



Mid-term review of progress against 2014 High Level Meeting commitments

Snapshot prepared for the Financing for Development Conference.
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, July 2015

The third High Level Meeting (HLM) of the Sanitation and Water for All partnership was held in April 2014 in Washington, DC. It brought together 21 ministers of finance; 35 ministers responsible for water and sanitation; 16 donors and development agencies (six of them represented by ministers or heads of agencies); and senior representatives of UN agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector.

SWA partners attending the meeting made a total of 383 commitments to remove barriers to progress, eliminate inequalities and ensure sustainability of water and sanitation services. Forty-three developing countries ('countries') made 313 commitments, and 12 donor partners ('donors') made 70 commitments. These commitments, intended to be achieved by April 2016, were developed through government-led, consultative processes, often engaging multiple stakeholders. Fifteen of the countries, for instance, reported involving civil society in developing their commitments.

This summary report is the outcome of countries' and donors' own, voluntary mid-term assessments of the progress made by March 2015 towards achieving the commitments. Of the 43 countries, 40 reported back, and all 12 of the donors provided inputs to this report.

70
commitments;
12 donors

313
commitments;
43 countries

Overall level of progress

One year after the 2014 HLM, countries report that, on more than half of their commitments, they have achieved progress that is good or better. By 'good or better progress', we mean that countries reported good progress, or that they had partially or completely fulfilled their commitments. In particular, this was true for the commitments to improve the visibility of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector, develop and implement national monitoring systems or increase institutional and human capacity. Indeed, countries report that 10% of their commitments have been met or are almost complete.

There is slow progress on around 40% of the country commitments including 7% on which countries are facing major barriers.

Donor partners report good progress or better on more than three quarters of their commitments, including on a quarter which are near completion or already achieved.

Developing countries reported good progress on half of their commitments while donors reported good progress against 80% of their commitments.

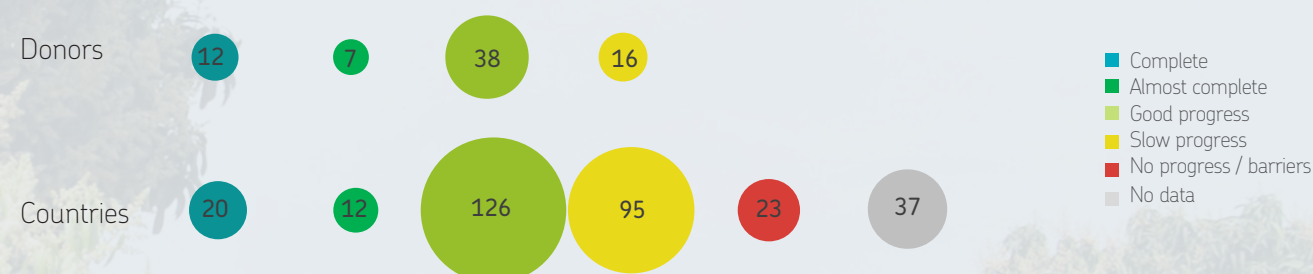


Figure 1: Progress made, number of commitments

Commitments on a broad range of issues

Commitments made by partners can be considered to fall into eleven categories, which in turn can be grouped according to three areas that are priorities for SWA, namely:

- **Political prioritization:** Financing and visibility
- **Evidence-based decision-making:** National monitoring systems, evidence, linking monitoring to planning, transparency, and global monitoring systems
- **National planning processes:** Coordination and alignment, policy and plans, capacity and decentralization

Good progress is being made on the majority of the commitments across most categories. However, progress is weak in the financing category where there is good progress on only a third of the commitments.

