

# 2016 SWA Meeting of Ministers of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

15-16 March  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



**SANITATION  
AND WATER  
FOR ALL**

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# The Ministerial Meeting by numbers

198

**partners** representing **50 countries** from every continent, **33** of those represented **at ministerial level**

10

**sessions** covering **3 topics** and organized by region and language

17

**ministerial dialogues**, each one at least one and a half hours in length

25

**marketplace** displays



# Emerging themes

- Partners reaffirmed their commitment to the **four SWA Collaborative Behaviours**, and agreed to address barriers to development effectiveness by: 1) enhancing government leadership of sector planning processes; 2) strengthening and using country systems; 3) using one information and mutual accountability platform; and 4) building sustainable water and sanitation financing strategies.
- Achieving the SDGs will require national systems capable of delivering and sustaining services that leave no one behind. Partners agreed on the importance of establishing strong **Building Blocks** for sector performance: sector policy and strategy; institutional arrangements; sector financing; planning, monitoring, and review; and capacity development.
- Partners recognized the importance of diversifying **funding streams** and exploring **new financing mechanisms**, alongside the need to increase efficiencies in existing sector financing through improved targeting, better cost recovery and increased absorption capacity.
- As a multi-stakeholder partnership that brings diverse constituencies together on an equal footing, SWA was celebrated as an important **mechanism for global mutual accountability** for the water, sanitation and hygiene-related SDG targets. The discussions reinforced the suitability of SWA as a platform to support the means of implementation of the SDGs and contribute to the UN High-level Political Forum's central follow-up and review process.
- Governments and their partners reaffirmed their willingness to **track performance** against key indicators, including those related to the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours and SDG Targets 6.1 and 6.2.
- Partners recognized the importance of **working with other sectors and partnerships to tackle** the broad range of issues that are addressed in the Goals. Partners will collaborate with partnerships and alliances linked to SDG targets where sanitation, water and hygiene make a contribution, including those on health, nutrition and education.

All presentations available on [www.sanitationandwaterforall.org](http://www.sanitationandwaterforall.org)



# 1. The 2016 SWA Meeting of Ministers of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

On 15–16 March 2016, a meeting hosted by the Government of Ethiopia, convened by UNICEF on behalf of the SWA partnership, and chaired by the Hon. Kevin Rudd, brought together 33 ministerial level representatives responsible for water, sanitation and hygiene. High-level representatives of aid agencies, development banks, UN institutions, civil society organizations, and others joined them.

It was the first standalone meeting of ministers charged with water, sanitation and hygiene<sup>1</sup>, and the first SWA high-level meeting held outside the United States of America. More importantly, it marked the first global gathering to discuss the water, sanitation and hygiene targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) following their adoption by UN Member States in September 2015. Preparation for the SDGs was a prevalent topic throughout the Ministerial Meeting as demonstrated by its objectives:

*“This meeting is historic: it is the first global meeting for ministers responsible for sanitation and water in the era of the SDGs. You have the chance to make this meeting a real, defining feature of how we will all achieve our SDG targets.”*

**H.E. Dr. Mulatu Teshome,  
President, Federal  
Democratic Republic  
of Ethiopia**

- Examine the sanitation, water and hygiene components of SDG 6 and other related targets within the SDGs (including the sub-targets, indicators and definitions) and identify what their level of ambition means for the WASH sector.
- Take stock of the sector, share experiences and identify the major bottlenecks to achieving the sanitation, water and hygiene targets, including barriers to development effectiveness (the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours).
- Identify the respective roles and responsibilities of governments, development partners, civil society research and learning institutions and the private sector in achieving the sanitation, water and hygiene-related SDG targets.
- Lay groundwork for clear action plans, strategies and commitments for the water, sanitation and hygiene related targets of the SDGs.
- Develop an understanding of how the sanitation, water and hygiene sector needs to interact and work with other related sectors – nationally and internationally – to ensure the achievement of all the SDGs.
- Identify the key elements of a future SWA mutual accountability mechanism for the water, sanitation and hygiene related targets of the SDGs.

