

## EVENT SNAPSHOT

# Scaling Up WASH Services in a Pandemic Seminar Series: Part 3 – WASH, IWRM, and Climate Change

## Event Details

### Date and Time

18 June, 3:00–4:00 p.m.

### Venue

MS Teams

### Related water subthemes (based on Water Advisory Teams)

x	Water supply, sanitation, and wastewater	x	Flood/drought risk management and resilience
	Irrigation and productivity		Water governance and finance
x	IWRM, storage, water-food-energy nexus	x	Water and health

The impacts of climate change are being felt across the Asia and Pacific region and threaten to reverse progress made in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). Services must be urgently extended and strengthened in the face of the severe and unpredictable impacts of a warming world. However, little attention and investments have been given to the effects of climate change on clean water and decent sanitation services.

In the third session of the series, Virginia Newton-Lewis, Director of Policy and Advocacy for WaterAid Sweden, discussed mitigating climate risks for WASH; interlinks between WASH and integrated water resources management (IWRM); and approaches to climate resilient WASH and securing water resources.

## Key Takeaways

**Achieving water security for basic human needs means looking beyond the WASH sector.** WaterAid has developed their own definition for water security, which is focused on water security for basic human needs. This means reliable access to water of sufficient quantity and quality for basic human needs, small-scale livelihoods, and local ecosystem services, coupled with effective management of water-related disaster risk. To attain this, collaborative partnerships are needed with other sectors, such as with agriculture, environment, and climate change.

**Access to WASH is a critical line of defense against climate change impacts.** Without access to at least basic services, you cannot be resilient. WASH services must be strengthened and made to be resilient to climate change. There are six principles for climate-resilient WASH: (i) assessment, (ii) partnership, (iii) design, (iv) implementation, (v) monitoring and adaptation, and (vi) learning and influencing.

**Systems strengthening and empowerment are needed to develop strong WASH systems at the local and national levels.** This starts with actively engaging communities and dedicated governments, which is combined with using demonstrated approaches for inclusive and scalable access, and improved capacity and institutional arrangements, among others. In West Africa, the Securing Water Resources Approach was the programmatic approach used to improve water security for households and the community by combining activities for IWRM and WASH service delivery.

**Climate-resilient WASH is often more technically challenging than regular WASH.** This raises the question of financing. In Bangladesh, a program on addressing climate change vulnerability has been ongoing since 2009. This includes interventions to ensure access during floods, such as dual platform tube wells for drinking water and elevated latrines for sanitation. WaterAid and partners also conducted assessments to see which activities are needed to manage and/or respond to disasters.

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**“Climate-resilient WASH is often more technically challenging than regular WASH.”**

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— Virginia Newton-Lewis, WaterAid Sweden

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## **About the Speaker**

### **Virginia Newton-Lewis**

Director of Policy and Advocacy, WaterAid Sweden

[virginiانewtonlewis@wateraid.org](mailto:virginiانewtonlewis@wateraid.org)

Virginia specializes in water security as it relates to WASH. She has worked on a wide range of water issues including food security, irrigation, water resources management, and flood risk management. She holds a PhD from the University of East Anglia, where she explored the topic of agricultural-to-urban water allocation.