

## **Preparing a Decade of Healthy Ageing – Lessons from Existing Decades of Action**

**July 2018**

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*Providing a platform for concerted action on one of the most pressing issues of our time, the Decade of Healthy Ageing presents an opportunity for WHO — and the UN at large — to remain relevant in the 21st century and to act as a catalyst for bold, global change.*

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## Acronyms

ALC – Ageing and Life Course  
CFS – Committee on World Food Security  
CSM – Civil Society Mechanism  
DoV – Decade of Vaccines  
DHA – Decade of Healthy Ageing  
DTP3 – Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis  
EB – Executive Board  
EWEC – Every Woman, Every Child  
FAO – Food and Agricultural Organisation  
GAVI – Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation  
GFF – Global Financing Facility  
GODAN – Global Initiative on Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition  
GVAP – Global Vaccine Action Plan  
GPW 13 – 13th General Programme of Work  
H6 Partnership– UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO and the World Bank  
HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus  
HLPF – High-Level Political Forum  
ICN2 – Second International Conference on Nutrition  
IFAD – International Fund for Agricultural Development  
ISO – International Organisation for Standardisation  
IWRM – Integrated Water Resource Management  
IYFF – International Year of Family Farming  
IATTS – International Association of Traffic and Safety  
MDG – Millennium Development Goal  
M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation  
MS – Member States  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
PfMNCH – Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health  
PSM – Private Sector Mechanism  
SDG – Sustainable Development Goal  
SG – United Nations Secretary-General  
SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound  
UN – United Nations  
UNDESA – United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
UNGA – United Nations General Assembly  
UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund  
UNSCN – United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition  
UNRSC – United Nations Road Safety Collaboration  
UN WASH Community– United Nations Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Community  
WFP – World Food Programme  
WHA – World Health Assembly  
WHO – World Health Organisation

## 1. Introduction

The United Nations has relied on International Decades of Action to pursue programmatic objectives for more than 58 years. Since 1960, the UN has declared a total of 45 such Decades.<sup>1</sup> Ten years of sustained and coherent action, projects and programmes are a powerful vehicle for mandate implementation for any UN agency. Many of the significant advances of the past 60 years in the field of International Development can be traced back to the push and continued effort of Decades of Action (hereafter: Decade).<sup>2</sup>

Decades of Action add unique value in different ways to the work of an organisation. They help raise awareness and sensitise policy-makers and the public for issues formerly ignored, underrated or invisible. As we will see in this report, with the Decade of Nutrition for instance, the Decade's broad and inclusive nature has been an opportunity for outreach beyond the traditional boundaries, making for a fresh, systemic and holistic approach to the cause of nutrition. More than that, the Decade taps into the potential of sectors and constituencies formerly without much of a connection to the nutrition community. Another value-added of the Decade of Action as a tool lies in the substantial momentum created and the associated effect of bringing a formerly marginal issue in to the mainstream of the International Development agenda – the Decade of Road Safety which this report examines is a prime example for this.

In light of this, the call for a Decade of Action in the field of Ageing and Health (2021–2030) is not only understandable, it is more than timely. Building on three of the most important documents of the policy area – the World Report on Ageing and Health, the Global Strategy on Ageing and Health and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – the Decade of Healthy Ageing (DHA) connects seamlessly to a policy dialogue already set in motion. Precisely, DHA offers the unique opportunity to increase visibility, raise awareness and mainstream Healthy Ageing thanks to action at the highest level, multi-sectoral collaboration, synergies with related policy fields, and tracking of progress against 9 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16. In short, DHA will respond to one of the core promises of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: for no one to be left behind.

For a multi-layered, complex, ten-year initiative like a Decade, it is only suitable to invest in learning from past experiences as one generally sees further "standing on the shoulders of Giants". This report does exactly that: it investigates core elements of the design and implementation of six currently ongoing Decades and initiatives, taking away best practices. The six selected Decades have been hand-picked out of a pool of 20 most recent and ongoing Decades, based on their relevance for WHO and DHA in particular. They scored the highest number of positive answers to a selection of eleven (11) yes–no questions. These questions were:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/international-Decades/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/international-Decades/>

Does the Decade have/feature:

- a particular WHO-relevance?
- a multi-sectoral character?
- a population focus?
- an advocacy focus?
- a focus region?
- an out-of-the box format?
- lessons learnt from a previous Decade built into it?
- new/desirable partners of relevance for WHO/DHA?
- a fresh/recent design?
- relevant focal point availability?
- good open-source data availability?

The report adopts a comparative analysis research design, focusing on the relevant Decades':

1. core policy framework, including Global Strategies, Global Action Plans and/or Programmes of Work
2. recent Monitoring and Evaluation and/or Global Status Reports
3. key informant interviews with experts involved in the design and/or implementation of the relevant Decades.

Distilling lessons from 60 years of programmatic work in a meaningful, i.e. actionable way into a 15-page format is an ambitious exercise, to say the least.

The Decade for Water in Sustainable Development alone features 31 Members from within the United Nations and 37 Partners, including representatives from civil society and non-governmental organisations. Take these 68 organisations' water-related activities across the four (4) individual work streams (with 7-35 activities per work stream) and complexity increases – to name just one example.

Reducing the ensuing amount of data to a digestible and actionable report comes with limitations. For the purpose of this report's relevance for the DHA, a focus was placed on the following six (6) Decades of Action:

1. Road Safety
2. Vaccines
3. Nutrition
4. Every Woman, Every Child
5. Water
6. Family Farming.

Within these six Decades, six (6) areas of interest in line with the Terms of Reference of this assignment, receive particular attention. These are:

1. purpose of the Decade
2. processes used for development
3. framing of action areas
4. outcomes (expected and actual)
5. success factors and barriers to success
6. partnerships (benefits and disadvantages)

For ease of reference, you will find the more in-depth analysis of each of the six Decades in the annexes while a summary of the findings is provided in the next section.

## 2. Lessons Learnt from the Comparative Decade Analysis

### 2.1 Processes Used for Development

For the development of the six (6) Decades in review, a number of processes were used. Depending on the primary focus of each individual Decade, different processes may take a more prominent role. Six (6) of them stand out.

1. Political Process: The Decade building process could not take place without a corresponding political process. This political process may be the result of grassroots movements as in the case of family farming organisations in Brazil and other countries that long before the proclamation of the Decade had lobbied their respective governments to "do something for family farmers" (see Annex 4.2). The political process requires drivers that take the lead in negotiating, building alliances and advancing relevant policy initiatives. The most prominent such driver among our six Decades in review is Tajikistan, a small Central Asian Member State, that brought to bear its influence to initiate and drive the international process that led to the International Community launching two Water Decades since the early 2000s (2005-2015 and 2018-2028; see Annex 6.7).

2. UNGA or WHA Resolutions: All Decades were endorsed by either a UN General Assembly Resolution (Water, Family Farming), a World Health Assembly Resolution (Vaccines) or both (Road Safety, Nutrition; see Annexes 1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2). Endorsement by these bodies guarantees a clear, agreed-upon mandate, a high-degree of legitimacy and visibility. While acting as important guidance for the implementors, the sometimes strict mandate may also come to be perceived as a straightjacket.

3. Coordination Mechanisms: While the UNGA or WHA resolution in all cases sets out who the implementing partner(s) of the Decade are, it in cases of broader, multi-sectoral Decades (Water, Road Safety, Nutrition) inter alia also names a relevant body in charge of coordinating all actors involved (UN Water, UN Road Safety Collaboration, UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition). The mentioned coordination mechanisms will be instrumental in supporting both the development and the implementation of the Decade (see Annexes 1.2 and 6.2).

4. Global Ministerial Conferences: An instrument of choice used by drivers of the political process are global or high-level ministerial conferences (see Annex 1.2). They spur the momentum, rally the troops and build policy consensus. In the case of the Decade of Road Safety, for instance, they were organised every five years, at the beginning, mid-way through and at the end of the Decade. Their first instance certainly plays a key role for the Decade's development.

5. Extensive Multi-Stakeholder Process: It is oftentimes under the coordination body's umbrella that extensive multi-stakeholder processes are organised. They help increase participation, integrate diverse perspectives and augment the Decade's legitimacy. In the case of the Vaccines Decade, this consultation process reached 1,100 individuals representing 140 countries and 290 organisations (see Annex 2.2). EWEC for its early consultations mobilised 1,000 people, representing various constituencies from UN



agencies, to civil society, youth groups and the private sector. This number skyrocketed during EWEC's consultation process at the WHA that saw the involvement of about 7,000 individuals, organisations and government representatives (see Annex 5.5).