The Ministerial Meeting incorporated extensive intergovernmental discussions, including several ministerial roundtables, and inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogues between SWA partners.

## Preparing for the Ministerial Meeting

In preparation for the Meeting, partners came together at country level for discussions around the extent to which their systems, processes and behaviours are ready for the challenges posed by the SDGs. Based on these discussions, and drawing on available data (e.g. national statistics, analytical tools, Joint Sector Reviews), partners prepared materials outlining the situation in their country in terms of current coverage trends and identified bottlenecks and drivers. During the two-day meeting, ministers drew on these materials to review the changing landscape for sector development and chart a way forward.

<sup>1</sup> SWA has previously convened three Sector Ministers' Meetings in 2010, 2012 and 2014, all held back-to-back with High-level Meetings of Ministers of Finance.







## 2. From MDGs to SDGs: opportunities and challenges

The transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the SDGs was a common topic to all Ministerial Meeting sessions. As stressed in the joint presentation by GLAAS<sup>2</sup> and the JMP<sup>3</sup>, the MDGs proved that huge gains in access to water, sanitation and hygiene are possible, but that the SDG focus on universality and the eradication of poverty and inequalities means that more needs to be done.

The Agenda 2030 brought several new challenges: the need to go beyond the household (e.g. schools, health facilities); hygiene and sustainability of services are now included; elimination of inequalities becomes a key component; ambition to improve service levels, etc. Many of the ministerial discussions focused on countries' readiness to move from an MDG mentality to an SDG approach.

*"We are engaged in a global partnership because the SDGs, by definition, are global. At the same time, unless this global partnership is anchored in the reality on the ground across the various nations represented here, it will simply be a paper exercise."*

**The Hon. Mr. Kevin Rudd, Chair, SWA**



<sup>2</sup> The UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)

<sup>3</sup> WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation





It was acknowledged that the SDG targets no longer envision reaching just “basic” services but demand “safely managed” ones (Targets 6.1 and 6.2).

This builds on the MDG indicator related to the population using improved sanitation facilities, and adds new elements addressing aspects of hygiene, faecal waste and wastewater management.

By adding an extra rung to the ladder for both sanitation and water, the SDGs raise the bar, marking a new beginning for the sector, as part of a wider effort to end poverty in all its forms by 2030.

The ultimate implication is that even countries that achieved the MDGs against a scale that ended in “basic sanitation” will start the SDG period with (often significant) lower access rates.

*“Every country has choices to make between moving people beyond the bottom rung, and helping people who are already on the ladder to move further up.”*

**Mr. Sanjay Wijesekera,**  
Associate Director,  
WASH, UNICEF

MDG/SDG	Service ladder	Progressive realization
SDG 6.2	Safely managed sanitation	Private improved facility where faecal wastes are safely disposed on site or transported and treated off-site; plus a handwashing facility with soap and water
MDG continuity	Basic sanitation	Improved facility which separates excreta from human contact (private)
	Shared sanitation	Improved facility which separates excreta from human contact (shared with other hh)
	Unimproved sanitation	Unimproved facility does not separate excreta from human contact
	No service	Open defecation

“MDG vs. SDG service ladder” from the presentation by Sanjay Wijesekera, UNICEF

# Leaving no one behind

The evidence shared during the GLAAS/JMP session also demonstrated that under the MDGs, measurement of progress through aggregated national statistics obscured those being left behind, and contributed to a failure to identify, plan for and monitor disadvantaged groups.

In contrast, the SDGs set universal targets that make it vital to target the disadvantaged. However, it is clear that we are still struggling to address uneven progress, whether between wealth quintiles, rural and urban, men and women, or other dimensions of disadvantage.

