



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

NEW YORK
22-24
MARCH
2023



WASH Cluster
Water Sanitation Hygiene



SANITATION
AND WATER
FOR ALL

22 March 2023 8-10AM EST
UNICEF New York, Danny Kaye

Joined-up Action for Humanitarian and Development Collective Outcomes to Accelerate SDG 6

Learn more about our speakers



Melissa Opryszko, WASH Team Lead, USAID/BHA



Melissa Opryszko is the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Team Lead in the US Agency for International Development's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. In her twelve years at USAID, she has responded to acute and slow onset disasters in more than twenty countries, including complex emergencies in Ukraine and Syria, health emergencies such as Ebola and COVID-19, as well as numerous floods and droughts. Melissa has over twenty years' experience in environmental public health both internationally and domestically including research focused on health impacts of household access to potable water supplies and support for improved hygiene in rural Afghanistan and Ghana. She holds a PhD and MPH from the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health and a BSc in Biology from McGill University.

Manuel Fontaine, Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF



Manuel Fontaine took up his position as UNICEF Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes in early January 2017. Mr. Fontaine has more than 25 years of experience with UNICEF, combining managerial and technical leadership in both development and emergency contexts. Prior to his current position, Mr. Fontaine served as UNICEF Regional Director of the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) where he was responsible for overseeing the organization's programmes in 24 countries. From August 2011 to August 2013, he worked as UNICEF Deputy Regional Director, also in WCARO. Previously, he held positions as UNICEF Representative to Algeria, Senior Adviser Child Protection in New York Headquarters, Deputy Representative to Afghanistan, Somalia and Albania, and Head of Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before joining UNICEF, Mr. Fontaine worked for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Fontaine is a national of France. He holds a DEA (post-graduate diploma) in International Public Law and International Organizations from the University of Paris I (Pantheon-Sorbonne). He has been instrumental in achieving transformative WASH outcomes across humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding. This includes strengthening capacity in technical areas specific to water, sanitation and hygiene service delivery and coordination, including competence in long-term planning and budgeting, improved cost recovery, revenue generation and financial sustainability.

Learn more about our speakers



Ghulam M. Isaczai, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq



Mr. Isaczai took up his role in Iraq as the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in October 2022, after serving as UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan. Prior to that, he served as the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the UN in New York.

Mr. Isaczai brings to the job over 25 years of work experience in the UN system covering complex humanitarian, development, recovery, and peace-building issues in different parts of the world, including serving as UN Resident Coordinator to the Republic of Azerbaijan (2016) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (2013). He also served as the UNDP and UNFPA Resident Representative in both countries. Mr. Isaczai served in other senior leadership and management positions within the UN system, including as Director of Program at the United Nations Volunteers in Bonn, Germany; UNDP Senior Advisor and Country Director a.i in Tajikistan, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative and Head of Program in Nepal, and Assistant Resident Representative in Yemen. He also served in Afghanistan, and Syria with the UN system. Before joining the UN system, Mr. Isaczai held positions with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan and Save the Children-US in Peshawar, Pakistan, and worked with the private sector in the United States. Mr. Isaczai holds an M.A. in Public International Law from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, a BSc in Business Administration from Midland University, a Diploma in Human Development from Jones International University, and courses on negotiations and conflict resolution from Harvard University. He is fluent in Pashto, Dari/Farsi, and English and has a working knowledge of Arabic.

Hon. Alice Muthoni Wahome, Cabinet Secretary for Water, Sanitation and Irrigation in Kenya



Hon. Alice Muthoni Wahome, is the Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation. Having just secured her 3rd term in the 2022 general elections as elected Member of The National Assembly for Kandara Constituency under the UDA party. She is a seasoned parliamentarian whose previous work in her constituency created impact and drove local growth. As part of her work in Kandara, Alice started several projects that are aimed at capacity building, women empowerment as well as self help groups focused on community mobilization for wealth creation. Hon Alice Wahome picked water, education & health as key programs in her work. In her first 3 years of parliamentary constituency work, Alice facilitated and ensured completion of stalled 7 health center projects thus opening to the public. In her enthusiasm to provide water to the community, through the support of NGCDF and the Muranga South Water Company, Alice initiated several projects including Kariti, Machegecha, Kagunduini, Gaichanjiru - Nguruweini, Muruka - Nguthuru, Kandara - Ngararia, Kariua - Muthuru, Nguruweini - Gakoigo, Kirigithu - Kaguthi, Kaguthu and Kieni -Boboti Gathogu irrigation projects, and numerous piping and water connections. In matters Education, Alice Muthoni Golden Hearts Education Foundation became her platform for extra support for bursaries and other community projects such as feeding programs to very needy families. The Education foundation is currently supporting 45 Secondary School children. On supporting women, Alice established Kandara Women Initiative Network (KAWIN) bringing together 100 women groups with over 5000 members for awareness creation, community mobilisation skills, table banking and general resource mobilisation. Read full bio [here](#).