6. Strategic Policy Framework or Global Plan: Based on the relevant resolutions, outcome documents of previous high-level meetings and the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development, the aforementioned consultative multi-stakeholder process culminates in the agreement on a strategic policy framework document for the Decade – oftentimes called Global Action Plan and/or Programme of Work (see Annexes 1.2, 3.2, 6.2). This document provides strategic guidance for the entire Decade and certainly constitutes a milestone in Decade development.

## **2.2 Framing of Action Areas**

As mentioned before, terminology used varies significantly across the six Decades. Action areas, however, often feature under the term "pillars". Regarding their framing, while highly tailor-made to best fit their respective cause, three patterns emerge.

1. Holistic/Ecosystem Approach: Conceptually captivating is the systemic/holistic approach taken by, for instance, the Road Safety Decade. Five dimensions – a manageable number – support one core Decade goal ("reducing road traffic deaths"). Each dimension emphasises one building block of an intrinsically safe road system: 1) road system governance 2) safe roads 3) safe vehicles 4) safe road users 5) post-accident care. A clear emphasis is placed on prevention at a systemic/structural level (first four dimensions).

The Nutrition Decade adopts a similarly holistic approach, pointing at the fact that no Decade exists in a vacuum, always unfolding in an ecosystem. Reflecting the cross-sectoral nature of Nutrition, its broader ecosystem consists inter alia of the:

1. food system
2. health system
3. education/social protection system
4. trade/finance system.

So it is only logical that these constitute the first four of its six action areas.

2. Focus on Actors/Populations: A different form of framing action areas adopts a strong population/actor focus. A case in point is the Vaccines Decade. It divides action areas along the lines of those who will perform these actions (all countries – all people – individuals and communities).

3. Building Blocks of A Social Movement: The last framing pattern constitutes an outlier as it is observed best in the one initiative/movement that strictly speaking does not qualify as an International Decade of Action: EWEC. EWEC's action is organised around the building blocks of a sizeable, global, multi-sectoral social movement, addressing this movement's most urgent needs one by one:

1. capacity-building at country-level
2. resource mobilisation
3. (health) system resilience
4. individuals as agents of change
5. community engagement
6. multi-sector action, and so forth.

## 2.3 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)

Various, at times conflicting, terminologies for outcomes exist across the six Decades. While not identical to an outcome, the terms used closest to it are "goal" or "target".

Non-Alignment of Expected and Actual Outcomes: For most Decades expected and actual outcomes do not align (Water, Nutrition, Family Farming, DoV, EWEC), only the Decade for Road Safety sees its expected core outcome (Number of road traffic deaths reduced) partially achieved (despite global increases in population and in motorists the number of road traffic deaths did not increase but remained steady).

The reasons underlying the non-alignment of expected and actual outcomes are manifold. The Water Decade's expected outcomes are identical with those of SDG 6, are highly ambitious in nature and meant to be achieved by 2030 only. The Nutrition Decade has only been launched in 2016, it appears though that progress is indeed slow and that for the time being only few Member States seem to actually prioritise the issue sufficiently. The Family Farming Decade only to be officially launched in 2019, needs to define its outcomes yet. The Vaccines Decade saw some progress towards its set goals, but the speed of it "remains too slow for most goals to be reached by the end of the Decade of Vaccines in 2020."<sup>3</sup> EWEC's goals spelled out in its Survive – Strive – Transform agenda are highly aspirational (for instance, "end malnutrition" and "eradicate poverty"), show significant regional variation, and remain very hard to achieve, not least in the face of current record-highs in forced migration and conflict globally.

Achieved Macro Outcomes: At the same time, some Decades (Vaccines Decade, for instance) note macro outcomes, i.e. successes achieved thanks to the Decade which may not always be captured fully by the more micro-level expected/actual outcomes. These include successes in terms of branding and higher visibility of the issue, improved leverage vis-a-vis funders/donors thanks to the Decade, better tracking and measurement of progress and overall accelerated (even though still imperfect) rates of implementation.

## 2.4 Success Factors

Different success factors can be identified across the Decades. Four are particularly noteworthy.

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<sup>3</sup> Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation, 2017 Assessment Report of the Global Vaccine Action Plan. See: [http://www.who.int/immunisation/sage/meetings/2017/october/1\\_GVAP\\_Assessment\\_report\\_web\\_version.pdf](http://www.who.int/immunisation/sage/meetings/2017/october/1_GVAP_Assessment_report_web_version.pdf)

**1. Powerful Cause:** A powerful cause – a population focus, i.e. a human face in particular – can help mobilise diverse constituencies and rally great numbers of people (EWEC).

**2. Member State Champions:** As mentioned before, for a Decade development and implementation process to gain and sustain momentum over an extended period of time, strong country champions (Water, Road Safety, Nutrition) and/or a group of committed and resourceful partners (EWEC, Family Farming) are essential.

**3. Cross-sectoral Collaboration:** A conceptual set-up that emphasises cross-sectoral collaboration (Nutrition, Road Safety), synergies and linkages constitutes another powerful success factor. "Since key determinants of health often lie outside the health sector, countries can only work towards the health SDGs by engaging sectors beyond health [...]."<sup>4</sup> The resulting cross-sectoral collaborations are where some of the highest returns on investment are to be expected. For example, if the Water Decade were to successfully "cross-fertilise" the policies of the agricultural sector which accounts for 70% of global freshwater withdrawals, important water savings could be realised even from small improvements in agricultural policies.<sup>5</sup>

**4. Linkages and Practical Package Solutions:** Linkages anchor a Decade in an existing policy discourse, in particular the SDGs and organisational strategies/work plans (see also: DoV and Family Farming). The Family Farming Decade, for instance, effectively links back to a host of other global and pressing issues, including global food security, poverty eradication, biodiversity, environmental protection and migration.

These linkages will not only help with communicating and "selling" the Decade inside one's organisation, but they can prove instrumental in developing practical, implementation-focused package solutions that cost-effectively address multiple country needs. For instance, if a country faces obesity, air pollution and road safety issues, why not help them design their urban spaces to include more parks which will prove beneficial on all three levels (people work out more, the air is cleaner, traffic will slow down, causing less traffic deaths), killing multiple birds with one stone?

## **2.5 Barriers of Success**

**Losing Sight of Country-Level Implementation:** The strongest barrier to success a Decade can experience is when country-level implementation is not sufficiently prioritised (Vaccines, Annex 2.6), adding on layers of reporting to oftentimes overwhelmed Member States (Road Safety) instead of suggesting actionable solutions and operational guidance on how to implement these (Road Safety, Vaccines).

**Resource Limitations:** A successful Decade is a Decade well communicated (Vaccines, Nutrition). Resource limitations may be the reason why a communications strategy and team are missing and why breakdowns in communication with Member States occur (see example of Nutrition Decade, Annex 3.6).

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<sup>4</sup> WHO, Draft thirteenth general programme of work, 2019–2023 Report by the Director-General, see: [http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA71/A71\\_4-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA71/A71_4-en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> High-Level Political Forum, SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation, see: [www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2018/07/SDG6\\_SR2018\\_web\\_4.pdf](http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2018/07/SDG6_SR2018_web_4.pdf)

Lack of Cross-Sectoral Outreach: If overcoming silos and traditional barriers between sectors is one of the most important value-added a Decade can bring, then not reaching out boldly and creatively enough may easily amount to the biggest opportunity one can miss (see Water, Annex 6.6). Several Decades struggled, in particular, when it comes to engaging with the private sector in a fruitful and sustainable way (Nutrition, EWEC).

Decade Fatigue: The Water for Sustainable Development Decade (2018-2028) was proclaimed very shortly after the Water for Life (2005-15) was completed. Water for Life is credited among other things with achieving a free-standing water goal (SDG 6) in the 2030 sustainable development agenda. The new Water Decade is essentially meant to support SDG 6 implementation and to raise the lead Member State's political profile – while this will not harm, its value-added is expected to remain limited. Hence, a certain Decade fatigue in the WASH community (see Water, Annex 6.6).

## **2.6 Partnerships (Benefits and Limitations)**

UNGA resolutions define who the implementing partners of a particular Decade are (oftentimes they are two, as with WHO and FAO in the Nutrition Decade). Oftentimes, a joint Secretariat is set up, sometimes for reasons of resource limitations the relevant sections of each organisation collaborate closely, but from within their existing structure and location.

