



**Ministry of Finance  
Ministry of Water Resources Development and Management**

**Short Statement by the Government of Zimbabwe on Water and Sanitation Commitments for the first Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) High Level Meeting and Water Ministers Dialogue, April 22-23, 2010<sup>1</sup>, Washington DC, USA**

**Zimbabwe Representatives:**

**Honourable Minister of Finance, T. L. Biti**

**Honourable Minister of Water Resources Development and Management, S.S. Nkomo**

**Introduction**

Zimbabwe's water supply and sanitation (WSS) services, which have a proud history of achievement in coverage, management and innovation, have suffered a major collapse in both urban and rural areas over the last decade. The implosion of the economy, the collapse of public sector investment, diminishing revenue and the flight of donor finance have limited investment in an already aging infrastructure. A nationwide cholera epidemic in August 2008 triggered an emergency response and highlighted the precarious state of the sector. Zimbabwe's sector performance is below its national targets and is currently not on track to meet the MDGs.

The creation of an inclusive government and the stabilization of the economy are now stimulating the recovery of infrastructure development. Government of Zimbabwe is committed to stepping up the pace of WSS development. In September 2009 the cabinet endorsed that the Minister of Water Resources and Development Management take the lead in this renewal. In February 2010 the Ministry hosted a Minister's retreat for main sector agencies to develop a clear framework with accountable institutional arrangements for development of the sector. The retreat outcomes are expected to be endorsed by Cabinet by the time of the HLM. It has followed this up with an April 2010 stakeholders meeting to build momentum and support for the sector amongst development partners civil society and the private sector.

In rebuilding the sector, the Government of Zimbabwe is seeking to reach out, learn from others and strengthen its contribution to global and regional dialogue to solve problems of mutual concern. Zimbabwe welcomes the timely opportunity created by the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) initiative in hosting the first High Level Meeting (HLM). It brings to the meeting the following commitments, consistent with the intentions and purposes of Sanitation and Water for All.

**A. Political Prioritisation for Water and Sanitation:**

1. **Renewal of Leadership:** The Deputy Prime Minister, responsible for the Infrastructure cluster of Government will take oversight over the sector. A Cabinet Steering Committee for Water and Sanitation, chaired by the Ministry of Water Resources Development and Management will provide the political leadership in the sector. Included in the Cabinet Steering Committee will be: the Ministers for Agriculture; Health and Child Welfare; Transport, Communications and

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<sup>1</sup> To be held in the World Bank alongside the World Bank Spring Meetings and hosted by UNICEF.

Infrastructure Development; Environment; Energy; and Local Government, Rural and Urban Development.

2. **Budget Priority:** The Minister of Finance has made the water sector a priority in his November 2009 budget speech with the intention of committing \$109m of treasury resources to WSS in 2010.
3. **Institutional Arrangement for Leadership, Oversight and Coordination:** The Cabinet memo re-establishes a National Action Committee (NAC) for Water and Sanitation, chaired by the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Water Resources Development and Management, to lead and coordinate the sector. Ministry membership shall not be below Director level. NAC will be supported by an executive body, the National Coordination Unit (NCU) to support the NAC and its three sub-committees coordinating the rural sub-sector, the urban sub-sector and the water resource management sub-sector. Strengthening regulation would be one of the items to be considered by the NAC.
4. **Commitment to Increase Dialogue and Collaboration with Partners:** The Government welcomes the recently-established Donor Coordination Group co-chaired by the World Bank and UNICEF. NAC shall work closely with the Donor Coordination Group; the WASH cluster which coordinates NGO sector activities; and the private sector.
5. **Commitment to SWA and to engage in the HLM:** The Government endorses the draft guiding principles of SWA<sup>2</sup>, the AMCOW eThekweni declaration on sanitation and the AU Sharm El Sheikh commitments on water and sanitation.

#### **B. Strengthening Evidence-based Decision-Making:**

1. **Commitment to renew Zimbabwe's sector data base and national monitoring systems:** Zimbabwe's sector information systems need renewal. The cabinet memo endorses the monitoring responsibilities of the MWRDM for water resources, MLGRUD and NCU for urban and rural services, and MOHCW for sanitation and water quality. Zimbabwe commits itself to sharing appropriate sector information with the Global Annual Assessment of the water and sanitation sector (GLAAS)
2. **Zimbabwe Country Status Overview:** Zimbabwe is collaborating with AMCOW and partners in developing a country status overview of the WSS sector to pool sector information and provide a regionally consistent and credible guide to investments, policies and processes to get Zimbabwe on track to achieve its national targets and accelerate performance against the MDGs.
3. **Policy Update:** MWRDM intends leading a process for a comprehensive update of Zimbabwe's water sector policies. The policy update will reflect the policies of the inclusive Government, respond to new realities in Zimbabwe, and incorporate new knowledge and insights from reflection of its own and others' experience. Government's intentions are to rebuild a viable sector to stimulate the economy and provide sustainable services to all Zimbabweans, including targeting of the unserved.

