



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2021-0039, 17 March 2021

World Water Day 2021

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Summary

A debate on World Water Day has been scheduled for Thursday 18 March 2021 in the Commons Chamber. The subject for the debate has been selected by the Backbench Business Committee and has been initiated by Navendu Mishra MP.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

World Water Day is an annual United Nations Observance day which focuses on the importance of freshwater. It has been held since 1993. The event is coordinated by UN-Water and led by one or more of its [Members](#) and [Partners](#). World Water 2021 will take place on 22 March.

The aim of World Water Day is to celebrate water but also to raise awareness of the 2.2 billion people in the world that lack access to safe water.¹ A key aspect of World Water day is supporting the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) which is to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

The UN established 17 SDGs in 2015, with the aim of achieving them and meeting 169 associated targets by 2030. More information on the SDGs is available from the UN [online](#).

Valuing Water

Each year, UN-Water sets a theme for World Water Day. For 2021, the theme is valuing water. The [World Water Day 2021 Tool Kit](#) sets out more background information about this year's theme:

Economic development and a growing global population means agriculture and industry are getting thirstier and water-intensive energy generation is rising to meet demand. Climate change is making water more erratic and contributing to pollution.

As societies balance the demands on water resources, many people's interests are not being taken into account.

How we value water determines how water is managed and shared. The value of water is about much more than its price – water has enormous and complex value for our households, culture, health, education, economics and the integrity of our natural environment.

If we overlook any of these values, we risk mismanaging this finite, irreplaceable resource.

SDG 6 is to ensure water and sanitation for all. Without a comprehensive understanding of water's true, multidimensional value, we will be unable to safeguard this critical resource for the benefit of everyone.²

A further document collating conversations from social media that have used the [#Water2Me](#) will be available on 22 March 2021 at www.worldwaterday.org. This will contain representative comments and opinions of what water means to people across the globe.

Examples of the different ways water is valued are set out in the [World Water Day 2021 Tool Kit](#):

1. Valuing **water sources** – natural water resources and ecosystems.
2. Valuing **water infrastructure** – storage, treatment and supply.

¹ UN-Water, [World Water Day 2021 Tool Kit](#),

² UN-Water, [World Water Day 2021 Tool Kit](#),

3. Valuing **water services** – drinking water, sanitation and health services.
4. Valuing water **as an input to production and socio-economic activity** – food and agriculture, energy and industry, business and employment.
5. Valuing **socio-cultural aspects of water** – recreational, cultural and spiritual attributes.

On World Water Day, the [UN World Water Development Report](#) is published. This focusses on that year's theme and provides policy recommendations.

Previous themes included water and energy, water and food security and water for development. A list of previous themes can be viewed in the [World Water Day archives](#).

1.1 Access to Water and Sanitation

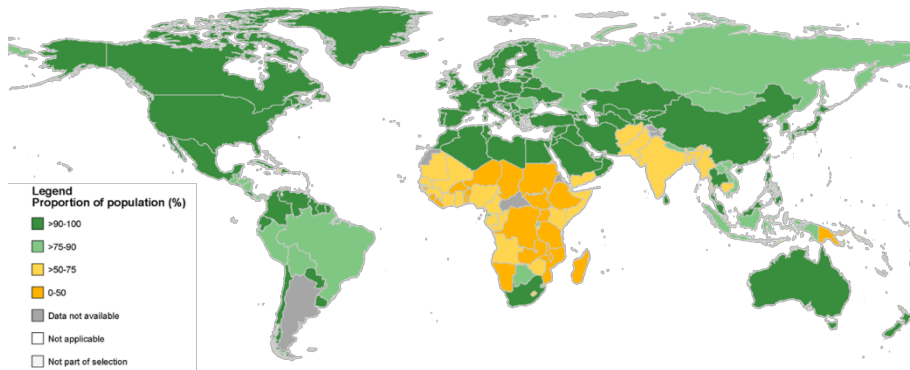
The UN provides information and global statistics relevant to each of the SDGs online. Some of the [key water and sanitation statistics](#) for SDG6 (pre Covid-19) taken from [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020](#) are outlined below:

- 2.2 billion people lack safely managed drinking water (2017)
- 4.2 billion people lack safely managed sanitation (2017)
- 3 billion people lack basic handwashing facilities at home
- 2 in 5 healthcare facilities worldwide have no soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub
- Water scarcity could displace 700 million people by 2030
- Some countries experience a funding gap of 61% for achieving water and sanitation targets³

SDG 6 has 9 associated targets to meet by 2030. These targets and the indicators by which they are assessed are provided by the UN and available to view [online](#). Further information and details of progress towards achieving SDG6 is also provided.