There was a general agreement among participants that, to ensure we reduce rather than perpetuate inequalities, as we endeavour to reach a large number of the population, the sector needs to think unconventionally and identify alternative and innovate solutions that ensure no one is left behind.

*"The MDG failure to identify, plan and monitor efforts for disadvantaged groups meant that richer populations often benefited first, leading to an increase in inequalities."*

**Mr. Bruce Gordon, WASH Coordinator, WHO**

## Ensuring sustainability

Evidence shows that, during the MDG period, resources flowing to maintenance of water, sanitation and hygiene services were inadequate, and today our ability to keep these systems functioning over time remains a huge challenge. As we strive to achieve the SDGs, the importance of sustaining systems will become ever more pronounced, and we will need to work together to better understand, and fund, the sustainability of different types of services. Ensuring climate change is factored into plans and investments, and that the role of water, sanitation and hygiene in increasing resilience is recognized, especially in the context of natural disasters, will also be critical.







## Breaking down silos

Several sessions emphasized that delivering the ambition of the SDGs will require a holistic approach, which also recognizes the centrality of hygiene alongside water and sanitation.

This will also require SWA partners to strengthen their understanding of the relationship between water, sanitation and hygiene and other issues such as education, health and nutrition – both nationally and internationally.

### SWA in the SDG Era

Participants of the 2016 Ministerial Meeting agreed that SWA has a vital role to play in the Agenda 2030 as a platform for:

- **Multi-stakeholder exchange and dialogue**

SWA provides a unique opportunity to bring a diverse range of constituencies together on an equal footing to achieve sanitation, water and hygiene for all.

- **Mutual accountability for sector performance**

SWA's experience in enhancing sector accountability can be extremely valuable for the follow-up and review of the water, sanitation and hygiene-related targets of the SDGs, and in ensuring partners collectively hold themselves accountable for achieving results.

Through a framework that connects the key Building Blocks for sector performance (see page 15) and the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours (see page 12), SWA partners can drive improvement in long-term sector performance by encouraging the development of country systems capable of delivering and sustaining services.

