Webinar Summary May 2019

Introduction

The SWA Secretariat organised a Ministerial webinar on the 15th and 16th of May, on the results of the Sector Minister's Meeting (SMM) and the follow-up to it. This was the first webinar after the SMM, and the first in the 2019 series of webinars, which continues the focus on Leave No One Behind and seeks to sustain the momentum generated around the SMM.

Participation

The webinar brought together more than 120 participants across the four episodes (2 in English, 1 in Spanish and 1 in French). Besides the high number of participants, a notable feature was the broad variety of participants, with all five SWA constituencies amply represented. This was also evident in the interventions where partners from all five SWA constituencies spoke of their experience during, and plans after, the SMM.

Structure

The webinar first discussed the themes, participation, and structure of the SMM. This was followed by interventions, both prepared and impromptu, from country governments 1 and partners 2, and discussions around these interventions. The recommended follow-up activities were then presented 3. The last part of the webinar consisted of a Mentimeter exercise where participants provided real-time inputs on the actions they plan to undertake in the next few months to follow up the SMM and continue focus on inequalities, as well as the support that participants would like from the Secretariat. The responses from the participants built on the main themes that emerged from the interventions and the discussions.

Main messages

The SMM was characterized by a strong, multistakeholder **preparatory process** (more people participated in the prep process than in the SMM itself). This strong preparation greatly contributed to more partners and governments having strategic discussions on Leave No One Behind. Similarly, a **strong follow-up** will allow governments and all SWA partners to leverage the momentum generated by the SMM. Participants indicated that **meetings such as the SMM must be encouraged**, as "we will able to overcome our challenges much faster when we discuss

---

[1] Sector Ministers of five countries (Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Panama, and Sierra Leone); Directors general from four countries (Kenya, Myanmar, Paraguay and Vietnam).
[2] CSOs (FANSA from South Asia, Fanca from Nicaragua, Speakup Africa from Senegal, and Water for People from Malawi); bilateral agencies (UK's DFID and Australia's DFAT); technical partners (senior advisors from Unicef and IADB); and one representative each of the private sector (Zenith Water Nigeria) and research and learning institutions (Labgea Brazil).
[3] These are presented in more detail in the "Beyond the SMM" document, and organized in five categories - Advocate at the highest levels; Plan and strategize based on Evidence; Implement and review commitments; Incorporate LNOB into sector processes; Document and disseminate experiences.
[4] As one participant noted, "to take forward these ideas into actions, two things are needed. Multistakeholder platforms in countries are very important; A robust MAM is necessary as a guiding mechanism for the functioning of multistakeholder platforms".

together and dialogue together". There was even a suggestion to decentralize such ministerial dialogues to regional levels, which could also enable ministers to dialogue more often.

The SMM participants mentioned three main **takeaways from the Meeting** – the critical place of political leadership; the importance of reliable data for decision-making, financial planning, accountability and regulatory frameworks; and the possibility and need to learn from one another.

Two main **areas of focus** have been identified post-SMM:

- Recognizing the importance of mutual accountability, countries and partners plan to improve existing commitments and/or table new ones, disseminate them to all sector, and define ways to follow them up 4. Countries that made "SMART" commitments were able to convert these into clear action plans; other countries need to make their commitments clearer. This shows the importance of having SMART commitments.

- The other most common planned action is to share relevant experiences on inequalities and the use of the SWA Framework; this will be done in the existing national fora or sector working groups, for example, or through dedicated workshops organized over the coming months. Countries also plan to convene interministerial meetings.

Several countries and partners emphasized the unique **role of the SWA** in the aftermath of the SMM – as **broker of peer-to-peer learning**. The common areas in which they would like such learning are: data and information systems for the sector; involvement of the private sector in WASH; decentralization of accountability and LNOB to lower levels like provinces and townships; regulatory frameworks; and creation of Whatsapp group for direct communication between ministers. In particular, several countries expressed interest in learning from the Ethiopia One WASH Program and other ministers and leaders identified areas such as private sector development, Information management systems and financing as key areas of learning. Innovative country approaches should also be shared for information and inspiration of others 5. Countries are also seeking to link with international technical and financing partners to support the countries' ambitious plans for the sector.

More information and resources:
- The report of the SMM has been hosted on the website. It is currently available in English, and the versions in the two other languages of the Meeting are coming soon.
- The slides and videos of this webinar are available on the SWA website.
- The actions to follow up on the commitments tabled under the MAM are important, and needs to be clarified. This will be the focus of the June webinar.
- The SWA has made available a set of tools on its tools portal; the tools are organized around the sector Building Blocks.

---

[5] Some of these are - OneWASH in Ethiopia, WASH all-in-one in Madagascar, Maldives' plans to reach all their islands with WASH services over the next five years, Kenya's approach for WASH in small towns and periurban areas, or Kenya's efforts at regulating the sector, Ghana's experience in rural water supply and sanitation; and the importance of addressing WASH in institutions (schools and health facilities) as a key action towards LNOB.