A [UN-Water mapping tool](#) also allows users to look at different water and sanitation indicators. This can display information for the entire world or by regions or by country. Data can be further divided to encompass national level coverage or distinguish between rural and urban areas. The below example shows the proportion of the population using an improved sanitation facility by country:

³ UN, [SDG 6 Overview](#), Accessed 16 March 2021



Source: United Nations, [UN Water](#), accessed 16 March 2021

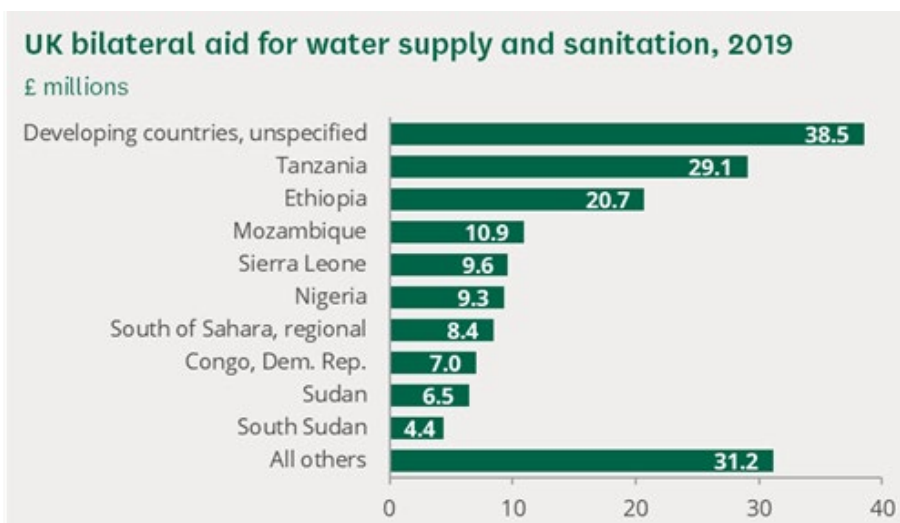
1.2 UK Government Aid

The chart below shows that from 2009 to 2019, total UK Government aid for water supply and sanitation was £1.6 billion. The highest total level of aid that the UK has provided in recent years was £206.5 million in 2018.

UK aid for water supply and sanitation, by subsector											
£ millions											
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Basic drinking water supply and basic sanitation	53.0	66.0	72.0	61.2	70.2	80.9	41.9	25.8	22.5	39.6	52.3
Water supply and sanitation - large systems	0.4	1.7	3.1	1.3	1.8	7.9	2.4	17.4	19.8	35.0	28.4
Basic drinking water supply	-	0.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	19.5	46.9	67.5	48.3	39.1	27.2
Basic sanitation	-	1.4	4.5	9.2	26.2	39.1	54.1	24.7	36.7	36.5	23.5
Water sector policy and administrative management	17.1	13.1	22.1	18.2	35.2	30.0	21.0	23.3	22.9	25.9	16.6
Water supply - large systems	-	0.1	-	10.0	-9.5	1.0	9.4	7.4	6.9	6.0	10.6
Education and training in water supply and sanitation	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.9	10.2	8.9	5.3
River basins development	2.5	2.9	2.1	1.6	0.0	0.4	3.1	1.2	2.5	3.6	5.1
Waste management/disposal	0.2	1.9	0.9	0.7	0.3	0.6	1.3	1.9	3.4	5.6	4.2
Water resources conservation (including data collection)	0.0	4.6	2.1	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.6	0.0	3.5	6.1	2.5
Sanitation - large systems	-	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	-
Total	73.2	92.4	109.7	106.7	128.3	180.8	182.6	170.0	177.0	206.5	175.7

Source: FCDO, [Statistics on International Development: Final UK Aid Spend 2019](#), 24 September 2020, and earlier editions

In 2019, unspecified developing countries were the largest recipients of aid (this designation is often used for aid contributions that went to multilateral institutions such as UN agencies or the World Bank); the largest contribution to a single country was £29.1 million to Tanzania, with other countries and regions in Africa making up the rest of the top ten.



