

ON THE ROAD TO THE 2026 UNITED NATIONS WATER CONFERENCE

WEBINAR 2: CO-DEVELOPPING THE NARRATIVE – YOUTH AND CIVIL SOCIETY JOINT INPUTS TO THE INTERACTIVE DIALOGUES



United Nations



United Nations Water Conference
United Arab Emirates, 2026



Global Youth Movement for Water



IWA the international water association



GERMAN WASH NETWORK

SANITATION AND WATER FOR ALL

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



UNDESA

UN WATER

Webinar 2 – Overview



1. Opening remarks
2. Updates
3. Civil society advocacy
4. Youth accountability frameworks
5. Breakout rooms
6. Plenary
7. Next steps
8. Q&A
9. Closing

Moderators



Coline Arnoux
Advocacy and
Communication Officer



Alix Debray
Youth Sector Coordinator

International Secretariat for Water

Opening remarks



Georg Schücking
Associate Expert
UN Water



Maren Heuvels
Facilitator
Stronger Together

The 2026 UN Water Conference



United Nations



United Nations Water Conference
United Arab Emirates, 2026

General presentation 2026 UNWC

- From 2 to 4 December 2026, in the United Arab Emirates
- Co-hosted by the United Arab Emirates and Senegal
- Thematic: Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6
- Continuity with the 2023 UN Water Conference - same format with intergovernmental sessions (and interactive dialogues) and parallel events (special sessions and side-events)
- No binding result



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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



The 2026 UN Water Conference

High-level preparatory meeting - Dakar, Senegal

- Monday **26** and Tuesday **27 January 2026** at the Abdou Diouf International Conference Centre (CICAD) in Diamniadio, located approximately 30 km from Dakar, where the 2022 WWForum was held
- Preceded by a **one-day event on 25 January 2026**, co-organised by UN DESA, to strengthen multi-stakeholder participation, including that of civil society. Further details upcoming
- Objective of the prep meeting: to lay the groundwork for the final conference in December, based on preliminary discussions on the **6 themes of the interactive dialogues**
- The meeting is intended to assess progress on SDG6 and identify implementation gaps, bring together Member States, UN entities, stakeholders to ensure an inclusive preparation for the main conference, and build momentum ahead of 2026
- Languages: English and French
- Registration: online registration is open, with a **closing date of 10 January 2026**



2026 UNWC - High-level preparatory meeting - Dakar, Senegal

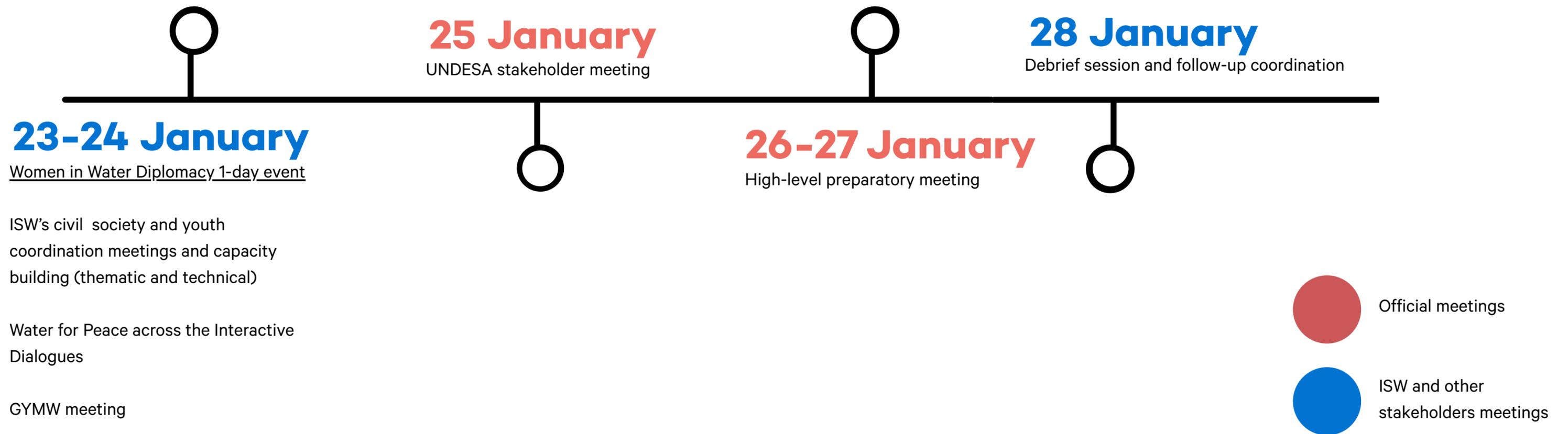
PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