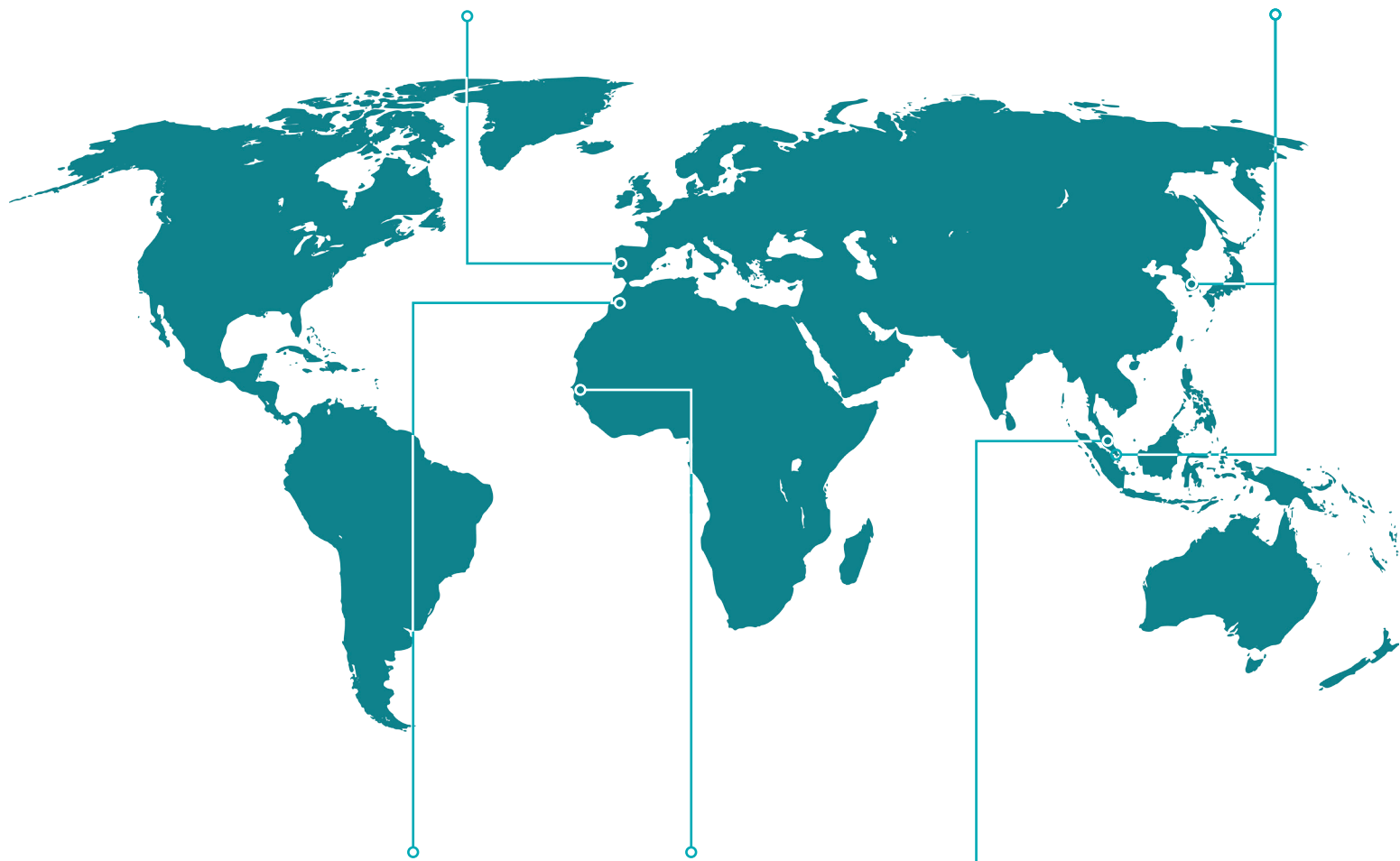
- **Integration with other partnerships and platforms**

By forging links with individuals, organizations and networks working on issues across all areas that are important to the achievement of SWA's vision, the partnership can ensure that issues of water, sanitation and hygiene are integrated into broader efforts to end poverty in all its forms.

# Beyond “business as usual”

In **Portugal**, a financially and politically independent regulatory body has delivered benefits for citizens, the economy, health and the environment.

Case-studies from **Singapore** and **South Korea** testify that dramatic changes in water and sanitation services can be achieved within a generation. Their experience shows that wealth or economic development was not a necessary precondition. Political leadership at all levels was critical, including engagement of leaders in the challenges of implementation and a constant cycle of monitoring, adaptation and course correction.



**Morocco**, which faces challenges in overcoming inequalities in rural areas, is introducing autonomous systems for sanitation in rural areas, enabling households to build their own systems.

In **Senegal**, expansion of services has been carefully planned to take inclusion into account. Social connection and land tenure policies implemented by the government enabled greater access to water, sanitation and hygiene services.

**Malaysia** gradually moved its regulatory leadership from central to federal government, including administration of subsidies. All are regulated by a central agency responsible for both water and sewage. Operators must migrate to the agency's licensing regime to enjoy financial benefits.



### 3. Tools to achieve our common vision

SWA partners recognized that effective institutions and leadership will be critical to delivering, sustaining and influencing uptake of water, sanitation and hygiene services. During the Ministerial Meeting, governments and development partners encouraged each other to go beyond funding and installing infrastructure, and instead implement actions that build and strengthen national systems capable of delivering and sustaining services over time.

Together, participants agreed that the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours and the Building Blocks provide a framework for joint action around these challenges.

#### The four SWA Collaborative Behaviours



In discussing the roles and responsibilities of SWA partners in achieving water, sanitation and hygiene for all, participants focused on the importance of addressing barriers to development effectiveness and adopting ways of working that bring the greatest benefits for long-term sector performance and sustainability.

