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Photo credit: SWA / Jess Hoffman
Introduction

The second Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Partnership Meeting took place in Geneva, Switzerland from 11-13 November 2013, hosted by SWA partner the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation.

The meeting brought together a diverse group of over 120 SWA partners and potential partners (developing country governments, donors, development banks, civil society, multilaterals, sector partners and research and learning institutions). The Partnership Meeting is part of SWA’s governance and is the regular meeting, open to all partners, to update partners on progress and give strategic direction to move the partnership forward. The meeting is also an opportunity for cross-learning and for increasing familiarity and dialogue within and between the different SWA constituencies. Following the success of the second High Level Meeting (HLM) in 2012 and the growth in membership to 93 partners, this meeting was situated at a critical point in the development of the partnership. In addition, with less than five months to go before the third SWA High Level Meeting in April 2014, participants were able to chart out the preparatory process to build momentum towards this key WASH sector event.

The three-day Partnership Meeting brought together a diverse range of sector players in a positive, inclusive and participatory dialogue. This report gives insights into the dialogue and discussion that took place and is mainly intended for those who are already engaging in SWA at various levels, including those who attended the Geneva meeting.

“Switzerland supports the global sector monitoring and analysis systems as a basis. In the WASH sector, we are happy to work with the international community on the JMP, GLAAS and the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership. The latter we consider as an influential global task force to advocate for action based on the monitoring and analyses of JMP and GLAAS”.
François Münger, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
An agenda designed to meet the expectations of all participants

Significant efforts were put into planning the agenda for the second Partnership Meeting, based partly on feedback following the first meeting, which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2012. A survey of all participants sounded out their expectations for the meeting and their inputs on a draft agenda were taken very seriously.

A key challenge was to design an agenda that would allow diverse participants to discuss issues of common interest, whilst also allowing those new to the partnership to engage on an equal footing with more established members. A decision was also taken to profit from the Geneva location by getting representatives from other multi-stakeholder partnerships (several of whom are based there) to share their experience and learning.

It was agreed that the first day of the meeting should focus on ‘looking back’ and, as well as provide an introduction to SWA for newer members, to take stock of the partnership and its achievements to date. Day two built on this by ‘looking forward’ and was largely built around two pillars – firstly a visioning exercise, secondly interventions from outside groups that can lend valuable perspective. The last day was designed to wrap all this together, making tangible recommendations and suggestions for the Steering Committee.

A half-day programme on day three also gave different member organisations a chance to share their perspectives on topics as diverse as:

1. the High-Level Commitments Dialogue (HLCD) and the High Level Meeting (HLM);
2. the various tools available to help partners engage in SWA-related work; and
3. the success and challenges of national advocacy campaigns.
Day one: Taking stock of the partnership

The first day looked back and took stock of the added value that SWA provides to the sector. A series of discussions and interventions from partners confirmed that SWA is serving a unique global function: providing a political platform for high-level sector dialogue; improving accountability; supporting the development of realistic national plans in off-track countries; improving sector coordination; helping to make the case for increased budget allocations to WASH; increasing visibility of sanitation and hygiene; and helping to build a strong evidence base for action and advocacy. As one participant put it, “no other platform is building, strengthening and creating political will for universal access to WASH”.

The Chair of the session posed four clear questions to various representatives of the different constituencies that make up SWA. These questions were:

1. How has SWA changed the way your organization works?
2. What concrete results has SWA achieved in your country (and globally)?
3. What has happened that would have not otherwise happened?
4. What has been challenging and what risks do you see for the future?

These questions were put to Mr Nadjiam Dirabay, WASH Programme Coordinator, Association pour la Defense des Droits des Consommateurs (ADC), Chad; Mr Joli Solphi Hamelo, Director of Partnership Development, Ministry of Water, Madagascar; Mr Samuel Ome, Ministry of Water Resources in Nigeria; Mr Leonard Tedd, Senior Infrastructure Adviser in the WASH team, DFID, UK; and Mr Alpha Nabe, Director General, Service des Points d’Eau, Guinea Conakry; each of whom had their own perspectives on how SWA has contributed to their organization, country-level or global activities.