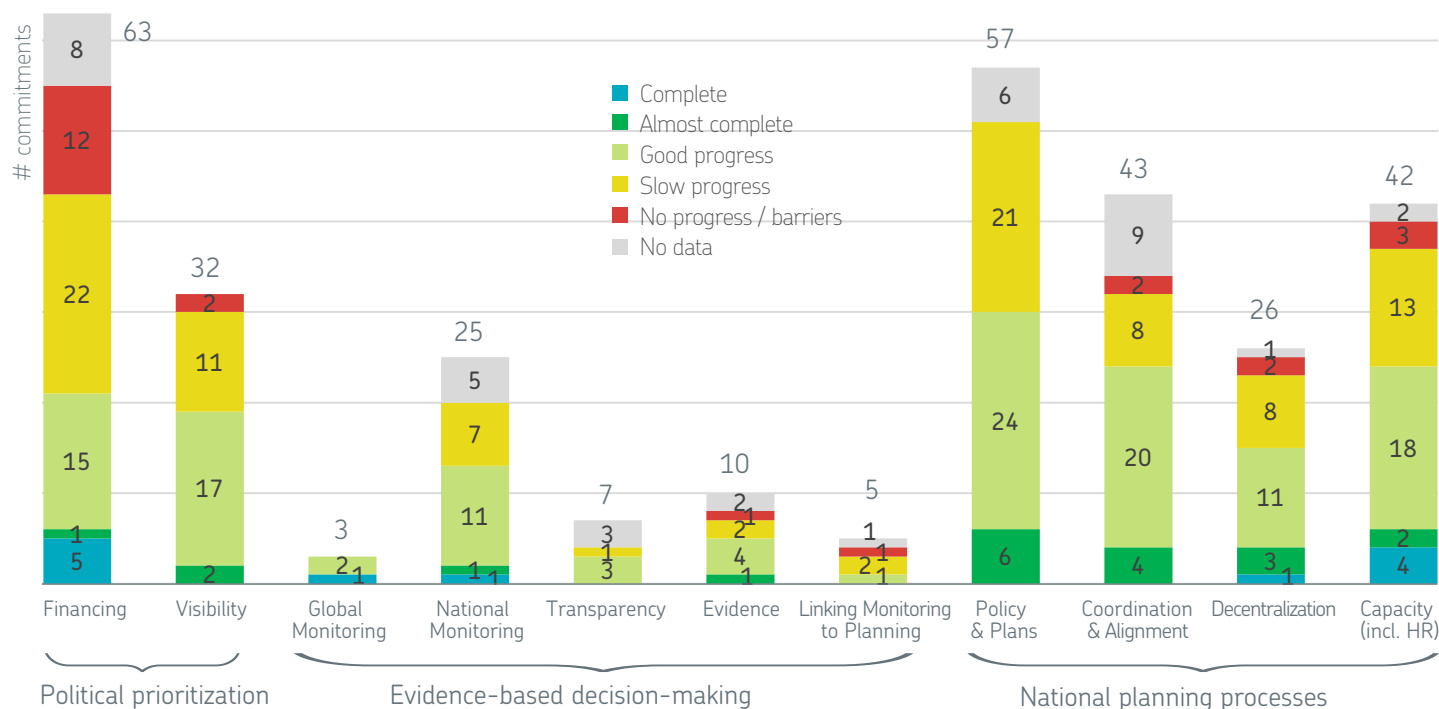


Figure 2: Number of commitments by status of completion and category

Financial commitments: a closer look

One measure of the political priority given to an issue such as sanitation and water is finance: both the overall amounts committed, and how these funds are structured, allocated, managed and spent.

Countries: Slow progress on financing commitments

Almost all countries (40 out of 43) made commitments related to financing. Sixty-three commitments were made on mobilizing, increasing or sustaining sector funding, or on creating separate budget lines. Overall, countries report good progress or better on only a third of their financing commitments. They recognize that there are major barriers currently blocking progress on at least a fifth of the financial commitments.

When considering the commitments to increase budget allocations, the picture is mixed: eight countries report good progress or better, while 16 countries report slow progress.

On the commitments aimed at developing sector investment plans, four out of seven countries report good progress. Ten countries made commitments aimed at improving financing for sustainability. Some of them involved the creation of sustainable sanitation funds. Others represented increases to existing budgets, but with priority given to spending on operations and maintenance. Progress on these commitments is mixed. Four countries report good progress on these commitments. However, there is slow progress reported against commitments from five countries, notably on commitments to create sustainable sanitation funds.

Donors: Good progress on financing commitments

Between them, eight donors made a total of 15 commitments towards financing water and sanitation. They report good progress on almost all of them – 14 out of 15. Some framed their commitments in terms of support to particular regions or countries. Others spoke of increasing access to services without specifying particular countries.

Mutual accountability in action

SWA is guided by a strong commitment to mutual accountability. Countries and donors have agreed to report regularly on their progress in meeting their commitments. Government-led and country- or partner-specific processes are followed for reviewing progress. This has often entailed national consultations in the case of countries, and in the case of donors, a review session at the national- or agency-level.

At least 20 countries facilitated a multi-stakeholder process involving the lead sector ministry and other agencies, and it is noteworthy that the Ministry of Finance was consulted or involved in nine countries. It is also remarkable that in some countries, such as Uganda, parliamentarians were involved.

