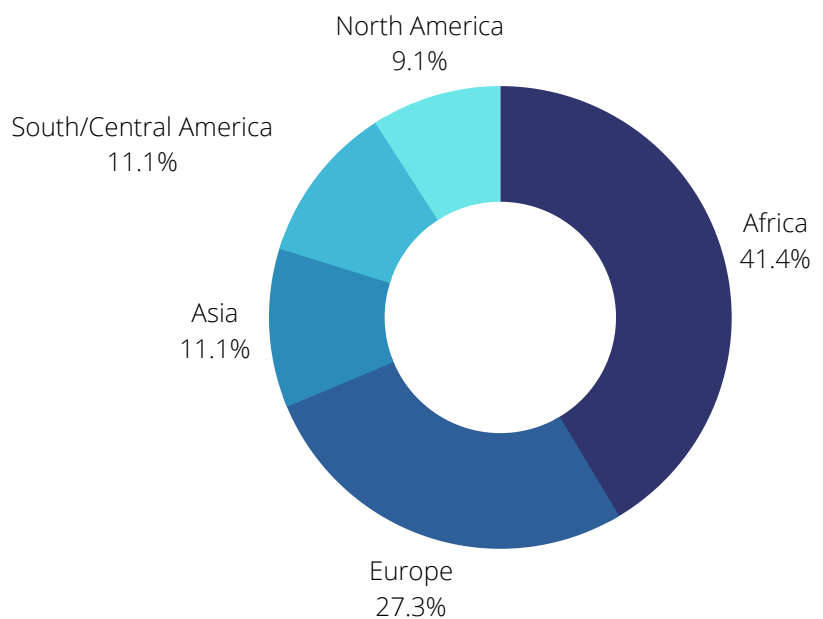
The Butterfly Effect has identified two major global objectives for its advocacy process:

- 1. The Heads of State Summit of the 9th World Water Forum (Dakar, March 2022)
- 2. The UN Conference on the Water Decade 2023 (New York, March 2023)

**The messages resulting from this consultation will be further developed through regional online workshops (Nov. 2021) and will form the basis of a policy paper compiling the advocacy demands expressed by participating NGOs/CSOs**

