

Committee: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Issue: Transforming the Economics and Governance of Water in the African crisis context

Student Officer: Artopoulou Maria

Position: Deputy President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Esteemed delegates,

My name is Artopoulou Maria, and I am a 10th-grade student at Ekpedefiki Anagennisi High School. In this year's ATSMUN, I have the utmost honor to serve as one of your Deputy Presidents of the Economic and Social Council, marking my 12th conference in total and my 2nd time chairing.

First things first, I would like to start off by welcoming you all to the 9th session of the ATS Model United Nations. Also, I want to congratulate you on your choice to participate as a delegate at this year's conference, particularly at the Economic and Social Council, a very intriguing committee with much to offer you.

MUN provides us, participants, the opportunity to involve ourselves in issues of the modern world developing our critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In this conference ECOSOC session, you will be given the chance to experience the operation of one of the main six organs of the United Nations and will be called upon to deal with and familiarize yourselves with international economics, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters. Thus, the purpose of this study guide is to assist you in the best way possible in your research and help you gain insight into our topic. Nevertheless, I highly encourage you all to do your own research and not use this guide as your only source. Should you have any questions or need assistance, I am more than happy to aid you, so do not hesitate to get in touch with me via email. I cannot wait to meet you all in November!

Yours sincerely,

Artopoulou Maria

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INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), by 2025, half of the world's population will be living in water-stressed areas¹ and more than 800 children under the age of 5 die from diarrhea caused by contaminated water, poor sanitation, and unsafe hygiene practices.² It is important to acknowledge that whether water is utilized for consumption, household usage, agriculture, or recreational activities, it is crucial for the public's health to have access to safe, easily available water. Furthermore, water and sanitation are officially recognized by the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) as an inalienable human right. In addition to that, water also plays a vital role in decreasing poverty and boosting the economic development of a nation, when there is an improved water supply, health and hygiene, and efficient administration of water resources.

As a result, the absence of the above in the context of the African crisis is perceived to be the greatest barrier to the sustainable development of the region. A large portion of Africa's water is wasted, contaminated, or improperly managed since it is unequally distributed. It is remarkable that even though Africa appears to be a continent full of water resources like large rivers, big lakes, vast water lands, and limited, but widespread groundwater resources³ they cannot be taken for granted, taking into consideration that improper management, false governance, and certain natural phenomena are an inevitable obstacle set by the African crisis. All these make the lives of hundreds of people insufferable and call for immediate action. In the Horn of Africa, according to experts in the last two years, there was an 88% increase in household water insecurity from 5.6 million to 10.5 million⁴ highlighting the need for a renewal of economics and water governance in Africa, global political mobilization, and international engagement is urgent.

Connecting it to the theme of our conference "The world at a breaking point: Truth or Dare"; The emergency has escalated to a breaking point, affecting at least 36.4 million people and growing⁵, we need to stop ignoring the situation and act

¹ World Health Organization. "Water." *WHO | Regional Office for Africa*, 2015, www.afro.who.int/health-topics/water. Accessed 1 July 2023.

² Reid, Kathryn. "Global Water Crisis: Facts, FAQs, and How to Help." *World Vision*, 16 Apr. 2019, www.worldvision.org/clean-water-news-stories/global-water-crisis-facts.

³ Water, Un, and Africa. *The Africa Water Vision for 2025: Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water for Socioeconomic Development* a N de ve LOPMENT BA N K Economic Commission for Africa African Union African Development Bank. 2004.

⁴ for every child, UNICEF. *Water Crisis in the Horn of Africa*. www.unicef.org/media/126006/file/water-crisis-horn-africa-2022.pdf Accessed 22 July 2023.

⁵ Ave FI, Lexington. "The Horn of Africa Crisis, Explained." *Concernusa.org*, <https://concernusa.org/news/horn-of-africa-crisis-explained/>. Accessed 29 June 2023.

now. We need to Cooperate to Prevent and to become Resilient in facing such crises that affect our world and create economically strong nations with effective governments.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

African crisis

The African crisis is characterized by an economic recession, political decline, and social tension. In 2023, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia will each have more than 43 million people in need of humanitarian aid, 32 million of whom will have severe food insecurity. The 2020–2023 drought will have a devastating effect that will last for years. In the three countries, more than 2.7 million people have been displaced, and more than 13 million animals have perished, devastating not only livelihoods but also an entire way of life. The 2020–2023 drought has had a devastating effect that will last for years. In the three countries mentioned above, more than 2.7 million people have been displaced, and more than 13 million animals have perished, devastating not only livelihoods but also an entire way of life.

