

# REPORT OF THE 2022 SECTOR MINISTERS' MEETING

18-19 MAY  
JAKARTA, INDONESIA







## Contents

### INTRODUCTION

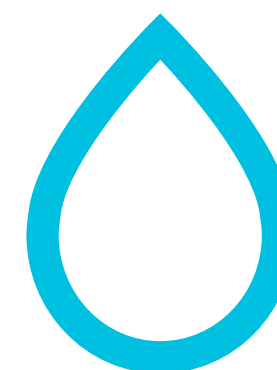
- 2 SWA's High-level Meetings
- 3 The 2022 Sector Ministers' Meeting: Building Forward Better for Recovery and Resilience
- 4 The lead-up: SWA's preparatory process for the 2022 SMM
- 6 2022 SMM at a glance
- 8 Youth engagement at the 2022 SMM

### SESSIONS' SUMMARY

- 10 The 2022 SMM inauguration & opening plenary
- 14 Plenary: The role of political leadership
- 16 Ministerial Dialogues: From triple crisis to triple win: The role of political leadership
- 20 Plenary: Governance & finance: Reforms for recovery & long-term resilience
- 22 Ministerial Dialogues: Sustainable recovery through reforms and collective action
- 24 Ministerial Dialogues: Financing recovery & resilience
- 28 Plenary: Accountability matters! Strengthening partnerships, accelerating progress & building resilience
- 30 Ministerial Dialogues: Accountability for progress: Building resilience & leaving no-one behind
- 32 Showcasing commitments: accountability at the 2022 SMM
- 34 'Bringing the SMM home' Closing plenary

### CONCLUSIONS

- 36 Key reflections & highlights from the 2022 SMM
- 37 Outcomes from the 2022 SMM
- 39 Closing remarks from SWA's CEO





## SWA's High-level Meetings

SWA's High-level Meetings are a cornerstone of the partnership's work. They are unique in the sector and are the partnership's most visible activity. They are scheduled on 18-month cycles, alternating between Finance Ministers' Meetings (FMMs) and Sector Ministers' Meetings (SMMs). Both types of High-level Meeting provide an opportunity for ministers from around the world to gather, to share their experiences and achievements, their priorities and the challenges their countries have faced. They engage with other ministers with responsibility for water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as ministers with other briefs, such as for the economy. They also engage with expert SWA partners from civil society, the private sector, external support agencies, academia, service providers, sector regulators, UN agencies and donor organizations. They come together to discuss challenges and explore potential ways forward to securing the human rights

to water and sanitation for all. All participants have a key aim in common: to help shape progress towards a world where no-one is left without access to life-enhancing and life-saving water, sanitation and hygiene services.

The impacts of such gatherings can be quite powerful. Relationships are strengthened, accountability is enhanced and a sense of shared purpose is forged, inspiring increased political will and cementing the belief that the fundamental human rights to water sanitation can – and must – be realized. SWA's High-level Meetings are unique opportunities, creating ripple effects on national, regional and global scales. There is no doubt that bringing powerful people and experts together can spur meaningful decisions, moving global policy and action forwards – towards a world that finally achieves sanitation and water for all, always and everywhere.



## The 2022 Sector Ministers' Meeting: Building Forward Better for Recovery and Resilience

SWA's High-level Meeting of 2022 was a Sector Ministers' Meeting (SMM). It was the first major SWA in-person gathering since the COVID-19 pandemic began – and SWA's most ambitious to date, presenting a critical opportunity to link with other sectors as countries rebuild and recover from the biggest global shock in most of the world's living memory.

The two-day SWA event was hosted by the Government of Indonesia and co-convened with UNICEF. For the first time in an SWA High-level Meeting, ministers responsible for water, sanitation, and hygiene came together with their counterparts responsible for climate, environment, health, and the economy. The meeting provided a space for leaders around the world to meet and identify innovative ways to increase the political prioritization of water, sanitation, and hygiene, exploring how to integrate these vital services into national climate, health, and economic policies and strategies. SWA partners from all the SWA constituencies – Governments, Civil Society Organizations, the Private Sector, External Support Agencies, Research & Learning, and Utilities & Regulators – were represented in the discussions.

The meeting was preceded by a six-month-long preparatory process at both national and global levels involving hundreds of partners and stakeholders, and strengthened the links between the water, sanitation and hygiene sector and other sectors that rely on it to deliver their own development objectives.

Both days were a mix of open plenary sessions, involving all delegates, and 28 sessions of 'Ministerial Dialogue', which were held under the Chatham House Rule, offering a trusted environment for ministers and other stakeholders to share, understand and resolve complex issues. The sessions reflected the key objectives of SWA's Strategy 2020-2030:

- Building and sustaining political will to eliminate inequalities in water, sanitation and hygiene
- Rallying stakeholders to strengthen system performance and attract new investments
- Championing multi-stakeholder approaches towards achieving universal access to services sector co-ordination and accountability

The meeting drew to a close with an official statement from participants, committing the partnership to urgent action on several fronts: increased **political leadership** across different branches of government to prioritize water, sanitation, and hygiene; support for **reforms** to strengthen recovery and increase access to services; the pursuit of **innovative ways to secure resources** and support a green economy; and building **accountability** as a central tenet for progress, collaboration, participation, and national resilience.





# The lead-up: SWA’s preparatory process for the 2022 SMM

SWA’s High-level Meetings are always preceded by a six-month-long, multi-stakeholder preparatory process. It is this ‘behind the scenes’ work that dictates the success of the meetings; the preparatory process for this Sector Ministers’ Meeting started in the final quarter of 2021, in every area of the global partnership.

As with previous High-level Meetings, this preparatory process was composed of discussions at national, regional and global levels, during which partners jointly analyzed progress, identified bottlenecks and successes, and agreed on joint future actions. These multi-stakeholder dialogues offer crucial opportunities for SWA partners to build closer relationships: with ministers, with policy makers, with each other – as well as with other professionals from inter-linked sectors. They offer the opportunity to develop and pursue joint objectives, through a process of mutual accountability. For the first time partners involved their counterparts in climate, environment, health, and the economy in these discussions. They covered themes such as how to integrate water, sanitation and hygiene as part of formal climate commitments and plans under the Paris Agreement, as well as how to improve COVID-19 response, and boost economic recovery planning.

National and regional activities are complemented by a webinar series organized by the SWA Secretariat, providing the opportunity for partners to share thoughts and experiences. The webinars create a sense of momentum, acting as a mobilizing force that fosters co-ordination and common purpose among partners. The prospect of the SMM offers shared focus; a milestone for partners to work towards.

Preparing for the 2022 SMM: ‘Weeks of Action’

Dedicated ‘Weeks of Action’ were held in a dozen countries across all regions in the six months preceding the SMM, as part of their preparatory process. These Weeks of Action focus on inter-linked communications and advocacy activities for maximum visibility and engagement. They include media outreach such as press events, television and radio programmes with high-level decision-makers; inter-ministerial dialogues; multi-stakeholder meetings; workshops; new data analysis and field visits.



Preparing for the 2022 SMM: ‘Country overviews’

Country overviews are briefings developed using multi-stakeholder processes, to help brief ministers and sharpen partners’ perspective of their sector ahead of SWA’s High-level Meetings.

For the 2022 SMM they were used to brief ministers of climate, environment, economy, and health, as well as water, sanitation and hygiene. The overviews include actions previously agreed to be taken by partners, tabled as part of SWA’s Mutual Accountability Mechanism.



66 It is as much about the journey as the destination. The journey to Jakarta has been exciting – and rich.

Catarina de Albuquerque, CEO, SWA

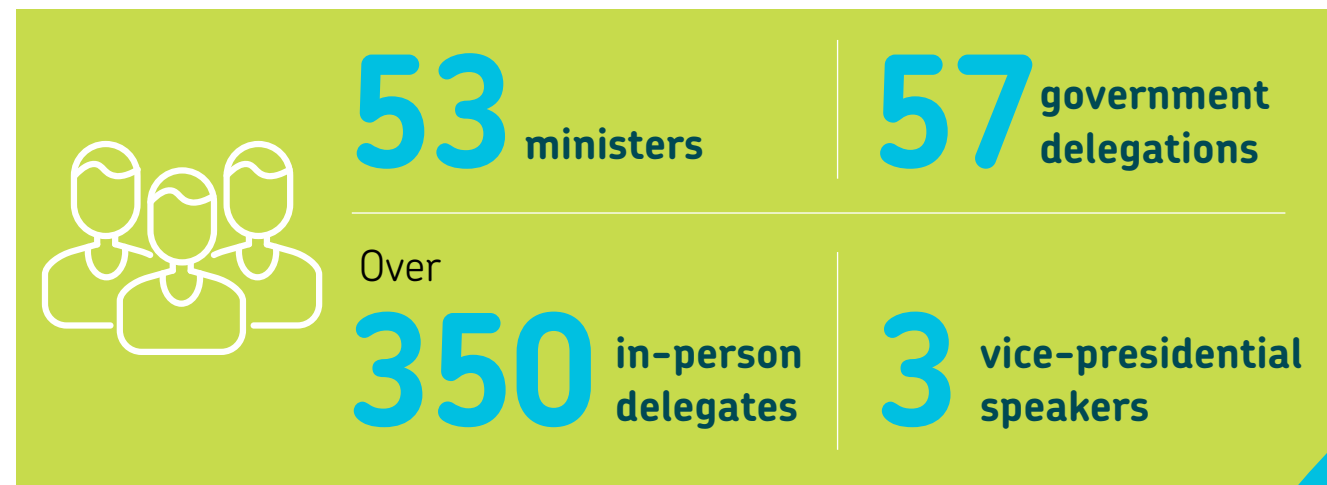
## Below is a snapshot of the work that went into preparing for the 2022 SMM.