Points mentioned by the civil society members include SWA providing a framework for civil society organizations to bring about actions at a national level and, through collaboration, strengthen their voice in dialogue with decision makers. This, however, requires strong advocacy skills, which would benefit from external support.
National governments have seen tangible changes. In Madagascar membership has triggered the setting up of a hygiene and sanitation department within the national ministry. This is a good beginning but for actions on the ground to result, time and patience are needed and it helps if other partners appreciate that. For those from Guinea Conakry, the HLM also played a key role – to the extent that the ministers of finance, environment and hydrology all travelled together to Washington DC. A direct result was increased funding to the sector – importantly not just from outside sources, but from domestic sources (which comes with fewer conditions and is less often delayed). WASH is now considered a priority sector in Guinea Conakry and efforts are being made to reach out to the health sector and the health minister. The SWA HLM in 2012 produced profound outcomes in Nigeria, including a ministerial meeting attended by the President. This coordination amongst ministers has led to greater visibility for the sector and assisted greatly when it comes to lobbying for high-level funding.

For the technical and financial partners, each has ‘lived’ SWA in a different way. In the United Kingdom, SWA has made a significant difference: the Secretary of State attended the 2012 HLM, announcing that the UK had doubled its ambition. DFID considers mutual accountability to be a very important contribution that the partnership makes, something which SWA’s advocacy towards the general public can support (“by keeping the pressure up”). Nevertheless, a significant challenge is seen as the need to transition to the ‘post-2015 environment’, which represents a new paradigm that SWA must be flexible in responding to.

Following plenary interventions the meeting dived straight into a facilitated discussion on the added value of SWA. Constituencies were invited to coalesce in groups and, with the aid of a moderator, discussed the same set of questions. Rather than then have all groups feedback into plenary in succession (and to thus avoid nine consecutive presentations) the participants were asked to share their reflections on the added value of partnership through a “walk around” of flipcharts that captured some of the key points. Importantly, participants were encouraged to be even-handed in their assessments and address the challenges too – the box on page 5 captures some of the points that emerged across several of the groups present.
It is not all ‘plain sailing’, there are challenges too

Some of the challenges discussed related to in-country government capacity and the ability to retain momentum (“Changes in leadership at ministerial level leads to lack of continuity; Government capacity is weak; how do we maintain an on-going dialogue?”)

Others touched on fragmentation and the difficulties of building lasting coalitions across diverse constituencies (“Lack of one voice at government level; Harmonisation and coordination are not easy”).

Regional disparities were alluded to (“SWA lacks focus on Asia; a challenge for SWA is to mainstream in Asian countries, we need to take account of national processes. Need to give enough room for partners to participate in their own locations”).

Some felt that rhetoric can sometimes supersede the reality (“The term accountability is used a lot and is now part of our vocabulary, but this has not always been the case in the WASH world – hard evidence needs to accompany the rhetoric around accountability; how do we entrench the issue of WASH at national level when backsliding is a real risk?”)

The linkages between different levels and between sectors can sometimes fray (“stronger links are needed between the partnership at global and local levels; civil society organizations especially need to build their capacity to engage in advocacy”).

Given the limited resources there is a need to be strategic and ‘pick your battles’ (“how can SWA best assist countries and retain a strategic vision of the overall sector, even where policies are put in place they can soon become outdated”).
Day two: Building a common vision for the future

Whereas the first day was about taking stock and looking back at the partnership’s achievements and challenges, the second day was about looking forward, facing up to new challenges and seeking inspiration from others. Building on a well-received session on visioning held during the Steering Committee meeting in London earlier in the year, a highly interactive series of sessions was put together in order to force partners ‘out of their comfort zone’, getting them to discuss issues of common concern with other constituencies and to refine and shape their vision for the future.

An interlude in the visioning process then followed, allowing for a short series of highly thought-provoking sessions in order to brief partners on the changing context in which SWA works as well as to get lessons from partnerships that work in other sectors (and which have been in place longer than SWA). These sessions helped partners to stretch their thinking, lift their head from current pressing challenges and start to plan for a changing and uncertain context.

