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UN-led initiative harnesses partnerships to tackle water and sanitation challenges



A young boy drinks fresh water from a well in a village in Northern Laos. Photo: UNDP/A. Rogers

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The United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) has facilitated the formation of a global platform to unite local actors to solve water and sanitation challenges, including encouraging water authorities in developed countries to support the improvement of services in poorer regions through donations.

The Global Water Solidarity Platform was launched on Wednesday at the World Water Forum in Marseille, France, where 20,000 participants from the private, public and non-profit sectors gathered this week to address global water challenges.

UNDP led a group of 25 institutions, including local, regional and national authorities, international and multilateral organizations, water operators, non-governmental and private organizations, as well as prominent figures to assess, design and constitute the new international tool to promote decentralized cooperation in water and sanitation.

“This UNDP initiative is important because 11 per cent of the planet’s population still lacks access to potable water, and 2.5 billion people do not have adequate sanitation services,” [said](#) UNDP Deputy Director for External Relations and Advocacy Romesh Muttukumar.

Through the Platform, which is supported by the Governments of France and Switzerland, municipal water authorities in developed countries can, for example, take direct action to support the improvement of water and sanitation services in developing nations by contributing one per cent of their revenue or budgets.

“Together with an active coalition of stakeholders and concrete cooperation mechanisms, local leaders from across the globe are working in solidarity so everyone can access safe water and sanitation services,” said Mr. Muttukumar.

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