These ways of working are captured in the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours, which apply to both government and their development partners.

In particular, political motivation to move away from business as usual, through government leadership was seen as the biggest driver of service delivery expansion and improvements. Lessons from countries that achieved transformational change illustrate the importance of active leadership that extends beyond sector ministers to ministries of finance and planning, and incorporates relentless championing of progress through legislative and institutional reform. Ministers also shared their own examples of cases where clear political leadership focused on improving the enabling environment has brought about improved sector performance.

*"We must turn the mirror around and change our own behaviours."*

**Mr. Anthony Lake,  
Executive Director,  
UNICEF**

The Ministerial Meeting also provided an opportunity to reflect critically on the performance of development partners against the Behaviours. Through the ministerial discussions, governments identified common barriers to development effectiveness, emphasising that when partners are not aligned with country processes and instead use parallel systems, this not only makes coordination difficult and undermines political leadership, but also leads to high transaction costs and hinders sector progress. These challenges are often exacerbated in contexts of humanitarian assistance.

The continuing fragmented and project-based character of the sector caused many countries to rate current donor behaviours as unfit for the SDGs. To improve development effectiveness, ministers highlighted the importance of closer alignment of donors with country needs, and for all development finance to be reflected on governmental budgets to ensure transparency and accountability. Improved information sharing – particularly the use of a common dataset across development partners – and contribution of all actors to sector review processes were also emphasised as priorities.

*“The SWA Collaborative Behaviours not only urge governments to act, but also require the full and responsible participation of all stakeholders, from civil society to service providers and the private sector.”*

**Ms. Catarina de Albuquerque,**  
Executive Chair,  
SWA

*“We opted for an innovative real-time monitoring system using mobile to web technology to monitor progress and provide support at village level.”*

**The Hon. Mr. Dawson Kafwaya,** North-Western Province Minister,  
Zambia

*“Humanitarian situations do not only enable people to access improved sanitation but also provide an opportunity to reach the unreached with facilities which are resilient and will remain if another humanitarian situation occurs.”*

**The Hon. Mr. Tanveer Aslam Malik,** Minister of Housing, Urban Development and Public Health Engineering, Government of Punjab, Pakistan

*“We have one planning system, one monitoring and one reporting mechanism for this programme [One WASH Programme]”*

**Mr. Abiy Girma,** National WASH Program Coordinator, Ethiopia

# Country practices that align with SWA's Collaborative Behaviours

**Ethiopia's** ONE WASH National Programme focuses all of the country's efforts behind one plan, one budget, one reporting system and one Consolidated WaSH Account. This action plan was an important milestone for donor harmonization, and succeeded in tackling some of the identified challenges to development effectiveness by strengthening alignment of partners behind the government's vision.

In **Pakistan**, the sanitation policy provided the framework for a coordinated and joint approach to the floods.

In **Nepal**, a decentralized system of planning, finance, implementation and monitoring, combined with a 'community triggering' approach, allowed the country to make good progress in rural sanitation.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the establishment of a Ministry of Sanitation has helped clarify roles and responsibilities and address the need to strengthen the institutional framework for sanitation.

In **Zambia**, an innovative monitoring system has been used to inform planning processes at district, provincial and national level.

In **South Africa**, research institutions are recognized as important partners in action towards access to water, sanitation and hygiene. The government is investing in the capacity of the research and learning sector.



## The Building Blocks



**Sector Policy /  
Strategy**



**Institutional  
arrangements**



**Sector Financing**



**Planning,  
monitoring, and  
review**



**Capacity  
development**

Speakers pointed out that countries that made greatest progress in extending and sustaining water, sanitation and hygiene services have put in place the necessary components of a well performing sector.