"At the end of the 2014 High Level Meeting, I urged the countries and donors to go home and act on their bold commitments. I'm encouraged to see that they have done so, and are willing to stand up and be held accountable for this progress. Nonetheless, there is still work to do: our funding does not yet match our ambitions."

His Excellency Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, SWA Chair, Former President of Ghana and the African Union

Since SWA's inception in 2010, the Partnership has developed an accountability mechanism that is predictable, robust and inclusive. The process is:

- **Partner-driven:** Progress tracking is based on voluntary self-reporting by partners themselves, and conducting a review of progress is the responsibility of the countries and donor agencies that made commitments.
- **Inclusive:** Country governments are encouraged to involve all relevant stakeholders, including key ministries, departments and development agencies, plus civil society.
- **Positive and not punitive:** The annual progress monitoring report is focused on taking stock of the progress being made, noting individual achievements and stressing collective challenges. Many partners engage in advocacy at country level in order to raise awareness of progress.
- **Supportive of peer-to-peer learning:** Ministers present progress, achievements and challenges to their peers at the biennial Sector Ministers' Meeting, and there are opportunities for learning from best practice.
- **Regular, lean and aligned:** The reporting format is designed to be "light touch" and progress reviews, which take place annually, are increasingly linked at country level to related processes such as national sector performance reviews, Joint Sector Reviews and monitoring of regional commitments such as the Ngor sanitation commitments in Africa.

Stakeholder participation in the reviews at country level increased.

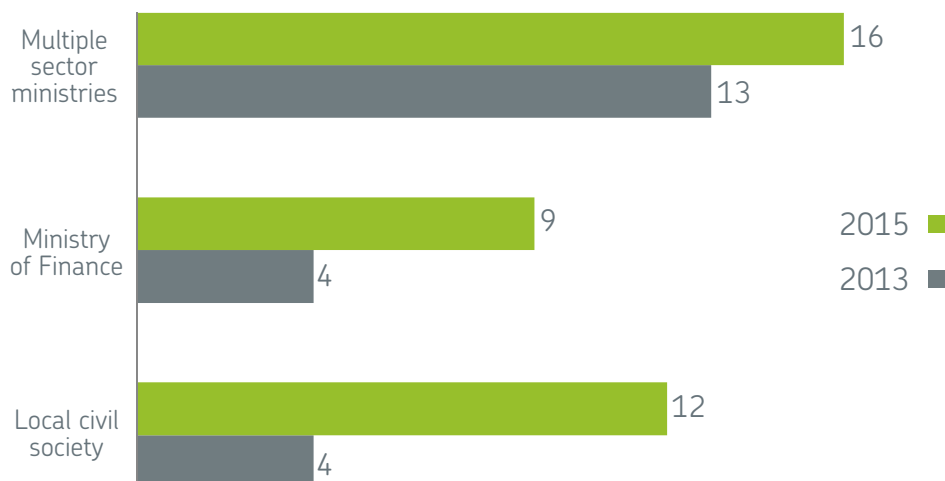


Figure 3: Number of stakeholders involved in 2013 and 2015

Fifteen countries report good progress on their commitments to strengthen human and institutional capacity. Enhanced capacity makes it more likely that financial resources will be fully utilized.

Good progress was reported by twelve countries against their commitments to strengthen national monitoring systems. Better data can help decision-makers allocate resources wisely.

More information:

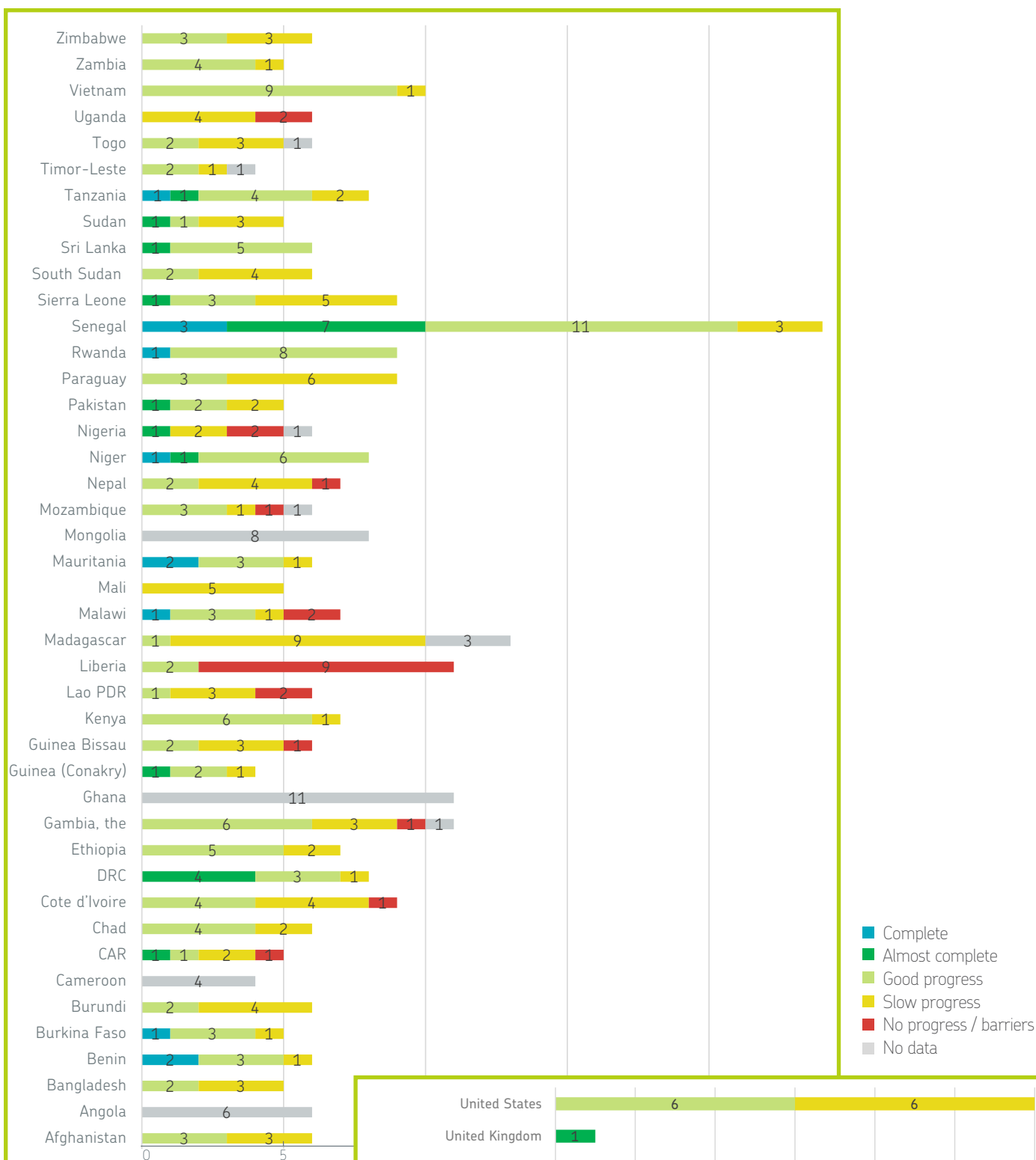


Figure 4: Status of progress by country

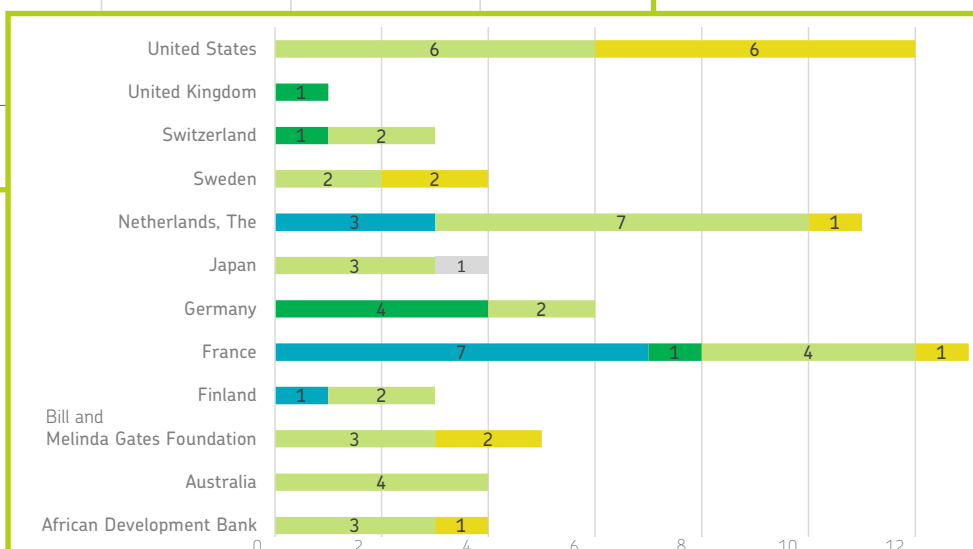


Figure 5: Status of progress by donor / agency