It represents just a fraction of the work of the partnership during the preparatory process, but gives a sense of the huge breadth of engagement and dialogue that SWA’s High-level Meetings generate around the world, before the meeting itself even begins.

DECEMBER 2021	JANUARY 2022	FEBRUARY 2022	MARCH 2022	APRIL 2022	MAY 2022
<b>India</b> First bilateral call to bring partners together and start the SMM preparatory process	<b>Malawi</b> Country’s Mutual Accountability Mechanism team develops national roadmap for the SMM	<b>Liberia</b> Partners including legislators and CSOs gather to discuss updates from the national ‘WASH Commission’	<b>Mali</b> ‘National Action Plan’ and key SMM preparatory activities approved	<b>Uganda</b> Government and partners including CSOs and private sector and gather to prepare for the SMM	<b>Liberia</b> Government and CSOs meet to discuss mutual accountability commitments and prepare for the SMM
<b>Spain</b> Government and SWA Secretariat meet to discuss future cooperation in context of the upcoming SMM	<b>Global</b> First meeting of SMM Task Team lead by the High Level Political Dialogue Working Group	<b>Sierra Leone</b> Stakeholders convene to discuss water, sanitation and hygiene commitments in preparation for the SMM	<b>Panama</b> Ministries for health and the environment meet to co-ordinate for the SMM preparatory process	<b>Suriname</b> Ministries of natural resources, finance, and the environment meet to prepare for the SMM	<b>Global</b> Youth representatives release statement calling on government leaders to fully and meaningfully include young leaders in decision-making processes
<b>Zimbabwe</b> Five ministries join partners to begin SMM preparations	<b>Mexico</b> First bilateral call to discuss preparation for the SMM	<b>Global</b> Three SWA constituencies (External Support Agencies, Private Sector, Utilities & Regulators) meet to align efforts for the SMM preparatory process	<b>Brazil</b> Mission visit by SWA’s CEO, to discuss countries’ good practices and prepare regional inputs for the SMM	<b>Peru</b> Experts on water and climate change meet ahead of SMM	<b>Pakistan</b> Multi-stakeholder ‘Call to action’ mobilized ahead of the SMM  <b>Kenya</b> Partners from all SWA constituencies meet to review progress on sector commitments and accountability
<b>Lesotho</b> Development of SMM preparatory process action plan agreed between Government and six key partners	<b>Global</b> SMM Organizational meetings between Government of Indonesia and SWA begin on bi-weekly basis	<b>Honduras</b> Government-led multi-stakeholder planning process fed into SMM preparations, representing civil society, research organizations and external agencies.	<b>Sierra Leone</b> First multi-stakeholder review of national sector commitments and accountability ahead of the SMM	<b>Bangladesh</b> CSO network meets to discuss preparations for the SMM	<b>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean</b> Representatives from multiple ministries and 9 countries hold a final regional preparatory session, “On the Road to Indonesia”
<b>Global</b> webinar #2: integrating water and sanitation into climate planning and financing	<b>Global</b> SMM webinar #3: Focused on how navigating crises is informing country preparatory processes for the SMM	<b>Indonesia</b> 100+ sector actors gather to review sector commitments and accountability ahead of the SMM	<b>South Asia</b> Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Climate Action Webinar as part	<b>Global</b> CSOs develop joint advocacy messages focused on how ensuring the human rights to water and sanitation increases resilience to current and future crises	<b>Indonesia</b> Event to mobilize business and philanthropy to support the sector in the run up to the SMM



## 2022 SMM at a glance



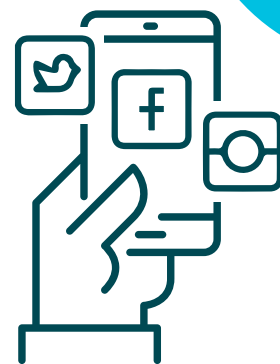
**28** dedicated sessions  
of Ministerial Dialogue



Watched live by over  
**2,300** people



Generated over  
**190** media articles  
in over  
**30** countries



**2,000**  
individual social  
media accounts  
discussing  
#2022SMM



### Preparatory process:



Over  
**130**  
bi-lateral meetings  
between SWA Secretariat  
and governments



National, regional and  
global **workshops and  
preparatory meetings** in over  
**40** countries

**'Weeks of  
Action'** in  
**12 countries**  
across all  
regions

**Dozens of  
conversations**  
with CSOs  
and other  
constituencies  
in over  
**30 countries**

**26 country  
overviews**  
drafted and  
updated



Specific conclusions  
and concrete actions  
formally agreed in

**3** key  
areas



**66** new Mutual Accountability  
Mechanism commitments  
including **19** related to climate

**50** progress reports on existing  
commitments submitted



# Youth engagement at the 2022 SMM

For the first-time in one of SWA's High-level Meetings, youth were officially involved in the SMM preparatory process and event itself.

In the run-up to the event, SWA's youth organizations gathered to develop a set of specific messages and recommendations. They developed and published the [SMM Youth Statement](#), which calls on government leaders to fully and meaningfully include young leaders in decision-making processes. At the heart of the statement is the idea that young people are not just beneficiaries of access to water, sanitation and hygiene, **they are agents of change**. The statement made a series of specific asks to decision makers. These were to:

- **Include young people in sector planning, policy and implementation** mechanisms.
- **Recognize and utilize the "on the ground" knowledge** young people have through working in their communities.
- **Establish a 'youth desk'** in every water, sanitation and hygiene ministry.
- **Support youth-led solutions** on water, sanitation and hygiene.
- **Implement national accountability mechanisms** that are accessible, inclusive, and transparent.
- **Include youth in those accountability processes and mechanisms.**
- **Increase public information** about water, sanitation and hygiene.
- **Invest in training and capacity-building of youth** in the sector.



These concrete asks and the voice of SWA's regional youth networks were brought to the SMM through SWA youth representatives Nicki Becker and Kenneth Alfaro Alvarado. They were both speakers at the closing plenary, actively participated in the Ministerial Dialogues, interviewed ministers (including from Panama, Maldives and Cambodia), and delivered youth recommendations directly to ministers throughout the two days.



**66 In this room, we have ministers of water, sanitation, environment, health and economy. This means you can guarantee the rights to water and sanitation for all – if you take the right actions and decisions.**

Ms. Nicole Becker, SWA Youth Champion



**66 We call on you to prioritize and invest in water, sanitation, and hygiene, recognizing these rights as crucial for peace, security, and economic recovery. Don't just let us be heard. Allow us to lead.**

Mr. Kenneth Alfaro Alvarado,  
Regional Co-ordinator of the Youth  
Network for Water, Central America





## The 2022 SMM inauguration & opening plenary

The inauguration and opening plenary sessions of the 2022 Sector Ministers' Meeting highlighted that we are reaching the mid-point to 2030, and that at current trajectories, the unpalatable truth is we are not likely to achieve the ambitions of SDG 6.

The event was officially inaugurated by His Excellency Vice-President Prof. K.H. Ma'ruf Amin, of the Republic of Indonesia. Dr. Patrick Moriarty, the Chair of the SWA Steering Committee expressed deep gratitude on behalf of the partnership to the Vice-President and to the Government of Indonesia, for hosting the two-day meeting.

The Vice-President outlined that achieving the access to water, sanitation and hygiene services set out in SDG 6 is the key objective for 2030, calling for the assembled delegates to "make water and sanitation the priority of development in our own countries". He invited participants to use the SMM as a learning exchange platform, to build knowledge of successful approaches and solutions applied in countries.

The conference was then addressed by another vice-president, His Excellency Constantino Guveya Dominic Nyikadzino Chiwenga of the Republic of Zimbabwe. As well as being the country's vice-president, he is Minister of Health and Child Care. Vice-President Chiwenga outlined data and evidence to the conference which demonstrates that the world is not on track to achieve SDG 6 by 2030 – and that the triple crises of climate, health and economic downturn are all exacerbating the problem. He explained that water and sanitation are essential building blocks for a resilient recovery, and how in Zimbabwe an inter-ministerial committee administers the water, sanitation and hygiene sector – helping to ensure strong co-ordination and efficient implementation of water and sanitation policy in the country. He also unveiled his country's plan to cement water, sanitation and hygiene as a core focus of his and successive governments through the development of a national 'Compact' for water, sanitation and hygiene.