Economics⁶

Economics is the system in which trade and industry are organized and the way in which the wealth of a country is made, produced, and distributed into goods and services.

Economic water scarcity

Economic water scarcity, on the other hand, is linked to poor governance, poor infrastructure, and limited investments. It can also exist even in countries or areas with adequate water resources and infrastructure.⁷

Governance⁸

Governance is the way that organizations or countries are managed at the highest level.

Physical water scarcity

⁶ 2“Economics.” Dictionary.cambridge.org, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/English/economics>.

⁷ Lai, Charlie. “Water Scarcity in Africa: Causes, Effects, and Solutions.” *Earth.org*, 8 July 2022, <https://earth.org/water-scarcity-in-Africa/>. Accessed 28 June 2023.

⁸ Cambridge Dictionary. “GOVERNANCE | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 20 Nov. 2019, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/English/governance>.

Physical water scarcity occurs when water resources are overexploited for different uses and no longer meet the needs of the population. In this case, there is not enough water available in physical terms.⁹

Transformation

Transformation is a complete change in the appearance or character of something, significantly so that it is improved¹⁰ or changed permanently. In our topic specifically, our aim is to improve as much as possible the economics and governance of the African region to successfully combat the water crisis.

Water scarcity

The term Water scarcity refers to the volumetric abundance, or lack thereof, of water supply. This is typically calculated as a ratio of human water consumption to available water for drinking and for practicing basic hygiene at home, in schools, and in healthcare facilities¹¹ supplied in a given area. Water scarcity is a physical, objective reality that can be measured consistently across regions and over time.¹² There are two types of water scarcity: physical water scarcity and economic water scarcity.¹³

Water stress

Water stress refers to the ability, or lack thereof, to meet human and ecological demands for water. It considers several physical aspects related to water resources, including water scarcity, but also water quality, environmental flows, and the accessibility of water.¹⁴

⁹ Lai, Charlie. "Water Scarcity in Africa: Causes, Effects, and Solutions." *Earth.org*, 8 July 2022, <https://earth.org/water-scarcity-in-Africa/>. Accessed 28 June 2023.

¹⁰ Cambridge Dictionary. "Transformation." @CambridgeWords, 21 June 2023, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/transformation?q=transformation>+. Accessed 25 June 2023.

¹¹ UNICEF. "Water Scarcity." UNICEF, 2020, www.unicef.org/wash/water-scarcity. Accessed 26 June 2023.

¹² Schulte, Peter. "Defining Water Scarcity, Water Stress, and Water Risk." Pacific Institute, 4 Feb. 2014, <https://pacinst.org/water-definitions/>. Accessed 26 June 2023.

¹³ Lai, Charlie. "Water Scarcity in Africa: Causes, Effects, and Solutions." *Earth.org*, 8 July 2022, <https://earth.org/water-scarcity-in-Africa/>. Accessed 28 June 2023.

¹⁴ Schulte, Peter. "Defining Water Scarcity, Water Stress, and Water Risk." *Pacific Institute*, 4 Feb. 2014, <https://pacinst.org/water-definitions/>. Accessed 26 June 2023.

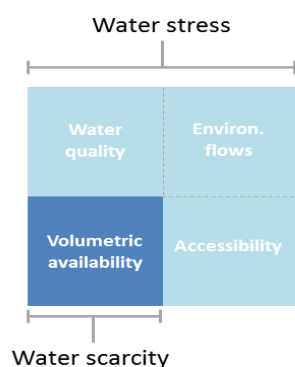


Figure 1¹⁵: A depiction of what water stress and scarcity are and the relationship between those terms.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Causes of water scarcity

There are numerous factors that contribute to causing water scarcity in a region both of natural and human origin. The natural phenomena threatening the availability of water resources can include the diversity of transboundary water basins and the extreme geographical and temporal variations of climate and precipitation, exacerbated by climate change. Moreover, the diminishing of certain water bodies and deserts and the increasing shortage of fresh water are also natural causes of water shortage mostly affecting physical scarcity.

