



Photo credit: WSSCC/ Carolien VanderVoorden – Residents of the Cross River State in Nigeria discuss issues of sanitation and water

The road to the 2014 SWA High Level Meeting

The third SWA High Level Meeting (HLM) will be held on Friday 11 April 2014. Convened by UNICEF, on behalf of the SWA Partnership, it will be hosted by the World Bank. There is a great deal of opportunity, as well as work to be done, in the lead-up in order to generate political attention and press for greater action and accountability in the delivery of commitments.

The 2012 High Level Meeting was unprecedented in attracting over 50 ministers and high-level participants. It demonstrated the increase in political prioritization of WASH that SWA has been able to achieve. The annual Progress Update of the 2012 SWA HLM commitments, released in August this year, shows that significant gains have already been achieved, such as increased budgets, strengthened national planning and country-level dialogue among ministers, technical stakeholders, civil society, donors and development banks. You can read more about the Progress Update on the back page.

In order to build momentum, SWA is moving towards an on-going political dialogue in which the HLM represents a notable milestone, rather than a process dominated by a one-day biennial event. The High Level Commitments Dialogue (HLCD) encompasses both the preparatory process that countries and donors carry out to develop context-specific commitments which are tabled at SWA High-Level Meetings, and the annual monitoring of commitments made.

Partners are encouraged to raise the profile of WASH on the political agenda and promote solutions in order to strengthen mutual accountability and increase the impact of resources.

WHAT IS THE HIGH LEVEL COMMITMENTS DIALOGUE (HLCD)?

- **Preparation of commitments:** Strengthen sector dialogue among ministers (and parliament), technical stakeholders, CSOs, donors and development banks and citizens
- **Biennial High Level Meeting:** Increase political engagement and better inform ministers
- **Monitoring of commitments:** Accountability to deliver results



PARTNER ACTION IN THE LEAD UP TO THE 2014 HLM

By now, partners in country should have come together to develop a strategy and action plan to reach the HLM. Next steps:

- **November:** Launch advocacy campaigns
- **November to January:** • Review progress on existing commitments • Sector analyses to identify solutions and define new commitments • Engage ministers • Inter-ministerial dialogue

Visit the [partner workspace](#) on the SWA website to read comprehensive guidance on the HLCD and find out more about the key steps on the road to the 2014 SWA HLM



SWA Chair H.E. John A. Kufuor speaks out on sanitation



Photo: SWA/Cecilia Österberg

World Water Week in Stockholm, September 2013

SWA partners were honoured to be at World Water Week with the SWA Chair, H.E. John A. Kufuor. Throughout the week, President Kufuor shared his commitment to challenge governments to make water, sanitation, hygiene, and the elimination of the diseases they cause, a top political priority. He spoke in official conference sessions, including Africa Day and the Stockholm Water Prize, where he shared his experience as former President of Ghana in increasing political commitment to support national integrated WASH and health approaches and suggested how Ghana's successes and lessons learned about political leadership can be applied to other countries.

The conference brought together SWA partners to share progress and their perspectives on WASH-related issues. SWA convened a session entitled *Elevating Political Momentum for Sanitation and Water*, where an impressive series of thoughtful presenters provided insights into what's working to get political traction for sanitation and water for all. SWA partners also convened a session on the role of aid effectiveness in supporting the transition from WASH relief to development.



Photo: SWA/Cecilia Österberg. From left: Jae So (WSP), Pim Valdre (office of the DSG), Minister Betty Bigombe (Uganda), Margaret Catley-Carlson (UNSGAB) at the SWA session

High-level breakfast at the UN General Assembly, September 2013

During the 68th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, H.E. Kufuor co-chaired a roundtable breakfast meeting with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to discuss linkages between nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene. Amongst the seventeen high-level decision makers present were Ms. Rachel Kyte, Vice President of Sustainable Development at the World Bank, Ms. Etharin Cousin, Executive Director of the World Food Programme and Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever.