Source: FCDO, [Statistics on International Development: Final UK Aid Spend 2019](#), 24 September 2020

1.3 Key Programmes and Performance

“WASH”

The Department of International Development (DFID), now part of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has funded Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programmes in developing countries for many years.

DFID’s expenditure and priorities before 2011 can be found the [Water, sanitation and hygiene portfolio review](#) which was published in March 2012. From 2011 to 2015 DFID reports that its WASH programme supported 69.2 million people. This included 22.2 million women.⁴

The FCDO published four briefs on learning from the WASH Results programme in October 2020. The WASH Results Programme aimed to support poor people in 11 countries to access improved water and sanitation, and to practice improved hygiene. It was a large-scale, Payment by Results (PbR) programme in which some payments to implementers were dependent on the achievement of WASH outcomes.

Overall achievements

[Learning Brief 1](#) assessed WASH outcome achievements in 11 countries: Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

It found that high levels of improved sanitation (above 70 percent) were maintained one to two years after implementation, and near-universal coverage was maintained in Ethiopia and Nepal. There were no results for water included in the brief.

How best could WASH reach the vulnerable?

[Learning Brief 3](#) considered the equity of the WASH programme, and how the three providers sought to reach more vulnerable and isolated

⁴ DFID, [Annual report and accounts, 2014-15](#), July 2015, p32

groups. Approaches included community engagement, subsidies and work with local and national governments.

[Learning Brief 4](#) discussed the role that NGOs could play in brokering relationships with local organisations and communities to ensure sustainable WASH services.

Commentary and evaluations on WASH

The Independent Commission on Aid Impact (ICAI) reviewed DFID expenditure on WASH in 2016.

The [ICAI](#) scrutinises UK aid spending, and reports to the UK Parliament through the House of Commons International Development Committee.

Its most recent report on DFID's [Water, Sanitation and Hygiene \(WASH\) programme](#) noted that DFID had exceeded its target for people to access WASH over the 2011 to 2015 period, by 2.9 million.

The ICAI noted that other impact data was not routinely collected, and that DFID did “not apply a consistent approach for measuring value for money across its WASH portfolio”.⁵

The report said that improving access to WASH was a “developmental goal in its own right” but also one that impacted on gender equality, wider health problems (e.g. diarrhoea and respiratory infections), and school attendance. The report argued that there was “some evidence” for improvements in education, nutrition, livelihoods and empowerment of women, and that health benefits, particularly for infants, “are the most clearly documented”⁶.

The ICAI also argued that DFID did not focus on monitoring the sustainability of its interventions.

DFID response to the ICAI report, 2016

In [response](#), DFID said the ICAI noted that it is “too early to draw strong conclusions on sustainability” (p2) and that the Department would develop stronger data on the value for money offered by WASH programmes (p3).⁷

e-Pact Evaluation 2019

e-Pact, a consortium led by Oxford Policy Management, was commissioned by DFID to monitor and evaluate the WASH programme. Its 2019 [report](#) examined the WASH programme from 2014 to 2018.

It concluded that “by most measures the programme was very successful in achieving its stated objectives” (piii), though questioned how far the results could be replicated by other providers (piv).⁸

⁵ ICAI, [Report: Assessing DFID's Results in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene](#), 24 May 2016

⁶ ICAI, [Report: Assessing DFID's Results in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene](#), 24 May 2016

⁷ DFID, [DFID Management Response](#), June 2016

⁸ E-Pact, [Monitoring, Verification, and Evaluation Component of the WASH Results Programme](#), Jan 2019

1.4 Impact of Coronavirus

Access to water and sanitation has been of heightened importance due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

DFID announced a [£100 million campaign](#) with Unilever in March 2020 to support better hygiene practices, including access to water. In [written evidence to the International Development Committee](#) the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office stated that the partnership with Unilever “is promoting hygiene in 37 countries, complementing country-specific activities on safe water and sanitation”.⁹

The Government [has also stated](#) that WaterAid, Action Aid and Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor will all receive funding through the Unilever partnership.¹⁰

A separate £20 million of funding was made available in a [humanitarian support package](#) in April 2020.

In April 2020, [DFID](#) said that existing bilateral programmes were being adapted to better support the response to the pandemic and in June 2020 [that](#) it had “increased our work with NGOs on water, sanitation and hygiene” since the pandemic began.