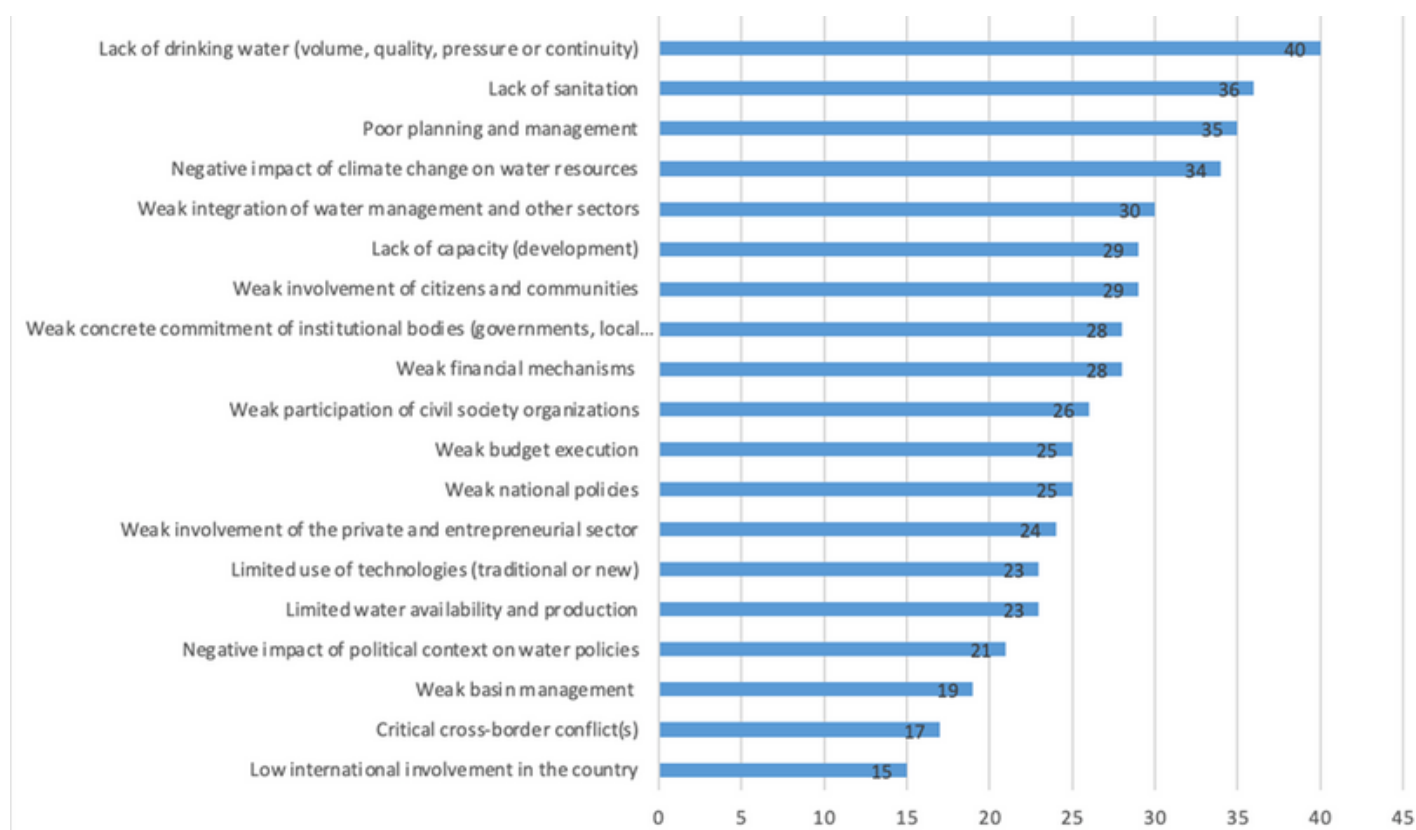
## **44 contributions were received:**

- 18 from African NGOs/CSOs;
- 12 from European NGOs/CSOs;
- 5 from Asian NGOs/CSOs;
- 5 from Central and South American NGOs/CSOs;
- 4 from North American NGOs/CSOs.



# Part 1 : the current state of the water and WASH sector in the world

**Fig1. The main water-related problems that respondents face**



## Main causes analyzed by the respondents:

### 💧 WASH lacks high-level political ownership

For many respondents, Water-Sanitation-Hygiene (WASH) issues receive very little attention from policymakers, who do not make universal access to water and sanitation a political priority. Recognition of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation (HRWS) in national legal frameworks, a strong marker of a country's commitment to these issues, remains partial or even non-existent.

### 💧 Sector governance is weak

This lack of interest often goes hand in hand with weak and undemocratic governance of the sector, largely due to the absence of strong institutional frameworks. In most countries, there is little or no coordination between the different actors and sectors ("silo approach"), which hinders not only a cross-cutting approach to WASH,

but also a collaborative management of water resources. Planning is often limited and there are gaps in available data. Administrative and technical staff are poorly trained and lack skills. The absence of binding legislation for the States (obligations and accountability mechanisms) and the private sector (no or little regulation) leads to poor management of the sector. Some respondents also denounce the increasing privatization and commodification of water.

### 💧 Unavailability or poor condition of water resources

Human activities have a strong impact on water resources: pollution of rivers and soils, overexploitation, drying up of springs and reserves in places, impact of the extractive industry, etc. Climate change also strongly impacts the availability and quality of water resources.



#### 💧 An underfunded sector

The sector is largely underfunded. In many countries, water infrastructure is aging and in poor condition. Lack of investment prevents their maintenance and renovation. In some places, the construction of new infrastructure is simply impossible (extension of the network to peri-urban areas, drilling and construction of wells, etc.).

Above all, the little funding that exists for the sector is mostly misdirected, making it impossible to reach the most vulnerable populations and areas. Finally, the sanitation sector is left behind.

#### 💧 The weakness of civil society

Civil society is often fragmented, poorly structured, and lacks resources (human, financial, technical and material). It is not sufficiently involved in the governance of the sector and in the development and conduct of public policies.

#### 💧 Political instability and conflicts

In many countries, political instability is an obstacle to socioeconomic progress and good water management. Respondents point to corruption or a lack of consideration for the interests of the governed. Humanitarian actors report an increase in the number of crises and in their intensity, complexity, and duration.

#### 💧 The lack of international cooperation

Several respondents note the weakness of the multilateral framework for water and sanitation, which does not provide sufficient incentive for states to act. There is a lack of political leadership and governance for the water sector at the global level.