These components are outlined by the Building Blocks, which provide a framework for addressing sector bottlenecks:

**Sector Policy/Strategy:** ministers recognized the real need to better integrate existing policies into a single overarching strategy, and realign policies to be fit for purpose in the SDG era.

**Institutional Arrangements:** many partners stressed the importance of a holistic, coordinated, cross-government approach built around strong institutions.

**Capacity Development:** participants underlined the importance of capacity building in order to develop national systems capable of implementing the SDGs. Particular attention was given to strengthening performance at local government level.

**Planning, Monitoring and Review:** access to information, especially monitoring that can inform corrective action, was recognized as crucial to both accountability and effective decision-making.

**Sector Financing:** effective finance is a critical building block of a well-performing sector. Its lack can become a major bottleneck, particularly when it comes to targeting the poor in rural areas.

During the inter-ministerial dialogue sessions, ministers discussed the application of the Building Blocks in rural and small towns and urban settings, and shared innovative solutions to strengthening them.

*“Countries with the right policies across building blocks have been able to bend the arc of history.”*

**Ms. Jyoti Shukla,  
Senior Manager,  
World Bank**







## 4. Financing universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene

Financing the water, sanitation and hygiene-related SDG targets was a topic throughout the Meeting, but on the second day ministers had the opportunity to focus almost exclusively on these issues. They shared experiences on managing domestic and donor financing, the effective use of subsidies and accessing market finance.

Many participants underlined the limits of public finance because of diminishing (and increasingly restricted) donor funds and national budgets. The need to diversify funding streams and explore innovative financing mechanisms was therefore emphasized, especially the importance of a meaningful and strategic involvement of the private sector. Partner experiences also highlighted the challenges for countries where financial markets and/or the private sector are still in infancy. Also, the role of the private sector in supporting the water, sanitation and hygiene sector needs to be better formulated.

*“Ministers, you have a challenge: raise funds domestically.”*

**Mr. Bai Mass Taal,  
Executive Secretary,  
African Ministers’  
Council on Water  
(AMCOW)**

Several ministers pointed out that lack of funding is not necessarily the sector’s problem (some countries even have difficulty spending what is available), but rather the distribution of existing funds.

*“The Government does not give us [SABESP] any money. All the investments come from profits. From the profits, 25% go to the stockholders, the Government gets half of this (12.5%). The rest (75%) is invested.”*