Written evidence submitted by [WaterAid](#) to the Committee in May 2020 relating to the Coronavirus outbreak stated that the NGO welcomed DFID’s funding commitment with Unilever but called for a “greater scale and urgency of prioritisation of hygiene, water and sanitation service to meet the scale of the need of low income countries” (para 9). It recommended that DFID “embed and ringfence WASH funding via multilaterals and other channels”.¹¹

The accompanying Committee report, [Covid-19 in developing countries: secondary impacts](#) (HC 1186), was published in January 2021. The report did not cover water and sanitation specifically but set out conclusions and recommendations on Government spending, non-Covid related healthcare, economy and livelihoods and gender inequality.

⁹ [Written Evidence Submission from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office in response to the International Development Committee’s Inquiry into COVID-19](#), January 2021

¹⁰ [PQ-53621](#), 9 June 2020

¹¹ [Written Evidence Submitted by WaterAid to International Development Select Committee](#), May 2020

2. Press articles

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

Guardian, 17 November 2020

[UK aid budget facing billions in cuts](#)

Telegraph, 5 November 2020

[Collecting drinking water can cause serious injury and disproportionately affects women, study finds](#)

Telegraph, 16 October 2020

Andrew Mitchell MP

[Covid-19 shows us why UK Aid should be invested in creating a healthier, safer world](#)

Guardian, 28 Aug 2020

[Pacific's fight against Covid-19 hamstrung by lack of clean water](#)

Telegraph, 10 July 2020

[Covid-19 dries up hopes of ending global water poverty by 2030, campaigners warn](#)

3. Parliamentary Questions

[Sanitation: Development Aid](#)

Asked by: Thompson, Owen | **Party:** Scottish National Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the reduction in the Official Development Assistance budget (a) from 0.7 per cent to 0.5 per cent and (b) as a result of the UK's decreased GDP on Government support for programmes supporting people to gain access to clean water or improved sanitation.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The seismic impact of the pandemic has forced us to take tough decisions, including temporarily reducing our aid budget. We will remain a world leading aid donor. We will spend more than £10 billion next year to fight poverty, tackle climate change and improve global health. We will reform how aid is spent across Government to deliver even better results for the money we spend. Aid has too often lacked coherence, oversight or appropriate accountability. Combined with our wider diplomatic work, this will ensure we remain a force for good next year and beyond.

The Government is continuing to ensure that water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) plays a full role in contributing to our commitments. We will do this by supporting global leadership in the sector, strengthening sector systems, and ongoing COVID-19 response activities. Our work on WASH builds on existing progress and the UK Government can confirm that the target of reaching at least 60 million people with improved water or sanitation by December 2020 has been met.

04 Dec 2020 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 122797

[Developing Countries: Sanitation](#)

Asked by: Williams, Hywel | **Party:** Plaid Cymru

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of the aid budget has been allocated to ensure the provision of (a) water, (b) sanitation and (c) hygiene in developing countries in the 2020-2021 financial year.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The proportion of the UK aid budget allocated to water, sanitation and hygiene in the current calendar year will be known with the release of the Statistics for International Development publication in late 2021. Current figures show that in 2019 the UK Government spent £176 million of bilateral official development assistance on water, sanitation and hygiene. This was 1.7% of total bilateral ODA last year. The 2021

annual report will confirm whether the share of ODA that was spent on water, sanitation and hygiene continued in the current year.

The UK Government can also confirm that the overall target of reaching at least 60 million people with improved water or sanitation by December 2020 has been met.

01 Dec 2020 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 120802

[Sanitation](#)

Asked by: Lord Jones of Cheltenham | **Party:** Liberal Democrats

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports from the World Health Organisation and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme that (1) 785 million people do not have access to clean water close to home, (2) two billion people do not have a decent toilet, and (3) three billion people do not have basic handwashing facilities at home; and what plans they have to work with other governments to tackle those issues, particularly in view of the importance of sanitation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The FCDO takes the data in these reports very seriously, and we are proud to support the WHO and UNICEF to produce them. If current trends continue, Sustainable Development Goal 6 targets for water supply, sanitation and hygiene will not be achieved. This will undermine the achievement of many other global goals, and our own commitment to end the preventable deaths of mothers, infants and children. Progress on hygiene and sanitation is needed to tackle COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Over the last five years, the UK has helped 62 million people gain access to water and sanitation services. We are working with Unilever and other partners to promote hand hygiene for up to a billion people in response to the current pandemic. We also need longer-term solutions. To maximise the impact of aid, we are shifting our focus to strengthen national health systems which can deliver and sustain access at a far greater scale - and which can attract additional financial resources.