**“ Access to water and sanitation is a pre-requisite to ensure the transition to green and environmentally friendly economies and the welfare of communities.**

His Excellency Vice-President Prof. K.H. Ma'ruf Amin, Republic of Indonesia



**“ The theme of this conference is most befitting in a world rearing under the triple crises of health, climate change and the economy. We need to quickly recover and build resilience in the face of these shocks.**

His Excellency Vice-President Constantino Guveya Dominic Nyikadzino Chiwenga, Republic of Zimbabwe



**“ Working together, we have made significant progress. But when 300,000 children still die every year from diseases linked to unsafe water and inadequate sanitation, we know we need to do more.**

Ms. Catherine Russell, UNICEF Executive Director



**“ When we leave in two days' time, we all need to feel confident that we can put the world and our countries back on track. I'd love it if each one of us could leave here with at least one new idea on how to address the challenges facing your country, your organization.**

Dr. Patrick Moriarty, SWA Steering Committee Chair



### Zimbabwe's vice-president pledges a national 'Compact' for the sector from the conference stage

Zimbabwe's vice-president unveiled his country's advanced plans for a formal national 'Compact', committing the current and future governments to improvements in water, sanitation and hygiene services.

He outlined how the Compact is designed to revolve around the following pillars:

1. Institutional and mutual accountability;
2. Infrastructure and service delivery, planning infrastructure and service delivery;
3. Monitoring information and knowledge management; and
4. Sustainable sector financing policies and strategies.





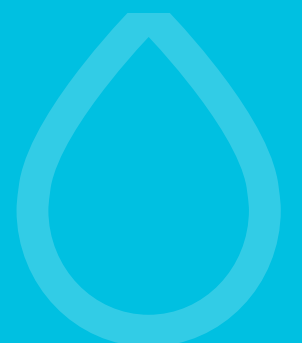
**“ Let’s make water and sanitation  
the priority of development in  
our own countries.**

His Excellency Vice-President Prof. K.H.  
Ma'ruf Amin, Republic of Indonesia



**“ It’s essential that we  
work together across  
borders and sectors  
with transparency and  
accountability.**

Dr. Tedros Adhanom  
Ghebreyesus, Director  
General, World Health  
Organization





# The role of political leadership

## Plenary

The first event plenary for 2022 SMM explored the central role of political leadership in prioritizing water, sanitation, and hygiene as a key driver for healthy and resilient populations and inclusive economic growth. It highlighted the importance of cross-sectoral alliances and the potential public gains of being a champion for more inclusive, sustainable, resilient water, sanitation and hygiene, and why every politician should take on this role. The session made special reference to cross-sectoral links and wins for countries' health, climate resilience, and economies.

The session included some country examples, demonstrating how ministers and other leaders have successfully influenced action to prioritize water and sanitation at the highest political level, initiating change and inspiring a common national vision in their countries.



### 66 Only joint work will allow us to reach our great goals

His Excellency Mr. Oscar Rojas,  
Vice-Minister of Water, Ecuador

**His Excellency Mr Oscar Rojas**, Vice-Minister of Water in Ecuador spoke about the country's national vision on water, which aims to reduce all threats to water sources, guarantee availability of water to all, and protect water sources to safeguard the human right to water, which is protected as part of his country's constitution. He talked about his country's work to prioritize reducing poverty and supporting those who are affected by the unavailability of water due to climate change in rural areas. He also explained his ministry's work to involve other sectors, to address common goals on reducing children malnutrition, and how they had recently developed official national regulations, to control both the quality of drinking water and their sources.



### 66 Toilets are an election winner...[and] the cheapest medicine in the world. It is not an expenditure, it is an investment.

Mr. Jack Sim, CEO, World Toilet Organization

**Jack Sim**, the CEO of the World Toilet Organization pointed out to the conference that when 30,000 people died of COVID-19, the whole world shuts down. Any yet every year the world still seems to accept seeing two million people die because of diarrhoea. He suggested that action would be taken now to end this imbalance and injustice, if diarrhoea killed rich and middle-class people instead of the poor and vulnerable. He described how the Indian election of 2007 showed that "toilets are an election winner", and that now all politicians compete on the issue, with the current prime minister having overseen the building of 110 million toilets across the country.



### 66 Our new standalone ministry provided dedicated and improved leadership...for the sector. Now, we have our own votes in parliament and funding has been increased.

Hon. Abida Sidik Mia, Minister of Water and Sanitation, Malawi

**The Hon. Abida Sidik Mia**, Minister of Water and Sanitation in Malawi spoke about how her ministry was recently established as a standalone ministry. It was set up by presidential request in recognition of – and to establish – water and sanitation as a priority at the highest level. Since its creation, the ministry has its own dedicated parliamentary time and focus, and the sector has seen an increase in funds. The minister highlighted several examples of progress in Malawi, including the country's *Climate Resilient WASH Financing Strategy*, to be launched in June, and how her ministry is focusing on green investment for the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. The country has invested in solar power, which has reduced sector energy costs by 80%.







## From triple crisis to triple win: The role of political leadership Ministerial Dialogues

This was the first of the Ministerial Dialogue sessions at the 2022 SMM. It focused on strategies used to overcome the 'triple crisis' of health, climate and the global economic downturn, as well as exploring how political leadership can overcome barriers to strategy development and delivery.

### What was discussed:

- Ministers and stakeholders discussed how COVID-19 has caused (often huge) revenue losses for utilities and government, as well as massive disruption to sector planning and delivery. They talked about how political leadership is critical to achieve a shared vision to formulate strategy, alignment with partners, and coordination to overcome crises.

And they discussed how leadership at all levels can bring about sustainable improvements, not just at the highest political levels – including through robust governance and regulatory bodies, and legal frameworks.

### Some of the challenges highlighted:

- Conflicting priorities** in country and across ministries affect the political will to focus on water, sanitation and hygiene.
- Lack of capacity and coordination** across ministries, geography, and levels of government.
- Topographic challenges** for sanitation causing a lag in progress – for example in lake and seashore areas.
- Lack of reliable, recent key data** and reliance on external sources

for data hampering evidence-based decision making.

- Lack of available funding** for policy implementation for water, sanitation and hygiene, compounded further by current inflation and global economic downturn.
- Island states** affected by heightened sector and consumer disaggregation, high emigration, and lack of capacity development.
- Increasing **frequency and severity of extreme events** directly affecting availability and quality of water resources.
- Water scarcity and **transboundary challenges** of sharing resources.

Once political leadership digests the problem and is convinced of the challenges, it will translate into financial allocation for the sector.

### Successes, solutions and suggestions:

- True political will and leadership can overcome any challenges.** Heads of State or Government can hugely increase political will through declarations, launching programmes, strategies, plans and campaigns, to bring great positive change. Political messaging direct from a president's or prime minister's office is incredibly powerful.
- Collaboration across ministries is highly beneficial.** Global crises have helped show how inter-ministerial collaboration can generate quicker progress, and is critical for overcoming crises. Speakers described experiences embedding water, sanitation and hygiene in NDCs and NAPs helping access to international climate financing. In one country, 11 ministries were involved in development of two
- Introduction of levies or charges** can create dedicated funding for the sector, but convincing communities and delivering the concept requires political leadership. Populations who can afford it must pay for services, not just to fund them, but also to increase the perceived value of water as a resource.
- Decentralization** for better management and organizing technical teams to support local capacities. Engage local populations and ensure a sense of local 'ownership' to activate national policy.
- Enshrine the rights to water, sanitation, and hygiene in national constitutions**, so they are binding and successive governments prioritize it.
- All ministries sign **performance contracts** and now the discussion is to have a dedicated ministry to monitor and evaluate these contracts.

It took political will to bring the regulatory function to the WASH commission, which has improved multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination.

national sector plans. This inter-ministerial collaboration elevated the profile of water issues, and helped engage other sectors.

- Importance of data for encouraging political will.** Including demonstrating the impacts of climate change, how the sector supports resilience. Local monitoring, data collection and management are critical. Data for cost benefit analyses are particularly useful convincing ministries of finance to increase budgets.
- Water can be a powerful election issue**, and requires good communication and political engagement.
- Sector innovations and technology** can be politically engaging, particularly in water-scarce countries, for example around desalination and improving water quality.



- Research and learning partners have potential ability to offer technical assistance**, which can support efforts to increase political attention to water and sanitation. In one dialogue, an SWA research and learning partner offered support to a government on water quality survey, which that government accepted.
- Installation of **household water meters** can help to increase public

Access to WASH is the only unifying conversation across the political divide, because it touches all people.

perceptions of the value of water – but must be accompanied by fair and affordable charging regimes.

