Partnering to finance the water, sanitation and hygiene targets Of the Sustainable Development Goals

The upcoming SWA Finance Ministers’ Meeting (FMM) will be convened in Washington DC, USA, in the week of 13-19 April on a date to be confirmed. The FMM will be hosted by and convened in partnership with the World Bank Water Global Practice. The objective of the FMM is to highlight practical actions that finance ministers can take to mobilize additional financing through increased cost recovery, better planning, and improved efficiency to deliver universal access to water supply and sanitation. This will be achieved by presenting evidence, practical experience and active dialogue between participants.

Unique in the sector, the FMMs are the culmination of robust ongoing strategic dialogue at country level, involving multiple stakeholders bound together by the belief that good governance and mutual accountability are key to achieve water and sanitation for all, always and everywhere.

This year’s FMM will be the fifth edition of the event, which is complemented by the regular SWA Sector Ministers’ Meetings (SMMs). The last FMM was hosted by the World Bank during their Spring Meetings in April 2017 and the last SMM was hosted by the government of Costa Rica in April 2019, co-convened by UNICEF and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Ultimately, the FMM will ensure that:

Finance ministers come away inspired by the discussions and real-life examples presented during the meeting and persuaded of the opportunities to make a difference in the lives of those currently without access to safely managed water supplies and sanitation.

During the Meeting, ministers will present short compelling experiences and evidence to illustrate key challenges and opportunities for closing the sector financing gap – including improving revenues (tariffs, taxes, transfers, commercial efficiency), reducing costs (capital and operational efficiency) and mobilizing additional financing (climate funds, market finance). The FMM will focus on four topics:

1. Planning and Financing Strategy to deliver SDGs
2. Improving Sector Performance
3. Incentive-based Financing
4. Climate finance as new sources of financing

These experiences will be the foundation for exchanges between participants - including finance ministers, sector ministers and representatives of SWA partners from the private sector, civil society, research and learning, development banks, and UN agencies.
The FMM lasting effect

The 2020 FMM is part of, and contributes to, an ongoing cycle of activities jointly implemented by SWA partners. The discussions in Washington DC will be key for partners to build a closer and ongoing relationship with finance ministers at national level. They will also guide, and facilitate progress towards, the achievement of national and global commitments tabled under the Mutual Accountability Mechanism. The main conclusions and key messages of the Meeting will contribute to the ongoing SWA High-level Political Dialogue including the 2021 Sector Ministers’ Meeting.

THE 2019 FMM PREPARATORY PROCESS

SWA partners will be engaged in a dedicated 6-month preparatory process to strengthen or catalyze in-country dialogue and action and prepare ministers of finance for their participation at the FMM. The 2019/2020 preparatory process will:

- Build political will and action of decision-makers (i.e. finance and sector ministers) to agree policy approaches required to mobilize additional finance, improve cost-recovery and sector efficiency. This includes prioritizing the sector through budgeting and medium-term expenditure frameworks
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder dialogue and analysis around the status of investments in the sector, opportunities for additional resource mobilization, cost-recovery and improved sector efficiency
- Prepare ministers for engagement with their peers at the FMM and for dedicated action after the meeting on their country’s priorities for financing water, sanitation and hygiene targets
- Mobilize support from all stakeholders to align development cooperation behind government-led sustainable sector finance strategies, and use the mutual accountability mechanism to have a more predictable and transparent planning and review cycle for the sector targets

The primary output of the preparatory process will be a country summary document – the Country Overview - which synthesizes the country-specific context, investment history, future financing scenarios to achieve the goals and the policy priorities to achieve the financing goals of the country.

The Country Overview will also be used as a briefing for the finance ministers who will attend the meeting in Washington DC, in April 2020. Sector ministers will also use the Country Overview in inter-ministerial discussions with their counterparts responsible for finance, economic development and planning. The Country Overview should be an output of the national multi-stakeholder dialogue and can contribute to broader sector reviews such as joint sector reviews.

For questions about the 2020 FMM, please contact the SWA Secretariat:
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