H.E. Johnson Sirleaf opened the meeting by speaking from her own experience in Liberia, where 20% of children suffer from stunting. *"We can all do better. That's why we're here to talk about collaboration,"* she asserted. H.E. Kufuor reminded participants that improved access to WASH can help drive improvements in nutrition which, in turn, contribute to social development, women's welfare and economic development. The UN Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson called for the building of coalitions across the UN family, working horizontally, not vertically and challenged participants to *"put the problem in the centre"*.

The breakfast meeting took place in the context of growing evidence of the connection between lack of water, sanitation and hygiene and poor nutrition outcomes for children, particularly during the first 1,000 days of children's lives.

"KEEP YOUR PROMISES"

One year on from its launch, the 1.1 million signature-strong "Keep Your Promises" petition was shared with prominent international decision makers gathered in New York for the UN General Assembly. End Water Poverty (EWP) campaigners met with UN Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, and Csaba Korosi, permanent representative of Hungary to the UN and co-chair of the influential UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, which will play the lead role in determining the global priorities that will succeed the MDGs.

From left: Esmee Russell (EWP), UNDSG Jan Eliasson, Jackson Mwenya (VAREN)



Photo: End Water Poverty



Partners in Rwanda share their impressions of the impact of SWA commitments

To what extent do you think the High Level Meeting has contributed to the good progress Rwanda is making on the 2012 HLM commitments?

The HLM generated lots of enthusiasm and support from decision makers in the ministries in charge of water, sanitation and finance. The meeting reinforced commitments made at the 2011 AfricaSan Conference, which was hosted in Rwanda. In particular, we are witnessing good progress on the sanitation campaign to improve universal access to latrines, which was launched by our President.

What so you consider to be the main bottlenecks that remain to achieving all the commitments?

Firstly, we are seeking stronger participation of the private sector, especially in rural areas. Secondly, we need to do more research in to appropriate technologies and thirdly, hygiene education must be scaled up.

What is the most concrete result that your country has achieved thanks to SWA?

The Government has adopted a Community Based Environmental Health Promotion Program (CBEHPP) which is based on solid experience of working with Community Health Workers (CHWs) to promote health benefits related to sanitation. The national awareness campaigns have contributed significantly to our aim of total sanitation coverage.

Has being involved in SWA changed the way in which the different sector stakeholders work together?

Yes definitely. The ministries of local administration, health, infrastructure, education and others, including civil society organizations, are now working together to promote water access and safe usage at all levels; there is a clear commitment to coordinate interventions to improve sanitation and water services to sustain the health of people and improve economic outcomes; the 1000 days campaign to eliminate malnutrition, recently launched by the Prime Minister's Office, involved different ministries and; a water and sanitation component has been incorporated in the reviewed policy on food and nutrition with clear objectives promoting hand washing, using improved latrines and safe handling of drinking water.

What do you see as future opportunities for SWA?

To keep up the momentum on advocating for improved financing from government to get beyond 1.5% of GDP and to keep key people informed of the positive benefits of investing in sanitation on health, education and the economy.

Regional Sanitation Conferences: Stepping-stones to the High Level Meeting

Both SACOSAN and AfricaSan are important regional platforms for dialogue. The regional "SAN" meetings (AfricaSan, EASAN, LATINOSAN and SACOSAN) were precursors to what SWA is seeking to achieve on a global scale; seeking to mobilize political support for sanitation; setting targets; encouraging actions to meet targets; and tracking progress.

SACOSAN V was hosted by Nepal in Kathmandu on 22-24 October 2013, just over 6 months ahead of the 2014 HLM. The meeting provided an opportunity for South Asian countries to showcase their achievements and to review options to accelerate progress.

The process for preparing for AfricaSan 4 involves four African sub-regional meetings during 2013 building up to AfricaSan 4, which is planned for 2014 (after the HLM). The sub-regional meetings are targeted specifically at refining the indicators of commitments in order to provide a clearer analysis of progress.

Considerable effort is being made to align the political commitments (SAN and HLM) and track process jointly. Integrated calendars, joint preparatory meetings and joint action plans can all help this process.

