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FAITH ACTION ON UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Faith Action on the UN Sustainable Development Goals: **CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION**

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

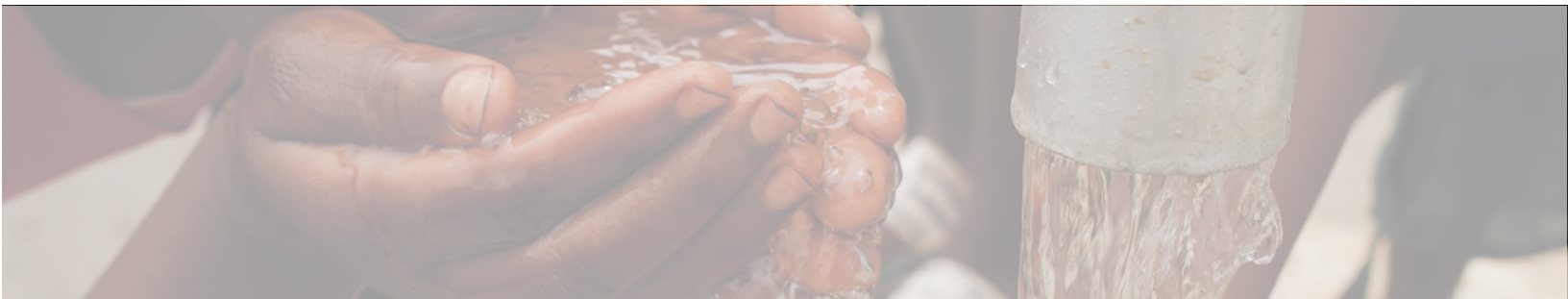


This supplement is the first in a series of periodic reports that will highlight new and ongoing activities. This issue specifically showcases a sampling of inspiring efforts to collect, conserve, and create access to clean water. The phrase, “water is life,” is a universal teaching appearing throughout sacred texts and Indigenous expressions, yet we know that two-thirds of the world’s population lives today in areas that experience water scarcity for at least one month per year. Climatic and non-climatic factors drive water insecurity where, since the 1970s, 44% of disaster events are flood-related. Extreme weather events are more severe due to human-induced climate change. In the year 2022 alone, earth and its variegated ecosystems experienced record-breaking extremes with flooding in some regions and simultaneous drought in others.

These events, bred by intense rainfall, accelerated glacial melt, and prolonged heat waves, underline delicate yet critical relationships with water in our human and non-human communities. While 6.4 billion people have basic water supply, fewer than 5.2 billion access a safely managed system, resulting in hundreds of deaths everyday due to preventable water and sanitation-related diseases. Community resilience development requires Indigenous knowledge, local knowledge and technical knowledge and the cooperation and coordination of actions among multiple actors at all levels. Around the world, faith-based organizations are actively providing life-saving education and on-the-ground support to implement WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) practices. At the same time, we witness how religious communities are working to protect oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, streams, and glaciers. As we continue to honor and protect water as a priceless, sacred element on which our lives depend, let us celebrate the good work of projects shared here.



LOCATIONS OF PROJECTS ADDRESSING SDG 6 INCLUDED IN DATABASE



Do you have a project to share with us?
Visit <https://fore.yale.edu/FaithActionSDG>

Highlighted Projects for SDG 6

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MOSQUES

EcoMasjid | Indonesia | Islam

Created by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) and Indonesian Mosque Council (DMI), EcoMasjid promotes Islamic teachings on the duty of individuals to protect local ecosystems through environmentally sustainable mosques. Mosques in this network harvest rainwater, use water-efficient faucets for wudhu (ablutions), conserve water with infiltration wells and strategic landscaping, and/or provide clean drinking water to rural communities. Since its founding in 2017, there are now 206 registered EcoMasjid communities including Istiqlal Mosque, the national mosque of Indonesia.



WATERSPIRIT

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace | USA | Interreligious

Provides spiritually-informed action on environmental issues with a focus on the sacred and critical role of water. This center has successfully advocated for policies that increase equitable access to clean water, educates about stormwater management and its relationship with green infrastructure, hosts waste cleanups along coastal shorelines, and has mobilized more than 21,000 participants in its programs and activities across 6 countries within the last year. In the words of Waterspirit's founder, Sister Suzanne Golas, CJSP: "We cannot have true peace without right relations with the land and the water."

WATERSCHOOL & WORLD TOILET COLLEGE

Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) | India | Interreligious

Through its programs, GIWA provides the inspiration, infrastructure, and education needed for WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) resources throughout India. These activities include clean water pilgrimages, sanitation workshops for teachers, and hygiene education campaigns for community members. In 2013, only 38.7% of rural India had toilet facilities. Today, sanitation coverage across rural India stands at 93%, with over 80 million toilets constructed and thousands of schools committed to ongoing water sanitation and conservation instruction.