+ 25th

TIME	DAY 1 - 26 January 2026	DAY 2 - 27 January 2026
8.00-9.00	Arrival of participants & registration	
9.00-12.30	High-level Opening Segment - Arrival of Dignitaries - Opening ceremony - High-level Panel discussion - Presentation: Conference vision, Meeting objectives & agenda - Launch of the UN-Water GLAAS 2025 report	Side meetings Dialogue space [3]
12.30-14.00	Lunch	Round table 'kick-off' discussions on Interactive Dialogue themes (e) and (f) - (90 mins) ID (e): Water in multilateral processes Coffee & networking ID (f): Investments for water Lunch Side meetings Dialogue space [4]
14.00-18.30	Round table 'kick-off' discussions on Interactive Dialogue themes (a) to (d) - (90 mins) ID (a): Water for people ID (b): Water for prosperity Coffee & networking break ID (c): Water for planet ID (d): Water for cooperation Interactive Session 1 - (60 mins) - Strengthening multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral and intergenerational engagement	Interactive Session 2 - (90 mins) - Reporting back & reflections on the round table 'kick-off' discussions on the six interactive dialogue themes - Shaping a collective ambition for the 2026 UN Water Conference Coffee & networking break High-level Segment "On the road from Senegal to the UAE" - Synthesis of the results of the meeting - Overview of the roadmap ahead and concluding remarks Press conference
18.30-19.30	Side meetings Dialogue space [2]	Cultural experience (TBC)
	Cultural experience (TBC)	

