

Executive Summary

At the second Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) High Level Meeting (HLM), in April 2012, developing countries, donors and development banks made commitments to address barriers to delivering sustainable water and sanitation services. The progress update, issued by the SWA Secretariat, synthesizes the status of commitments as of April 2013.

Monitoring progress of the commitments is essential for accountability, and SWA partners agreed to report back annually. Some significant progress has been achieved. For instance, budget allocations have been increased, relationships among key ministries have been strengthened, better evidence has been developed and concrete results on sanitation have been achieved.

However, additional time, effort and support will be required to carry out structural changes that will improve the effectiveness and sustainability of service delivery.

Structural changes include strengthening institutional arrangements and financial systems, reducing sector fragmentation, addressing human resources gaps and linking evidence to national decision-making processes.

SWA partners believe that the HLM and its preparatory process strengthened the sector's political visibility overall and, for developing countries, dialogue with ministries of finance. The usefulness of the process is reflected by the high level of engagement of partners in tracking the progress of commitments.

Partners now look to the 2014 HLM to be a catalyst for strengthened national and global dialogue. The preparatory process for the 2014 meeting should support partners' advocacy efforts and accelerate progress towards meeting commitments made at the 2012 SWA HLM. Further, the preparatory process should result in new, more focused commitments that are more easily measured and better aligned with countries' priorities and plans.



SWA/Kris Trippier

Participants at the 2012 SWA High Level Meeting

Key findings

1. Good progress has been made; however, additional effort is needed to fulfil commitments by 2014.

By mid-2013, developing countries reported completion or good progress on almost 60% of commitments and donors reported completion or good progress on almost 80%. However, only 44 % of country commitments and 42% of donor commitments are on track to be achieved by April 2014.

2. 'Quick-win' budget allocations have been made, however, progress towards structural changes in overall financing systems has been slower. Nine countries have reported increased budget allocations. Longer-term structural changes, such as the creation of dedicated budget lines, are reportedly progressing significantly more slowly. Two donors have nearly fulfilled their major financial commitments made at the HLM and all donors are reporting good progress.

3. Substantial progress has been made in tackling open defecation but additional effort is required to achieve elimination. Fifteen developing countries reported achieving good progress in tackling open defecation with community-based approaches. Four donors reported good progress on commitments to increase funding or to prioritize sanitation within their programmes. However, additional funds and further efforts on the part of all partners are still necessary.

4. Partners have taken mutual accountability seriously; however, inclusion of multiple stakeholders in the review could have been stronger. All of the developing country governments and donors that made commitments at the 2012 SWA High Level Meeting submitted progress reports. Two thirds of developing countries consulted with development partners, but only ten percent included civil society and ten percent included the ministry of finance. Only one donor consulted with civil society on the review, however civil society has been engaged by donors around the commitments in other ways.

5. The SWA HLM positively influenced progress in sector visibility, financing and sanitation. Developing countries reported better relationships between sector ministries and finance ministries which have resulted in increased budget allocations. Sector dialogue and coordination is stronger and donors report increased political support and visibility for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), particularly for sanitation.