28 Sep 2020 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL8319

[Sub-Saharan Africa: Water and Sanitation](#)

10 Jun 2020 | Oral question time interventions | House of Lords | House of Lords chamber | 803 cc1736-1740

Lord Bruce of Bennachie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase their support for water and sanitation programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic.

My Lords, I beg leave to ask the Question standing on my name in the Order Paper and draw attention to my entry in the register of interests.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development (Baroness Sugg) (Con)

My Lords, water, sanitation and hygiene are essential for preventing the spread of Covid-19. We continue to support WASH projects throughout Africa. Our country teams are responding through health and humanitarian programmes, with water and sanitation being a key area. We have provided more funding to UNICEF, the lead UN agency for water supply and sanitation, to help with the response. We have launched a new partnership with Unilever, which is working in Africa to scale up Covid-specific messaging on hygiene.

Lord Bruce of Bennachie

With the impact of Covid-19 and the stress on water supplies from the climate emergency, I know the Minister recognises, as she acknowledged, that clean water and sanitation are more vital than ever, especially when aid budgets are squeezed. Water Unite, which I chair, collects a 1% levy on the sale of bottled water to invest in water and sanitation projects. Will the Government encourage this and other innovative ways of unlocking millions of pounds for development funds to add to taxpayer-funded donor contributions? Will she consider meeting me to explore this further?

Baroness Sugg

I thank the noble Lord for that suggestion. We have discussed that excellent initiative in the past and I would be delighted to meet him to discuss it further. As he says, water, sanitation and hygiene are incredibly important and the first line of defence for preventing the spread of Covid. DfID will continue to support WASH, as we know it is critical for managing the Covid recovery.

Lord McNicol of West Kilbride (Lab)

My Lords, handwashing is one of the most effective disease prevention methods available, including specifically for Covid-19, yet 3 billion people globally do not have handwashing facilities at home. As part of DfID's monitoring of Covid-19 cases in developing countries, do the Government intend to increase support for sanitation programmes in areas that are experiencing a high number of cases?

Baroness Sugg

My Lords, as the noble Lord says, hygiene relies on access to adequate quantities of clean water, and that applies to both handwashing and surface hygiene. We will absolutely continue to support WASH projects. We need to make progress on sanitation, and progress to ensure that sufficient clean water is available for people to be able to keep safe.

Lord Mann (Non-Afl)

Can the Minister be absolutely clear: will we be spending more on this in sub-Saharan Africa in the next 12 months?

Baroness Sugg

My Lords, I fear I am not in a position to answer that question. As the noble Lord will be aware, DfID funds a vast number of projects to tackle

Covid. As I said, WASH projects will absolutely continue to be a key priority for DfID as we move forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Baroness Garden of Frognal) (LD)

My Lords, I gather that the noble Lord, Lord Duncan of Springbank, is not asking his question, so I call the noble Baroness, Lady Sheehan.

Baroness Sheehan (LD)

My Lords, in Africa, the WASH sector is critical for both containing the virus and lowering its devastating impact on human and economic costs. Can the Minister say what conversations DfID has had with the CDC about using its heft to leverage investment into both WASH, infrastructure and products such as soap and sanitiser?

Baroness Sugg

My Lords, obviously we work closely with CDC to ensure that it is responding sufficiently to Covid. CDC is urgently undertaking a Covid-19 impact and vulnerability assessment across its portfolio of investments in Africa and South Asia. As other investors withdraw, CDC is looking at extending the risk-sharing agreements it has with partner banks to ensure that it will continue to be able to support projects. I will certainly have a further discussion with it about how it can specifically support WASH projects.

Baroness Stroud (Con)

My Lords, the recent outbreak of Covid has led to the biggest and most welcome extension of the WASH programme across Africa. How can we ensure that the investments made in water sanitation and hygiene by DfID look beyond Covid-19 and help to fight other diseases in the long term, such as neglected tropical diseases, and provide sustainable water and sanitation solutions for vulnerable populations going forward?