**Mr. Jerson Kelman, Director,  
Companhia de Saneamento  
Básico do Estado de São  
Paulo (SABESP)**

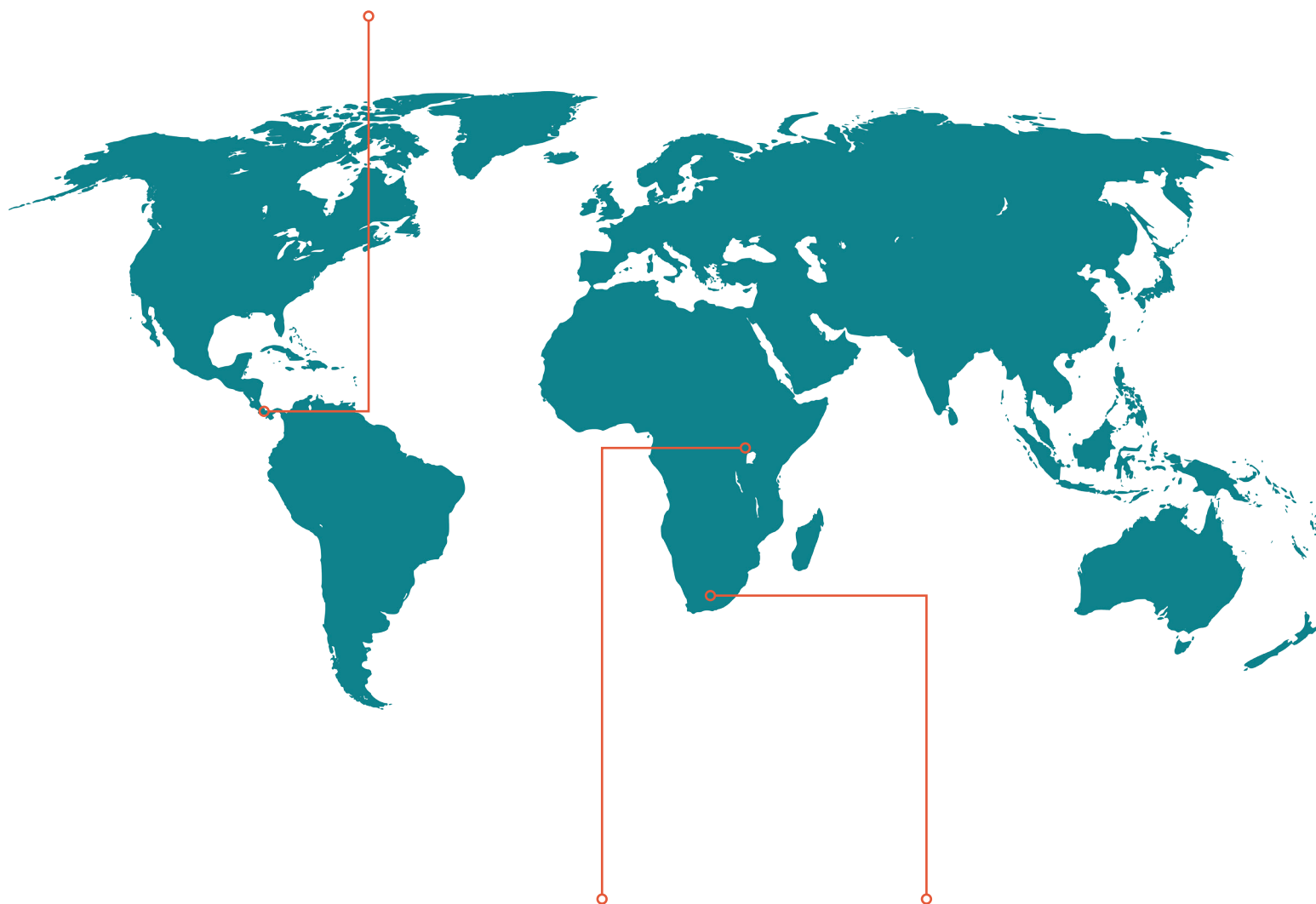
Speakers also emphasized that the importance of increasing the quantity of financing must go hand in hand with an increase in efficiency. We need to strengthen institutional capacity, target finances more appropriately, and improve predictability to ensure funds made available to the sector is spent effectively.

Discussions allowed countries to learn from each other’s experiences. They also provided an opportunity to identify priority issues and messages for consideration by finance ministers at the 2017 SWA Finance Ministers’ Meeting.



# Financing access to water, sanitation and hygiene

In **Costa Rica**, financing of sanitation and water works in different ways: investment in water supply comes from tariffs (over 100 projects for new infrastructure funded) and government loans via Development Banks. In sanitation, the government contributes towards design and construction costs, while maintenance is covered by tariff revenues.



In **Uganda**, the National Water Supply Corporation has a Board of Directors that gives strategic direction and is mandated to cover capital expenses and operation and maintenance costs. The country has implemented a pre-paid system that is addressing the challenges of revenue collection. Rural water supply is covered through allocations in the national budget plus conditional grants to districts.

In **South Africa**, water, sanitation and hygiene resources come mostly from national allocations and conditional grants to municipal governments. There is a constitutional obligation to provide 6,000 litres of water per household per month, so government subsidies target the most vulnerable and under-served. Capital expenditure is not only seen as social spend, but as an investment that can generate a return via tariffs.



## 5. Next steps for SWA partners

Countries will develop plans for achieving the water, sanitation and hygiene-related targets of the SDGs with clear and measurable milestones that can be monitored. These plans will articulate how the Building Blocks will be put in place and partners agreed to work in line with the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours.