Partners, re-energised by this stimulus (as well as the dynamic intervention of Mr. Sena Alouka alias ‘Mr Paracetamol’ from Togo) then came back into their constituencies and debated how their discussions with others could inform a mutual vision – where specific action areas could be proposed to the Steering Committee – all of which would help turn a ‘co-created’ vision for the partnership into reality on the ground. The vision articulated at the meeting puts country-leadership, driving momentum for universal access squarely at the centre of what SWA does. Partners’ recommendations included promoting closer collaboration among global stakeholders at country level; strengthening sector monitoring; and remaining open to engaging with new partners (for instance additional Asian and Latin American countries; the private sector – including local small scale private sector; non-traditional donors – including Arab countries; and local government). The visioning exercise was partly about provoking interchange between different constituents with the aim of ensuring that any vision was – to the extent possible – co-created (rather than be the product of a stubborn and drawn-out negotiation of ‘positions’). Partly it was about bringing robust suggestions through to the Steering Committee meeting the following day. The following box gives a flavour of some of discussions; the specific suggestions made by different constituency groups can be found in a table in Annex C.
Reflections on visioning exercise

There was a lot of discussion around commitments and monitoring. This may reflect the fact that, as the partnership matures, it is more confident about being bolder on enforcing the core issue of mutual accountability. The fact that 100 per cent of the entities – developing countries and donors – that had made commitments at the 2012 High-Level Meeting reported back on their progress in meeting their commitments is seen as a strong indicator of effective mutual accountability. Discussions related to developing stronger mechanisms to achieve targets, being more critical in naming countries that are not making the progress expected and thinking about accountability in new ways. Natural tensions were revealed, for instance, between a narrowing of the tools (“harmonisation of monitoring platforms”) and more country-specific processes (“encouraging ‘bottom up’ monitoring, strengthened in-country rather than being a top-down process”).

A lot revolved around leadership (“Need for partners to step up and take leadership roles; Need for strong voice at national level”) and keeping promises made (“Organizations need to be continually reminded of the fact they are accountable. Without pressure, there is a tendency to slip and lose focus”). Yet SWA is also voluntary in nature – no-one can be forced to participate – and some remained mindful of this (“How do we increase accountability without scaring people away from the partnership? It is trust, confidence, honesty and transparency that lead accountability – and these take time to build”).

Accompanying this talk about commitments came much discussion of some principles upon which SWA should be based. This was in part prompted by discussions around the appropriate role of the private sector (“We need to develop guidelines on how to engage with the private sector”), something the input from the other sector partnerships helped to illuminate. Amongst more generic calls around a partnership vision (“Clear purpose. Clear principles”), some wanted to go further (“Be clear what SWA is and is not”).

Accountability themes continued to emerge (“Whatever the vision statement is for SWA, it must reflect the importance of accountability. Currently commitments are not being fulfilled. Lack of accountability is a major issue for the sector; Ultimate accountability is to the people we are trying to represent. Give those people space to interact.”) and this should apply not only to existing partners (“Articulate better the role of partners, what they are accountable for and share this with partnership as a whole”) but also to new ones (“New partners should also have clearly articulated roles and responsibilities and be asked to subscribe to the accountability agenda of SWA”).

Another clear push was to move beyond just the headline numbers and address effectiveness issues (“The SWA role should focus on development effectiveness and not just the commitments; Need to have more a focus on how money is spent. Money may not be being spent in the right way. What needs to happen for money to be spent correctly and how do we track this?”). Yet softer, internal, issues were not ignored. Learning was a key one (“We should facilitate better partner to partner learning and horizontal learning. What works?”) as were internal and external coordination (“What are the tools we are going to use to address how people work together, promoting coordination? How do we measure some of these things? Can we link better to regional sanitation conferences?”)

Lastly, as the partnership grows and a more sophisticated understanding of how such global partnerships work takes root, the need for modular approaches and tailored plans became evident (“Partners won’t all engage in the same way so we need a modular approach – variable geometry”).
Day two: Addressing key strategic issues for SWA

The meeting provided a golden opportunity to discuss three key strategic issues:

- Improving aid-effectiveness and its role in strengthening national processes;
- Influencing the post-2015 agenda;
- Learning from other global partnerships about how to increase SWA’s impact and appreciation of WASH by other sectors.

Mini-sessions on these three issues were taken up with gusto by various SWA partners and provided a lot of food for thought for participants, helpfully coming mid-way through the visioning exercise on day two. Some highlights follow.