#### **C. Rejuvenating National Planning Processes**

1. **Resource Mobilization:** The sector in Zimbabwe has been starved of resources. Government recognizes that over-reliance on state and donor finance is a central lesson from its recent sector history. Government's intention is to lead the sector's resource mobilization through treasury, increasing revenue streams, improving performance to attract private finance and in dialogue with its partners. Government

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<sup>2</sup> Attached as Annex 1

welcomes the establishment of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (with one of its first initiatives to review tariff policies) and the Water and Sanitation Transition Fund as a first step to renewing strategic support to WSS development in Zimbabwe. The program of activities that the Government has launched with the support of development partners is intended to provide immediate assistance to urgent rehabilitation needs, technical assistance and studies to resolve key problems. It will also create a foundation for longer-term development assistance.

2. **Integrate Water and Sanitation into MTEF and National Plans:** Government intends signalling its commitment to the water sector through allocations in the Medium Term Expenditure Forecast. Water and sanitation will be fully incorporated into national development planning processes.
3. **Annual Joint Sector Reviews:** Building on the tone and outcome of the April 2010 Stakeholder meeting, the NAC will be establishing a process of commissioning an annual sector review to be discussed at a joint sector meeting with all sector government and support agencies in order to build momentum behind strategic decisions to shape the sector.
4. **Priority Focus on Rehabilitation:** Government's priority for sector financing are: (i) investments needed to mitigate high risks to the loss of life and existing physical assets; (ii) investments needed to rehabilitate existing capacity and improve financial sustainability; and (iii) investments needed to expand capacity to under- and under-served populations.

### **Our Expectations**

The Government of Zimbabwe has embarked on a process at the national level to develop a framework that gives clarity and direction, and ascribes accountability for WSS development. Zimbabwe is similarly looking to SWA at a global level to provide a framework for an exchange of views between governments, donors and international agencies, a forum for the development of global strategies to achieve sanitation and water for all and for accountability in making progress and providing support for the achievement of global targets. We are coming to Washington to learn, share our experiences, and meet potential new partners.

The Government of Zimbabwe notes the skewedness of international aid flows as identified in the GLAAS report and welcomes SWA's initiative to discuss tools and approaches in the architecture of international development assistance to the water sector. We are hoping that SWA will provide a vehicle for:

- giving higher global prioritization to the sector,
- increasing the global resource base for the sector;
- better targeting of resources to areas of greatest need;
- enhanced country and sector knowledge and share experience on strengthened donor harmonization;
- increasing transparency in aid and accountability of commitments; and
- providing a stronger voice for developing countries in global dialogue on WSS development.

## ANNEX 1: Sanitation and Water for All – A Global Framework for Action

### Draft Guiding Principles

Sanitation and Water for All is a global partnership between developing countries, donors, multi-lateral agencies, civil society and other development partners working together to achieve universal and sustainable access to sanitation and drinking water, with an immediate focus on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the most off-track countries. Recognizing that countries and organizations around the world achieve more by working together, it is a transparent, accountable and results-oriented framework for action that provides a common vision, values and principles.

#### Recognising that:

1. Universal access to sanitation and drinking water fundamentally underpins economic growth, human security and all aspects of social development, especially health.
2. Sanitation and drinking water underlie achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals.
3. Political prioritisation, comprehensive planning frameworks and evidence-based decision making are essential factors to achieve universal access to sanitation and drinking water.
4. A high degree of political as well as environmental uncertainty, in particular from climate change, places rigorous demands on Sanitation and Water for All to be both flexible and adaptive in its operations and initiatives.

#### The following principles guide the Partnerships efforts:

1. All stakeholders have important and relevant contributions to make – including governments, multilateral and intergovernmental organisations, development banks, civil society organisations and the people using services.
2. Sustainability of services should guide all strategies and actions to improve access to sanitation and drinking water.
3. Targeting the unserved and maintaining existing services should take precedence over improving services for the already served.
4. Particular support is to address the countries and contexts, such as access inequalities for rural, poor and internally marginalized populations, which are most off-track for reaching the MDG target on sanitation and water.
5. Knowledge and evidence must be sought and transparently shared to inform policy-making and action at all levels.
6. Aid effectiveness must increase significantly to achieve sanitation and water for all, in line with the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action commitments on country ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, mutual accountability, predictability, country systems, conditionality, and untying aid.
7. Prior commitments by donors and developing countries serve as a strong foundation to increase access to sanitation and drinking water and for improving aid effectiveness. These commitments should continue to be translated into action and results.
8. The Sanitation and Water for All should build on and support existing country and regional institutions, processes and sector networks.
9. Sector engagement in fragile states and situations should be guided by OECD-DAC Principles of Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations in those contexts.