



## International Organization for Migration Messages to the UN 2023 Water Conference

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People on the move find themselves at the heart of the water and sanitation crisis, exacerbated by climate change. At the same time, disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation are reshaping both patterns of water availability and access and patterns of human mobility. Conflict over water resources or exacerbated by shrinking water resources also impacts these patterns. Access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene is the most basic human need for health and well-being, and a conditional element of progress for the rest of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as enshrined in the [Sustainable Development Goal 6](#) on water and sanitation. The UN Water Conference is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to mobilize all stakeholders to work towards achieving universal access to water and sanitation for all, without any discrimination, and while prioritizing those most in need, including migrants and displaced persons.

In this context, IOM calls on all stakeholders and parties to:

1. Ensure that the **linkages between human mobility and water** in the context of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters – including integrated water resources management - are **recognized and incorporated into local, national, regional and transnational and global relevant water, climate response and adaptation, and migration and displacement policies** with whole-of government approaches, in line with the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the Global Compact for Migration, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement.

2. When averting, minimizing and addressing Loss and Damage linked to water resources, **mobilize action and financial resources that strengthen people's resilience and adaptability** in the context of mobility decision-making. This should be based on a comprehensive and contextual approach based on the linkages between human mobility and water in the context of climate change, environmental degradation, disasters and/or conflict. Such comprehensive approach includes solutions for people to stay, for people to move and for people on the move: through, inter alia, addressing the impacts of water extremes on migrants and displaced populations while ensuring sustainable water management when finding durable solutions to displacement; migration as an adaptation strategy as a response to losses and damages on water resources; and adaptation interventions and innovative, sustainable and cooperative water resources management to either allow people to stay in situ or move with dignity.
3. Build resilience to future shocks and stressors, by **providing tangible Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services that go beyond basic needs**. This includes services related to governance, institutional capacity building, environmental protection, job creation, and conflict resolution. Sustainable WASH is not only life-saving, but is critical to achieving broader sustainable development goals, ensuring effective adaptation to climate change while ensuring stability and peace in line with the Humanitarian-Development- Peace Nexus.
4. Follow the **principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** to ensure sustainable water access when providing WASH services. Using the above Nexus approach, addressing WASH and other humanitarian needs means looking beyond short-term humanitarian responses and ensuring that development deficits are identified and addressed. By linking with localized approaches in resilience, WASH services can work with and build upon the capacities, processes, and practices that already exist within communities.
5. **Apply a whole-of-society approach** that looks to reduce vulnerabilities people face and empower people as agents of change. There is an opportunity to tap into the significant potential of community resilience and human mobility – when well-managed and people-centred – to support innovative and sustainable water resources management. Empowered communities, diaspora groups, migrants and displaced persons, returning migrants and others can foster the transfer of skills, know-how, technology and investments to support water infrastructure as well as innovation for water-use efficiency solutions.

For additional information, visit the webpage dedicated to IOM's engagement at the UN 2023 Water Conference [HERE](#).