- Increase transparency and accountability** through political leadership. It is critical to attracting all forms of funding for the sector, whether public (ministry of finance), external (donors, development banks and global funds), or business / private sector.





“ If there is transparency,  
transparency will trigger trust  
– and trust will trigger finance.

Minister Ruben Chavez, President of  
the National Administration  
of Aqueducts and Sanitation,  
El Salvador



“ It is about financing,  
yes, but the enabling  
environment and  
governance come  
before financing can  
be mobilized.

Ms. Neeta Pokhrel, Chief  
of Water Sector Group,  
Asian Development Bank





# Governance & finance: Reforms for recovery & long-term resilience Plenary

This plenary session explored how governments around the world face severe and immediate challenges to secure resources to cover the costs of the pandemic, while trying to kick-start economic recovery and meet their development commitments. The session considered the need to secure investments that can help them mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. It outlined available financing options and how governance reforms offer the potential to increase resilience, sustainability, as well as expansion and efficient use of scarce resources.

The key take-away from listening to speakers in the session was that the water, sanitation and hygiene sector can be the foundation for the growth of industries and the economy, and the wellbeing of communities and ecosystems. Water, sanitation and hygiene can influence and amplify success in health, economic and environmental sectors.

**His Excellency José Antonio Matos**, Deputy Minister for Quality Assurance, Ministry of Public Health, Dominican Republic explained how the Dominican Republic has met its sector service coverage ambitions in the past decade by focusing on maintenance of infrastructure, and on service provision in rural areas which had traditionally been neglected. Even so, he said that the country's sector still needs to increase its budget by 400% to meet SDG 6. He identified "synergy, collaboration and co-ordination" as the keys to make the most of scarce funding resources, and outlined how his government's 10-year development plan is designed to offer confidence and stability, in order to attract the financial resources required.



**“[Because of the COVID-19 response], people who did not have access to water, now do. We took advantage of the situation and expanded our network.**

Hon. Cecilia Abena Dapaah, Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Ghana

**Hon. Cecilia Abena Dapaah**, Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Ghana spoke about the importance of water and health during the COVID-19 crisis. In April 2020, the Government in Ghana absorbed the water bills for all citizens for 15 months, at the request of the president. In inaccessible areas, private operators and tank owners were deployed to ensure vulnerable communities also had free access to water. The Government also built 111 new hospitals across all regions of the country. Government support for water services over that period helped to kick-start increases in access to services in the country. When the support schemes ceased, the minister explained how many private operators continued to work in these new areas, with standpipes built in 2300 communities in peri-urban areas, for example. The overall number of people who pay their water bills has now increased, which the minister linked to public appreciation for the Government's actions during the pandemic. Ghana has also embraced technology and digitalization, which has quadrupled tax revenues.



**“[Taxes are] the single most untapped potential for unlocking financial resources. We need member countries to work with us on this. It will free up trillions.**

Ms. Neeta Pokhrel, Chief of Water Sector Group, Asian Development Bank

**Ms. Neeta Pokhrel**, Chief of Water Sector Group, Asian Development Bank echoed figures given by Deputy Minister Matos, saying most Asian Development Bank partners need to increase their budgets for water, sanitation and hygiene by 400%. This equates to trillions of additional dollars each year, which means blended financing options are needed, as “there is no way the public sector can bring in trillions of dollars”. She spoke of the need for ‘lendability and sustainability’ to attract funds: an enabling environment which requires regulations, transparency and accountability to take care of scarce assets and resources. “It is about financing, but the enabling environment and governance come before the financing can be mobilized”, she said. Lenders and investors all consider if their money will be well spent: if their investment will leverage further investments, especially in regard to attracting private sector funding. Governments and sectors should seek ways to develop joined up plans, implement regulatory structures, and concentrate on how to tap into the ‘3Ts’: tariffs, taxes and transfers.



**“We have to make ourselves investible before we can hope to attract money. Private investors are looking for return, they are not giving grants.**

Dr. Patrick Moriarty, SWA Steering Committee Chair



# Sustainable recovery through reforms and collective action

## Ministerial Dialogues

In these Ministerial Dialogue sessions, ministers and other stakeholders discussed responses to the pandemic, and what they can tell us about effective solutions from a governance and finance perspective. There was a focus on actions that can achieve durable resilience and sustainability of their water resources, their economy and their planning for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

### What was discussed:

Improving and supporting good governance was a key focus of this session, with a particular emphasis on collective action in times of crisis. Speakers described how the COVID-19 crisis forged learning on creating more flexible policy and operational frameworks, to respond to disruptions, and how climate change was a major and growing challenge, particularly where the level of preparedness was low. It was often highlighted how crisis response requires the support of effective existing or new coordination structures, and how multi-sectoral, inter-ministerial

co-operation, particularly on water, sanitation and hygiene can be an enabler of resilience and economic growth.

The importance of water, sanitation and hygiene for sustaining tourism, economies, and keeping the population healthy was often described, as were transboundary relations on water resources, which were often framed as a crucial element of foreign relations. Ministers and stakeholders also discussed how crucial it is to focus on the value of water for their populations, through education and fair payment options – to both reduce non-revenue water and increase investment, offering opportunities for exploring green solutions to complement existing processes.

### Some of the challenges highlighted:

- **Inadequate regulatory environments** hampering sector transparency and co-ordination.
- **Unreliable and unprotected budgets.** Ring-fencing budgets is difficult for water, sanitation and

hygiene – and budgets are often not accurately reflected in funding ultimately allocated.

- **Resource mobilization** is a challenge – often linked to competing priorities and poor co-ordination, meaning unclear plans and a lack of shared vision or strategy.
- **Difficulty to articulate the inter-connected issues of increasing access** to services in advocacy and finance arguments for reform – water, for example, is often regarded and dealt with as a standalone problem.
- **Challenge explaining and delivering** measures to increase water resilience to populations.
- **Energy requirements for reclaimed water and desalination** mean that these processes are prohibitively expensive without strategic or economic support from government.
- **Challenge to find the balance** between water as a guaranteed human right and the consequent need to ensure its affordability, and water as a resource that should be paid for, as people must understand value of water.

- **COVID-19 caused disruption to service provision and monitoring.** This has particularly affected good sanitation and pollution control, further affecting tourism and ecosystems.

### Successes, solutions and suggestions:

- **Multi-sectoral, inter-ministerial collaboration** is key. Such collective action creates more efficient, effective, resilient development for all sectors involved. Inter-ministerial committees can be a highly effective way to break established norms of sectoral, 'silo' approaches.
- **Establishment of regulatory authorities for water and sanitation** and the development of clear legal frameworks can help build political and sector stability.
- **Sector 'coordination committees'** established to organize and oversee crisis response (e.g. to COVID-19) have improved governance and streamlined decision-making processes – they can offer a template for longer-term sector reform.
- **Head of State/Government involvement** and political commitment at the highest level is an indispensable element for developing and delivering reforms, to increase access to services.
- **Increasing community-based engagement** and sense of ownership and appreciation for water – this can increase communities' sense of value of water, and ease reforms for reducing non-revenue water. Creating a sense of recreational / social value of water can also help (e.g. water in social spaces).

consultants, can help save resources and strengthen local resilience.

- **A narrow focus relying on donor funding is not sustainable.** Such funding should be treated as a way of kick-starting reform and collective processes.
- **Use high quality cost-benefit analysis** and provide evidence that access to services has positive ripple effects on the economy.

and enable the safe relocation of communities.

- **Establishment of legal frameworks or 'water agreements' with neighbouring countries** can improve cooperation and relations with other countries, particularly on transboundary issues or sharing of resources, capacity building or common infrastructure interests.

**There are many layers of power and decision. In emergencies, these layers should be reduced so that action can be taken quickly. So [the Government] decided to establish a committee that could take decisions quickly.**

- **Sector reforms should strengthen the quality of data,** so decision makers and investors can have confidence to move forwards.
- **Sector reforms should forge better links between water, sanitation and hygiene and economic growth,** particularly in the context of sustaining tourism.
- **New economic and social strategies should take an ecosystems approach.** The climate crisis can act as a catalyst to prosperity, using green financing to develop sustainable energy and services.
- **Decentralization** can make countries quicker to respond to crisis, more attractive to investment, and help central government reduce costs and avoid increased debt during crisis.

- **Global and regional financing instruments** should be simplified, made more accessible and more affordable. More knowledge sharing is required on how countries are engaging with multi-national donors and funds, to improve water, sanitation and hygiene and climate funding.

**The Government creates the environment for business to thrive, especially in the sanitation sector...**

- **Energy transitioning for climate resilience,** increasing the use of renewable energy for water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure.
- **Technical and innovative improvements** should be embraced, for example on desalination, reducing and diversifying energy use, and reducing non-revenue water. Science and technology are key to building resilient environment and communities.
- **Reform and improvements to governance** should be proactive, not reactive. This means forward-looking, strategies and plans, with solid policies on investment and financing.