SWA’s role in improving aid-effectiveness – focus on accountability

This session – combining PowerPoint presentations and a panel discussion – was moderated by Henry Northover, Head of Policy at WaterAid. Panellists and presenters included: Bai-Maas Taal, Executive Secretary of AMCOW; Khairul Islam, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government, Bangladesh; Chaibou Tankari, Director General of Water and Environment, Niger; Leonard Tedd, Senior Infrastructure Adviser in WASH, DFID, United Kingdom; Erma Uytewaal, Head of the Africa Programme at IRC; and Lajana Manandhar, Executive Director of Lumanti Support Group for Shelter, Nepal.

“There really is a challenge to have very clear attribution between development results and the inputs that have come from taxpayer money”
Leonard Tedd, DFID, UK
Leonard Tedd talked about the shift in pressure on donor institutions; where there is increasing pressure to show clearly how taxpayers’ money has led to development impacts. This creates a natural tension between supporting processes that deliver shorter-term measurable outputs and processes that seek to deliver longer term structural changes.

Bai-Maas Taal stressed how the WASH sector still has some way to go to make WASH a priority within countries – hence the need for buy-in at the highest level. He cited Nigeria is a good example, where a Presidential Summit led to increased engagement from the finance minister.

Chaibou Tankari highlighted the very real challenges a lack of donor harmonisation poses for recipient governments and the practical challenges on bringing about alignment between ministries and between donor partners.

Lajana Manandhar addressed the issue of accountability, describing how, in Nepal, civil society has contributed to the dialogue around making aid more effective. A key role stressed was the ability of civil society to facilitate and bridge the gap between government and communities (particularly marginalized ones). She did however lament that no one mentions corruption and the on-going damage it engenders.

Takeaway messages focused on how institutions, policy and capacity matter and cannot be ignored. The countries that do best are those that have linked their WASH activities clearly to core governmental systems and have aligned aid to these. SWA was thus urged to focus on the principles of aligning and coordinating aid behind existing government systems and work at all levels of the partnership to reinforce this.

**Improved water and sanitation sector**
- Stronger sector policy that addresses MDG targets
- Single budget that supports policy objectives
- Coordination mechanisms and structures
- Strengthened institutions
- Capacity for financial management, procurement, and monitoring
- Improved governance, including accountability and transparency
- More sustainable services provision

**Development partner or donor**
- Shift from project aid to sector budget support
- Alignment with country policies and priorities
- Delivery of aid through country systems
- Support for service delivery rather than infrastructure only
- Coordination and use of joint funding mechanisms

**Virtuous cycle of Aid Effectiveness**

**Effect of focus on aid effectiveness**
- Focus on country ownership and building capacity
- Focus on strengthening sector policies
- Support for national sector planning
- Access to technical support
- Reduced transaction costs
- Coordination across the sector
- More performance monitoring
- Better sector governance

*Source: Williamson et al., 2008*
Bruce Gordon and Sanjay Wijesekera, from WHO and UNICEF respectively, gave partners an insight into the discussions at the UN around the post-2015 agenda, i.e. what comes after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SWA Steering Committee has already developed a statement on WASH in the post 2015 context and is encouraging member states to find various opportunities to intervene in the wider UN processes that address these issues.

For its part, UN Water is preparing a position paper on this topic (still in preparation). It was clarified that there are two main processes: one that is led by UN member states (this process grew out of a recent summit in Rio and is now working through a body called the ‘Open Working Group’); and a second that is led by the Secretary General and which takes the form of a ‘global conversation’ to which a ‘High Level Panel of Eminent Persons’ contributed a report in May 2013.

Key takeaways on SWA ability to add value to the post-2015 agenda

1. SWA is a unique platform which allows a different means for member states to discuss and which lies outside of formal UN negotiations.

2. The High-Level Commitments Dialogue (HLCD) is taking place at a critical moment in terms of the post-2015 processes.

3. The HLCD offers a great opportunity to engage partners in-country and therefore funnel a wider range of contributions (from diverse stakeholders) to the post-2015 discussions. This lends credence to SWA inputs.

4. SWA partners, by making connections at the national level, can work together with ministries for foreign affairs to make sure that they ensure a place for WASH in the post 2015 agenda created by the UN General Assembly.