Reaching Diverse Constituencies and Sectors: The role of partnerships for Decade implementation can hardly be overstated since they offer an opportunity to branch out to diverse constituencies (academia, youth, donors, global financing mechanisms, healthcare professionals, governments, Inter-Governmental Organisations, NGOs, Governments, private sector, UN agencies, UN Secretary-General's Office<sup>6</sup>) and sectors (for instance, in the case of Road Safety: transport, health, police, justice, urban planning, road engineers and road authorities)<sup>7</sup>, unlocking unparalleled potential for the Decade's reach, visibility and overall effectiveness.

Right Partner for Each Phase: Different partnerships come with different benefits. Partnering with the World Bank to launch a Decade on Road Safety may offer both a thought partner and the cloud of a major International Development actor. Over time, with implementation growing in importance, however, it may turn out that a small NGO that would appear insignificant next to the World Bank, will be a partner of choice. A single-issue organisation with people burning for the cause may prove to be the right partner for that phase (see Road Safety, Annex 1.7).

Usefulness of Partner: In terms of lessons to be learnt from the DoV/GVAP experience, a partnership can be viewed as beneficial when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- the partnership helps you deliver better against WHO's Global Programme of Work

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.who.int/pmnch/about/members/constituencies/en/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://undocs.org/A/RES/58/289>

- it involves sector heavyweights that are so significant you cannot do without
- the partner in question brings significant resources to the table.

Complexity and Cost of Coordination: The limitations of partnerships become apparent when looking at a sizeable multi-stakeholder processes, including the Water Decade, involving 31 Members from within the United Nations and 37 Partners from civil society and NGOs. Complexity, costs of coordination and formalism increase while ownership and effectiveness decrease (see Water, Annex 6.7). EWEC's movement building story speaks to the fact that bringing together a small group of partners can go a long way (see EWEC).

Lack of Governance Structure: Another factor limiting the effectiveness of partnerships especially over extended periods of time can be the lack of an overarching governance structure or a board, for instance (see EWEC, Annex 5.7). If in a consortium of partners, it is not clear who mobilises funds or under whose oversight the movement operates, misunderstandings and rivalries may occur.

### 3. Developing a Vision for the Decade of Healthy Ageing (DHA, 2021-2030)

#### 3.1 DHA's Unique Potential

Demographics and Timeliness: With populations world-wide ageing rapidly, the timing of the Decade could not be better. It will offer a platform and solutions to questions governments will increasingly be grappling with. Similarly, considerable interest can be expected from the private sector, employers and unions since healthy employees and retirees with money to spend hold significant economic potential. In short, the window of opportunity for bold change towards more productive, healthy and age-friendly societies is wide open. Providing a platform for concerted action on an issue of global importance, the Decade of Healthy Ageing presents an opportunity for WHO and the UN at large – to stay relevant and to continue acting as a catalyst for global change in the 21st century.

A Strong Business Case: The proposed Decade has a precise and clearly definable focus on older people while also promising returns for younger generations and society as a whole. "Maintaining functional ability in older people can help to reduce health-care costs and care dependency and promote well-being, enabling them to continue contributing to society."<sup>8</sup> The relevant cost-savings will allow governments to reallocate resources to other societal and health priorities. This business case and the associated scientific costing estimates of savings and economic potential of healthier, older societies, will be an extremely powerful tool for mobilizing resources and support. EWEC may serve as an example (see Annex 5.2) – it used a series of scientific papers (The Lancet) to stand its business case on solid numbers and a scientific foundation.

A Powerful Cause: The Decade of Healthy Ageing has a human face people can relate to. Tapping into people's emotion and compassion for the elderly, in particular their own grandparents, parents or ageing friends, should make selling the Decade's message easy, the messaging powerful and relatable. UNICEF's messaging around children can serve as an example here. Also, the prospect for younger generations to, for instance, receive help with keeping their parents' generation healthy and content longer is an important incentive for engagement of the middle-aged and younger strata in the Decade.

#### 3.2 Potential Purposes and Partners

Sensitisation and Cross-Sectoral Alliances: Other Decades, in particular the Decade on Road Safety, have shown that an international Decade of Action holds the potential to turn a formerly health-only issue into a health and International Development mainstream topic. The DHA's potential in this regard is at least twofold:

- Sensitizing Member States, civil society and the international development community to the relevance and the economic and societal potential of the healthy ageing agenda.

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<sup>8</sup> WHO, Draft thirteenth general programme of work, 2019–2023 Report by the Director-General, see: [http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA71/A71\\_4-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA71/A71_4-en.pdf)

- Using the vehicle of an international Decade opens up considerable opportunities for commitment of non-traditional partners from very different sectors of society, in the case of DHA these could include "transport, housing, social protection, streets and parks, social [and cultural] facilities, and health and long-term care; politics; products and technologies".<sup>9</sup>

Natural potential partners for the DHA could further be actors from cities and municipalities (cities alliances), the private sector (employers, unions), the social sector, finance, and others. The holistic/ecosystem approach of the Nutrition Decade, for instance, allowed for outreach beyond sectoral borders to the food production, trade and consumption sectors. The ensuing cross-sectoral alliances may very well be the places where some of the biggest structural inequities may be addressed.

### 3.3 Developing DHA's Value Proposition

Typology of Decades' Value-Added: The different Decades examined above demonstrate the multiplicity of roles lead agencies can play in the design and implementation of an international Decade. One of the unique comparative advantages of the 2005-2015 Water Decade lay in its role of "capacity-builder". A committed Member State had dedicated an entire center of competence to building skills for implementing water projects and programmes.<sup>10</sup> The Vaccine Decade draws unique strength from successfully influencing partners with WHO's norms and standards ("lobbyist").<sup>11</sup> EWEC and most Decades examined add value by providing an enabling environment for policy change ("enabler") and by tracking, monitoring and measuring this change ("monitoring agent").

DHA's unique value proposition, i.e. its purpose and value-added, will yet have to be defined during the course of the Decade's strategy development and in line with WHO's strategic priorities as an organisation<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> WHO, Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2016-2020).

<sup>10</sup> Key informant interview with UN Water expert on International Decade (2018-2028) for Action – Water for Sustainable Development, 20 July 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on DoV/GVAP, 22 June 2018.

<sup>12</sup> WHO, Draft thirteenth general programme of work, 2019–2023 Report by the Director-General, see: [http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA71/A71\\_4-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA71/A71_4-en.pdf)

## 4. Looking Ahead: Suggestions on Moving DHA Forward

1. Based on Ecosystem Analysis, Define Decade Purpose: Analyse the respective strategic policy frameworks of the UN (2030 agenda, in particular SDG 3), WHO (13th General Programme of Work, in particular Outcomes 3 and 9) and ALC (Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health, in particular its five strategic objectives) and define the purpose of the Decade in line with these.

2. Focus on Member-State Implementation: Put yourself in the shoes of Member States and design a Decade that is useful to them. More than that, instead of adding to their overwhelm, help them develop practical, implementation-focused package solutions that cost-effectively address multiple of their needs simultaneously. Helping Member States achieve more within their existing resources goes a long way in making Decade results permanent and sustainable.

3. Make Decade Actionable: Support Member States with operational tools. Established formats that are appreciated include How to Guides, Resource Guides and Country Fact Sheets. Further, take advantage of country Decade focal points, tending to the relationship, establishing communication channels and building their capacity on Decade related knowledge and required skill sets. If possible, follow the Water Decade's example and have a committed Member State build people's capacity in a center of competency on Healthy Ageing.

4. Mobilise Resources: A Decade of Action like any social enterprise requires resources to thrive. Resource limitations lie at the heart of some of the most severe Decade ailments. Building alliances with resourceful partners, identifying ways of mobilising resources and quantifying the costs of your Global Action Plan (and attaching a price tag to it) will be essential to the Decade's long-term success.

5. Prioritise Communication: Among the experts interviewed for this report, there was general agreement that the Decade survives and thrives to the extent that it is successfully communicated. A communication strategy, a dedicated communication team as well as professional campaigning skills will boost advocacy and overall implementation results. Events and campaigns around an annual World Day of Healthy Ageing and a World Week of Healthy Ageing as well as quinquennial High-Level Ministerial Meetings present opportunities to make the Decade's message known, mobilise support and build a following.