**As a minister, the best thing that happened to me was water and sanitation portfolios were sitting in the same ministry. It helped understand and deal with WASH access issues better.**

- **Sensitize and empower marginalized communities** as part of sectoral reforms, to demand the good-quality services that are available to affluent populations. Working with local authorities and communities for recovery and collective action is critical. Building local capacity within ministries, instead of reliance on
- **Embrace technology as part of sector reform** – e.g. digital payments and procurements helped overcome logistics constraints created by COVID-19.
- **Develop capacity for multi-stakeholder platforms** and investments that strengthen early warning systems for natural disasters,







## Financing recovery & resilience Ministerial Dialogues

**These sessions of Ministerial Dialogue focused discussions on finance solutions to maximize potential funding for crisis recovery and resilience. Conversations centred on areas such as mobilizing additional funding, increasing repayable domestic finance, and consideration of innovative or new finance models.**

### What was discussed:

The dialogues considered the current multiple shocks affecting countries, and the urgent, increased need for financial prudence, more effective, quicker resource mobilization, and improved accountability. Conversations often focused on how recovery and resilience is not just about building green and climate-resilient infrastructure, it is about building resilience in services and communities. Other key topics of discussion included difficulties accessing global and regional finance mechanisms, the need to move to renewable energy for running services, and on improving infrastructure quality, operation and maintenance, in the context of increasing climate and disaster resilience. Discussions

also considered how to maximise and accurately allocate existing funding, to increase predictability for financing. A number of countries expressed interest in supporting or learning directly from other countries in the room – and one country reported 7.5% of the national budget now officially allocated to water, sanitation and hygiene, which everyone in the room applauded.

### Some of the challenges highlighted:

- Difficulty **accessing funding mechanisms** was raised by many speakers. Speakers often specified difficulties around green finance, including engaging with the Green Climate Fund. It was noted that COVID-19 had added another layer of complexity to accessing funds, by creating additional funding gaps.
- **Island states are among the most vulnerable to climate change**, and yet, in many contexts they are regarded as middle-income countries, which makes it more difficult to secure external resources.
- Even when new funding is mobilized, there are **inefficiencies in the way funds are deployed**, with references made to development partners

not well co-ordinated or aligned to government priorities.

- Challenges convincing decision makers to **create dedicated, reliable fiscal space in domestic budgets** for water, sanitation and hygiene.
- **Geographical challenges** to recovery and resilience were often raised. In remote, dry areas, infrastructure is costly to install and maintain; in flood-prone areas, infrastructure is often destroyed. Water redistribution is often held back in remote areas due to funding and gaps in reliable data.
- High operational costs and **challenges for communities to pay for water services** – balancing affordability with service provision and not increasing illegal access and non-revenue water. Vandalism and water theft often mentioned as impeding progress.
- **Impact of natural disasters** and the accelerating effects of climate change – wiping away or severely impacting infrastructure.
- **Ageing water and sanitation infrastructure**, and the inefficiencies of current systems – often due to poor quality, cheaper options and inadequate maintenance planning.
- **High population growth** means increased demand for services, and



**We have discussed with treasury the need for shocks and ambiguity to be mainstreamed in planning resilience and how we are managing our resources.**

impacts sector progress. It also directly affects climate change, health systems and economic growth.

- **Commitments that are not followed by actions**, which affects confidence, ability to mobilize finance and damages political will.

### Successes, solutions and suggestions:

- **Inter-ministerial collaboration** around programmes for water, sanitation and hygiene are crucial. Inter-ministerial decision-making bodies can decide which projects to prioritize, and resource adequately. Water, sanitation and hygiene and poverty indicators should be monitored

- **Simplify the process of accessing the Green Climate Fund.** For its part, the water, sanitation and hygiene sector should better demonstrate its contribution to climate adaptation and mitigation, so that it can more easily access green funding.
- **Recognize the importance of data.** One country's rural management information system offers live information and has won international awards. It helps the country build a data case for investing in water – for example illustrating that it helps reduce health costs. 'TrackFin' methodology was highlighted as to helping finance and manage programmes.

**Local partners are willing and able to raise funds, if given the right capacity and incentives.**

- by a national committee, not just one ministry alone.
- **Clear ministerial support** for national strategy processes and co-ordination mechanisms can strengthen the sector and attract investment.
- **Political leadership** is key to success for important decisions for sectoral improvements (for example, reforming water tariffs, or increasing water, sanitation and hygiene budgets).

- **Use SWA as a strategic platform** for knowledge exchange, sharing experiences of innovative funding mechanisms, and also explore the role of private sector and local governments.
- **Decentralize financing** – encourage local collectives to raise finance, for example by offering fund matching. Given the right regulation, capacity and incentives, local partners are willing

and able to raise funds (these include municipalities, communities, local banks, local private sector actors, and innovative collaborations with federal structures).

- **National water, sanitation and hygiene 'accounts'**, which track financial flows for the sector.
- **Seek ways to engage the youth more.**
- **Plan and budget for future disasters** – to increase resilience to these inevitable shocks.
- **Stop any over-reliance on development aid.** This should be something that kick-starts ways for countries to develop local capacity, improve governance and build resilience.
- **The idea of a 'hydro credits', similar to carbon credits.** This could create a sense of the value / impact of water, and a compensation 'market' as an element of financing the sector.

**We are the source of water for neighbouring countries, but we are vulnerable to accessing that resource for ourselves due to lack of funding and collaboration.**

- **Ensure that developed countries do not just make empty commitments on the global stage**, but reliable pledges that they are held accountable for.
- **Focus understanding and efforts on delivering the '3Ts':** fair tariffs, taxes and transfers.
- **Increase the use of technology** – such as digitization of systems, or using GPS for boreholes, to increase sector knowledge and transparency, and increase attractiveness to investors.
- **Invest in the existing infrastructure** to make systems more efficient, not just focus on new infrastructure – for example add-on technologies or employing systems to reduce non-revenue water.





## SECTOR MINISTERS' MEETING

18-19 MAY 2022  
JAKARTA

#2022SMM  
SMM-SWA.ORG



“ It’s essential that we work together across borders and sectors, with transparency and accountability.

Dr Tedros Adhanom  
Ghebreyesus, Director General,  
World Health Organization



“ You cannot expect good results without co-ordination. And you can’t do that from your desk, you must go out and co-ordinate with the people, share with the communities, listen to what is needed.

His Excellency José Antonio  
Matos, Deputy Minister for Quality  
Assurance, Ministry of Public  
Health, Dominican Republic





# Accountability matters! Strengthening partnerships, accelerating progress & building resilience Plenary

This plenary session explored why accountability matters. Accountability can accelerate and improve progress, strengthen collaboration, reinforce participation, transparency, integrity and build resilience. The session highlighted the importance of using and sharing information. It ensures transparency to demonstrate progress (or lack thereof) in meeting legal obligations, as well as other commitments that may have been made by sector actors. The session was framed in the context of 'building forward better' – creating resilient and healthy societies able to respond to the needs of recovering economies.

Recent research by the Accountability for Water Global Advisory Group indicates that accountability is one of the biggest drivers of improved performance in the water sector. The research suggested an 80% improvement in outcomes arising from improved accountability. The crucial nature of transparency and accountability was echoed in many discussions during preceding plenaries and Ministerial Dialogues at the 2022 SMM – often identified by speakers as central to the improvement of water, sanitation and hygiene services.

Speakers during this plenary session spoke passionately about accountability and transparency as critical elements to build trust, collaboration and effective partnerships for delivery – particularly in the context of securing increased finance. They spoke of the need for all stakeholders to be able to demonstrate that they are fulfilling their responsibilities – suggesting the crucial need to ensure that partners can be held accountable, both to celebrate success and action, and to establish a way to get things back on track when things are not happening as planned.