“Use your knowledge and experience to speak with your Ministry of Foreign Affairs at home to make sure they talk to and educate the people in your Permanent Mission to the UN in New York”

Catarina de Albuquerque
Learning from other sectors’ global partnerships (and increasing SWA’s presence in other sectors)

Given the location of the meeting, Geneva, where several other multi-stakeholder partnerships have their secretariat (and given the need not only to learn from other sectors but to be able to better engage with them to achieve SWA’s objectives) the organizers were doubly motivated to dedicate a session to hearing from the experience in other sectors.

Accordingly three external presenters: from the International Health Partnership (IHP), GAIN (the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) and the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) movement were invited to address the meeting. Ken Caplan and Leda Stott, who are assisting with a review of the SWA partnership, also provided good insights into how partnerships function, grow and/or stagnate.

Phyllida Travis from the International Health Partnership (IHP) shared her experience – in the sphere of health – in building up a complex reporting and monitoring exercise. She emphasised that this takes time and given there are high transaction costs in doing so, it is necessary to motivate and retain ‘volunteers’ from within supporting organizations. In their case they have tried to keep indicators to a minimum, using scorecards to raise awareness.

A challenge is that awareness is not sufficient (“action is required and this is harder”) and engagement with country processes and systems is needed. They rely on scorecards, but for them countries have seemingly moved further than development agencies in moving the aid effectiveness agenda forward.

“...A fundamental requirement to success in bringing about complex change is a willingness to transform yourself, your environment and your institutions so that you have space for completely different ways of thinking, groups of people and actions. There must be a clear and central purpose to which everybody is united. But we still have to be able to demonstrate that the results are really coming through ... this is part of accountability. So built into this way of working was abilities to measure progress and to demonstrate results”
Dr David Nabarro (SUN)
Tensions remain between development partners and recipient countries, where a lack of feedback loop can lead to perceptions within ministries that they spend all their time doing reports for others (whilst still not knowing what is going on at a macro-level in their own country). Lastly, good evidence and science is necessary but is not sufficient; good stories that resonate with the public are needed too.

David Nabarro, from the SUN movement, gave a very personal insight into his career working on issues that require complex change (so-called ‘wicked problems’). His insights ranged over issues of leadership and inspiration, vision and process to achieve it. He also used the example of moving from talk of “population control” to discussing “choice” as a powerful example of the effectiveness of reframing the dialogue. He recounted his personal experience of the necessity to create platforms and ‘movements’ that political leaders everywhere could engage with, commit to and even enjoy, but also to stand accountable for. He reiterated several times how “commitment and accountability are linked together and are the centre of partnership”.

Marc Van Ameringen explained that GAIN was created 10 years ago to take nutrition interventions to scale. In their sector, it is impossible to reach scale (i.e. 2 billion people) without engaging markets, by which they mean the private sector (“Most people do not buy their food from the ministry of health!”). Doing so – and getting to grips with the intricacies of marketing etcetera – has been complicated, but the reward for grappling with this complexity has been great.

GAIN is a multi-sector partnership that once had a tight constituency structure. It did away with this as it found that not all constituencies were organised to participate and within some constituencies there were significant conflicts of interest (some constituencies were implementing agencies or receiving money from GAIN itself). GAIN decided that where people from the private sector were to sit on the board, they should do so in their individual capacities (in respect to this, Marc emphasised that there is a critical need to have clarity around incentives, as well as to accept that a fundamental goal of the private sector is to make profit in the short or long term).

The private sector is also very diverse and “one size does not fit all”. Alongside the multinationals there are lots of smaller businesses that still have a lot to contribute. A view that ran through several of these interventions was that “there are no boundaries; rather there are rules of engagement”.

“Anger, frustration, injustice, incompetence: all have driven me throughout my career”

Dr David Nabarro, Coordinator of the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) movement

“My ability on my own to make change is virtually zero. But if I can work with other people, suddenly extraordinary things could happen. The most effective way to work with other people was not to have them working in a group over which I had control. But instead to have them working in a group in which the control was shared and there was a lot of scope for subversion, disruption, questioning and straightforward disobedience”
Sharing a decade of working with cross-sector partnerships

Ken Caplan, from Building Partnership for Development in Water and Sanitation, has worked for more than a dozen years with complex multi-stakeholder partnerships in the WASH and other sectors.