This national-level work will feed into the High-level Meeting of Ministers of Finance to be held in Washington, D.C. in April 2017 (hosted by the World Bank on behalf of SWA), and the back-to-back Sector Ministers' Meeting. SWA partners are thus committed to working together to deepen their dialogue and cooperation, as an essential and urgent step towards achieving sustainable sanitation, hygiene and water for all, always and everywhere.

*"We stand ready to support your national political leadership in any practical way we can. We stand ready to support your national actions with any convening power we can bring."*

**The Hon. Mr. Kevin Rudd, Chair, SWA**

*"Always remember that this is about people, particularly vulnerable people: poor people and women and children."*

**Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chair, African Union**

### Save the date

**2017 SWA High-level Meeting of Ministers of Finance  
2017 Sector Ministers' Meeting  
April 2017  
Washington, DC**







## 6. Technical Day – Summary Report

After the Ministerial Meeting, accompanying technical staff came together to translate the outcomes of the previous two days into concrete short- and long-term actions. Most of the discussions focused on planning for the SDGs and the tools needed to implement these plans and monitor progress.

### Planning framework for the SDGs

In a three-country panel, Ethiopia underscored the importance of national mobilization towards one national water, sanitation and hygiene programme which could more easily be adapted to the SDG challenge. Pakistan presented the evolution of their sanitation strategy: they recognized the strength of regular Joint Sector Reviews and bottleneck analysis, which helped harmonization with other sectors (e.g. nutrition, energy) and a more effective response to floods and droughts. Burkina Faso described their significant national policy developments and a new focus on the sector in the next five years.

Main conclusions:

- National governments will drive incorporation of the SDGs into national plans and each will determine their own process.
- The four SWA Collaborative Behaviours and the Building Blocks go a long way towards providing a framework for the SDGs.
- Increasing domestic finance for the sector will be critical to the realization of the SDGs. Secure financial underpinnings for the sector need to be developed and the dialogue with national treasuries needs to shift from 'can we have more money' to 'we're using money effectively and can leverage a lot more'.
- Most national plans will require substantial recasting to absorb the SDGs. Governments will have to establish new targets on service delivery ladders.
- The SDGs will require a significant shift in national monitoring systems. One implication is that data collection will be more complex and cannot simply rely on household surveys. More data will be needed from other sources, such as regulators, service providers and water quality laboratories.



# Tools to enhance planning and monitoring

During the technical day, participants learnt about the recent evolution of the WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool (WASH-BAT) to a more flexible model with several adaptable modules. The World Bank undertook an assessment of Joint Sector Reviews which emphasized the importance of preparatory and follow-up activities.

Drawing from the experience of European regulation, a range of on-line regulatory and monitoring tools were presented, which could provide decision-makers with precise information and trend analysis to inform sector decisions. AMCOW gave an update on its plans to strengthen pan-African water sector monitoring, using questions drawn from the SDGs, GLAAS and other global monitoring systems. This would minimize the burden placed on countries for international reporting, yet give African ministers and Heads of State oversight over continental progress.

It was also widely agreed that SWA is providing the sector with a platform for sharing the tools and resources needed for preparation for the SDGs. In particular, this applies to strengthening data collection and improving national monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure evidence-based decision-making.

## Country action planning

Countries met in eight groups to incorporate what they learned at the Ministerial Meeting into specific actions/plans to meet the SDGs and establish national milestones. Of the 23 countries that participated in this process, only three judged themselves to have already made significant progress towards incorporating SDGs into national plans. The main conclusions were:

- The tools and resources needed for countries to adjust national plans towards the SDGs already exist.
- The SDGs are an exceptional opportunity for the water and sanitation sector but it requires a substantial level of effort and political prioritization. Rethinking sector financing strategies in particular is a critical driver of this transition.

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