**66 The key message from CSOs in this meeting is to call for 100% transparency, zero tolerance on corruption and to join our governments to find innovative means to raise funds for our countries, reducing the dependency on donors.**

Timothy Kpeh, National Executive Director, United Youth for Peace, Education, Transparency & Development, Liberia

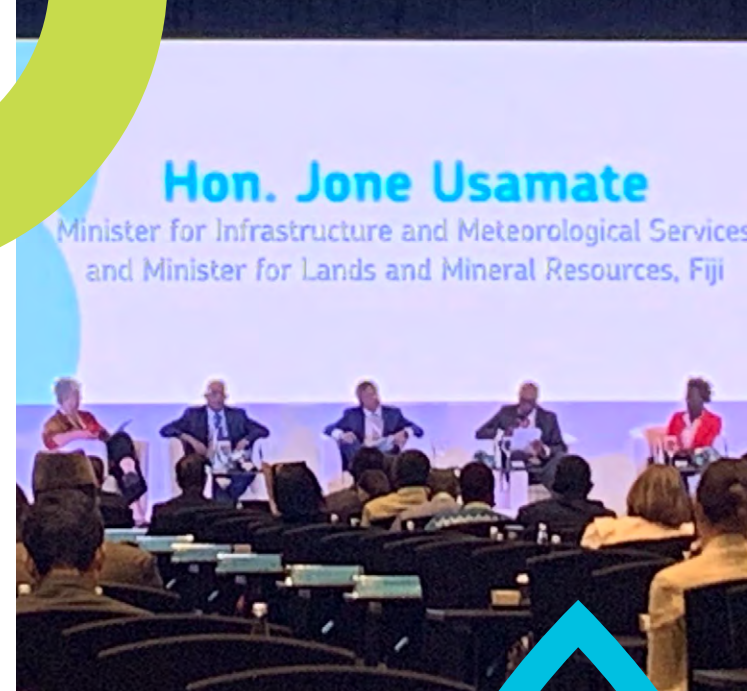


**66 Transparency on its own is necessary but not sufficient. What is critical is that transparency be partnered with accountability, and ideally with participation and inclusivity to really drive change.**

Ms. Barbara Schreiner, Executive Director, Water Integrity Network

Dr. Amaka Godfrey, Global Policy and Research Director, WaterAid, described areas that WaterAid has identified which need to be strengthened in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector: financing, coordination, government leadership, gender-inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene, and empowerment of communities. WaterAid is exploring integration between health and water, sanitation and hygiene policies, identifying roles and responsibilities to broker and strengthen partnerships – including where governments have a critical role to ensure service coverage.

Dr. Godfrey described two distinct forms of accountability, both crucial for achieving progress in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. The first includes principles and elements of accountability at the enabling level, such as regulation policy, clarity on budget and expenditure, delivery, and monitoring, as well as the coordination of external support agencies. The second form of accountability is ensuring that service providers are linked via platforms, channels, data and targets directly both to users and governments.



**Hon. Jone Usamate**  
Minister for Infrastructure and Meteorological Services  
and Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources, Fiji



**66 Mauritania has shown the utility of accountability in making the sector more credible and attractive.**

His Excellency Sidi Mohamed Taleb Amar,  
Minister for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene,  
Mauritania

His Excellency Sidi Mohamed Taleb Amar, Minister for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Mauritania, spoke about how improving transparency and accountability in the sector can ultimately attract more finance. He talked about how his country's legal frameworks are being consolidated and that legislation on water and sanitation is currently being updated, including improvements to accountability, and are expected to be ready to guide sector planning and strategies between 2022 and 2030.

The minister highlighted that the relationship between governments and civil society organizations should be complimentary, and described how his country has several platforms for sector accountability. It also has inter-sectoral, periodic reviews where government and civil society organizations come together to discuss progress. These mechanisms increase co-operation and transparency, and help to attract public investment to the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. The minister said that sanitation is now better represented in multi-stakeholder discussions regarding funding, and as a result has seen resources increased in the last decade, with a third of sector funding now directed to sanitation.

Mr. Leonard Navarro, Executive Director, Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation Regulatory Commission, Colombia, spoke about Colombia's work to improve legal and regulatory frameworks for public services in recent decades, with users considered central to all service provision, and tools in place for accountability and transparency. The central government launched initiatives in 2015 to increase quality and coverage for four major areas: informal urban settlements, isolated communities, existing markets in need of investment, and rural areas. This included clear annual targets to progressively increase access. Importantly, every service provider in the initiative must fulfil three formal responsibilities: they must have a local agreement, a social plan and a management plan to report to the relevant regulatory authorities. These responsibilities ensure that service providers can be held to account by users.

Mr. Navarro emphasized the importance of tools and channels to facilitate accountability, so that investments can be monitored and used appropriately. He described Colombia's online regulatory tools which are open to all users. Improving information systems for accountability is a challenge many countries face, but they are crucial for improving transparency, trust, and confidence.

The Hon. Jone Usamate, Minister for Infrastructure and Meteorological Services and Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources, Fiji, spoke about how his country is framing all of Fiji's water and sanitation efforts in the context of climate action – and the processes and commitments as part of the Paris Agreement. This involves capacity-building initiatives to strengthen institutional arrangements and enable transparent reporting in its implementation of NDCs, which includes targets around water, sanitation and hygiene. He explained how by ensuring that water and sanitation are interlinked with Fiji's climate commitments, the existing mechanisms of the Paris Agreement uphold the country's water, sanitation and hygiene commitments as well.

Fiji, he said, recognizes the right to clean and safe water as a social and economic right of everyone, meaning that the Government is called to account if it does not deliver. The minister also spoke about how the right to access information needs to be well-established, with meaningful participation of stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of national policies. He went on to describe the importance of meaningful, integrated, financed targets for water, sanitation and hygiene – with strong, reliable, accessible monitoring systems. As he said, "Increased access to information enables stakeholders to scrutinize the work of governments".



# Accountability for progress: Building resilience & leaving no-one behind Ministerial Dialogues

**These sessions of Ministerial Dialogue explored how ministers and others can help to establish a robust culture of accountability – and put in place the systems and capacity needed to sustain it. Conversations emphasized the particular importance of using and sharing information to drive accountability.**

## What was discussed:

Many speakers highlighted accountability as the best way to bring about progress, with the importance of government accountability becoming even more relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Speakers suggested a critical need to focus on reliable data systems, policy and regulation frameworks as key elements.

Discussions also suggested that identifying practical, visible actions or themes for ministers to focus on and deliver improves trust and accountability from citizens. Transparency was also highlighted as key to building trust and improving access for more vulnerable populations, with an emphasis on how to engage local communities. Inter-ministerial co-operation – a recurring theme in every session of the 2022 SMM

– was also discussed as key to developing efficient ways to build wide-ranging, sustainable resilience.

## Some of the challenges highlighted:

- **Overlapping responsibilities of different ministries** mean roles and responsibilities can be unclear.
- **Poor co-ordination and the competing priorities of different sectors** mean that what they are 'accountable' for can clash with the water, sanitation and hygiene

of different languages and dialects, as well as illiteracy. This is particularly true when trying to engage vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as migrants or smaller, rural communities.

- **Lack of a reliable, effective information system** for the sector means it is extremely difficult to develop sector plans and priorities, or measure progress.
- **There is a lack of technical capacity** required to engage local communities through decentralized decision-making.

## The [SWA] Mutual Accountability Mechanism allowed us to come together for the first time.

sector. For example, the agriculture sector's main priority is to provide food, but this has an impact on water use and ecosystems.

- **Unreliable electricity and / or internet** can severely hamper the effectiveness of accountability platforms.
- **Communication barriers** can present huge challenges, for example because

- **Outdated water laws** can hamper accountability – for example if they were written for a far lower or less urbanized national population.
- **Lack of perception of the value of water** can mean water is wasted. Both communities and industries can be less engaged, leading to apathy and lack of accountability.

## Successes, solutions and suggestions:

- **Promote local participation** in the process of management of water, for example through strengthening the capacity of municipalities, or engaging people and communities to develop regulations. Involvement of local-level actors is 'absolutely essential' for accountability.
- **Collaboration with other ministries is vital.** Strong co-ordination and political leadership to prioritize water, sanitation and hygiene across several ministries is key – but must include clear definition of roles and responsibilities. For example, this could include task forces, committees and national working groups on finance, to help track how funds are being used.



- **Use multi-stakeholder processes** to develop, deploy and monitor sector plans and strategies. These strengthen transparency and accountability in the sector and can attract investment.
- **Ensure reliable data systems** for information and accountability, with a focus on digital transformation and innovation (such as Geographic Information System data). Systems should be publicly accessible, and feed

- **Update legal frameworks** to enshrine the human rights to water and sanitation in national laws and constitutions.
- **Establish systems for problem reporting and complaints**, which should be accessible and reliable – for example through social media, 24/7 phoneline or other means that are truly accessible to the most marginalized.

## Because of the Mutual Accountability Mechanism, the country now has a multi-stakeholder platform in place

financial incentives, certification and reward for activities (both domestic and non-domestic) that are more sustainable, or by developing more appropriate pricing structures for non-domestic uses.

- **Develop enforceable, legal mechanisms** that can be applied when authorities and providers do not deliver on their obligations and commitments.
- **Ensure there are dedicated, low-income consumer departments** at service providers to ensure fewer people are left behind. Such departments can offer many ways to support low-income consumers, including 'zero fee' connections, social tariffs, toilets in vulnerable households, and schemes to ensure privacy and safety for women and girls in poorer areas.

## The power of civil society is fundamental – ...make an effort to get citizens as allies in the projects.

- into accountability platforms in order to monitor progress.
- **Improve data analysis and information sharing.** Transparency is crucial for data and information processes for sanitation and water management. Approach should be based on an effective, simple management information systems.