Nevertheless, human activities, which also significantly influence the environment, are another leading cause of water scarcity. More precisely, due to pollution, there is a severe depletion of water resources, environmental degradation, and deforestation. Furthermore, inadequate investment in resource assessment, protection, and development and unsustainable financing of expenditures in water supply and sanitation are frequently observed in the governance of many nations in the African region. In addition to that, there are poor and inadequate administration and institutional arrangements for governing national and transnational water basins, thus the water sources are mismanaged and inappropriately distributed between the countries in the region. At the same time, collapsing infrastructure and improper resources for water administration are also contributing to the economic scarcity in an area. What's more, significant geographic, social, and financial disparities still exist between and inside urban and rural regions, where those residing in low-income, unauthorized, or unofficial

¹⁵ Schulte, Peter. "Defining Water Scarcity, Water Stress, and Water Risk." *Pacific Institute*, 4 Feb. 2014, <https://pacinst.org/water-definitions/>. Accessed 26 June 2023.

settlements impact their access to improved supplies of water for consumption than other citizens. Last but not least, political instability and therefore violent conflicts or protests are great obstacles, preventing the governments from focusing on water management and economic development of the nations.

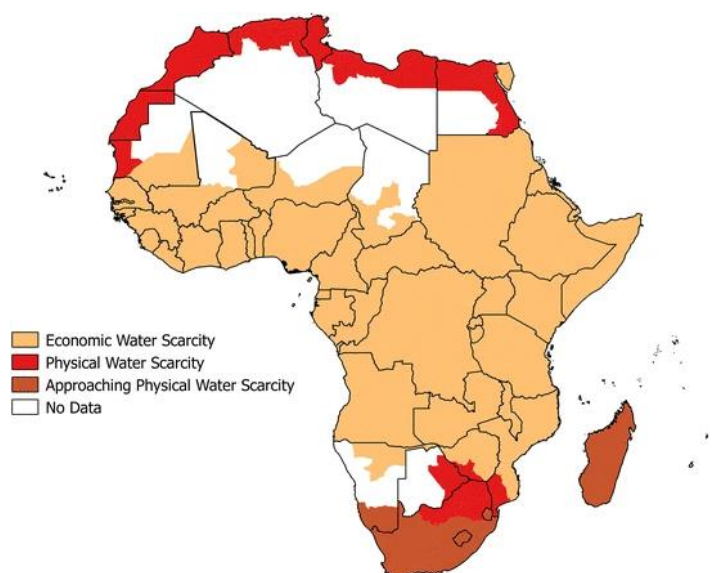


Figure 2¹⁶: Measurement of water scarcity

Scarcity-lead conflicts and crisis

Extreme water-related events, such as heatwaves and droughts, occur every year across the world. In the continent of Africa alone, multiple countries, such as Somalia, Kenya, and Madagascar suffered from severe water shortages in 2021. Naturally when resources are few and mismanaged, competition over diminishing natural resources is a contributing factor in several African wars. Hence, water supplies and the mechanisms needed to distribute drinking water have been directly attacked during armed conflict, taking advantage of the human need for water.

State-level conflict over freshwater in the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam has lasted for years between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan. Identical problems are present at every societal level. For instance, in December 2021, a violent water conflict between fishermen and herders broke out in a community close to the Chadian border in Cameroon. As the two factions clashed over who had the right to

¹⁶ "Map of Physical and Economic Water Scarcity at Basin Level in 2007 across the African Continent, ." Springer Link , <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13280-017-0912-z/figures/2> . Accessed 3 July 2023.

the water in a drying Lake Chad, 22 people were killed and another 100,000 were forced from their homes.¹⁷



Figure 3¹⁸: The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

The social effects of water scarcity are another thing that leads to conflict. People are being compelled to emigrate because up to 25% of the world's population experiences severe water scarcity for at least one month of the year. A severe drought in 2017 led to unrest and the emigration of at least 20 million people from Africa and the Middle East.

In the Horn of Africa, political instability continues to increase the likelihood of violence. Millions of people have been forced to evacuate their homes as a result of the ongoing fighting in northern Ethiopia and the protracted crisis in Somalia, which has also impeded access to humanitarian aid. Tensions resulting from elections in Somalia and Kenya in 2022 might make it more difficult to address the present drought. There have traditionally been tensions and confrontations between groups from various areas due to the concentration of people and competition for limited water supplies, such as between sedentary farmers and pastoralists who live on the move.

¹⁷ "Across Africa, Water Conflict Threatens Security, Health and the Environment." www.downtoearth.org.in, www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/africa/across-africa-water-conflict-threatens-security-health-and-the-environment-86116. Accessed 21 July 2023.

¹⁸ "The Politics of Water: What We Know about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam - Atlantic Council." *Atlantic Council*, 9 Feb. 2016, www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/the-politics-of-water-what-we-know-about-the-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam/.



