

# Sanitation and Water for All: *A Global Framework for Action* Statement of Water Ministers

*We, the Ministers of Water and Sanitation from Africa and Asia, having met in Washington on the 22 April 2010 in preparation for the first Sanitation and Water for All Global Framework for Action High Level Meeting on 23 April 2010 hereby adopt this Statement*

## **Preamble**

Nearly one billion people lack access to safe water and 2.5 billion lack access to improved sanitation. 2.2 million children die every year from water and sanitation related diseases. The health, social and economic impacts for our countries are staggering. At the current rate of progress the world will miss the sanitation Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target, and, although it will reach the water MDG target by 2015, there will still be 672m people without access to safe water. This situation is unacceptable and comes at the expense of the livelihoods of the poor, particularly women. Poor performance in our sector holds back progress across all the MDGs.

Water is essential for economic growth, poverty reduction and the impacts of climate change will be felt largely through water. Drinking water and sanitation should be seen in the context of overall regional and local water resource management whereby cooperation between key stakeholders and users is essential.

The social, health and economic impacts of neglecting investment in sanitation and water have been under-estimated. Poor sanitation and water trigger a downward slide into poverty, where the sector economic impact is often found to be excess of 5% GDP. The economic benefits of achieving universal access to sanitation and drinking water are estimated at US \$171 billion per year. Sanitation and water interventions deliver economic returns of at least 5 times on investment, with an annual rate of return of 20% or more.

Aid flows in sanitation and water are poorly targeted to the poorest. Only 42% of development aid commitments in the sector were targeted to the least developed or low income countries. A high proportion of aid for sanitation and water is not targeted towards basic services or the poor. Over the last five years aid to basic services has declined from 27% to 16%. In addition only 37% of sector aid was targeted to sanitation, in comparison to 63% to water. In addition global aid to water and sanitation reduced as a percentage of total aid from 6.3% to 4.7% between 2000 and 2008.

The Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008) need to be better implemented in the water and sanitation sector in order to meet our MDG targets. This includes improved collaboration between all parties to improve aid effectiveness.

The Africa Water Vision 2025, the African Union Heads of State Declaration on Water (Sharm El-Sheikh, 2008), the eThekweni Declaration on Sanitation (2008), and the commitments made at SACOSAN Delhi, outline how we propose to meet out water and sanitation Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The challenge now is to address the bottlenecks and constraints in our sector and ensure it receives political priority both in our countries and internationally.

*We therefore, together with donors and civil society organisations have established the SWA-GF4A as our global platform for dialogue, mutual accountability and monitoring progress on commitments towards achieving universal and sustainable access to sanitation and drinking water. Through this platform we can jointly realize the targets and actions set out in our declarations and ensure that all available resources are prioritised and properly targeted. The SWA-GF4A enables us to work together within a common, transparent, accountable and results-oriented framework for action.*

***We Commit to:***

- **Advocating and providing the evidence of the benefits** of investing in water and sanitation so that this sector is prioritised in our national budgets.
- **Developing credible National Plans** for meeting the water and sanitation MDG targets and ensuring sustainable service delivery. This includes improving planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring processes, and to advocate for peer reviews of sector plans.
- **Providing strong sector leadership** and ensuring coordination for implementing national plans. We will ensure clear roles and responsibilities within the sector which also provide for donor coordination and civil society participation.
- **Identifying and addressing the institutional capacity gaps** for implementing our National Plans.
- **Undertake Annual Monitoring** and review of progress against our National Plans with the participation of all the key sector stakeholders. In the interests of strengthening the accuracy and depth of global sector knowledge, we commit to continue to supporting preparatory activities for GLAAS report, Joint Monitoring Program activities and, where applicable, Country Status Overview processes.

***We call on the donor community to:***

- **Reach a target of over 50% of sector aid to low income countries** by 2013.

- **Increase the percentage of sector aid allocated to basic services to 27%** of the total sector aid by 2013.
- **Increase investment for meeting the water and sanitation MDG targets** so that no credible national water and sanitation plan goes unimplemented due to a lack of funds.
- **Provide catalytic funding for technical assistance** to help us address our institutional capacity issues and develop our national plans, thereby enabling the poorest countries to effectively utilise the increased investment in the sector.
- **Monitor and report on the implementation of the Paris Declaration Principles and Accra Agenda for Action** towards improving aid effectiveness in the water and sanitation sector.
- **Enter into partnerships or compacts with our governments based on mutual accountability** of donors to our governments and our governments to our citizens.