On the road to the 2026 UNWC

Dakar High Level Preparatory Meeting - January 2026

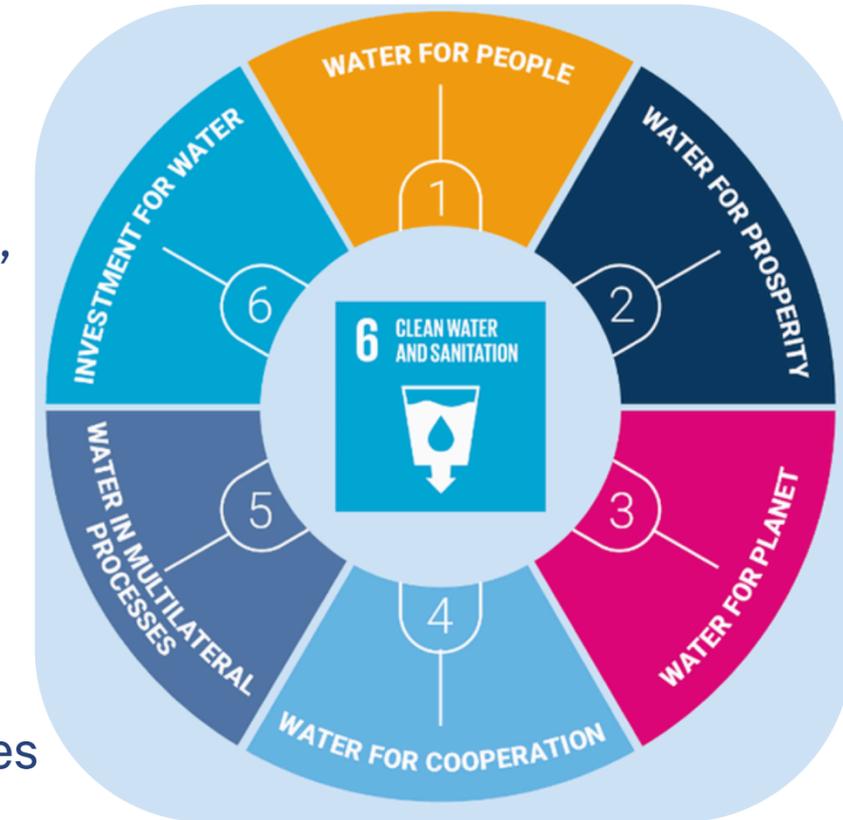


The 2026 UNWC

Process

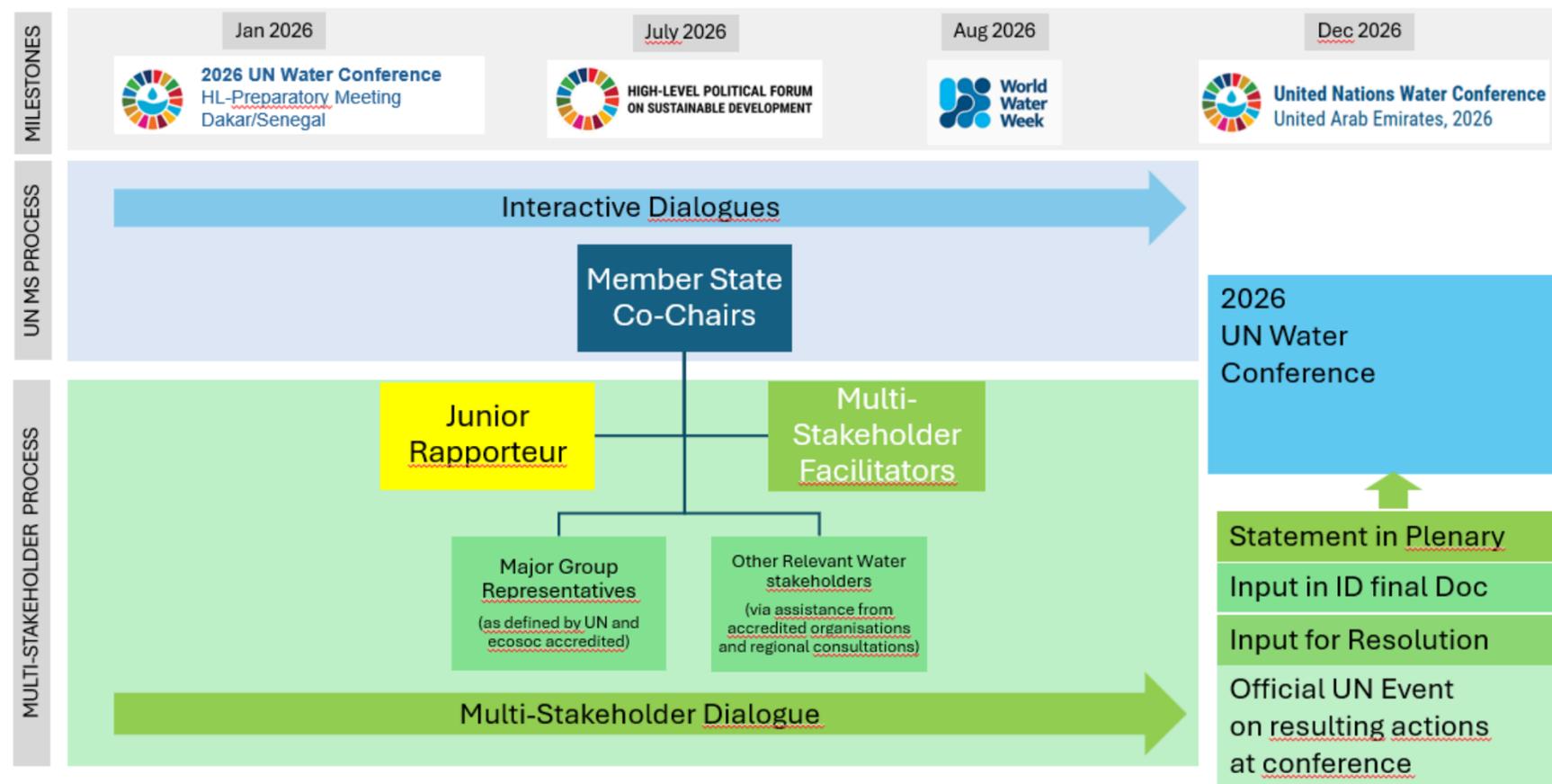
The themes of the **Interactive Dialogues** have been adopted at the PGA meeting on July 9, as follows:

- 1. Water for People:** The human rights to water and sanitation, including for those in vulnerable situations, for healthy societies and economies
- 2. Water for Prosperity:** Valuing water, Water-Energy-Food nexus, advancing integrated and sustainable water resource management, wastewater and water-use efficiency across sectors, and economic and social development
- 3. Water for Planet:** Climate, Biodiversity, Desertification, Environment, Source to Sea, Resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction
- 4. Water for Cooperation:** Transboundary and International Water Cooperation, including Scientific Cooperation, and inclusive governance
- 5. Water in Multilateral Processes:** SDG 6, the 2030 Agenda and beyond, and global water initiatives
- 6. Investments for Water:** Financing, technology & innovation, and capacity building



Civil society advocacy initiatives

Inclusive participation of civil society in the interactive dialogues



Join our advocacy by signing our open letter here

Civil society advocacy initiatives

Joint position paper of european NGOs (published in June 2025)

1. Recommendations for the organisation of the 2026 UN WC

- High level political mobilisation
- Meaningful CS inclusion
- Break silos / engage with other processes (e.g. COPs)
- Strong diplomatic commitment

2. Recommendations to the EU and its member states on the proposed themes (IDs)

- all IDs included, except ID 6 ‘Investments for water’, as this had not been introduced at the time of publication

Joint position paper of European Union NGOs for the preparation of the UN Water Conference 2026
An ambitious, action-driven, and inclusive process



Context

The UN 2023 Water Conference was the largest-ever gathering of Members States and stakeholders to deliberate on water. The overall conclusion of the conference was that **“the global water cycle is a global common good; the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation must be accessible to all populations without further delay, and rather than being a threat to life and health, water must become a catalyst for health and well-being, securing nutrition and energy for all”**.

The UN 2026 Water Conference is a crucial step towards strengthening global water governance and accelerating the implementation of the human rights to water and sanitation and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6. Water is critical not only to achieve SDG 6, but all the other SDGs.

The conference takes place against the backdrop of a worsening water and sanitation crisis, exacerbated by the growing impact of climate change as well as increasing fragility, humanitarian crisis and declining international funding.

The preparatory process, including the high-level preparatory meeting in Dakar in December 2025, will be a strategic opportunity to formulate the objectives of the conference, ensure follow-up to the commitments made in 2023, translate commitments and initiative into tangible outcomes of the conference and reinforce the multi-stakeholder dynamics, notably guaranteeing the effective participation of civil society.

Below are our collective recommendations to the EU from 23 signatory organisations for a successful UN 2026 Water Conference.

Networks:



Organisations:



1 Summary of Proceedings UN 2023 Water Conference from the UNCA/Provisional Catalog

Multistakeholder advocacy initiative

High-level compact - Sanitation and water for All (SWA)

The Compact has been endorsed by 29 countries and 28 organisations today.



Youth accountability framework



Hadi Toure

AFR'EAU,

IWA & Grundfos Fellow (1st cohort)



UN 2023 WATER CONFERENCE STORY TIME



The Water Action Agenda

We analysed 841 commitments under the Water Action Agenda. Here is what we found:

- **Only 25% of commitments include youth as partners**
- **Only 27% include youth as beneficiaries**
- **Even though 60% mention the word “youth” somewhere**

Displaying 1 - 18 of 845

Search Keywords

▶ SDGs

▶ Entity Types

Countries

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Andorra
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia

Search

WHENCE Initiative



Saving the Worlds Water Towers Campaign



Empowering Communities in Monitoring for Watershed Security and Adaptation in River Basins



Low Water Footprint Initiative (LWFi) for Dairy Industry



Contribution of Artificial Intelligence, Geophysics, GIS, and ICT to the Fight Against Groundwater Drawdown in the Algerian, Arab, and African Arid Regions