6. Holistic, Multi-Sectoral Approach: The experience of previous Decades (Water, Nutrition, Road Safety) shows that one of the biggest value-added relates to the holistic approach a Decade can capitalise on to reach out to other sectors and new constituencies. The challenge lies in incentivising participation, identifying common interests and making it easy for these new partners – in particular from the private sector, for instance – to join and participate in the Decade.

7. Struggle for Specificity: The ability to measure and track progress on the Decade's goals and targets is one of biggest opportunities a Decade has to offer. It is when countries can compare their own progress to that of others that many develop the ambition to become



better. However, tracking progress is most meaningful when the targets defined are specific, measurable, ambitious, relevant, time-bound and evidence-based (SMARTER; see Nutrition Decade). Lofty, unambitious or unspecific goals are easy to define, but are not helpful. The fight for the specificity of targets and outcomes is worth your time.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with WHO WASH expert, 5 July 2018.

## Annexes

### 1. Decade for Road Safety (2011-2020)

#### 1.1 Purpose

"The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 seeks to save millions of lives by building road safety management capacity; improving the safety of road infrastructure; further developing the safety of vehicles; enhancing the behaviour of road users; and improving post-crash response. Guided by the Global Plan, the Decade of Action offers a framework for policy, practice and advocacy to help countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals."<sup>14</sup>

#### 1.2 Processes Used for Decade Development

UNGA Resolution and WHA Endorsement (April/May 2004):<sup>15</sup> In April 2004, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/58/289 on "Improving global road safety", inviting WHO in close cooperation with UN Regional Commissions to coordinate road safety across the UN system.<sup>16</sup> The World Health Assembly accepted the role of Secretariat for the UN Decade on Road Safety in May 2004 and subsequently set up the UN Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC).<sup>17</sup>

Global Ministerial Conferences (November 2009): The first global ministerial conference on road safety was held in Moscow in 2009, two years prior to the launch of the Decade.<sup>18</sup> It furthered road safety policy coordination, built momentum for the issue and culminated in the Moscow Declaration.<sup>19</sup> The follow-up, a mid-Decade implementation conference was hosted by Brazil in 2015. The end of the Decade will be marked by the third global high-level conference 2020 in Sweden.<sup>20</sup> Preparing and holding these conferences allowed for a substantial political process to take place both among and within Member States.

The UN Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC): UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/58/289 established a coordination body for road safety issues within the UN system, called the UN Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC).<sup>21</sup> It brings together international organisations, governments, NGOs, the private sector and is chaired by WHO. UN Regional Commissions are rotating vice chairs. The UNRSC acts as a friends of

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade\\_of\\_action/en/](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade_of_action/en/)

<sup>15</sup> For a repository of all relevant road safety-related UNGA, WHA and WHO EB resolutions and reports, please see: <http://www.un.org/en/roadsafety/documents.shtml>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.who.int/roadsafety/about/en/>

<sup>17</sup> For Terms of Reference of the Road Safety Decade Secretariat, please see: <http://www.who.int/roadsafety/about/secretariat/en/>

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/ministerial\\_conference/en/](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/ministerial_conference/en/)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/540](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/540)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.government.se/press-releases/2018/04/sweden-to-host-un-conference-on-road-safety-in-2020/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://undocs.org/A/RES/58/289>

the Decade, steering and advisory group. It inter alia was instrumental in developing the Decade's conceptual framework.

The Global Plan (May 2011): As requested by the UNGA Resolution, WHO and the UN Regional Commissions, in cooperation with the UNRSC and other stakeholders, prepared a Global Plan for the Decade and officially launched it in May 2011.<sup>22</sup> This plan is the Decade's strategic framework. A guidance document for countries, it provides context and background and serves as a tool to support the development of national action plans.<sup>23</sup>

### 1.3 Action Areas

The Global Plan lays out five so-called pillars for national and local activities, representing interventions that have proven to work well for national road safety champions (including Sweden and the Netherlands):

- Road safety management and governance — Adhere to UN legal instruments; create multi-sectoral partnerships; designate lead agency; develop national strategies; set realistic, long-term targets; ensure sufficient funding; establish data system for M&E.
- Roads and mobility — Raise inherent protective quality of road networks, especially for most vulnerable groups (pedestrians, bikers...); assess road infrastructure; improve safety-conscious planning, design, construction, operation of roads.
- Vehicles — Improve vehicle safety technology; harmonise global standards, accelerate uptake of new technologies.
- Road users — Improve road user behavior; enforce laws and standards; increase awareness and seat-belt and helmet wearing rates, reduce drink-driving, speeding, risk factors.
- Post-crash response — Improve emergency treatment and longer-term rehabilitation of victims.

At the international level, the Global Plan foresees the following activities:

- Ensure monitoring through UNRSC; Advocacy at highest levels; facilitate collaboration between stakeholders; increase risk factor awareness; provide guidance; improve data collection.

Caveat: These pillars are blueprints that may have little to do with actual country needs and realities.<sup>24</sup>

### 1.4 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)

Expected Outcome: The primary overall outcome for the Road Safety Decade is "to stabilise and subsequently reduce the forecasted number of global road traffic deaths."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade\\_of\\_action/monitoring/UNRSC\\_M\\_and\\_E\\_Report\\_Version\\_3.pdf](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade_of_action/monitoring/UNRSC_M_and_E_Report_Version_3.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade\\_of\\_action/plan/en/](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade_of_action/plan/en/)

<sup>24</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on Road Safety, 2 July 2018.

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade\\_of\\_action/monitoring/UNRSC\\_M\\_and\\_E\\_Report\\_Version\\_3.pdf](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade_of_action/monitoring/UNRSC_M_and_E_Report_Version_3.pdf)

A total of 33 indicators is used to measure successful implementation of the five pillars. They are monitored through the so-called Global Status Report which provides a regular snapshot overview of road safety in Member States.<sup>26</sup>

The first Global Status Report, published in 2009, represents a first broad baseline assessment of the global road safety situation in 178 countries. To build the report, national stakeholders from different sectors (transport, health, police and others) came to a consensus on a dataset that best represents their countries' road safety situation.<sup>27</sup> 2013 and 2015 respectively saw the second and third report, a fourth and final one is expected.

Actual Outcome: The latest Global Status Report (2015) "shows that the number of road traffic deaths – 1.25 million in 2013 – has remained fairly constant since 2007, despite the increase in global motorisation and population, and the predicted rise in deaths."<sup>28</sup> It suggests that relevant interventions are preventing increases that otherwise would have occurred.

Macro Outcomes – From Margins to Mainstream: The Decade's biggest success til this day has been the global advocacy created around road safety which managed to successfully transition Road Safety from a sector-specific issue to a mainstream health and development issue.<sup>29</sup>

## 1.5. Success Factors

Systemic Conceptual Approach: By virtue of the breadth of the road safety issue, the corresponding Decade involves stakeholders from many different sectors of society (transport, health, police, justice, urban planning, road engineers, road authorities..).<sup>30</sup> These different perspectives taken on the same issue allow for a deeper, systemic approach to some of the more deep-seated, structural issues behind road (un)safety. This systemic approach is a unique hallmark of the Decade.

Successful Decade Preparation Period: The Decade was preceded by a substantial preparation, lead-up, and advocacy period of more than ten years. This period saw the gathering together of a group of key actors (WB, OECD, WHO, ISO, Multilateral Development Banks, Bloomberg Philanthropies), successfully setting the stage for the Decade.<sup>31</sup>

## 1.6 Barriers of Success

Countries Overwhelmed: The Decade does not address the lack of management capacity in Medium- and Low-Income Countries which acts as a barrier to implementing the Global Plan. These countries are oftentimes ill-prepared and overwhelmed by the scale and spread

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade\\_of\\_action/monitoring/UNRSC\\_M\\_and\\_E\\_Report\\_Version\\_3.pdf](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/Decade_of_action/monitoring/UNRSC_M_and_E_Report_Version_3.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> idem.

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_safety\\_status/2015/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/)

<sup>29</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on Road Safety, 2 July 2018.

<sup>30</sup> <http://undocs.org/A/RES/58/289>

<sup>31</sup> IATSS, Meeting the Management Challenges of the Decade for Road Safety. See: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0386111211000276>

of the Road Safety crisis in addition to managing a host of other urgent development needs.<sup>32</sup>

Lack of Operational Guidance: While the Global Plan lays out *what* needs to be done, it does not say much about *how* to do it, i.e. about how to implement good practice models when country capacity is lacking or precisely how to

- instill institutional reform
- accelerate knowledge creation and transfer
- scale up investments
- sustainably secure the support of development aid.<sup>33</sup>

## **1.7 Partnerships: Benefits**

The UN GA resolution set out that WHO and UN Regional Commissions become partners in coordinating the Decade.