Figure 4¹⁹: the Horn in Africa

Those conflicts have a negative impact on water security, creating vicious cycles of conflict,²⁰ and this conflict-fueled negative feedback loop is further exacerbated by the impact on forced migration, agriculture, and water quality. According to a director from the pacific institute, with very few exceptions, nobody actually dies of thirst, however, water contamination or disputes over access to water are killing an increasing number of people.

Water shortage in Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic

During the pandemic, the World Health Organization recommended regular soap hand washing as the best defense against the coronavirus. It was obvious that maintaining efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 and potential pandemics depended on making safe water accessible to everyone.

However, in Sub-Saharan Africa, roughly 63% of residents in urban areas—the primary virus clusters—found it difficult to acquire basic water services and are unable to wash their hands. Approximately 70% to 80% of the ailments in the area were attributed to the region's poor water quality. For instance, cholera and dysentery are two of the main reasons why infants die.

In order to address the COVID-19 emergency, African nations had put in place swift reaction strategies. However, aside from providing handwashing stations in health centers and other public locations, the majority of these plans put more of an

¹⁹ Wakabi, Wairagala. "Horn of Africa Faces Deepening Crisis." *The Lancet*, vol. 372, no. 9640, Aug. 2008, pp. 705–706, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(08\)61289-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(08)61289-1).

²⁰ "Across Africa, Water Conflict Threatens Security, Health and the Environment." *Www.downtoearth.org.in*, www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/africa/across-africa-water-conflict-threatens-security-health-and-the-environment-86116. Accessed 21 July 2023.

emphasis on providing urgent healthcare responses than on enhancing access to water and sanitation.

Consequences

Africa's ecology, economy, and population health are all predicted to suffer from a lack of water. Unsurprisingly, a lack of water poses a serious threat to people's health. People are frequently compelled to obtain their water supply from ponds and streams that are polluted during times of water scarcity. Polluted water causes several diarrheal illnesses, such as cholera, typhoid fever, salmonellosis, various gastrointestinal viruses, and dysentery, when consumed. Only 48% of Africans have access to healthcare, and many African nations offer subpar healthcare facilities. Due to the weak system, diarrheal illnesses are now often lethal and life-threatening.

According to research from 2021, severe diarrheal sickness kills over 600,000 people annually in sub-Saharan Africa, mostly children and the elderly. Public health experts attribute the third most common cause of illness and mortality among African children under the age of five to diarrheal disease and inadequate water and sanitation conditions.

Furthermore, a lack of water threatens ecosystems and results in a decline in biodiversity. Some of the world's most distinctive freshwater environments may be found in Africa. The biggest desert lake in the world is Lake Turkana, whereas Lake Malawi has the most diverse freshwater fish population in the world, with 14% of all freshwater fish species found there. Water shortage will disturb and probably lead to the extinction of freshwater and marine ecosystems on the continent if it is not addressed.

Agriculture and food security

“Water scarcity means less water for agriculture production which in turn means less food available, threatening food security and nutrition,” said a Director of the Land and Water Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Africa's water shortage has impacts that go beyond the lives of those who are most immediately impacted. All African nations' economies rely heavily on agriculture. Water shortage threatens agricultural productivity, putting many people's livelihoods in jeopardy. This has a knock-on effect on the economy as a whole. Without enough water, millions of livestock animals have died, and harvests have failed. Due to this, the price of food has skyrocketed and has become unaffordable for many. There are 1.5 million displaced persons and 7 million starving children in the area.

Water is a crucial component of agricultural production since various crops require varied amounts of water for optimum development. And as agriculture is responsible for over 70% of freshwater withdrawals, it plays a significant part in the water equation. Lack of water for agricultural production reduces the amount of food that can be produced, endangering food security and nutrition. Since more food would need to be produced with few water resources in 2050, when the world's population is projected to be approximately 9 billion, it is obvious that water shortage poses a serious danger to food security.

Figure 5²¹: Water security components and indicators

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Ethiopia

The Ethiopian water crisis affects more than 62 million people: in fact, Ethiopia accounts for 7.5% of the worldwide water issue. Water, however, is not the only issue. The spread of disease is aided by inadequate hygiene standards, unsafe sanitation,

United Nations University
Institute for Water, Environment and Health

Water security components, indicators, and data sources assessed at a national level