PANCH MAHABHUTAH SHANTI (ECO-VATIKA) & PANCH PANCH MAHABHUTAH SHANTI YATRA (ECO-DEVALYA)

Aham Brahmasmi | India | Hinduism

Through its programs, Aham Brahmasmi promotes teachings for daily worship of Panch Mahabhutas (i.e., Earth, Water, Sky, Air, and Fire) through ecosystem restoration and the cultivation of ecologically-conscious sacred sites. They engage the broader public through tree plantings in designated green spaces ("eco-vatika") and provide environmental trainings and resources for priests, management committees, and worshippers at Hindu temples ("eco-devalya"). These efforts are increasing awareness about the interconnections of water and soil pollution with waste management, climate change, and local ecosystem rehabilitation. Participants have committed to plant 4.5 lakhs (450,000) trees every year in every district of India by 2031.

CLEAN WATER ACCESS

Friendly Water for the World | Zambia, Kenya, India | Christianity

Community-led programs promote a holistic approach including no-fire, hand-pressed bricks to construct composting toilets and rainwater catchment tanks; slow-sand and membrane water filters to remove 99% of the pathogens from the water; and gray water systems to support water conservation and permaculture efforts. In 2022, more than 11,000 participants have helped create over 20 rainwater catchment tanks and to store close to 2 million liters of water.



SAFE WATER FUNDS

Muslim Hands | Pakistan, Somalia, Bangladesh | Islam

Teaches people how to use water sources safely, maintain new wells, and keep up good health and hygiene practices. In its 20 year history, Muslim Hands has constructed more than 23,000 tube wells and provided more than 2.6 million people with safe water, improved agriculture, and sustainable water testing and filtration resources. In 2022, Muslim Hands provided on-the-ground support during floods in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Faith Action on SDG 6 by impact



affect urban areas



affect farmlands



affect freshwaters



affect grasslands, shrublands, & savannahs



affect community resilience



affect conservation



affect law, policy, & government



affect finance & economics



affects energy

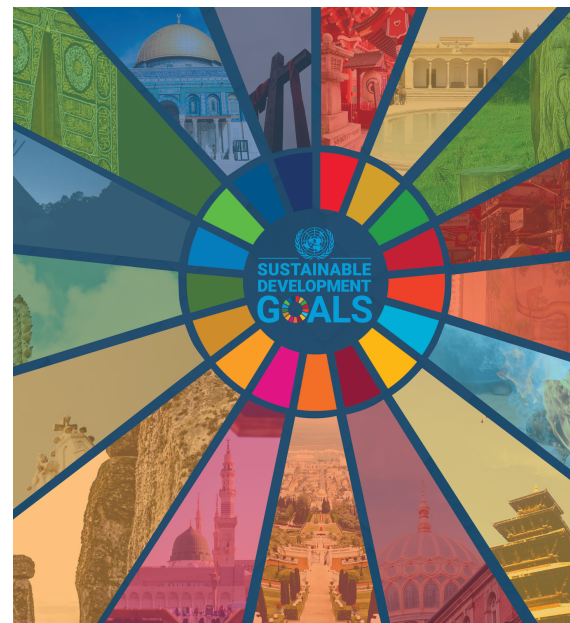
*based on projects included in the database as of December 2022

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Faith Action on the UN Sustainable Development Goals is an [interactive online database](#) showcasing environmental efforts led by religious communities worldwide. Documenting these activities in a public way facilitates inspiration and avenues for collaboration. [All projects can be explored](#) by religious tradition, geographical region, ecosystem, areas of impact, and/or environmentally-centered SDGs. This database was launched in September 2021 and is actively curated by the Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology, the United Religions Initiative, and the Parliament of the World's Religions. It was built in partnership with UNEP's Faith for Earth Initiative in response to a [September 2020 report](#) celebrating the five year anniversary of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which were launched in 2015.

NEXT STEPS

- **EXPLORE** [all examples](#) of Clean Water & Sanitation in the Faith Action database
- **LEARN** more about Sustainable Development Goal 6 at [unwater.org](#)
- **CONNECT** every year on [World Water Day](#), and at the [UN Water Conference](#) in March 2023
- **STRENGTHEN** commitments to faith action on water with free online courses:
 - Honor examples of Indigenous kinship with and protection of waterways worldwide: [Indigenous Religions and Ecology](#)
 - Celebrate efforts to restore the Jordan River and encourage water-centered interfaith dialogue: [Western Religions and Ecology](#)
 - Explore embodied relationships with water and sacred rivers in India: [South Asian Religions and Ecology](#)
- **ENGAGE** global water issues through the lens of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) and the United Nations' SDG framework: [Faith and Water](#)



Submit your project to the database here: <https://fore.yale.edu/FaithActionSDG>

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UNEP Faith for Earth Initiative, Parliament of the World's Religions, United Religions Initiative, and Bhumi Global. "Faith Action on the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Progress and Outlook." United Nations Environment Programme, September 2020.

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