Knowledge Transfer from Country Champions: Partnerships with country champions (Sweden, Netherlands) proved instrumental in addressing some of the deep-seated structural issues around road safety, including making the road system intrinsically safe.<sup>34</sup>

Wealth of Partnerships: The aforementioned systemic approach only becomes possible thanks to the large spectrum of stakeholders from many different sectors of society involved in the Decade (transport, health, police, justice, urban planning, road engineers and road authorities).<sup>35</sup>

Small Single-Issue NGO a Strong Implementing Partner: When selecting partners, it is useful to differentiate between idea-giving/thought partners and implementing partners. For instance, the World Bank as a large development organisation with its own multi-faceted mandate, and multiple focuses of work may contribute initial funding to launch the Decade. The Alliance for Road Safety, a much smaller NGO that exclusively focuses on this single issue, may however be a much better implementing partner, ready to follow through, sustain the momentum and help advance implementation of the Decade over time.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Idem.

<sup>33</sup> Idem.

<sup>34</sup> Idem.

<sup>35</sup> <http://undocs.org/A/RES/58/289>

<sup>36</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on Road Safety, 2 July 2018.

## 2. Decade of Vaccines – Global Vaccine Action Plan (2011-2020)<sup>37</sup>

### 2.1 Purpose

The Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP) — endorsed by the 194 Member States of the World Health Assembly in May 2012 — is a framework to prevent millions of deaths by 2020 through more equitable access to existing vaccines for people in all communities. GVAP was the product of the Decade of Vaccines (DoV) Collaboration, an unprecedented effort that brought together development, health and immunisation experts and stakeholders. The DoV Collaboration brought together diverse stakeholders to develop the GVAP to stimulate the discovery, development and delivery of lifesaving vaccines. The plan builds on the success of current work to transform the way vaccines move from formulation, to factory, to families.

### 2.2 Processes Used for Decade Development

WHA Endorsement and EB Resolution: In May 2011, a report by the WHO Secretariat on the global immunisation vision and strategy was noted by the Sixty-fourth World Health Assembly (WHA). During the discussions the vision for the Decade of Vaccines (2011–2020) and the development of a Global Vaccine Action Plan were welcomed. Subsequently, the WHO Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012 considered the Global Vaccine Action Plan and provided guidance. The Board also adopted resolution EB130.R12 on World Immunisation Week. The final plan was endorsed at the 65th World Health Assembly in May 2012.

Extensive Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Process: The Decade's plan was developed following a multi-stakeholder approach, bringing together governments and elected officials, health professionals, academia, manufacturers, global agencies, development partners, civil society, media and the private sector. The associated global consultation process reached over 1,100 individuals representing more than 140 countries and 290 organisations, and included two special sessions to brief representatives of the Permanent Missions of the United Nations Offices and other Intergovernmental Organisations in Geneva and New York.

### 2.3 Action Areas

The Global Vaccine Action Plan consists of five (5) goals and six (6) strategic objectives.<sup>38</sup> While the co-existence of these two categories (goals and strategic objectives) may be confusing to both the uninitiated reader and the vaccines expert, the key difference between them is that the goals are aiming at the macro–, the strategic objectives at the micro–level. The strategic objectives are:

1. All countries commit to immunisation as a priority.

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<sup>37</sup> [http://www.who.int/immunisation/global\\_vaccine\\_action\\_plan/DoV\\_GVAP\\_2012\\_2020/en/](http://www.who.int/immunisation/global_vaccine_action_plan/DoV_GVAP_2012_2020/en/)

<sup>38</sup> See above.

2. Individuals and communities understand the value of vaccines and demand immunisation as both their right and responsibility.
3. The benefits of immunisation are equitably extended to all people.
4. Strong immunisation systems are an integral part of a well functioning health system.
5. Immunisation programmes have sustainable access to predictable funding, quality supply and innovative technologies.
6. Country, regional and global research and development innovations maximise the benefits of immunisation.

## **2.4 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)**

### Expected Outcomes:

1. Achieve a world free of poliomyelitis.
2. Meet global and regional elimination targets.
3. Meet vaccination coverage targets in every region, country and community.
4. Develop and introduce new and improved vaccines and technologies.
5. Exceed the Millennium Development Goal 4 target for reducing child mortality.

Actual Outcomes: "In 2016, some progress was made towards the goals set out in the Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP). The year saw the fewest number of cases of wild poliovirus ever reported, and three more countries were certified as having achieved maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination. Nine additional countries have introduced new vaccines. Overall DTP3 vaccination coverage increased, but by only 1% to 86%. Progress, therefore, still remains too slow for most goals to be reached by the end of the Decade of Vaccines in 2020."<sup>39</sup>

Macro-Outcomes – Branding, Visibility and Leverage: Further positive effects of the Decade include the branding and higher visibility of the issue, the leverage vis-a-vis funders/donors who appreciate to see a well a thought-out plan, the measurement of progress/lack of progress and the ensuing incentive for countries to accelerate implementation, and the increased leverage for countries on global level in their dealings with powerful vaccine producers which under the GVAP made pricing of vaccines more transparent and comparable.

## **2.5 Success Factors**

Successfully Linking Immunisation to SDGs: The full potential of any given global health initiative can only be unlocked when it meaningfully relates to the broader international development agenda, in particular the SDGs. This realisation has been made in the case of the DoV/GVAP, as the following passage of the 2017 GVAP Assessment report clearly demonstrates:

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<sup>39</sup> Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation, 2017 Assessment Report of the Global Vaccine Action Plan. See: [http://www.who.int/immunisation/sage/meetings/2017/october/1\\_GVAP\\_Assessment\\_report\\_web\\_version.pdf](http://www.who.int/immunisation/sage/meetings/2017/october/1_GVAP_Assessment_report_web_version.pdf)

"The Sustainable Development Goals represent a holistic framework to health, wellbeing and development towards which immunisation has much to offer. Global health security and International Health Regulations, health systems strengthening and universal health coverage, and combating antimicrobial resistance are all global agendas to which immunisation can and should be contributing. A key principle to communicate will be common interests and the mutual benefits of closer alignment. Immunisation platforms provide a way to reach a significant proportion of national populations, which could be leveraged to enhance other aspects of health, welfare and development."<sup>40</sup>

## 2.6 Barriers of Success

Ten-Year Plans and Evolving Realities: When designing a Decade, it is important to bear in mind that over such an extensive amount of time changes – be they political (changing world leaders) or organisational (new head of WHO) – are inevitable and that with new leaders come new organisational priorities. When over the ten-year period, programmes become disconnected from the organisation's strategic objectives and/or plan of work, they risk not to be implemented fully.

Action Plan's Actionability: The GVAP had already been completed when shortly before being due it was entirely rewritten. This may account for areas in the plan which are too little actionable and implementation-oriented.

Country-Level Implementation Insufficiently Prioritised: For hierarchical organisations with strong levels of engagement at the global, regional and country level, it is only legitimate to ask where the majority of the Decade's implementation efforts are taking place – and to devote resources accordingly. Concretely, in the case of the DoV/GVAP, some considered regional strategies necessary in addition to already existing global and country-level strategies. The finalisation of these regional strategies took about three years and added additional layers of reporting to an already convoluted reporting system.<sup>41</sup>

Missed opportunities in terms of communication: With 80% of the DoV complete, there seems to be a recognition among experts involved that more could have been achieved had advocacy and communication been prioritised more strongly.<sup>42</sup>

## 2.7 Partnerships: Benefits and Limitations

Key partners for the DoV/GVAP include WHO, UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the GAVI Alliance and the United States National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases.

In terms of lessons to be learnt from the DoV/GVAP experience, a partnership can

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<sup>40</sup> 2017 Assessment report of the Global Vaccine Action Plan.

<sup>41</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on DoV/GVAP, 22 June 2018.

<sup>42</sup> See above.



be beneficial when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- the partnership helps you deliver better against WHO's Global Programme of Work
- it involves sector heavyweights that are so significant you cannot do without
- the partner in question brings significant resources to the table.

In DoV/GVAP's case, condition ii) was met while iii) was not (no additional new resources).

