



This event brought together corporates, investors and SMEs to demonstrate the leading role the private sector can play in filling the funding gaps for solutions in the water sector. It highlighted the rich pipeline of innovations and entrepreneurs tackling the issues of water poverty, water pollution and water scarcity.

OPENING & WELCOMING



Satya Tripathi
Trustee at Water Unite,
Secretary-General of GASP

- Swift development of infrastructure has occurred at the expense of ecological systems, posing a challenge as we expand our infrastructure.
- As a company, fostering responsibility entails becoming a conscientious corporate citizen—exploring ways to reuse, recycle, and minimise waste while embracing stewardship principles.
- Recognizing that small shifts in behaviour can yield significant positive outcomes underscores the power of incremental changes in fostering sustainability.
- The ability to manage effectively is contingent on measurement; hence, emphasising the importance of data is crucial in navigating the complexities of corporate responsibility and ecological impact.

KEYNOTE SPEECH



Aparna Shrivastava
Deputy Chief Climate Officer at
U.S. International Development
Finance Corporation

- The intricate connection between water and climate necessitates a holistic approach in discussions about either; one cannot be addressed without considering the other.
- Traditionally, the responsibility for water provisions has rested with the public sector. However, recognizing the demand for more innovative models, fostering public-private partnerships becomes crucial to effectively navigate this space.
- The DFC is enthusiastic for collaborations with partners such as Water Unite and various other actors actively exploring innovative approaches and financial strategies within the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector.
- The DFC is actively seeking innovative partners capable of working alongside their investment officers. These partners are expected to bring unconventional tools to the table, thereby enhancing the scalability and impact of interventions in the water sector.

PANEL SESSION - From CSR to Impact Investing



Fabrice Beaulieu
Chief Marketing and
Sustainability Officer at Reckitt
Benckiser Group



Cyrille Antignac
Portfolio Director at Water
Unite Impact and Partner at
Wellers Impact



Charlotte Wright
Director of CSR &
Wellness at Elior UK

- Sustainability is fundamental to business, extending beyond mere risk management to serve as a catalyst for value creation.
- In the global South, the focus is on enhancing water access through the avenues of social entrepreneurship and innovative finance.
- Embracing concepts such as social entrepreneurship and innovative finance, the circular economy model is highlighted as particularly impactful. This model emphasises the notion that a dollar can have multiple lives, gaining significant traction.
- Large corporations are encouraged to leverage their strengths in inspiring sustainable behaviours and serving as responsible stewards of the environment. Their role extends to supporting entrepreneurs and adopting innovative approaches in providing financial backing for sustainability initiatives.
- Technological advancements are playing a pivotal role in tackling water-related challenges. The integration of AI and technology is contributing to a circular economy, with innovations such as plastic substitutes, particularly crucial in addressing gaps in traditional WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) infrastructure, especially amid the rapid urbanisation in the global south.
- Blended finance strategy, combining various funds, offers not only the means for technical assistance but also attracts corporate interest in contributing skills and forming partnerships.
- Shifting from classic Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) approaches to a more holistic version, termed water+, represents a strategic move towards comprehensive water management.
- Leveraging philanthropic funds to support impact investing becomes a transformative strategy. By redirecting a fraction of available philanthropy towards impact investing, we have the potential to magnify its impact, making philanthropy more efficient and transformative. This approach also serves to safeguard private capital, offering a leverage point that accelerates the growth of entrepreneurs within the realm of impact investing.
- Water is connected to everything we do.
- Food production requires the use of water. Water is essential to our operations at Elior. For example, some customers may choose to buy bottled water. We can use these sales to drive positive change. Donating a portion of the proceeds to Water Unite will have low financial impact for us, but we can increase our impact by making strategic investments to Water Unite that promote broader environmental responsibility.
- Increasingly, clients demand tangible proof of our efforts in areas related to climate change mitigation, pollution reduction, waste reduction, and alleviating water stress. Demonstrating our commitment to addressing these concerns is becoming pivotal in client relationships.
- Entrepreneurs possess the innovative ideas and expertise needed to tackle environmental challenges. However, to bring these solutions to scale, they require investment and support. Recognizing the commercial significance of these initiatives, there is a strategic synergy, especially as clients and consumers place a growing emphasis on ESG factors.
- Corporate Social Responsibility serves as a crucial catalyst, capable of initiating and supporting initiatives. Impact investing becomes imperative to elevate these endeavours to a larger scale, multiplying their overall impact.