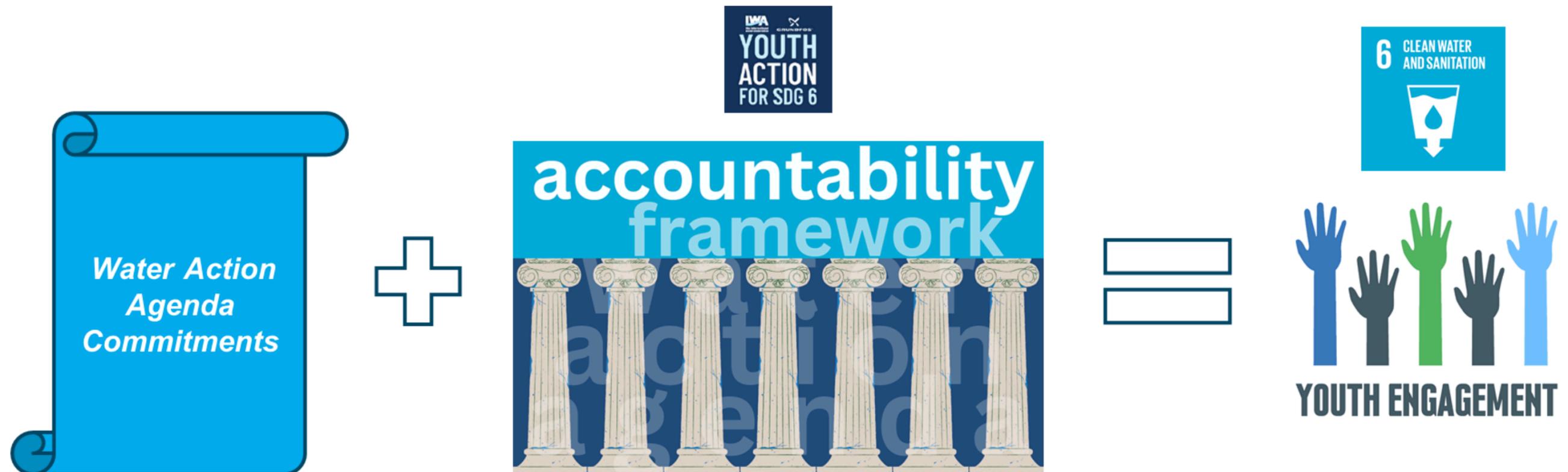


100 Voices for Our Planet



Youth accountability framework

Our objective is to support Commitment-holders to be accountable in engaging youth in the course of fulfilling their Water Action Agenda (WAA) Commitment.



Youth accountability framework

7 Pillars of accountability



Responsibility

Accepting your obligation to engage with youth



Answerability

Providing explanations to youth stakeholders for its actions



Trust

Confidence in the reliability and integrity of the organization



Transparency

Accessibility and clarity of information for youth stakeholders



Learning and Continuous Improvement

Feedback loop resulting from lessons learned and feedback



Knowledge Sharing

The organization's contribution to the public body of knowledge



Checks and Balances

Delimitations on the use of authority and power

LOW LEVEL

MEDIUM LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

Supporting indicators

Moving forward



Scan for more on the accountability framework

Youth substantial engagement in the 26UNWC



Global Youth Movement for Water



- Youth coordination to allow for impactful engagement (accountability, capitalisation, proactivity...)
 - Webinar, hybrid meeting in Dakar, capacity building between Dakar and the UAE
 - Who is going to Dakar? → **please reach out to us!**
- Together with civil society
 - Breakoutrooms today... to build on and push forward
 - ID concept note and Fill Up The Glass 2.0

Example of 2023 youth advocacy campaign



5 key demands



Water for Development

Dedicated funding for youth-led community-based water solutions



Water for Climate

Adequate training for youth, especially young women, to acquire knowledge to tackle water and climate issues



Water for Cooperation

Inclusion of youth in water governance with water as an instrument of peace and cooperation



Water for Health

Access to safe water and sanitation, as basic human rights, especially for young women and girls



Water Action Decade

Creation of an inclusive and permanent body within the United Nations to address water and nomination of a UN Youth Envoy on Water

- Analyse the themes 26UNWC (issues, stakeholders, challenges, opportunities)
- Define key advocacy messages or objectives - **Moderator and rapporteur**
- Summary to be shared in plenary → **45 min**

Breakout rooms (45 min)