### 3. Decade on Nutrition (2016-2025)<sup>43</sup>

#### 3.1 Purpose

The UN Decade of Action on Nutrition is a commitment of Member States to undertake ten years of sustained and coherent implementation of the recommendations and commitments of the ICN2 Framework for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The aim of the Decade is to provide a clearly defined, time-bound cohesive framework that operates within existing structures and available resources to implement the ICN2 commitments and the nutrition-related SDGs. The added value of the Decade is to establish a focused period to set, track and achieve impact and outcomes, and provide an accessible, transparent and global mechanism<sup>44</sup> for tracking progress and ensuring mutual accountability for the commitments made.

#### 3.2 Processes Used for Decade Development

UNGA Resolution, Role of UNSCN and WHA Endorsement: "In April 2016, the UN General Assembly in its Resolution 70/259, endorsed the ICN2 outcomes and proclaimed the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition. It called for FAO and WHO to lead its implementation in collaboration with WFP, IFAD, UNICEF [...] and using coordination mechanisms such as the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) and multi-stakeholder platforms such as the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)."<sup>45</sup>

"In May 2016, the World Health Assembly (WHA) through Resolution 69/8 requested the Director-General of WHO to work with the Director-General of FAO "to support Member States, upon request, in developing, strengthening and implementing their policies, programmes and plans to address the multiple challenges of malnutrition, and convene periodic meetings of inclusive nature to share best practices, including consideration of commitments that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) within the framework of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)".<sup>46</sup>

Programme of Work: Policy outcomes of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) served as a framework for further consultations on the Decade's framework document, its Work Programme.

The Work Programme of the Decade was drawn up in keeping with the guidance given by the General Assembly in resolution 70/259, through an inclusive and collaborative process, which included four face-to-face discussions with Members and two open online consultations.<sup>47</sup> The Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) and the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM)

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.un.org/nutrition> as well as <http://www.who.int/nutrition/Decade-of-action/en/>

<sup>44</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025).

<sup>45</sup> United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition Work Program, see:

<http://www.who.int/nutrition/Decade-of-action/workprogramme-doa2016to2025-en.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> See above.

<sup>47</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025), see: [http://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1486196/files/A\\_72\\_829-EN.pdf?version=1](http://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1486196/files/A_72_829-EN.pdf?version=1)

actively participated in online consultations to help shape the Decade's Work Programme, with participants from 48 countries responding through 189 individual contributions.

### 3.3 Action Areas

Based on Member States' policy consensus expressed in the commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition, the recommendations made in the ICN2 Framework for Action, the Global Targets as well as the SDGs (in particular SDG 2 stating to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture"), Nutrition experts were able to initially extract 60 policy recommendations and 25 themes which they then successfully synthesised into the following six (6) action areas/pillars:

1. Sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets
2. Aligned health systems providing universal coverage of essential nutrition actions
3. Social protection and nutrition education
4. Trade and investment for improved nutrition
5. Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages
6. Strengthened governance and accountability for nutrition.

Holistic/Ecosystem Approach: The rationale behind these six pillars is that of a systemic and holistic approach to nutrition – from food production over trade to consumption. More precisely, the six pillars investigate where food comes from (food systems), how nutrition and health interact (health systems), how social policies can be used to positively impact nutrition (social protection), how at a meta-level international trade affects food security (trade), and what actions at the level of the individual can be taken to build healthy nutrition habits (breastfeeding).

### 3.4 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)

Expected Outcomes: The expected outcomes are: i) increase visibility of nutrition action at the highest level; ii) ensure coordination; iii) strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration; iv) create synergies and measure progress towards sustainable food systems and food and nutrition security for all.

Actual Outcomes: Two years after its launch, efforts to implement the Decade are underway.<sup>48</sup> Some progress has been made in the implementation of national commitments. Almost all countries have policies related to nutrition, often covering all forms of malnutrition. However, nutrition is not always a stated objective in national sectoral policies or development plans.

Intersectoral coordination mechanisms have been established to achieve coherent nutrition objectives and targets, often including multiple stakeholders.

In general terms, implementation has to be scaled up, investments for nutrition need to be increased, enhanced policy coherence is required, and, most importantly, a greater number

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<sup>48</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025).

of SMART commitments is called for. In sum, the world currently is still off track to achieve the global nutrition targets.

### 3.5 Success Factors

Strong Conceptual Base: As can be seen in the choice of the six pillars discussed above, the Nutrition Decade takes a systemic approach to food/nutrition and their wider ecosystem, capitalizing on linkages with other non-traditional sectors and allowing engagement on nutrition with actors beyond the traditional nutrition sector.

In Sync with SDG Agenda and Reporting: Also, solidly anchoring the Decade's implementation in the implementation of the SDG agenda helps Member States keep track of their commitments while also ensuring that Nutrition receives due attention and visibility, not least when integrated in the High Level Political Forum, the international community's most important forum for SDG-implementation at UNHQ in New York often attended at Minister/Deputy Minister-level. Furthermore, in terms of reporting, it is foreseen that country commitment submissions for tracking progress be aligned with the monitoring systems of the Agenda 2030 as well as the SDG2 framework led by the Global Initiative on Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN).

Implementation Focus: Unlike other Decade framework documents – take for instance, the Global Plan for Road Safety – the Work Program on Nutrition dedicates 28 paragraphs (50-78) to the "means of implementation", i.e. the "how" of things, including through the use of SMART commitments, availability of a resource guide, details on country-specific commitments and the annual submission of data to the FAO/WHO Secretariat. The value-added of the Decade vis-a-vis earlier commitments made under the ICN2 format lies precisely in the fact that ICN2 commitments were voluntary and contained no timelines while Decade commitments are binding and time-bound (see emphasis on SMART targets).<sup>49</sup>

Champion Countries: During the 70th WHA in May 2017, Brazil became the first country to make ambitious, concrete commitments as part of the Decade, with a focus on reversing the obesity trend. The second country to make specific commitments to the Decade at the 70th WHA was Ecuador, announcing five commitments, supported by 15 policy measures with the long-term aim of a healthier life for all Ecuadorians.<sup>50</sup>

### 3.6 Barriers of Success

Resource Limitations: Member States in UNGA Resolution 70/259 made clear that the Nutrition Decade had to be shouldered "within existing structures and available resources." This has limiting implications for the Decade's implementation: no additional staff can be hired, the website could not be completed yet, a communication strategy does unfortunately not exist.

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<sup>49</sup> Key informant interview with two WHO experts on Nutrition Decade, 6 July 2018.

<sup>50</sup> Idem.

Missed Opportunity – Lacking Communication Strategy: Communicating what the Decade is about, what is new about it and how it can help with SDG implementation, is essential for generating buy-in among Member States. This opportunity was at least (partially) missed in the case of the Nutrition Decade due to a lack of resources.

Breakdown in Communication around Commitment Registration: To begin with, the process for Member States to register their commitments is rather demanding, if not a little cumbersome. They are supposed to write a letter at Minister-level to either the Head of FAO or WHO, laying out commitments that are demonstrably SMART and for which they can show that they are making the required resources available. A joint, co-signed WHO/FAO letter went out to all Member States' Ministries of Health and Agriculture in October 2017, informing them of this process. Unfortunately, this letter was never shared with WHO country offices for their follow-up. This could explain why WHO country representatives may not yet have had the opportunity to support their ministerial counterparts on the implementation of the letter's instructions. As a matter of fact, nine months later, only two Member States have registered their commitments so far.

Limited Support from Inside WHO: Different departments inside WHO had very different levels of interest in collaborating on this. A positive example was the Food Safety team. Meetings with departmental focal points could improve internal collaboration. Oftentimes, however, resources for this lack.

### **3.7 Partnerships: Benefits and Limitations**

As described above, the UNGA resolution called for FAO and WHO to lead the Decade's implementation in collaboration with WFP, IFAD, UNICEF [...] and using coordination mechanisms, including the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) and multi-stakeholder platforms, including the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

At global level (HQ), the partnership between WHO and FAO is characterised as "exceptionally positive" by members of the joint Secretariat.<sup>51</sup> Relations with IFAD and WFP have also, thanks to the Decade, improved.

Benefits of the Decade include the opportunity to invite more actors, beyond the traditional nutrition actors, to engage in nutrition, including for instance the trade sector.

Limitations: Expanding Multi-Sectoral Collaboration: Adequate forms of partnership and opportunities for the private sector have not yet been identified.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Key informant interview with two WHO experts on Nutrition Decade, 6 July 2018.

<sup>52</sup> Idem.