Baroness Sugg

My Lords, my noble friend is of course quite right to point out that WASH is critical not only now as we deal with the immediate impacts of Covid-19 but for the future. That is why we are working closely with our partner Governments to ensure that the water systems in their countries continue to receive investment as countries around the world are challenged with the economic impact of Covid-19.

Lord Hope of Craighead (CB)

My Lords, can the noble Baroness assure the House that everything possible is being done to assist villagers in poorer countries such as Malawi, in sub-Saharan Africa? Access to clean water for washing hands is often very limited, as has been pointed out, and traditional medicine inhibits knowledge of symptoms and how to deal with them. The provision of well-judged education and sufficient hand sanitation could save many lives.

Baroness Sugg

I certainly agree with the noble and learned Lord that we must make sure that the information provided to people is correct in order to help them save lives. I mentioned our project with Unilever, which aims to reach 1 billion people with the correct information about how best to protect themselves from Covid.

Lord Collins of Highbury (Lab)

I congratulate the Government on the Gavi replenishment—a great example of international co-operation delivering on a vital health initiative. WASH is an important ingredient in delivering SDG 6, as well as our objective of universal health coverage. What are the noble Baroness, the Government and DfID doing to ensure that we lead and get other countries to invest in WASH projects?

Baroness Sugg

I am grateful to the noble Lord for bringing up Gavi, which was a great success last week, and which brought the world together to raise over £8.8 billion for essential vaccinations. As he says, improving access to water and sanitation is its own development goal; safe water and sanitation are critical to public health and are necessary elements of universal health coverage. It is also good value for money, and we encourage other donors and indeed the World Bank to continue investment. It estimates that for every £1 spent there are economic benefits worth over £4. Therefore, we target our aid well to vulnerable countries. Between 2011 and 2015, we helped 64.5 million people get access to water and sanitation. We will continue this work and continue to encourage other partners to invest.

Baroness Randerson (LD)

I declare an interest, as my husband receives a grant for research on sustainable farming in Uganda. Almost 22 million people in Uganda do not have access to clean water. That is important for health but also for equality and education opportunities for girls in particular. How much funding have the Government allocated in the last year to address health and sanitation problems in that country?

Baroness Sugg

I am afraid that I do not have the specific amount of funding for that country but I will write to the noble Baroness with that information. I completely agree that we must ensure that, as schools reopen, all pupils are able to return to school, and providing proper health, hygiene and clean running water will of course be important for that aim.

Viscount Waverley (CB)

My Lords, negotiating a broad network of water PPP awards similar to that which has worked well in Gaza could be a strategy. However, I draw attention to the use of the term “sub-Sahara”, which many consider to have overtones from a bygone colonialist and racist era and so to have had its day. Would it therefore not be better to exercise our minds on Africa geostrategically, to include north Africa and the Maghreb?

Baroness Sugg

I thank the noble Viscount for that question. While examples of donating water supply or treatment equipment have been successful in some cases, our programmes overall focus increasingly on more systems-strengthening and climate resilience, as they are part of our work on ending preventable deaths. I recognise that both “Africa” and “sub-Saharan Africa” are used as shorthand for a continent that is incredibly diverse in people, cultures and contexts, and our work is

designed in collaboration with countries and partners to respond to that diversity.

Lord Polak (Con)

My Lords, there is a practical and reliable solution. For the last 12 years, the charity Innovation: Africa has enabled remote villages to harness the power of the sun using Israeli solar and water technology. The solar panels power the pump, which is placed in the aquifer below ground. The clean water is then pumped into a tank and taps are installed throughout the village, providing up to 10,000 people with clean water from one system at a cost of about £40,000 per system. Thanks to Innovation: Africa, 1.7 million people in remote villages in sub-Saharan Africa have clean running water. Would the Minister agree to meet with Innovation: Africa to explore ways in which her department can help ensure that clean, fresh water can be delivered to the millions in desperate need?

Baroness Sugg

My noble friend highlights one of the ways in which we are helping people in rural villages, which the noble and learned Lord, Lord Hope, asked about earlier. I understand that Innovation: Africa works closely with UNICEF, one of our key partners in WASH. Its use of innovative technology is particularly encouraging, especially as it uses green energy to power it. To achieve our ambitious SDG 6 WASH targets will require a major increase of resources and capacity. To use those effectively we must make the most of domestic funding, contributions from households and attract new finance. The WASH team at DfID will be happy to meet with Innovation: Africa, and I will follow that up with my noble friend.

