

Summary Report of the global partnership for Sanitation and Water for All Meeting of Ministers of Sanitation, Water and Hygiene



Held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15-16 March 2016

Overview

The global partnership for Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)¹ is a world-wide, multi-stakeholder movement that brings together national governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, research and learning institutions and external support agencies, to work collectively towards a vision of sanitation, hygiene and water for all, always and everywhere. Together, partners take action to catalyse political leadership, improve accountability, and use scarce resources more effectively.

On 15-16 March 2016, SWA brought together 30 Ministers, Vice Ministers and heads of government departments responsible for water, sanitation and hygiene, along with 70 of their senior advisors, creating a unique and timely opportunity to consider the implications of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to plan government-led, national programmes to achieve the ambitious targets that have been set for water, sanitation and hygiene. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Ethiopia, and convened by UNICEF on behalf of the SWA partnership. Government participants were joined by high level representatives from aid agencies, development banks, UN institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector associations. In total, 47 countries were represented. The meeting was chaired by The Hon. Kevin Rudd, Chair of SWA.

Participants recognized that the SDG goal of availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030 represents a significantly higher ambition than set by the Millennium Development Goals. To meet the SDG targets all partners will need to act in new and different ways, and considerable increases in resources, including financial, will be needed.

Summary of discussions

A key feature of the meeting was the significant amount of time devoted to ministerial dialogue sessions, with the objective of allowing Ministers and their colleagues the chance to share experiences and plans, discuss the bottlenecks that they consider might stand in the way of achieving the SDGs, and review the tools and resources available to them. Partners from other constituencies had the opportunity to consider their roles and responsibilities in contributing to the elaboration and achievement of national plans. They also provided additional perspectives during the ministerial dialogues. Plenary sessions addressed topics of concern to the ministers, identified through partnership-wide consultations in the lead up to the meeting.

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**

¹ SWA has over 100 partners from six different constituencies: Countries, External Support Agencies (which includes UN agencies, the World Bank, bilateral donors, private foundations and regional development banks), Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector, Research and Learning Institutions and Community-Based Organizations

blocks: sector policy and strategy; institutional arrangements; sector financing; planning, monitoring, and review; and capacity development. In particular, the importance of diversifying funding streams and exploring new financing mechanisms was recognized, alongside the need to increase efficiencies in existing sector financing, through improved targeting, better cost recovery and increased absorption capacity.

Tools and approaches for strengthening all **building blocks** were shared, and partners committed to continued collaboration and exchange.

Partners also reaffirmed their commitment to the **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. Participants were urged to establish robust regulation and overall policy, and a strong customer focus in service delivery.

As a multi-stakeholder platform that brings diverse constituencies together on an equal footing, the SWA partnership was celebrated as an important mechanism for global mutual accountability on the water, sanitation and hygiene-related SDG targets. States and other key stakeholders reaffirmed their willingness to track performance against key indicators, including those for the SWA **Collaborative Behaviours** and SDG Targets 6a and 6b. 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. The crucial role of the WHO / UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) and UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) in global monitoring, building on national information and data systems, was acknowledged.

SWA partners recognized the importance of working with other sectors and partnerships to tackle the broad range of issues that are addressed in SDG Goal 6 and beyond. SWA will collaborate with partnerships and alliances linked to other SDG targets where sanitation, water and hygiene contribute, including those on water resources, health, nutrition and education.

Next Steps

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. Partners agreed to work in line with the **Collaborative Behaviours** to support countries to develop and implement their SDG plans.

This national level work will feed into a 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 a subsequent Meeting of Ministers of Sanitation, Water and Hygiene.

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.

Addis Ababa, 16 March 2016