Components	Indicators Used in this Assessment	SDG Indicators	Data Sources
1 Drinking water	Proportion of the population using basic to safely managed drinking water (%)	6.1.1* Safe & Basic	JMP
2 Sanitation	Proportion of the population using basic to safely managed sanitation (%)	6.1.2a* Safe & Basic	JMP
3 Good health	Mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (deaths/100,000 population)	3.9.2 (6.1.2b)	WHO
4 Water quality	Proportion of household wastewater treatment (%)	6.3.1* domestic	WHO & Jones
5 Water availability	Level of water stress: withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources (%)	6.4.2	FAO AQUASTAT
6 Water value	Water Use Efficiency (USD/m ³)	6.4.1* actual	FAO AQUASTAT
7 Water governance	Degree of Integrated Water Resource Management (%)	6.5.1	UNEP / DHI
8 Human safety	Mortality due to water-disasters (deaths/100,000 population)	1.5.1, 11.5.1, 13.1.1	EM-DAT & IHME
9 Economic safety	Modelled economic impact of floods (% of national GDP) Modelled drought risk (non-dimensional integer)	1.5.2, 11.5.2* loss / GDP	WRI Aqueduct
10 Water resource stability	Interannual variability (non-dimensional integer) Large dam storage /capita (m ³ /capita)	None	WRI Aqueduct ICOLD

UNU
INWEH

and a lack of access to clean water. More than 97 million Ethiopians do not use adequate sanitation practices now. Families in extremely isolated communities are forced to use the outdoors since there are no safe, covered restrooms, which contaminates the water supply and has a substantial negative impact on the community's health. Despite being overwhelming, Ethiopia is not defined by its water

²¹ "Water-Insecure Africa Gets Some Wins at the UN Water Conference." *Africa Renewal*, 3 Apr. 2023, www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2023/water-insecure-africa-gets-some-wins-un-water-conference.

issue. According to data, Ethiopia is predicted to have the world's fastest-expanding economy overall.

United Kingdom (UK)

Millions of people in Asia and Africa will benefit from the UK's new 5-year effort to increase access to affordable, dependable, and clean water supplies and sanitation services. At the United Nations Water Conference, the first such gathering since 1977, UK Minister for the Environment and Climate Lord Goldsmith pledged extra financing from his country. The UK's accomplishment in assisting 120 million people to obtain basic water and hygiene facilities between 2010 and 2020 is the foundation for the new support. Lord Goldsmith, the UK climate and environment minister, pledged fresh funding to enhance the quality of water supply, sanitation, and hygiene services in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa during his speech at the first UN High-Level Conference on Water in 40 years.

Providing sanitation and hygiene services that help prevent disease, preserve people's health, and protect the environment from pollution will be made possible with the support of £18.5 million in UK funding. It is a crucial component of the UK government's commitment to stop the avoidable deaths of mothers, babies, and young children.

The initiative will assist those residing in underprivileged parts of Asia and Africa, including rural communities and slum sections in urban and suburban areas. Along with supporting improvements to menstrual hygiene services in schools, the funds will also help improvements to water, sanitation, and hygiene services in hospitals, where they will have a significant impact on lowering infection rates and raising patient care standards.

Zimbabwe

Four out of five people live off of rain-fed agriculture in rural Zimbabwe, but as rainfall patterns become more unpredictable and the economy becomes more volatile, communities have been devastated, making it harder for them to take care of and invest in their families. Due to the country's water problems, both urban and rural parts of Zimbabwe are now exposed to both waterborne illnesses and a lack of access to clean water.

The Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund Enhanced Community Resilience and Sustainability (ZRBF-ECRAS) project, run by CARE International and supported by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Resettlement, the Swedish Embassy, the European Union, UNDP, and the Foreign Commonwealth Development Office, has improved their capacity to adapt to water shortages.

Currently in its sixth year, ZRBF-ECRAS aids communities by providing assistance and training while using a layering, sequencing, and integration strategy to

activities. One household participates in a variety of activities in this situation, including post-harvest management, asset-based Village Savings and Lending (VSAL), resilient, climate-smart crop and livestock production, water harvesting technologies, and fish farming. These activities are aimed at enhancing the absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities of communities.

European Union (EU)

The EU will make 33 pledges for immediate action at the United Nations Water Conference in New York from March 22 to 24 to reaffirm its strong commitment to global water security. These promises will support the EU's goal that by 2050, the globe will be able to withstand rising water stress while still ensuring everyone has access to safe drinking water. The EU team, led by Vice-President of the Commission Dubravka Suica, will outline the EU's voluntary pledges to the Water Action Agenda, which aims to speed up progress on the world's water-related sustainable development objectives. The EU has set certain priority areas in which they will be working such as mobilizing public and private finance, research and innovation, and knowledge sharing and promoting a more comprehensive strategy for managing water resources across industries. Also according to the president of the European Commission, the EU has “committed over one billion 1 euros to water management, working with countries in Africa and central Asia to support livelihoods, energy, food, and peace.”

