

Political leadership brings us a step closer to the dream of sanitation and water for all

Monitoring report shows encouraging steps have been taken since the 2012 SWA High Level Meeting, but additional effort is needed to fulfill commitments by 2014.

New York, 14 August 2013 – At the second Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) High Level Meeting in April 2012, developing countries, donors and development banks made commitments to address barriers to delivering sustainable water and sanitation services. The 2013 Progress Update on the 2012 SWA High Level Meeting Commitments, launched today by the Sanitation and Water for All partnership, tracks achievements made against the commitments so far.

“The monitoring report shows exceptional achievements and illustrates that that political will and strong leadership can drive action, even in the toughest environments,” says H.E. John Agyekum Kufuor. “I am immensely impressed that countries were able to translate commitments into action on the ground. This report shows that SWA High Level Meetings add value.”

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 water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector higher political visibility. Others report progress in creating stronger information systems from which important decisions can be made. Improved planning and coordination processes is another theme highlighted in the report.

While notable progress has been made, the report shows that 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, addressing human resources gaps and using better information in planning processes. Change in these areas will take a considerable amount of time and progress needs to be monitored over several years.

“Additional time and effort is urgently required if we are to fully achieve our collective vision of universal access to sanitation and water,” warned Kufuor. “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.”

In April 2014, SWA will be holding the third High Level Meeting, when developing countries, donors and development banks will report on progress since 2012 and table new and more ambitious commitments. There is a great deal of opportunity - as well as work to be done between now and April - to further increase the political profile of WASH, press for greater action and deliver on results.

More Information and Resources

2013 Progress Update on the 2012 Sanitation and Water for All High Level Meeting Commitments.

Find the Full report, the Executive Summary and the UN Deputy Secretary-General's statement on the release of the 2013 Progress Update on the SWA website:

www.sanitationandwaterforall.org

Notes to editors

Over 80 Ministers of development co-operation, finance, water and sanitation and representatives of the world's leading water and sanitation agencies attended the 2012 Sanitation and Water for All High Level Meeting or were engaged in the preparatory process leading up to it. The meeting produced over 400 commitments made by 37 developing country governments and 11 donors/development banks.

For further information or to arrange an interview with a spokesperson, please contact

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