



Civil Society Common Messages for the High Level Meetings (Sector Ministers Meeting and Finance Ministers Meeting) of Sanitation and Water for All in April 2017

SUMMARY

The CSO constituency, which gathers more than 60 organisations (Community Based Organisations, Non Governmental Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and networks), has identified key messages that it will share at the 2017 Sanitation and Water for All High Level Meetings in Washington.

CSOs, CBOs and NGOs call for:

1. *Reaching safe universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene, and leave no one behind as a priority for action*

Access to water and particularly sanitation and hygiene for the poorest populations and communities is lagging behind!

More than one third of the global population – some 2.4 billion people — do not have access to sanitation facilities (of which 70% live in rural areas), and 946 million people practice open defecation¹. These water and sanitation needs especially affect the health and economic potential of women and girls.

- Governments have to take into consideration **the urgency of addressing the needs of the poorest and most marginalised** (in both rural and urban areas and informal settlements) through adequate policies, participatory approaches and financial planning and funding allocation.
- Governments, donors and service providers need to include the **Human Rights to Water and Sanitation** as guiding principles for the implementation of SDG 6.1 and 6.2 and ensuring that financing reaches the most marginalized.
- Governments, donors and international organisations **need to honour their financial obligations²** and increase the resources available to the sector and the poorest populations, especially on hygiene and sanitation.
- **Addressing the rights of women, ethnic minorities and people living with disabilities** is key to achieve universal and sustainable access to WASH for all.

2. *Reinforcing the four SWA Collaborative Behaviours³ through strong accountability mechanisms and community participation*

Generating adequate financing requires trust and integrity in strengthened and more efficient national systems, with strong safeguards and CSO and local participation, as well as, broad societal consensus on the way WASH⁴ services are sustainably financed.

- Governments should establish strong **accountability mechanisms** and allow for stakeholder engagement and oversight mechanisms for large investment programmes, including collaboration with a **capable independent institution** (e.g. auditing office or specialized watchdog CSOs) for oversight and complaints management. They should enable citizen monitoring and feedback through all stages of policy and programme implementation.

¹ WHO/UNICEF. 2015. Progress on sanitation and drinking water – 2015 update and MDG assessment. WHO and UNICEF: Geneva, Switzerland

² 0,7% Official Development Assistance (ODA)/Gross National Income (GNI) target.

³ The Sanitation and Water for All Collaborative Behaviours call for: enhancing government leadership of sector planning processing, strengthening and using country systems, using one information and mutual accountability platform, building sustainable water and sanitation sector financing strategies.

⁴ Water Sanitation and Hygiene

- Governments and service providers (including CSOs, CBOs and NGOs) need to put in place **transparent mechanisms** to track financing to water, sanitation and hygiene, linking expenditures with the services provided and ensuring that increases in expenditure produce the intended results (e.g. increased or expanded services).
- Financial mechanisms need to include sustainable financing of local CSOs, CBOs or NGOs to facilitate a strong and independent civil society. **Empowered local communities** can greatly contribute to SDG implementation by monitoring and providing feedback on the performance of governments and service providers, as well as by directly engaging in service delivery.

3. *Allowing for additional finance strategies, carefully evaluated, to ensure they reduce inequalities*

- Governments should strengthen **domestic resource mobilisation** as a primary approach to financing universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene, with increased government allocations, effective and affordable tariffs, strengthened and broadened tax systems and a vibrant, well-regulated private sector.
- Additional sources of funding such as **blended finance** are important, as they offer important leverage options for an increased investment in the sector. However, blended finance and private sector involvement requires **careful evaluation** to ensure that services are affordable for the poor, offer long term value for money, and do not lead to excessive debts.

4. *CSOs as a collaborative partner for SDG implementation*

- CSOs have a role to play **alongside and in collaboration** with governments, donors, and international organisation in the implementation of the SDG 6.1 and 6.2 and of the Collaborative Behaviours, as they are also implementation partners. **Participatory approaches** for service delivery and budget programming should be reinforced to allow for all partners to play a role in the new ambitious SDG agenda and to promote mutual accountability.
- CSOs also need to ensure the **integrity of their own functioning**; guaranteeing efficiency, transparency, accountability and participation in their contributions to strengthening sustainable systems and services.

5. *Sanitation and Water for All as a main partnership to achieve SDG 6.1 and 6.2 and reinforcing the sector*

- SWA is the **key multi-stakeholder platform** for achieving SDG 6.1 and 6.2. It brings together the main stakeholders in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector at high level. The **Guiding Principles, Building Blocks, Collaborative Behaviours** as well as **Country Commitments** are important documents for guiding the sector.
- SWA's **accountability mechanism** should be built upon the SDG and Collaborative Behaviours monitoring framework. All partners need to be consulted in order to use the full strength of the partnership in formulating a new accountability mechanism.