- **Revise outdated sector regulations**, to better reflect population and other changes.
- **Support decentralization**, for example by allocating a proportion of the national budget to lower tiers of government.
- **Develop mechanisms that persuade citizens and sectors to preserve water**, for example through household

## There is still a long way to go, but accountability is part of the journey.

Build forward better for recovery and resilience



# Showcasing commitments: accountability at the 2022 SMM

The 2022 SMM included two sessions dedicated to showcasing the making and monitoring of sectoral commitments as part of the preparatory process. The sessions gave vital space in the agenda, to celebrate and appreciate the commitments that have been made and delivered on. They were presented in the context of preparing for the SMM, but also relating to future milestones for sustainable development in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector: COP27, the UN 2023 Water Conference process and, ultimately, delivering on SDG 6 by 2030.

**Mr. Henk Ovink**, Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, Kingdom of the Netherlands, stated that the 2023 UN Water Conference should not be a 'talk-show', but about commitments and actions, and described the plenary session as an inspiration of what stakeholders can bring to the table. He suggested that SWA's Mutual Accountability Mechanism "shows how accountability, and the tracking of commitments is important, to understand what works to be able to bring it to scale, and then replicate it."

**The Hon. Eng. Basuki Hadimuljono**, Minister of Public Works and Housing, Republic of Indonesia, announced new multi-stakeholder commitments for the Indonesian sector, covering four major areas – strengthening political will, equity-based monitoring and community engagement, climate resilience in water, sanitation and hygiene, and seeking alternative financing. The multi-stakeholder process the minister outlined for the drafting of these commitments included the ministry engaging other government ministries, CSOs, youth groups, development partners, private sector and academia, in preparation for the Sector Ministers' Meeting.

**Her Excellency Dr. Ivete Berrio Aqui**, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Health, Panama, spoke about Panama's strengthening of community-level water management through 'Rural Water System Management Committees', as part of her country's commitments tabled in 2019. The programme is focused on rural and indigenous areas and has women's participation and leadership as a very strong component; currently, a majority of the management committees are led by women. The minister also described how further infrastructure is being developed with a mix of public and private finance, with the Government committed to exploring new financing mechanisms, including regarding moving towards a green economy. The minister re-iterated her country's commitment to sharing data and knowledge flow between countries for better regional and global governance.

## SWA's Mutual Accountability Mechanism and the 2022 SMM

As with past SWA High-level Meetings, the 2022 SMM provided a key milestone in the Mutual Accountability Mechanism's calendar. The preparatory process for these High-level Meetings offers a clear timeframe, generating momentum and creating opportunities for bringing stakeholders together to discuss progress. In the lead up to the 2022 SMM, a total of 66 new commitments were tabled, including 19 climate-related commitments, and 50 progress reports were submitted by national and global partners from all constituencies.

SWA held a dedicated session on SWA's Mutual Accountability Mechanism the day before the start of the SMM. The session gathered senior government and non-government partners from 12 countries and 10 global organizations, for them to reflect on and discuss the process of working towards mutual accountability. Conversations emphasized government leadership, strong multi-stakeholder platforms with periodic review meetings, adequate data and reliable financing as key enablers of accountability.

Key barriers highlighted by participants included sector fragmentation, changes in governments or ministries affecting policy, and the absence or non-commitment of essential actors in multi-stakeholder processes. Participants recommended areas for improvement. Suggestions included: having a wider range of actors (including regional and global) involved in commitments' monitoring; encouraging the submission of new commitments by under-represented constituencies; promoting opportunities for peer-to-peer accountability among global partners; and the harmonization of commitments made under the Mechanism with other existing commitments processes. A longer-term recommendation was to explore ways to increase alignment between Mutual Accountability Mechanism commitments (i.e. national priorities) and access to international funding.



**66 [SWA] Mutual Accountability Mechanism is supporting Nigeria's achievements towards meeting the SDG 6...We have enhanced multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination since we developed these commitments that can be measured and tracked effectively.**

Mr. Suleiman Adamu,  
Minister of Water Supply, Nigeria

**Hon. Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka**, Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water & Rural Resettlement, Zimbabwe, presented Zimbabwe's multi-stakeholder commitments tabled under SWA's Mutual Accountability Mechanism. They focus on four key areas to achieve improvements by 2025: reducing open defecation from 21% to 9%; ensuring access to water for 80% of the population; increasing sustainable financing; and improving sector regulation and coordination. The country has several means of delivering these commitments. This includes a 'National Action Committee' chaired by the sector minister and – crucially – with the involvement of all other relevant ministries. The country holds annual 'Joint Sector Reviews', where stakeholders make and monitor commitments to the sector, and also has a dedicated cabinet committee for water, sanitation and hygiene and emergency issues, which is chaired by the vice-president.

**Amb. Bobby Whitfield**, Chairman and CEO of the National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Commission, Liberia, spoke about how water and sanitation is given a high priority in the country, stemming from the leadership of the country's president. He described how water and sanitation are central to the country's 'National Development Agenda', and how Liberia's commitments on water, sanitation and hygiene are ambitious and civil society-driven, with a strong focus on access to safe drinking water, and ending open defecation – despite much of the country's infrastructure being devastated by the recent civil war. Liberia's commitments have been endorsed by the president.



**66 Government...alone won't be able to combat the impacts of climate change. Further collaboration beyond borders, peer-to-peer learning, and the use the ideas of adaptation across the globe can bring potential solutions...We think SWA is the perfect platform for that.**

Hon. Mr. Umakant Chaudhary,  
Minister of Water Supply, Nepal

**Hon. Mr. Umakant Chaudhary**, Minister of Water Supply, Nepal, highlighted recent activities implemented by the country which are aligned with Nepal's Mutual Accountability Mechanism commitments. This includes the preparation of a new 'integrated WASH policy', the updating of the broader national 'Sector Development Plan', the approval of updated national drinking water quality standards and wastewater effluent standards, and a 'hygiene for all' roadmap. He also emphasized the critical importance of data and transparency, and described the development of the 'National Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Decision Support System' as part of his country's sector commitments. He explained that "data creation, transparency and decision support for local governments are the core of this commitment".

**The Hon. Eng. Sulemain Hussen Adamu**, Minister of Water Resources, Nigeria, described Nigeria's engagement with the Mutual Accountability Mechanism since its inception in 2018. He explained that Nigeria has tabled commitments from four constituencies, all aligned with national policies, supporting government priorities. He said that since the commitments were developed, the sector had improved its multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination, as well as its capacity to measure and track progress. The country's mutual accountability commitments were developed and are monitored by a conglomeration of ministries and partners. According to the minister, "the Mechanism is supporting Nigeria's achievements towards meeting the SDG6, in that all stakeholders contribute and support national priority actions".





## 'Bringing the SMM home' Closing plenary

The meeting closed with reflections on the sessions of the previous two days, and how to take the outcomes of discussions into wider processes, including COP27, UN 2023 Water Conference, and the next SWA Finance Ministers' Meeting.

Speakers emphasized that including water, sanitation and hygiene in environment, health and economic agendas is a "real game changer". They described how discussions from the SMM will influence the actions that people will take in country – that interactions here at the conference will influence actors at the national level, to take learnings and new ideas home, generating energy and momentum to increase access to services.

It was also highlighted that the 2022 SMM is part of a global discussion, feeding into a wider calendar of regional and global events. These events will be further opportunities for the water, sanitation and hygiene sector to forge powerful relationships with other sectors in the lead up to 2030 – and make them "inclusive, cross-sectoral and action-oriented".



**66** These meetings bring an opportunity so that, in an environment of trust, stakeholders can learn and exchange information around solutions and how to bring them to scale.

Mr. Henk Ovink, Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, Kingdom of the Netherlands



**66** I am always in awe of the power of peer-to-peer learning and I think this is something that is unique about SWA and the environment that has been created in these last two days.

Ms. Alexandra Knezovich, Managing Director, Toilet Board Coalition



**66** There can be one solution for all – we have to work jointly... I know this group is big and we can make a change in the world. We can do it.

Mr Omar Nuñez, Executive Director, AHJASA (Asociación Hondureña De Juntas Administradoras De Sistemas De Agua), Honduras



**66** Being part of a Sector Ministers' Meeting that also tackles the theme of climate change is important for a country like Chad. We have created a climate national plan, and all the learnings from the SMM related to climate will be included into that document.

His Excellency Mr. Alio Abdoulaye Ibrahim, Minister of Urban and Rural Hydraulics, Chad



**66** We know that accountability is the base of trust, and communication is a pillar for multi-stakeholder collaboration, to create resilience and ensure inclusiveness in the various crises we are facing.

His Excellency Mr. Basuki Hadimuljono, Minister of Public Works and Housing, Indonesia



**66** After these two days, we have all become champions for WASH. It has been a very enriching and energizing experience.

Mr. Myo-Zin Nyint, Deputy Regional Director, UNICEF



**66** What impressed me the most in these two days was the convergence of the international community about the necessity for good governance in the water and sanitation sector. Good governance leads to transparency in decision-making – and to increased revenues for water services.