Julienne Tiendrébogo, Directrice Générale de l'Assainissement des Eaux Usées et Excréta, au Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement in Burkina Faso



Julienne Tiendrébogo is the "Directrice Générale de l'Assainissement des Eaux Usées et Excréta, au Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement" in Burkina Faso. She has 15 years of experience in the implementation, coordination and monitoring of water, sanitation and hygiene projects and programs. In her current position, her main mission is to coordinate the implementation and monitoring of national policies and strategies in the area of wastewater and excreta sanitation in relation to the structures of the Ministry, other ministries, local authorities, civil society organizations, technical and financial partners and other actors. She is also the focal point of "Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)" in Burkina Faso. She is a member of the Order of Civil Engineers of Burkina Faso and is responsible for the Sanitation Budget Program. She holds a design engineering degree in hydrogeology and a Master II in sanitary and environmental engineering.

Learn more about our speakers



Helena Fraser, Director, Policy and Programming Branch, DCO



Helena Fraser joined Development Coordination Office (DCO) on 1 September 2021 after having served as UN Resident Coordinator in Uzbekistan from July 2017 to August 2021. She was concurrently UNDP Resident Representative in Uzbekistan until December 2018. Prior to this appointment, Ms. Fraser served for twenty years with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), including two assignments in UN peacekeeping operations (Kosovo and Timor-Leste). Most recently, Helena headed OCHA's Regional Office for the Syria Crisis in Amman (2014-2017). In this role, she supported coordination of the humanitarian response inside Syria across five different response hubs, as well as overseeing inter-agency needs assessment, humanitarian access analysis and reporting. Prior to this, Helena established and led OCHA's Partnerships & Resource Mobilization Branch in Geneva, serving simultaneously as Chief, Private Sector Section, following a four-year stint as Chief of OCHA's Donor Relations Section. Helena has also served twice at UN Headquarters in New York. She began her UN career in 1997 as a Field Adviser with OCHA in Georgia. Helena is from the United Kingdom and holds a Master's degree in International Relations from the University of Oxford and a Bachelor's degree in History and Russian Language and Literature, also from Oxford. She speaks English, French and Russian.

Ramesh Rajasingham, Director, Coordination Division, OCHA



Ramesh Rajasingham was appointed Head and Representative of OCHA in Geneva and Director of the Coordination Division in September 2018. Mr. Rajasingham's UN career spans more than 25 years. He served in senior positions with OCHA including Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, and Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator. Mr. Rajasingham has carried out assignments with OCHA and UNICEF at Headquarters and in crisis settings. He also served as Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis. Prior to that, he held senior appointments including Director of the secretariat of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises, and OCHA's Head of Office in the occupied Palestinian territory. Mr. Rajasingham's other assignments were in Afghanistan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Iran, Montenegro and Sudan. Mr. Rajasingham, a Sri Lankan national, has an MA in Economics and is a trained Economist. He speaks English and French.

Nikos Papamanolis, Policy Officer for the WASH and Shelter and Settlements Policy Files of the Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) at the European Commission



Nikos Papamanolis joined the Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) at the European Commission as Policy Officer in January 2019. In this role, he is responsible for DG ECHO's operational activities in the area of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), and Shelter & Settlements, contributing to strengthening relations with strategic NGOs, relevant partners and donors in his respective areas, and ensuring that DG ECHO's policy priorities in these sectors are well reflected in the programmes funded by the organisation. Prior to this role, he served for five years as Head of the Regional Asylum Office at the Reception and Identification Centre in Chios, Greece, during the peak of the refugee crisis in Europe, leading the Joint Operation Plan in asylum procedures with the European Asylum Support Office and the EU Member States.

Learn more about our speakers



Maura Barry, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, and Global Water Coordinator, USAID



Maura Barry serves as the Senior Deputy Assistant to the Administrator in USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security and as interim USAID Global Water Coordinator. In this role, she oversees the implementation of the Agency's responsibilities under the U.S. Global Water Strategy. Ms. Barry also oversees the bureau's strategy, program, budget and administrative functions, which support implementation of both the Water for the World and Feed the Future initiatives. Prior to joining RFS, she served as the Deputy of the Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance in USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance. Before returning to Washington, she served for a year as the Acting Deputy Chief of Mission to the U.S. Embassy in Jamaica. Ms. Barry has been working in international development for over 30 years. As a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, she has held various leadership positions throughout USAID. She served as USAID Mission Director to Jamaica responsible for the overall direction of programs that cut across a range of sectors, including citizen security, environment and health. Other assignments include serving in the Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) in Bangkok overseeing a diverse portfolio aimed at narrowing the development gap in Southeast Asia, including programs in security, disaster management, human rights, trade, food security and local capacity development. In addition, Ms. Barry served in Afghanistan as the Deputy Office Director for USAID's Office of Democracy and Governance, and as USAID East Africa's Office Director for Somalia. In addition to her years with USAID, Ms. Barry worked for the United Nations Development Program and with CARE International. She holds an MPA in Public and Non-profit Management from New York University and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya.



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