[West Bank: Sanitation](#)

Asked by: Baroness Tonge | **Party:** Non-affiliated

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports that mobile latrines have been demolished and water tanks have been damaged by Israeli forces in Palestinian and Bedouin communities in the West Bank in March and April.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK is seriously concerned by the continued demolition of Palestinian property by Israeli authorities. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians and is harmful to the peace process. We have also previously stressed the need to take immediate and practical measures to ensure fair distribution of water in the West Bank.

02 Jun 2020 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL4620

[Developing Countries: Sanitation and Hygiene](#)

29 Apr 2020 | Oral questions - Lead | Answered | House of Commons | House of Commons chamber | 902053 | 675 cc308-243

Asked by: John Mc Nally (Falkirk) (SNP) | **Party:** Scottish National Party

What recent steps she has taken to help ensure that people in developing countries have adequate access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities during the covid-19 pandemic.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Wendy Morton)

Hand washing with soap and water, as we are all recognising, is the first line of defence against coronavirus transmission. The UK has world-leading commercial and scientific expertise on water, sanitation and hygiene. DFID has launched a £100 million scheme with British soap company Unilever to promote hygiene in developing countries, and has given a further £20 million to UNICEF to strengthen its coronavirus response in these areas. We are helping people around the world to defeat this virus.

John Mc Nally

The International Rescue Committee has highlighted that hand-washing facilities are absolutely crucial in preventing the spread of diseases in the developing world. Our experience of Ebola shows that NGOs currently working on the ground are best placed to scale up an emergency response, so I welcome the funding given to the Red Cross and others, but what plans does the Secretary of State have to increase funding to other local NGOs working within communities?

Wendy Morton

Good hygiene is the single most effective action an individual can take to prevent covid-19 transmission; that is absolutely an important point. Water sanitation and hygiene are a key part of DFID's work and vital in humanitarian crises. DFID funds the provision of safe water and sanitation in disaster areas across the globe. Since 2015, DFID has helped over 51 million poor people in Africa and Asia get access to a drinking water supply or toilet for the first time. But we recognise there is still more to do.

4. Further information

UK Aid

12 November 2020

[New Small Charities Challenge Fund grants announced for WASH projects in Uganda and Madagascar](#)

We are pleased to be able to announce the names of more grassroots charities to benefit from UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) Small Charities Challenge Fund (SCCF) grants.

These UK-registered organisations, Gather Hub, Teams4u and Teso Development Trust will receive SCCF grants of up to £50,000, to help them to address the UN Global Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) in particular.

The dangers of collecting drinking water

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/11/201104102213.htm>

University of East Anglia, November 4 2020

Summary:

Fetching drinking water in low and middle income countries can cause serious injury, particularly for women. A new study reveals dangers including falls, traffic accidents, animal attacks, and fights, which can result in broken bones, spinal injuries, lacerations, and other physical injuries. The work draws on a survey of 6,291 randomly selected households across 24 sites in 21 low- and middle-income countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

WaterAid post, 29 July 2020

[COVID-19 set to take \\$400 billion from global battle against poverty by 2021](#)

Developing countries will have at least \$400 billion less to spend on sustainable development including access to safe water, healthcare and education during this year and next due to the impact of COVID-19, according to a new report from End Water Poverty and WaterAid.

Rethinking the economics of rural water in Africa

<https://academic.oup.com/oxrep/article/36/1/171/5696680>

Oxford Review of Economic Policy, Volume 36, Issue 1, Spring 2020, Pages 171–190, 06 January 2020

Rob Hope, Patrick Thomson, Johanna Koehler, Tim Foster.

Abstract

Rural Africa lags behind global progress to provide safe drinking water to everyone. Decades of effort and billions of dollars of investment have yielded modest gains, with high but avoidable health and economic costs borne by over 300m people lacking basic water access. We explore why rural water is different for communities, schools, and healthcare facilities across characteristics of scale, institutions, demand, and finance. The findings conclude with policy recommendations to (i) network rural services at scale, (ii) unlock rural payments by creating value, and (iii) design and test performance-based funding models at national and regional scales, with an ambition to eliminate the need for future, sustainable development goals.

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