His Excellency Dr. Miguel Angelo, Secretary of State for Agriculture and Economy, Cabo Verde



**66** My takeaway message is that data collected and convened to the concerned authorities in the right way is the key to success. Until this data is clearly and precisely conveyed to organizations, no institution can work accordingly.

Ms. Saima Ashraf, CEO, The Able Plus Research Center (ApRec), Pakistan



**66** Our lives will be shaped by what the people in this room can achieve together in the next few years. And you can't decide for us, without us.

Ms. Nicole Becker, SWA's Youth Champion





## Key reflections & highlights from the 2022 SMM

- The announcement of Zimbabwe's **national 'Compact'** for water, sanitation and hygiene was a key highlight of Day 1. Discussions throughout the day often focused on ways to engage, encourage and celebrate **political leadership** – such as that illustrated by Zimbabwe's announcement.
- Many speakers highlighted how **inter-ministry collaboration** has been necessitated by global emergencies, and has been hugely beneficial. Multi-sectoral, inter-ministerial collaboration is the key to more efficient, effective, resilient development for all sectors involved. **Inter-ministerial committees** can be a highly effective way to break established norms of sectoral, 'silo' approaches.
- Accountability as a central tenet for accelerating and sustaining progress – and attracting sector finance.** This requires effective mechanisms, and tools powered by reliable, accessible data and information, to ensure transparency and that all investments are being appropriately directed.
- The power of co-ordination, of regularly gathering the relevant people to connect, plan and deliver.** It is a simple principle, but it unlocks huge potential progress, based on transparency and trust.
- "When young people defend water, sanitation and hygiene, we are doing politics"** – youth must have a say, and they are determined to hold today's decision makers to account.
- A positive consequence of the COVID-19 crisis has been that it has helped to forge learning on creating **more flexible policy and operational frameworks**, with the potential for generating pace and scale for developmental progress.
- Identifying, developing and implementing reforms** to support a stronger enabling environment was a key area of discussion – for example, actions to increase transparency, perceptions of the value of water, and community engagement and ownership of services.
- Sector strategies founded in multi-stakeholder processes** can offer confidence and stability, and help attract investment.
- This event must be seen in context of future milestones towards 2030.** COP27 will be dominated by issues around water and aligning the water, sanitation and hygiene and climate agendas will become a priority. We must ensure water, sanitation and hygiene is included in far more NDCs and NAPs, climate resilience and adaptation goals. The United Nations 2023 water conference is another important stepping stone for maintaining momentum towards universal access to water and sanitation.
- Many delegates reported informal discussions** happening on the side-lines of the SMM throughout the two days, often regarding partnerships being forged or boosted between sector and other ministries.

## Outcomes from the 2022 SMM

Ministers and SWA partners approved and published an official 'Outcome Document' outlining the results of their deliberations at the 2022 SMM. These were to: **press for urgent action to ensure political leadership; seek reforms to support a stronger enabling environment; explore innovative ways to secure resources; and consolidate accountability as a central tenet of progress in the sector.**

The Outcome Document formally pledged support for several specific conclusions and actions. These were:

### 1 The need for greater prioritization of water, sanitation, and hygiene in national, regional, and global agendas, as well as across all sectors. By:

- Taking forward the discussions from the SMM** in a multi-stakeholder and intersectoral way, to take stock of our progress and commitments, with a view towards more integrated policies, strategies and plans at country level.
- Seeking and establishing new partnerships** with actors and institutions whose mandates impact or are impacted by water, sanitation, and hygiene.
- Being champions for water, sanitation, and hygiene** and reaching up to highest level decision makers in our respective countries to emphasize the importance of prioritizing and financing water, sanitation, and hygiene to achieve the entire SDG agenda.
- Identifying and prioritizing the most vulnerable and marginalized groups**, and undertaking the necessary reforms to redress inequalities.
- Ensuring that climate resilience is prioritized** in all water, sanitation and hygiene policies, plans and programmes, and climate-resilient WASH is a central component in National Adaptation Plans.

### 2 The need for transparent and participatory processes to secure truly sustainable development. By:

- Putting multi-stakeholder processes** in place and supporting them to have a meaningful impact on decisions and policies led by the Government, with a particular focus on marginalized and underrepresented groups, including young people.
- Working together within a process of mutual accountability** to drive these transparent and participatory processes, as a critical way to track accelerated progress towards the promises we made through the SDGs, whether as Governments or other non-government constituents.

### 3 The need to support an enabling environment for the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation, to attract additional finance, and maximize value of existing financing. By:

- Undertaking the necessary reforms** to guarantee the human rights to water and sanitation for all, always and everywhere.
- Improving sector performance** to attract new finance to the sector and to use existing funds effectively and efficiently.
- Increasing prioritization of climate-resilient water and sanitation in national budgets**, and developing financing strategies and investment targets which support sustainable, safely managed, and resilient access to water and sanitation
- Bringing these conclusions to key global processes** in 2022 and 2023, such as COP27, G20 meetings, the UN 2023 Water Conference, and the 2023 SWA Finance Ministers' Meeting.

Read the full 2022 SMM Outcome Document [here](#).







# Closing remarks from SWA’s CEO

We have less than eight years remaining for the world to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We cannot be complacent. Time is fast running out.

But this meeting of ministers and expert minds in Jakarta has given me real hope. It has shown us that there are huge opportunities to accelerate progress – both on reaching SDG 6 on universal access to water and sanitation, and on the other SDGs that rely on it. But that will only happen if we make the effort to work together. We must all come away from this meeting truly grasping the need to collaborate better – to identify and achieve our mutual ambitions. We must reach out across sectors and ministries, and reach up to engage those at the very highest levels of decision making.

Although the context is challenging in many places, and there have been setbacks, I am persuaded that the SDGs are within reach, if we approach the next eight years with strong leadership and sector reform, as well as increased efforts and investments.

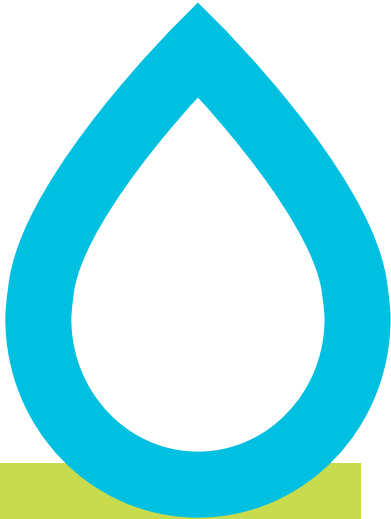
The 2022 SMM is not a static event. It was preceded by months of intense work at national, regional and global levels – and it is part of an ongoing political dialogue for the future. Work is already underway by partners at the national level for future events, and I know the foundations laid at the 2022 SMM will feed into upcoming milestones on the road to 2030 – COP27, the 2023 UN Water conference, and of course the next SWA High-level Meeting, slated for 18 months’ time.

A sincere thank-you to everyone for the work and huge efforts that went in to making the 2022 SMM a success. I am always in awe of the power of these gatherings to galvanize dialogue and collaboration, and I thank everyone who gave their time, and shared their experiences, expertise, and plans for the future as part of the SMM process. I am hugely grateful to you all.

As partnership, we will continue to work together – and we commit to even greater collective action, as well as a robust follow-up process, to track commitments and agreements made by ministers and partners. The discussions, international interactions and knowledge shared at the SMM was incredibly inspiring and encouraging. We owe it to those who still live without access to life-saving water and sanitation services to make sure we all work together, to turn our talk into action that we can all be truly proud of.



Catarina de Albuquerque  
CEO, SWA



## A sneak preview of SWA’s global campaign...

The launch of SWA’s **Justice Begins Here** campaign is scheduled for the week of the Stockholm World Water Week, at the end of August 2022.

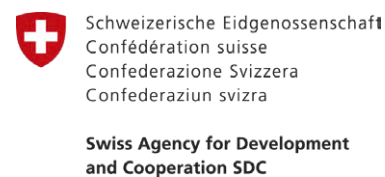
Delegates at the 2022 SMM were given a sneak preview of the campaign, with striking visual elements of the campaign taking over the venue’s restrooms. Feedback from partners was hugely positive, particularly on the way the campaign makes the direct connection between safe and effective water, sanitation and hygiene, and social justice.

The campaign will include a communications toolkit, and is designed to be a flexible, sector-wide initiative, demonstrating alignment and coordination among water and sanitation players. Discussions are underway with partners on how to include the campaign as part of their own communications, and during key upcoming sector occasions, such as UN’s 2023 Water Conference.

The pre-launch micro-site is up and running, for anyone to register their interest, and to get involved.



The 2022 SMM was made possible thanks to the support of SWA core donors



We are also grateful for the contributions by







# SECTOR MINISTERS' MEETING

18-19 MAY 2022  
JAKARTA



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