#### 💧 Very significant health consequences

This low access to WASH affects rural areas in particular, and leads to an increase in diseases and health risks (with waterborne diseases such as diarrhea, cholera, malaria), and mortality (and more particularly infant mortality): 58% of diarrhea cases in middle- and low-income countries, i.e. 842,000 annual deaths, are attributable to inadequate access to EAH. In Africa, many health centers and schools lack access to WASH, thus increasing health risks.

#### 💧 Rising social, economic, and gender inequalities

The consequences are also economic and social. The most vulnerable households are more likely to experience increased health care expenditures. Inequalities affect women and girls especially for fetching water. Children, especially girls, are taken out of school, as schools often lack specific facilities related to menstrual hygiene. Finally, women are exposed to the risk of harassment or attacks due to the lack of access to safe toilets. In addition, 82% of rape cases occur during the performance of daily tasks, including water collection.

#### 💧 Catastrophic environmental and humanitarian consequences

The impacts of climate change, human activity, and poor water management are leading to the depletion of water resources, increased water and soil pollution, and loss of biodiversity.

This situation is causing an exacerbation of tensions and conflicts within and between communities, and the displacement of populations who have no other choice but to leave.

### Most direct consequences to these issues

#### 💧 Non-effectiveness of **Human Rights to Water and Sanitation, HRWS**

In most of the countries in which the responding CSOs operate, water and sanitation services are particularly weak. SDG6 to achieve universal access to water and sanitation is far from being met. Globally, 2 billion people lack access to safely managed domestic drinking water services while 3.6 billion lack safely managed sanitation services (source Joint Monitoring Programme 2021).

## Part 2: policies and actions requested

### Policy, administrative, and legislative changes needed to improve this situation

#### Ensuring a strong political leadership

Human Rights to Water and Sanitation (HRWS) must become a public policy priority. States must integrate HRWS into their national legislation and show their commitment to ensuring universal access to water and sanitation.

At the international level, States and the international community must recognize the essential role of WASH in achieving the SDGs and make it a priority in their diplomatic efforts. SDG 6 must be placed at the heart of international cooperation policies.

#### Strengthening institutional and legal frameworks, and sector governance to ensure the effectiveness of HRWSs

This involves implementing existing laws or strengthening the legislative and legal arsenal where necessary.

At the national level, the States must put in place strong institutional frameworks aimed at:

- Ensuring democratic and transparent management of WASH services and water resources;
- Strengthening the participation of CSOs and citizen participation in the development and implementation of public policies;
- Strengthening operational and financial planning, and collaboration between different actors and sectors by breaking down silos;
- Improving information, data availability and establish accountability mechanisms;
- Putting in place regulatory mechanisms for the sector, particularly for private sector activity (sanction mechanism based on the "polluter pays" principle, limitation of resource use, etc.);
- Strengthening the capacities of public actors in charge of the sector (awareness raising, training), and ensure a real transfer of competences to local authorities;

- Better managing water resources, in particular by applying Integrated Water Resources Management. At the international level, the improvement of the multilateral framework and global governance is necessary, thanks to the establishment of an intergovernmental body dedicated to water under the aegis of the UN.

#### Investing massively in the sector

Public funding for WASH must be considerably increased, whether at the national level (national budgets) or at the global level (Official Development Assistance) to build and renovate infrastructure, but also to operate services. Above all, this funding must be targeted towards the most vulnerable populations and areas, with a particular focus on access to sanitation.

#### Strengthening CSOs and citizen participation

Civil society, as well as the most vulnerable populations, must be more integrated into the development and conduct of public policies. It is necessary to provide technical and financial support and to set up spaces for dialogue.





## Part 3: call to the policymakers



### Message to decision-makers about water: which problems and what are the solutions

"Access to water and sanitation is a human right, not a privilege. Yet globally, 2 billion people do not have access to a safe water source and 3.6 billion are without access to safely managed sanitation services. Water resources are increasingly under threat due to human activity.

Faced with these challenges, a strong political commitment from your side is necessary. Access to water and sanitation is crucial for the economic and social development of a country and its population. No public policy can be truly effective without taking into consideration WASH issues.

To guarantee HRWS and put it at the heart of public policy, it must be enshrined in national legislation. A solid institutional framework is needed, and the governance of the sector must be reformed to ensure their effectiveness. Water and sanitation services must be managed in a democratic and transparent manner, in collaboration between the different sectors concerned, civil society and citizens. Long-term action plans must be adopted while emergency measures must be taken to ensure access to WASH for all as soon as possible. Increased funding for the sector is essential to expand infrastructure and services.