## 4. Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028)<sup>53</sup>

### 4.1 Purpose

The aim is to inspire the international community to generate a refreshed political commitment supporting family farmers and crafting pro-family farming policies. Family farmers range from smallholder to medium-scale farmers, and include peasants, indigenous peoples, traditional communities, fisher folks, mountain farmers, pastoralists and many other groups representing every region of the world.<sup>54</sup>

### 4.2 Processes Used for Decade Development

A Bottom-Up Member State-Driven Process (Since 2008): The adoption of the IYFF+10/Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028, is the result of a long process started in 2008 with the campaign for the Declaration of the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF-2014), coordinated by the World Rural Forum and driven mainly by Family Farmers organisations.<sup>55</sup> These organisations successfully lobbied governments at their respective national levels to advance family farming policies. At the international level, a group of 13 Member States has formed which takes the lead in negotiating and pushing the Decade agenda forward.

International Year for Family Farming (2014): The Decade expands upon the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in 2014 which, according to the UN GA “raised the profile of the role of family farming, pastoralism, and smallholder farming in contributing to the achievement of food security and improved nutrition.”<sup>56</sup> The family farming Decade is based in large parts on the international year for family farming in 2014 which serves as a template/blueprint for some of the governance mechanisms and programmes envisioned for the Decade. As a case in point, the legacy document of the IYFF will serve as a guiding tool on which to build the Decade design.<sup>57</sup> Also, the Steering Committee of Member States and family farmers organisations established during the international year to help build the programme of work are likely to be activated again. At the same time, the perspective and ambition of the Decade will be less focused on sheer awareness raising and advocacy (as the IYFF was) and more geared towards designing programmes and advancing their implementation over the course of the ten-year period.

UN General Assembly Resolution (Dec 2017): On 20 December 2017, the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly approved the Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028).<sup>58</sup> The resolution encourages all States to develop, improve and implement public policies and share their experiences and best practices with others." It also establishes that FAO and the

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<sup>53</sup> <http://www.fao.org/family-farming/en/>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.fao.org/family-farming/background/en/> as well as for the estimates/figures: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/019/i3729e/i3729e.pdf>

<sup>55</sup>

<http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net/en/news/2017/12/the-Decade-of-family-farming-2019-2028-officially-adopted-by-the-united-nations-general-assembly>

<sup>56</sup> <https://foodtank.com/news/2018/01/un-Decade-family-farming-food/>

<sup>57</sup> Key informant interview with FAO experts on Family Farming Decade, 18 July 2018.

<sup>58</sup> <http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/239>

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) will be responsible for implementing the Decade.

Building on Existing Structures: FAO will heavily build on its current organisational work streams, aiming at creating a maximum of synergies between the Decade and the existing work of the organisation. Existing structures will also be use when it comes to facilitating Member States' reporting on progress. Existing family farming knowledge hubs with 135 governmental focal points as well as existing National Committees on family farming will be leveraged for this.

#### **4.3 Action Areas**

Not applicable. With the programme of work for the Decade currently being built in a collaborative effort, action areas have not formally been adopted yet.

#### **4.4 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)**

Not applicable. The Decade has not yet been launched, expected outcomes have not yet been defined.

#### **4.5 Success Factors**

Capitalising on Linkages with Pressing Global Issues: The family farming Decade is extremely clear about how it links back to other global issues including global food security, poverty eradication, ending hunger, conserving biodiversity, achieving environmental sustainability, and helping to address migration. These linkages are crucial for generating buy-in and forging alliances with actors in those policy areas.

Balancing Inclusiveness and Effectiveness: While a Decade offers opportunities for bringing together stakeholders beyond the "usual suspects", one of the challenges lies in promoting this openness and integrative character while, at the same time, staying lean, nimble, and effective in one's actions.<sup>59</sup>

Group of Committed Partners: The Decade of Family Farming owes large parts of its momentum to a group of family farming organisations and Member States that commit significant resources and efforts to advance the cause.

Funding: The mandate from the UNGA resolution foresees that the Decade be implemented within existing resources. Especially for its launch and related initial activities, FAO and IFAD will be able to cover the costs. Depending on the level of ambition of Member States, over the course of the Decade resources may have to be redirected towards the Decade and "voluntary contributions" from philanthropic organisations, foundations and the private sector may have to be sought.

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<sup>59</sup> Key informant interview with FAO experts on Family Farming Decade, 18 July 2018.

#### **4.6 Barriers of Success**

Not applicable.

#### **4.7 Partnerships: Benefits and Limitations**

Limitation: No Joint Secretariat: FAO and IFAD do not plan to establish a separate, joint Secretariat, but instead foresee to work out of their respective units.



## 5. Every Woman, Every Child (EWEC, since 2010)

### 5.1 Purpose of Initiative

"Launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Summit in September 2010, Every Woman Every Child is an unprecedented global movement that mobilises and intensifies international and national action by governments, multilaterals, the private sector and civil society to address the major health challenges facing women, children and adolescents around the world."<sup>60</sup> Its purpose was to instill new momentum to those areas of the MDG agenda that at the time were lagging behind most. The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health (2016-2030) builds on the EWEC movement, yet with a strong emphasis on achieving the SDGs.

### 5.2 Processes Used for Decade Development

Small group of resourceful and committed stakeholders: EWEC started its movement building process with representatives of resourceful and committed stakeholders sitting at a table in New York. The common denominator of this group was their willingness to advance equity. Together they brought to the table deep pockets, political clout and a common cause and with that in the nine months leading up to the first High Level Political Forum, they jointly built a road map for EWEC.

A Recipe for Success and its Ingredients: This road map included a i) written strategy, ii) an action plan, iii) a resource base (to support the work of a Secretariat) and iv) a broad consultation/movement building process, including a multi-track process involving everything from technical experts, to heads of agencies, up to heads of government, v) a high-level, inter-ministerial conference that generated consensus on policy direction and yielded important outcome documents.

In addition to the political clout (Ban Ki-Moon himself at the time presented the initiative to heads of governments at a global retreat), the human face of the campaign (i.e. women, youth, children), EWEC was able to build on a scientific foundation, including the technical work done by a series of Lancet papers that inter alia provided costing estimates for different dimensions of the EWEC agenda. Thanks to these, EWEC's action plan featured a price tag which turned out to be a very useful tool in mobilising financial contributions.

### 5.3 Action Areas

The Global Strategy<sup>61</sup> is built around nine (9) pillars:

1. Country-leadership: build capacity.
2. Finance for health: mobilise resources.

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<sup>60</sup> <http://www.everywomaneverychild.org/about/#sect1>

<sup>61</sup> Global Strategy: <http://globalstrategy.everywomaneverychild.org/>

3. Health system resilience: good care; universal health coverage.
4. Individual potential: support people as agents of change.
5. Community engagement: inclusive participation; enabling laws.
6. Multisector action: cross-sector collaboration.
7. Humanitarian and fragile settings: assess risks, gender needs; address gaps in transition to Sustainable Development.
8. Research and innovation: link evidence to policy; test and scale innovation.
9. Accountability: harmonise monitoring, independent review.

#### 5.4 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)

Expected outcomes: Under the three-pronged approach of survive-thrive-transform, the following expected outcomes were defined:

1. Survive:
  - a. Every woman can enjoy a wanted and healthy pregnancy and childbirth (reduce maternal mortality).
  - b. Every child can survive beyond their 5th birthday (reduce newborn mortality).
  - c. End HIV, Tuberculosis, Malaria.
2. Thrive:
  - a. Every Women, Child and Adolescent can reach their full potential; realises their right to mental and physical health and well-being; and has social and economic opportunities.
  - b. End malnutrition.
3. Transform:
  - a. Eradicate poverty.
  - b. Primary and secondary education for all children.
  - c. Water and sanitation.
  - d. End discrimination against women.

Actual Outcomes: The 2018 Global Strategy Monitoring Report reveals sobering results.<sup>62</sup>

At a global level, five (5) out of five (5) Survive targets are off track.

The maternal mortality target of <70 per 100,000 live births, for instance, is missed at a global level (216 per 100,000 live births), not least due to catastrophic results in Sub-Sahara Africa (555 mothers per 100,000 live births do not survive birth-giving). Regional results differ significantly with Sub-Sahara Africa, Oceania, Central and South America accounting for most of the missed targets. Thrive and Transform targets are subject to similar regional differences. They in a majority of cases remain unmet, too.<sup>63</sup>

#### 5.5 Success Factors

EWEC's Mobilising Power – The Power of Numbers: Already EWEC's early consultations involved more than 1,000 people, testifying to the breadth of its constituencies from UN agencies, to civil society, youth groups, parliaments and the private sector, to name a few.