Find out more:

-> SACOSAN: www.sacosanv.gov.np/

-> AfricaSan: www.amcow-online.org/

Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET) launch 2014 HLM action plan

The national civil society network in Uganda has developed a comprehensive advocacy plan to engage ministers and key stakeholders in the lead up to the High Level Meeting. Around 45 people – including civil society groups, the government, technical and inter-ministerial committees – have been invited to attend a national meeting to review progress against existing SWA commitments and prepare for HLM 2014.

A series of regional capacity building workshops are scheduled to include sessions on SWA and HLM commitments, sharing ideas about how best to bring information about commitments to the local level, training more UWASNET members about SWA and tracking HLM commitments at national and local level.

Find out more:

-> UWASNET: www.uwasnet.org/



Discover the new SWA website!

We are delighted to announce that the new SWA website is now up and running. The website has some exciting new features:

The screenshot shows the SWA website interface with several callout boxes pointing to specific features:

- All you need to know about SWA and the three priority areas**: Points to the top navigation menu (About, Priority Areas, Partners, Commitments, News).
- Constituency profiles, with individual developing country profiles**: Points to the 'Partners' section.
- A comprehensive summary of progress on all commitments, with options to compare countries and view individual country reports**: Points to the '416 commitments' summary card.
- Dedicated workspace for SWA partners**: Points to the 'Partners' section.
- Document library**: Points to the 'Download the 2012 Progress Update' link.
- Updates on SWA partner activities and perspectives**: Points to the 'Latest News' section.
- SWA latest videos, reports and photo galleries**: Points to the 'Watch our Partnership Video' and 'SWA at Sustainable Water Week' sections.

At the bottom left of the screenshot, there is a link: [-> www.sanitationandwaterforall.org/](http://www.sanitationandwaterforall.org/)

2013 Progress Update on the 2012 SWA HLM Commitments

Monitoring progress on the High Level Meeting commitments is essential for accountability and SWA partners agree to report back annually. The monitoring report, launched in August, synthesizes the status of commitments as of April 2013. It shows that encouraging steps have been taken since the 2012 HLM, but additional effort is needed to fulfil commitments by 2014.

All fifteen developing countries that made specific commitments to tackle open defecation have made notable progress in scaling up community-based approaches to sanitation. Nine countries reported significant budget increases for sanitation and water, and many leaders have given the WASH sector higher political visibility. Others report progress in creating stronger information systems, from which important decisions can be made.

Much work remains to be done to address commitments aimed at improving the effectiveness and sustainability of service delivery.

Slower progress has been made in terms of strengthening institutional arrangements and financial systems and addressing human resources gaps. Change in these areas will take a considerable amount of time and progress needs to be monitored over several years.

In the coming months, SWA partners will be focusing on implementing the 2012 commitments as well as working develop new and more ambitious commitments to be tabled in 2014 at the SWA High Level Meeting (HLM).

"The monitoring report shows exceptional achievements and illustrates that that political will and strong leadership can drive action, even in the toughest environments [...] I urge political leaders to be encouraged by progress so far but not to become complacent. We must all remain focused if we are to deliver the remaining commitments made in 2012."

SWA Chair, H.E. John Agyekum Kufuor

Aid Effectiveness explained

IRC and the SWA Country Processes Task Team (CPTT) have produced an information package to help WASH professionals understand what aid effectiveness entails. The package aims to support the sector to apply aid effectiveness and SWA principles in their daily work, integrating these in to WASH policies and practices. This package, comprised of ten fact sheets, was prepared by Erma Uytewaal, Jeske Verhoeven and Carmen da Silva.

Find the package on the IRC website
-> www.irc.nl/page/80872

Partners in Action is a twice-yearly newsletter for SWA partners to share information and experiences. If you would like to contribute a short piece of news or conduct an interview with the SWA Secretariat, please contact Ceridwen Johnson -> ceridwen@sanitationandwaterforall.org

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