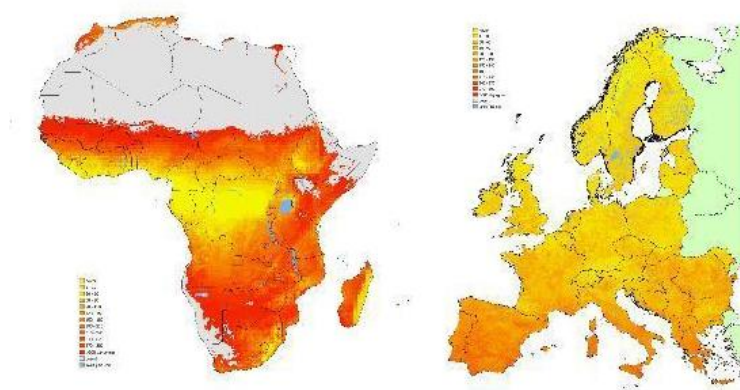


Figure 6²²: current water resources in Africa and Europe

²² De, ROO Arie, et al. “Current Water Resources in Europe and Africa - Matching Water Supply and Water Demand.” *JRC Publications Repository*, 13 Mar. 2012, <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC69423>.

Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA)

The Development Bank of South Africa provides a variety of both financial and non-financial solutions to South Africa's infrastructure problems in the water and sanitation sector. These ideas, which address market failure and aim to stimulate private sector investment in the sector alongside DFI, government, and concessional funds, are a response to the National Water Safety Management Programmer's call to action. The creation and implementation of water-related programs that solve particular issues affecting the industry are programs for water without profit, programs for water reuse, and private sector participation.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The FAO is crucial in solving the problem of water shortage globally, especially in agriculture. For instance, at the regional level, the Near East Regional Water Scarcity Initiative has assisted countries in a number of ways, including through water accounting and auditing, to review their water resources and find opportunities to increase the effectiveness of using water for agriculture. This region is affected by physical water scarcity. This has been done in conjunction with an analysis of the institutional and policy framework supporting water resources management.

To optimize the synergies between the various regional projects with the help of global supervision, the inter-Regional Technical Platform on Water Scarcity was recently formed. The Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG), which is hosted by FAO, includes more than 70 partners from international and national governments, UN agencies, educational and research institutions, as well as representatives of civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and trade associations. Since 2017, they have collaborated on a voluntary basis to identify answers together, fully utilizing FAO's convening function.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization (WHO), which is the leading worldwide authority on public health and water quality, guides nations in the creation of health-based goals and legislation. Several water quality recommendations are produced by WHO, including those for drinking water, wastewater treatment, and safe recreational aquatic habitats. The principles governing water quality are founded on risk management, and as of 2004, the Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality also encouraged the development of water safety plans to recognize and mitigate hazards before they cause water to become polluted. To assist with the implementation of the wastewater recommendations, the WHO established the idea of sanitation safety plans in 2015. WHO aims to promote efficient risk assessment and management techniques across all organizations, including water providers, treatment facilities for wastewater, agriculturalists, communities, and citizens.

World Water Council (WWC)

The World Water Council has a long history of focusing on developing original and useful solutions to financial challenges. It is aiming to bring financial institutions closer to the water community and persuade the various donors and funders to spend more financial resources on projects in the water industry. Its strategic actions to achieve its goal include making water a more prominent topic in talks about finance and the economy, providing resources for knowledge on how to enter the financial markets, including alternative funding, and creating collaborative forums that promote business and investor involvement.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1929 and 1959	The Nile Basin agreement between Egypt and Sudan
1986	Basin agreement between South Africa and Lesotho
26-31 January 1992	the Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development was agreed at the International Conference on Water and the Environment (ICWE)
1991-92 and 1994-95	Southern Africa experiences severe droughts
16 December 1966	The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was adopted, according to which access to safe water and sanitation is a universally recognized right.
1992	Creation of the Dublin Principles
21-13 March 1997	The first World Water Forum was held in Morocco, gathering 400 participants and aiming to address the global water crisis
7 February 2021	The Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP) was adopted by the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government as part of the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa – Priority Action Plan 2
25 March 2022	The International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa was formally launched during the 9 th World Water Forum in Dakar

22-24 March 2023	The UN 2023 Water Conference was held in UN headquarters in New York and co-hosted by the Governments of Tajikistan and the Netherlands
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PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

A/RES/64/292

An important resolution recognizing "the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights" was approved by the UN General Assembly on July 28, 2010 (A/RES/64/292). It followed the line of Article 11(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights which first recognized the right to access to safe drinking water and sanitation as a universal human right. Since 2015, the Human Rights Council and General Assembly have recognized the right to clean water and sanitation as separate but connected human rights. International human rights law requires States to seek to guarantee that everyone has access to clean water and sanitation, without discrimination, while giving those who are most in need priority.

