

World Water Day 2016

UN Secretary-General's Message for 2016



This year's World Water Day focuses on the links between water and jobs. Almost half of all workers – 1.5 billion people – work in water-related sectors, and nearly all jobs depend on the availability of freshwater.

Despite its paramount importance, water as a sector generally does not receive the attention it deserves. Water is central to human survival, the environment and the economy.

All workers can be harmed by poor water and sanitation. Of 2 million work-related deaths every year, nearly one-in-five are caused by poor

quality drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene.

People with the least access to water and sanitation often also lack access to health care and stable jobs. This perpetuates the cycle of poverty. I am especially concerned by gaps between cities and the countryside, men and women, and rich and poor. The basic provision of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene services at home, at school and in the workplace enables a robust economy by contributing to a healthy and productive population and workforce.

We can take bold action to address water inequity as part of our efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development Goal 6, on ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, addresses the need for access.

On this World Water Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to improve the quality, management and protection of water resources as part of our historic campaign to achieve a life of dignity for all people.

Ban Ki-moon