Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) is a global partnership of governments, donors, civil society organizations and other development partners working together to coordinate high-level action, improve accountability and use scarce resources more effectively. Over 90 partners are committed to achieving universal access to clean water and adequate sanitation.

Strengthening national WASH sector planning, investment and accountability frameworks is a key area of activity for SWA, and a primary objective of SWA is to support and promote joint WASH planning, joint WASH budget process, joint WASH review process (M&E).

In many countries that are off-track for the water and sanitation MDGs these processes are highly fragmented due to:

a) **Multiple development partner funding sources** available to countries (traditional: bilateral, multilateral; non-traditional: non-DAC donors; philanthropic and institutional giving; social impact investment; global vertical funds; and climate finance)

b) **Dispersed domestic institutional arrangements in the sector**: multiple ministries and agencies involved in WASH at central level; the trend towards devolving WASH functions to decentralized levels of government and the important role of local government.

This fragmentation can cause large inefficiencies in resource allocation (difficulties in matching available funding with needs and national policy priorities) and in sustaining the infrastructure that is built (especially where information on investments is not transparent).

The SWA National Planning for Results Initiative (NPRI) provides a platform for government and development partners to address this fragmentation and inefficiency by:

- Promoting the adoption of Aid Effectiveness Principles in and by the WASH sector that lead to increases in domestic WASH investment, increased donor flows through country systems, and more effective use of all resources in the sector (transfers, taxes and tariffs) - to ultimately increase access levels and enhance sustainability of all services;
- Coordinating the expertise of SWA partners to strengthen national sector leadership and national planning, budgeting and review processes to deliver better sector results.
- Documenting and sharing experience and good practice in improving effectiveness of aid and domestic resources.

Where governments and their development partners make a clear case -

1. That existing aid modalities are ineffective at building country capacities, sector processes and sector results;
2. AND that all efforts in-country to resolve this have failed to unify processes;
3. AND that there is strong support for NPRI from both finance and sector ministries, with a Ministerial or Director-level government official clearly identified to lead the NPRI dialogue in-country;

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1. N.B. In federal countries these WASH sector frameworks may be located at state or province level rather than national level
3. As set out in the Paris Declaration, Accra Agenda for Action, Busan Partnership Document and the New Deal for engagement in fragile states
4. N.B. NPRI is not a source of finance or pooled funding; rather it increases the effectiveness of existing resources through pooled activity, drawing on the technical and human resources of SWA partners
the SWA-NPRI can facilitate the requesting country and its development partners to initiate an exploratory dialogue and put in place an action plan (which may lead to a compact, sector diagnostic, sector review mechanism, sector investment plan etc) to enhance the effectiveness of existing aid modalities and dispersed domestic mandates. The ultimate aim is to strengthen national sector processes with wide in-country stakeholder involvement including citizens and actors at decentralized levels.

In its first phase, SWA-NPRI has committed to facilitate the development of an action plan in up to 5 countries. The processes, knowledge and tools generated through these interventions will be documented for general use by SWA partners and beyond, and best practice will be captured and used to guide discussions at the 2014 SWA High Level Meeting.

To test whether taking part in SWA-NPRI is likely to be useful to your country, answer the following questions.

1. Is your country off-track for MDG targets on water and/or sanitation?
2. Does your country lack a joint planning and review process with development partners?
3. Does your country have problems absorbing and spending available funds effectively?
4. Have previous efforts to get development partners and government to agree mechanisms for a joint approach to planning, budgeting and review been unsuccessful?
5. Does your government lack a clear sector lead, with responsibilities for WASH unclearly spread across a range of ministries, departments or agencies?

If the answer to all these questions is yes, your country could benefit by taking part in SWA-NPRI.

**Next Steps**

Where possible, countries interested in taking part in SWA-NPRI should use these questions to begin a discussion with development partners and other stakeholders in country. If it is agreed there is clear added value in taking part in SWA-NPRI, governments should send a joint sector and finance ministry letter to the SWA Secretariat nominating a director-level official in the sector to lead the process. SWA-NPRI will respond with an 'Exploratory Dialogue' which will discuss the above questions in more depth to identify appropriate ways to improve aid effectiveness.

Official letters should be addressed to:

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Secretariat Coordinator  
Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)  
UNICEF, Three UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017  
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For more information on how SWA Partners will work together to support selected countries, please see:

- NPRI Exploratory Dialogue Sequence
- NPRI Vision Paper
- NPRI Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.sanitationandwaterforall.org/countryprocesses.html

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5 See for example WaterAid. 2009. ‘Aid Compacts’ built around national Plans: How the Global Framework for Action on Sanitation and Water can support country-led processes

6 Ministries responsible for finance play a central role in aid coordination in most developing countries