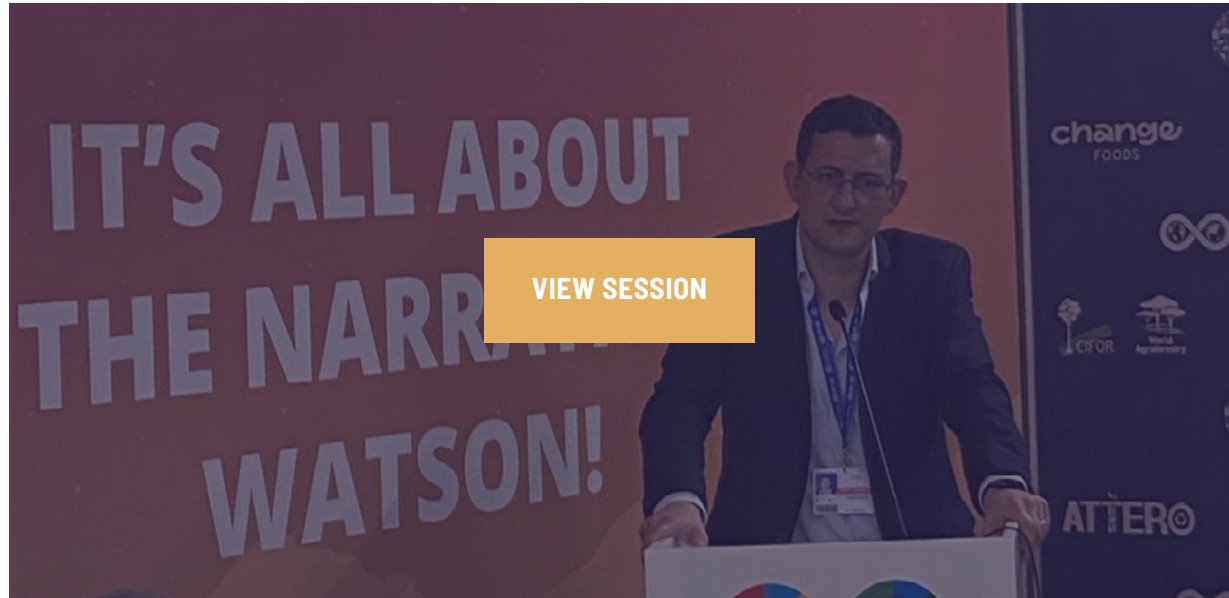
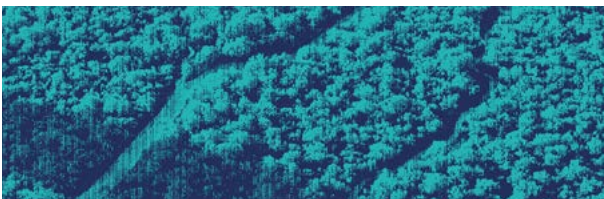


HEARING FROM AN ENTREPRENEUR



Taher Mestiri
 Co-founder and Chairman
 of Seabex

- Individuals lacking access to water often struggle with mismanagement of this resource. Farmers, traditionally relying on end-of-season assessments to gauge water usage effectiveness. However, the complexity of irrigation impacts supply chains and results in significant water consumption.
- Seabex has introduced a highly scalable, innovative solution to aid farmers. This AI-based irrigation system not only addresses water usage concerns but also has far-reaching impacts by sustaining farming practices, benefitting a wide range of farmers. The impact extends to food quality, public health, and children’s education.
- The intricate relationship between water and agriculture underscores the intersection of various interests. Water scarcity intensifies the complexities of irrigation, prompting the need for collaborative efforts to scale accurate decision-making in agriculture.



VIEW SESSION

The full session is available to view on demand via the link above.

NEXT STEPS

Following the success of the initial pilot, Water Unite Impact is now transitioning into its scale-up phase to accelerate and amplify its impact by making a further 10 investments over the next two years. Water Unite is now actively inviting new Limited Partners (LPs) to join the vehicle, please reach out if you’d like to learn more about our work.

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ON DEMAND

NEXT STEPS