

High-level breakfast on the private sector's role in achieving universal access to WASH

**Friday, January 22, 2016
Goal 17 Partnership Space
World Economic Forum Annual Meeting
Davos, Switzerland**

On January 22, 2016, over 30 participants joined UNICEF and the United Nations Foundation to discuss how the private sector can engage to improve water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). In response to the UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson's "Call to Action on Sanitation", the conversation explored actionable recommendations in the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) report titled "[Private sector and water supply, sanitation and hygiene](#)", including a possible campaign, "WASH4Work".

Kathy Calvin, President and Chief Executive Officer of the UN Foundation, provided opening remarks and framed the UN Foundation's engagement in support of the Deputy Secretary-General's "Call to Action on Sanitation", after which Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF, discussed how progress on WASH will enable greater progress across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), why greater private sector engagement is critical, and how businesses should think about getting involved.

Susan Myers, Senior Vice President of the UN Foundation, provided an overview of ODI's report, which maps the private sector role around in three areas: how to build viable business models to provide and sustain WASH services (private sector **in** WASH), how to leverage private sector contributions to the enabling environment for WASH (private sector **for** WASH), and how to frame mechanisms for private sector and WASH organisations to engage at global policy level, in support of country plans and strategies (private sector **and** WASH). The report highlights several opportunities for further engagement and provides in depth recommendations for a campaign, WASH4Work, aimed at encouraging companies to invest in WASH in their workplaces, in the communities where their workers live, and across supply chains. The campaign is an opportunity to build upon existing initiatives by providing a platform for advocacy, knowledge sharing and alignment.

The discussion which followed the opening remarks featured leaders from a range of sectors (listed below) on how the private sector can support the achievement of SDG 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all.

Key Discussion Points

- **If we look at one issue, we must weave in the others – WASH is no exception.** SDGs are interconnected and most require WASH to be successful. More than 800 children die each day due to diarrhea, for example, and lack of access to WASH can cause malnutrition and stunting, in addition to diminishing a child's ability to learn, particularly for girls. There are nearly 663 million people with no access to clean water, and approximately 1 billion people practicing open defecation globally.
- **The WASH community should connect with other efforts,** such as Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) and programs on girls education. Next year we should combine this event with the annual SUN breakfast.

- **There are multiple ways businesses can engage in WASH.** These include: emphasizing WASH across their supply chains (including facilities for their workers and separate facilities for women); advocating to governments (for example: join Sanitation and Water for All, enhance national financing); shaping products and services to local needs; and, engaging in public-private partnerships. They should also be encouraged to **sign-up to WBCSD’s [WASH at the workplace pledge](#)** – which reaches 2.2 million employees worldwide. We need to be cautious not to duplicate efforts.
- **WASH services cannot be provided without business and must be implemented in them. Businesses apply standards, face reputational risks from not providing services, and can yield high returns if they do.** For every \$1 invested there is a return of \$4, on average, which contributes to the decrease of waterborne diseases among the workforce resulting in reduced absenteeism and increased productivity. Conversely, a lack of investment is causing a decrease of 2-6% in GDPs in Africa and Asia. Efforts must flow through supply chains and communities.
- The work of the United Nations and World Bank Group’s new [High Level Panel on Water](#) needs to include WASH services for all. **The HLP also needs to have direct engagement with the private sector and we need to push for inclusion of this point into the Terms of Reference (TORs), possibly through the Deputy Secretary-General and/or World Economic Forum.** A formal endorsement by the HLP on WASH4Work should be considered as well.
- **Efforts of the Global Commission on Business and Sustainable Development will also feature WASH.**
- **If efforts to provide WASH services are going to work, we need to get it right in India,** where half of the 1 billion people defecting in the open live. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a tri-sector effort to get everyone involved, and has a program whereby 2% of every company’s revenues (an estimated \$3.5 billion this year) needs to be given to Corporate Social Responsibility efforts, but **actions need to be coordinated and focused.** Global citizenship, behavior change, social activation and scale are key. One effort currently underway is encouraging school children to get involved and address the issue with their parents. Global Poverty Project is planning to host concert in India this year which will be important for social activation and accountability.
- There is tremendous momentum around innovation, but we need to avoid an innovation bottleneck where good ideas are not scaled because there are too many. **Should scale what is already working.**
- **Behavioral change is crucial** and is linked to culture and the way people think about things. One challenge is the **lack of an ecosystem around educating people on why WASH is important,** and entrepreneurs can play a role.
- **Messaging is important.** “Fecal sludge management”, for example, is very hard to campaign for. Need to figure out what messages resonate with various audiences and stop “sanitizing sanitation”. Messaging is often complex, opaque and hides elements, though need to be careful to not simplify the issue. **Talking about toilets is more effective.** It feels like a different agenda when personal stories are shared as it makes the issue relatable. DFID has done a good job connecting people in UK with people in developing countries. Their strategy is to focus on the girl instead of the issue.
- **SWA welcomes suggestions on what will be most productive to work on and language to use.**
- **USAID will work on integrating WASH into efforts on other sectors** to enhance the numbers of companies working on the issue.
- Working with the UN can be complicated and fragmented. **A more coordinated approach would be useful for the private sector.**

Participants

Name	Title	Affiliation
Anna Tunkel	Director of Strategic Initiatives	APCO Worldwide Inc.
Margery Kraus	Founder and Executive Chairman	APCO Worldwide Inc.
Kevin Rudd	Chair	Sanitation and Water for All
Gary Cohen	Executive Vice President	Becton, Dickinson and Company
Alexander Woollcombe	Head of Campaigns	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Sarah Shields	Executive Director and General Manager of UK Sales	Dell, Inc.
Stephen Brown	UK Country Director	Global Poverty Project
Nina Sharma	Chief of Staff	Handshake Partners
Alison Eyles	Global Executive Vice President Marketing Communication	Hill & Knowlton
Nada Dugas	Communication Director	P&G
Deborah Bothun Avila	Global Leader Entertainment and Media and US Leader Entertainment, Media & Communications	PwC
Walter Van Kuijen	Senior Vice President Global Government and Public Affairs	Royal Philips Netherlands
Shiv Khemka	Vice Chairman	SUN Group
Shireen Dajani	Principal	The Abraaj Group
Zana Salzman	Director	The Global Education & Leadership Foundation
Ohood Al Roumi	Director-General	United Arab Emirates, Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, Prime Minister's Office
Kathy Calvin	President and Chief Executive Officer	UN Foundation
Susan Myers	Senior Vice President	UN Foundation
Gerard Bocquenet	Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships	UNICEF
Sally Burnheim	Principle Advisor, Private Fundraising and Partnerships	UNICEF
Andres Franco	Deputy Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships	UNICEF
Anthony Lake	Executive Director	UNICEF
Alan Jope	President, Personal Care	Unilever
Rebecca Marmot	Global VP, Partnerships & Foundation	Unilever
Melissa Powell	Head, Strategy & Partnerships	United Nations Global Compact
Eric Postel	Associate Administrator	USAID
Margaret Batty	Global Director of Policy and Campaigns	WaterAid
Peter Bakker	CEO & President	WBCSD
Tyler Barth	President	Young Investors Organization
Fernando Scodro	Vice President	Young Investors Organization