The Africa Water Vision for 2025: Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water for Socioeconomic Development

The African water vision for 2025 is aiming towards "an Africa where there is an equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, and the environment"²³. It consists of ten goals including sustainable access to safe and adequate water supply and sanitation to meet the basic needs of all, sufficient water for food and energy security, water for sustaining ecosystems and biodiversity is adequate in quantity and quality, and more.²⁴ In order for the vision to meet successfully its purpose the framework calls for the improvement of water resource management, increased water knowledge, addressed pressing water requirements, and stabilized the financial foundation for the intended future of water.

²³ Water, Un, and Africa. *The Africa Water Vision for 2025: Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water for Socioeconomic Development* a N de ve LOPMENT BA N K Economic Commission for Africa African Union African Development Bank. 2004.
<https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/african%20water%20vision%202025%20to%20be%20sent%20to%20wwf5.pdf>

²⁴ Water, Un, and Africa. *The Africa Water Vision for 2025: Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water for Socioeconomic Development* a N de ve LOPMENT BA N K Economic Commission for Africa African Union African Development Bank. 2004.
<https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/african%20water%20vision%202025%20to%20be%20sent%20to%20wwf5.pdf>

It encourages cooperation and unity amongst nations that share shared water basins at the regional level. At the national level, it will necessitate substantial modifications to institutional arrangements, tactics, legal frameworks, and managerial techniques. On a global scale, it will solicit help from Africa's development partners in securing seed money for kicking-starting the critical initiatives required to support the sustainable management of the area's water resources.

The Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health

An innovative international legal framework and intergovernmental platform, the Water Convention also known as the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes strives to encourage cooperation in order to enhance the sustainable use of transboundary water resources. It was first negotiated as a regional tool, but in 2016 it became available to all UN Member States. The Protocol on Water and Health is a unique, legally enforceable document that aims to safeguard human health by improving water management and lowering illnesses associated with water use. It is jointly supported by UNECE and WHO-Europe. The Protocol offers a useful framework for putting the human rights to water and sanitation into practice while carrying out Sustainable Development Goal number 6.

Healing Waters International

A multifaceted strategy will be needed to address the issue of water shortage in Africa, including immediate aid for those who have been evicted from their homes and long-term fixes that will give at-risk communities with a reliable supply of water²⁵, according to the experts of the organization.

Healing Waters International supplies communities in Africa and other parts of the world with water purification systems that both meet people's urgent requirements for clean, safe water and provide them with a long-term source of that water. For the requirements of each community, these systems are specifically created. In Africa, Healing Waters International has several water purification projects that provide communities with water scarcity with safe, clean water.

Examples of their work can be seen in Rwanda, where there are eight locally owned and run sustainable water purification systems that are located in or close to metropolitan areas. Since 2013, these have given the local population access to clean water, employment opportunities, and stable income. Another water filtration system is in Sierra Leone supplying water to the locals and a medical facility that sees 7,000 patients a year. Since 2013, this project has been enhancing the standard of medical care. These are just a few of their work in the African region, proving that this project

²⁵ Bensen, Deborah. "What Is Causing Water Scarcity in Africa?" *Healing Waters*, 29 Aug. 2022, <https://healingwaters.org/what-is-causing-water-scarcity-in-africa/>.

continues steadily with a successful mission helping to aim hundreds of people living in areas stricken by the water crisis.

Agenda 2063: Africa We Want

Agenda 2063 is Africa's vision and long-term strategy for making the continent a worldwide economic force. It was adopted by the African Union Summit in January 2015, and it consists of seven development aspirations for Africa covered by twenty goals each of which has certain priority areas. In the interest of resolving the ongoing water crisis in the region is goal number seven, namely, environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities under the aspiration for a Prosperous Africa, based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development. The priorities for achieving this goal include water security, under which this agenda with its ten years of action plan will try to combat the crisis and bring it to an end.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Drafting more water treaties

Africa is continent rich in natural resources, water being one of them. However, when nations need to allocate those between them, numerous problems may arise. In order to solve this problem and avoid any future disputes, the creation of treaties and agreements on the allocation of the available sources is key. Countries in the African region need to collaborate altogether to reach agreements and with the assistance of African governmental or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) reconsider treaties of the past and reform allocation systems to more fair, adequate, and sustainable ones. Furthermore, it is crucial that they all agree on taking action by setting goals, signing and ratifying water-related conventions, and therefore committing to those to resolve the matter while making use of sustainable means to improve their future.