At the international level, the promotion of HRWS must be a priority of your diplomatic action. You must be a driving force in strengthening international cooperation for the sector and support the establishment of a global governance of the sector to monitor and promote the achievement of SDG6 of the 2030 Agenda.

Acting on the ground as close as possible to the populations, civil society is ready to accompany you in this work and to boost citizen participation. CSOs have significant expertise that should make them a major player in the development and conduct of public policies."

***"Access to water and sanitation is a human right, not a privilege"***

## Part 4: actions of the CSOs/NGOs in the water sector

### The actions of CSOs/NGOs to address water issues

#### 💧 Conducting projects closer to vulnerable populations

Strengthened by their presence on the ground, NGOs and CSOs wish to conduct projects as close as possible to vulnerable populations, of various natures:

- WASH access projects: construction of public infrastructure, boreholes and wells, etc. ;
- Strengthening and empowering populations or supporting dialogue between actors involved in water services and management, through awareness raising, training and transfer of technical and technological skills;
- Strengthening dialogue and citizen participation.
- The CSOs wish to carry out advocacy and awareness campaigns aimed at decision-makers and populations, to :
- Influencing decisions at the national level (public policy development, budgets, etc.) as well as at the local level (implementation and monitoring of services);
- Ensuring citizen control of public action;
- Raising awareness and train both local authorities and the population on DHEA, as well as on hygiene and sanitation, good practices, etc;
- Boosting citizen participation.

### Resources needed by the CSOs/NGOs (beyond funding)

#### 💧 Human resources and equipment

#### 💧 Capacity building

- Technical trainings: water treatment method; training in different technologies; material support; etc.
- Advocacy training: training in different levels, procedures, and lobbying techniques
- Expertise
- Help and support for communication
- Assistance in raising awareness among the population

#### 💧 Strengthening collaboration among them

- Structuring civil society at the regional and international level
- Sharing of experience and networks
- Joint campaigns and projects

#### 💧 More cooperation from public authorities

- Spaces for dialogue and consultation
- An environment conducive to their intervention, including an open civic space and political stability
- Support from authorities/recognition of their role in the development and conduct of public policies
- Transparency and improved data

## Part 5: role of the international community

### Key decisions requested for the States and the international community to accelerate the implementation of the internationally agreed upon 2030 Agenda water goals

#### Ensure strong political leadership

Recognized in 2010 by the UNGA, the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation need high-level international political leadership. States must make WASH a priority in their diplomatic action and SDG6 must be placed at the heart of development policies. More international summits or meetings should include in their agenda a discussion around universal access to WASH.

#### Delivering on commitments

Human rights, Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Agreement. States have made many commitments that they must implement. It is necessary to set up a monitoring and accountability mechanism in the WASH sector.

#### Improve international cooperation and global water governance

States should strive to strengthen international cooperation on WASH and recognize the water crisis as a "global" crisis. Conventions on transboundary watercourses must be ratified by as many States as possible. To enable global governance of the sector, an intergovernmental committee on water within the United Nations must be set up. This body must serve to incite States to act, to set up strong institutional frameworks and to adopt international rules for States (obligation for States to guarantee the effectiveness of HRWSs) and the private sector (regulation of water exploitation by multinationals and large companies).

#### Concrete commitments to increase funding

Donors, decision-makers, and operators must take ownership of WASH issues and define clear orientations. States must increase their national EAH WASH budgets. Concrete commitments to increase Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the most vulnerable populations and countries are necessary. A special focus must be given to sanitation. The importance of humanitarian aid must be recognized.





## About the Butterfly Effect

The Butterfly Effect (BE) is a network of around 130 international and local CSO/NGO, from all over the globe, which advocates for effective local solutions that have a sustainable impact on improving access to water and sanitation and water resource management.

Our mission is to ensure that the NGOs/CSOs' voice, from all world regions is strong and heard in the international water agenda when it comes to advocating water's essential role in sustainable and equitable development. The network speaks not on behalf but rather supports its members to voice the views of the sector in strategic water-related international fora (World Water Forum, Agenda 2030, Water Decade mid-term review, climate change conferences, etc.) in order to influence consistently the international water political agenda.


The Secretariat of the Butterfly Effect is coordinated by the International Secretariat for Water (ISW).

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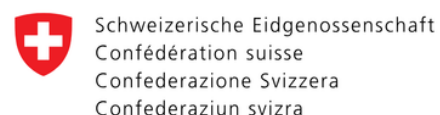
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