1

Water for people

2

Water for prosperity

3

Water for the planet

4

Water for cooperation

5

Water in multilateral processes

6

Investments for water

Moderators



Alexandra Chevalier
WaterAid



Edouard Boinet
INBO



Bella Lima
SWA



Marie Bouysse
Coalition Eau



Erik Schnetzler
GWH



Malesi Shivaji
KEWASNET



Johannes Rueck
German WASH
Network



Lesha Witmer
BE

Rapporteurs



Emira Seidenalieva
CAY4W



Lisa Oppermann
EYPW



Kevin Kamnang
LOJIQ



Magdalena Zivanovic
EYPW



Marta Zaragoza Navarro
WYPW



Gazi Nouman
WYPW

Plenary restitution (20 min)

1

Water for people



Emira Seidenalieva
CAY4W

2

Water for prosperity



Lisa Oppermann
EYPW

3

Water for the planet



Kevin Kamnang
LOJIQ

4

Water for cooperation



Magdalena Zivanovic
EYPW

5

Water in multilateral processes



Marta Zaragoza Navarro
WYPW

6

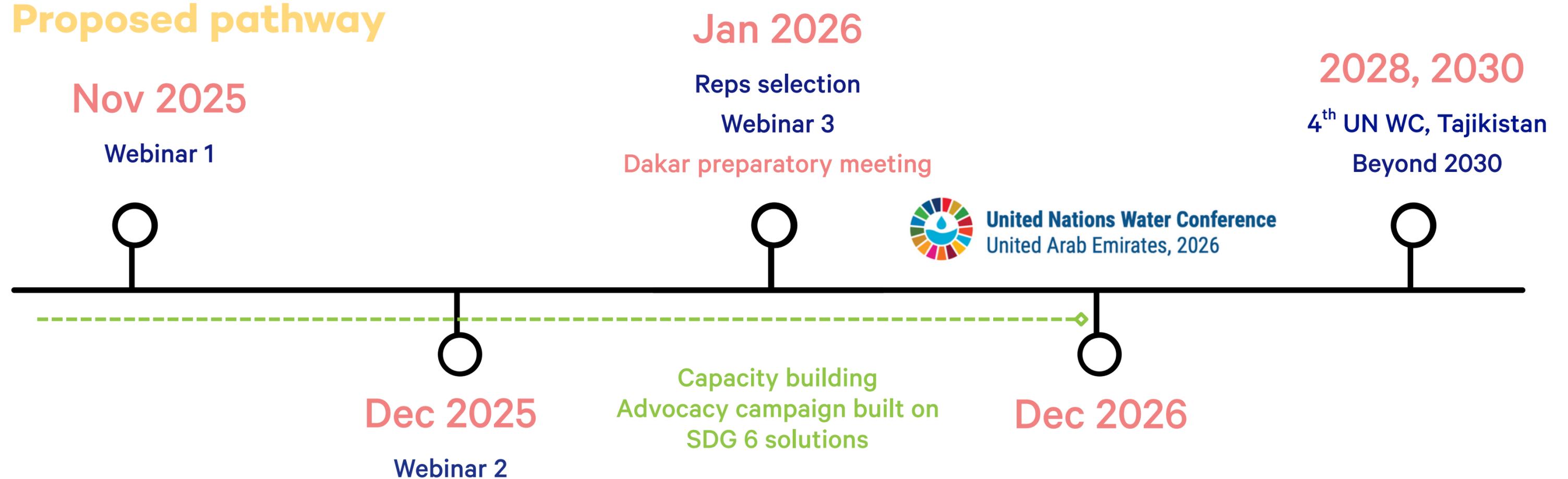
Investments for water



Gazi Nouman
WYPW

On the road to the 2026 UNWC

Proposed pathway



Next steps

Following webinars

January 14: Preparing for Dakar and beyond

- Capacity building for effective participation in Dakar;
- Water for Peace across the Interactive Dialogues;
- Logistics and updates on Interactive Dialogue leads;
- Post-Dakar roadmap.

Dakar hybrid meetings

MGCY & GYMW Capacity Development between Jan and Dec

- Upcoming!



Q&A

THE END... For now

Thank you for your participation!

Want to reach out?

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