Water infrastructure development

One of the major problems in African nations is the lack of quality water infrastructure, hence the economic scarcity in the region. Therefore, with the help of funding from private investment companies, and donations, the international monetary fund (IMF), and other international factors countries with low financial ability to support high-quality infrastructure will be assisted. At the same time, they will have the opportunity to invest in the construction of more sustainable infrastructure like urban wastewater management, except traditional water management ones, where there is collection, treatment, and reuse of water.

Global cooperation and sharing of water-related knowledge.

In the context of the African crisis, where African countries face numerous problems each and every one of which needs to be urgently resolved, acquiring high-quality knowledge on water administration and conducting useful research on the matter can be hard. For that exact reason, it's essential to build networks in the form of partnership and collaboration with international, governmental, and non-governmental organizations to jointly alleviate the crisis and support joint investigations. Relevant ministries, departments, and agencies should be brought together to tackle issues such as the protection, management, use, and knowledge of water resources and the surrounding natural environment.

Developing investment plans

Due to the low economic development of the African region and provided that the origins of the economic scarcity come from mismanagement, creating investment plans to monitor the distribution of funding in the water resources could be key to bringing an end to the crisis. More precisely, in cooperation with organizations specialized in economics and budget administration, countries can create long-term national goals and a system on how to meet them. Included in those will be a transition to a more sustainable future. Moreover, all these will be overviewed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council officials to guarantee the effectiveness of the plans.

Creation of new guidelines to enhance the effectiveness of water governance.

In order for the water resources to be effectively and adequately administrated between the regions, while ensuring that any mistakes in their management are prevented there is an urgent need for the creation of new guidelines. Their creation will be the responsibility of United Nations Organizations, and non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with expertise to water security, to guarantee the effectiveness of the guidelines. These will collaborate with states in the African region and the African Union, sending officials to counsel the countries on drafting, developing, and reviewing laws, policies, and action plans, so they can agree on creating a set of regulations applicable to all.

FURTHER READING

- o In this article you can find general information to gain insight to our topic. It goes on about many aspects of the water scarcity in Africa and it also presents a different point of view and experience.

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/water-scarcity-in-africa-explainer-what-to-know/>

- this link is for the website of national geographic presenting a real-life case of our topic. Even though it might show a more limited perspective of the crisis focusing on the environmental aspect of our topic rather the economic, it gives a slight impression of what is the situation in many countries.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/partner-content-south-africa-danger-of-running-out-of-water>
- Here in this link, you will find the Dublin principles. It is a previous attempt to solve the issue that could give an image of what has been done and tried already, but it can also be an inspiration when drafting your own solutions.
<https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/10630-integrated-water-management-perspective-dublin-principles>
- This is an official United Nations website on the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically for an action taken under goal number 6 of the agenda named Water Action Agenda. It is very important as it is one of the main actions the UN has taken to achieve goal n6 of the agenda 2030 and many other measures taken by NGOs or countries after its adaptation follow its mandate.
<https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023/action-agenda>
- The document you will find in this link is from a search conducted by the United Nations Emergency Children Fund (UNICEF) on our topic specifically for the Horn of Africa, where one of the biggest humanitarian crises is taking place. It includes useful facts and information. It will also offer you a different view of the topic and help u gain knowledge that may find good use during the conference and in your resolution. I also suggest that u join the UNICEF website to look through their attempts, something you might also find helpful.
<https://www.unicef.org/media/126006/file/water-crisis-horn-africa-2022.pdf>
- The link below is for an important action taken to help with water scarcity in the field of agriculture. It is called Global Framework to Cope with Water Scarcity in Agriculture in the Context of Climate Change (WASAG) and it's an international effort seeing the participation of multiple organizations and agencies including FAO.
<https://www.fao.org/land-water/overview/wasag/en/>
- In the following link you will find a document that will help you when drafting your solutions. Drafted by the High-Level Panel on Water it contains general statistics and facts, and highly researched information on water infrastructure development and investments.
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/hlpwater/08-WaterInfrastInvest.pdf>

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