<sup>62</sup> EWEC Global Strategy Monitoring Report 2018:

<http://www.everywomaneverychild.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/EWECGSMonitoringReport2018.pdf>; see dashboards p.45-47.

<sup>63</sup> Idem.

Another strong show of the level of legitimacy the EWEC movement is able to mobilise were the 7,000 individuals, organisations and government representatives that were involved in its consultation process at the World Health Assembly.<sup>64</sup> The 60 billion USD raised in commitments by over 400 stakeholders speak for themselves.

EWEC's Popularity: EWEC's popularity relates to the urgency of its message since it precisely addressed those dimensions of the MDG agenda that were lagging behind most at the time (2010) while at the same time offering a strong cause, a common denominator people can easily rally behind, leveraging the human faces of children, women and youth.

## **5.6 Barriers of Success**

### Daunting Scope of Task

The Global Strategy in 2015 alone requires – enormous – USD 33.3 billion. Resource mobilisation for a task of these dimensions constitutes a major challenge.

## **5.7 Partnerships: Benefits and Limitations**

Breadth of Constituencies: As mentioned before under success factors, a strength of the movement lies in the fact that it mobilises a broad spectrum of partners and constituencies, including from UN agencies, civil society, youth groups, parliaments, the private sector and others.

Missing Governance Structure: The four main stakeholders of EWEC include the UN (H6), the Global Financing Facility, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and the Secretary General's office. All four have their own separate governance structures: no joint, overarching governance structure in form of a board exists. While this approach allowed for a good amount of flexibility for a number of years, it also leaves substantial questions unanswered, as for example, under whose oversight the movement runs or who mobilises funds. Even a loose agreement on co-operating structures could remedy this situation.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on Partnerships for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, 9 July 2018.

<sup>65</sup> Key informant interview with WHO expert on Partnerships for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, 9 July 2018.

## 6. Decade on Water for Sustainable Development (2018-2028)

### 6.1 Purpose

In order to accelerate efforts towards meeting water-related challenges, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2018-2028 as the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”. The Decade builds on the achievements of the previous “Water for Life” Decade, 2005-2015. It will focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources, the implementation of related programmes and projects, as well as on the furtherance of partnership at all levels in order to help achieve internationally agreed water-related goals, including those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>66</sup>

### 6.2 Processes Used for Decade Development

UN GA Resolution (Dec 2016): On 21 December 2016, in its resolution 71/222 the General Assembly proclaimed the period from 2018 to 2028 the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, to further improve cooperation, partnership and capacity development in response to the ambitious 2030 Agenda.<sup>67</sup> The Secretary-General (SG), with the support of UN-Water, is invited to within existing resources plan and organise the activities of the Decade at the global, regional and country levels. UN DESA carries out this mandate on behalf of the SG.

Interagency Coordination Mechanism UN Water (since 2003)<sup>68</sup>: UN-Water is the United Nations inter-agency mechanism for all freshwater and sanitation-related matters. Building on a long history of coordination in the United Nations System, UN-Water was formalised in 2003 by the United Nations High-Level Committee on Programmes. It provides the platform to address the cross-cutting nature of water and maximise system-wide coordinated action and coherence. It has steadily built up membership and recognition since its foundation and as of 2014 includes 31 Members from within the United Nations and 37 Partners, including representatives from civil society and non-governmental organisations.

Decade Planning Task Force (February 2017–March 2018): To support the Secretary-General in planning and organising the Decade from February 2017 until its launch in March 2018, UN Water established a Decade Planning Task Force. The Task Force was inter alia tasked with administering a Decade Action Plan Logframe as a coordination and implementation tool and preparing a draft action plan.

Decade Implementation Task Force (from March 2018 onwards): With the Decade launch, a Task Force on Water Action Decade Implementation took over from the Planning Task Force to support country efforts to realise the aspirations expressed in the UNGA Resolution.

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.unwater.org/new-Decade-water/>

<sup>67</sup> The UN SG's Plan: Water Action Decade:

[http://www.wateractionDecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan\\_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf](http://www.wateractionDecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-Action-Decade-web.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> UN Water, Report on the achievements during the international Decade for action Water for Life 2005-2015.

### 6.3 Action Areas

The SG's Water Decade Plan features four (4) workstreams:

1. Facilitating access to knowledge and the exchange of good practices
2. Improving knowledge generation and dissemination, including new information relevant to water-related SDGs
3. Pursuing advocacy, networking and promoting partnerships and action
4. Strengthening communication actions for implementation of the water-related Goals

Per individual work stream, there are between 7-35 activities that the 68 implementing partners can engage in.

### 6.4 Outcomes (Expected and Actual)

Addendum: Previous Water Decade's Achievements (2005-15): "By many accounts the Decade has been successful in meeting its goals: during this time, the drinking water-related MDG target was declared met, the United Nations General Assembly declared access to water and sanitation to be a human right, an International Year in 2013 was dedicated to water cooperation, and in July 2014, the United Nations General Assembly's Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals proposed a stand-alone water goal for the Post-2015 Development Agenda."<sup>69</sup>

Expected Outcomes: The expected outcomes of the new Decade are identical to the eight (8) water goals/outcomes defined under SDG 6. "They cover the entire water cycle including: provision of drinking water (target 6.1) and sanitation and hygiene services (6.2), treatment and reuse of wastewater and ambient water quality (6.3), water-use efficiency and scarcity (6.4), IWRM including through transboundary cooperation (6.5), protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems (6.6), international cooperation and capacity-building (6.a) and participation in water and sanitation management (6.b)."<sup>70</sup>

Actual Outcomes: With most goals being very aspirational and the SDG agenda being in effect for three years, most outcomes are currently not being achieved yet at a global level.<sup>71</sup>

### 6.5 Success Factors

Water Decade Centers of Competence in Spain and Germany (2005-15): Under the previous Water Decade, two centers of competence funded by Spain and Germany respectively, supported the implementation of the Decade's goals. The one in Spain focused on awareness raising, organising conferences and producing water-related information materials. The other one in Germany prioritised capacity-building, offering workshops and building implementation skills with Member States.

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<sup>69</sup> UN Water, Report on the achievements during the international Decade for action Water for Life 2005-2015.

<sup>70</sup> High-Level Political Forum, SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation, see: [www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2018/07/SDG6\\_SR2018\\_web\\_4.pdf](http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2018/07/SDG6_SR2018_web_4.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> Idem. See p.21-22.

World Water and World Toilet Days: These two international days constitute another success factor of the previous water Decade as they allowed every year for water-related activities, raising the profile and reaching millions of people every year.

## 6.6 Barriers of Success

Decade Fatigue: Both inside the UN WASH community and among Member States, the latest Water Decade is seen by many as a political manoeuvre by one Member State (Tajikistan) to raise its profile in the region and globally. Experts question the value of the newest Water Decade alongside the stand-alone water goals of the 2030 agenda, acknowledging that "the Decade does not harm", but that its "value-added remains limited".<sup>72</sup>

Challenge to Expand Multi-Sector Collaboration: Reaching other water-intensive sectors of society, including agriculture, energy or health, remains a struggle for the previous and for the current Water Decade alike. This constitutes an opportunity missed, since it is precisely "the agricultural sector [that] accounts for nearly 70 per cent of global freshwater withdrawals. Saving just a fraction of this would significantly alleviate water stress in other sectors."<sup>73</sup>

## 6.7 Partnerships: Benefits and Limitations

One Strong Member State Champion: The Water Decade further capitalises on one country champion (Tajikistan) who takes the lead and pushes for ambitious changes at the Member State level. While Tajikistan's reasons for this activism can be questioned, its ethos and commitment as a small Central Asian nation to initiate this level of change remain unparalleled.

Growing Complexity and Formalism: Given the size and multi-sectoral nature of the water topic, there is a plethora of partners, activities and work streams. UN Water alone includes 31 Members from within the United Nations and 37 Partners, including representatives from civil society and non-governmental organisations.

While growth is a positive development in terms of achieving a broader reach, visibility and permeation of the water topic, it also comes with growing complexity, formalism and losses of effectiveness in the UN Water working culture.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Key informant interview with UN Water expert on the Water Decade, 20 July 2018.

<sup>73</sup> High-Level Political Forum, SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation, see: [www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2018/07/SDG6\\_SR2018\\_web\\_4.pdf](http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2018/07/SDG6_SR2018_web_4.pdf)

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