He recounted how many partnerships start off ambitious, and then take a dip. Seemingly there is a natural cycle of partnerships and if partners know this in advance, and can thus anticipate (and distinguish) the highs and lows, then they are better prepared. Meanwhile, each Partnership must be prepared to find its own way (“there are horses for courses”) and it is futile to attempt to directly compare partnerships. Nevertheless, one can learn valuable lessons from others. Whilst some suggest partnerships must be voluntary, Ken has found otherwise, seeing the ultimate goal as creating a ‘space’ or ‘movement’ where the key players have to be with us.

“Leaders come from anywhere and everywhere, you don’t always have to look upward”
Ken Caplan, Building Partnerships for Development

“Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world”
Margaret Mead, Author

Day three. Moving from visioning to recommendations: what the constituencies would like to see

Feedback: the rules

- At risk of being interrupted by the bell, a representative from each constituency was asked to step in front of the blue cloth and in three minutes or less (using the ‘co-created’ priorities list as a backdrop) share their respective ‘visions’;
- The points outlined on the following page were to be taken into the Steering Committee the following day (where each constituency is represented).
Recommendations from constituencies

**Developing Countries Anglophone**
- Specific budgetary lines for WASH under specific coordination at country level (either at a ministry or directorate level)
- To achieve this, there is need for greater engagement by the SWA Chair to engage with Heads of States
- Raise more sanitation and sector champions at country levels

**Developing Countries Latin America and South Asia**
- Need for SWA to institute strong follow-up on the regional SAN processes
- Support for countries to develop National Planning for Results Initiative (NPRI)
- Follow up actions on monitoring commitments by both countries and donors

**Developing Countries Francophone**
- Need for increased internal funding for the sector at the country level
- Development of learning mechanisms and member to member learning and knowledge sharing

**Multilaterals**
- Need to state with clarity the central purpose and principles behind SWA. What SWA is (and is not) as well as the organizational principles which define how partners operate
- Need to secure donor ‘buy-in’ including thinking about how to involve non-traditional donors and how to leverage linkages with these new blocks

**Sector Partners**
- Need to bring more clarity to what the central purpose of SWA is (and is not) and to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of partners
- Encouragement of greater reciprocal accountability among partners
- Strengthening of engagement with donors at country levels

**Civil Society**
- Recognition of CSOs as an indispensable partner of SWA by 2018
- Support to strengthen CSO networks at the regional and country levels
- Need to further encourage accountability through monitoring

**Donors**
- Need to encourage inclusiveness – mobilize the full range of partners as possible as well engage with the private sector
- Entrench monitoring in order to enhance accountability (and work on harmonization of indicators to avoid confusion)
Day three. High-Level Commitments Dialogue and the SWA High Level Meeting

The final day focused on preparations for the next High Level Meeting (HLM). All partners have reported back on progress made against the 2012 HLM commitments, and the 2014 commitments are expected to build on this. The final afternoon of the meeting provided the opportunity to share a framework and crucial tools for partners to develop strategic and “game-changing” commitments with measurable indicators. Time was spent on analysing the preparatory process, learning about successful advocacy activities, gaining insight into the design of good commitments and understanding how to engage finance ministries.

Overview of the key milestones to the HLM in 2014

Darren Saywell, Vice Chair of SWA, went over the schedule and themes that govern the preparations for the High Level Meeting. Fiorella Polo and Piers Cross, representing the SWA Secretariat, then gave a presentation on “The preparatory process for donors and developing countries”.

Following the session on developing new commitments, a comprehensive guidance note entitled: Developing good commitments for 2014 HLM has been compiled and will be available separately from this report in early January. It is designed to support the governments of developing countries, donors, and SWA partners in country to develop statements of commitments to be presented 2014 High Level Meeting, to be held on 11th April 2014 in Washington DC.

Engaging at a High Level: Ministers, Parliamentarians and Heads of State

The session that followed outlined guidance for SWA partners to conduct advocacy campaigns around the SWA High Level Commitments Dialogue in the lead up to the next HLM. The session drew upon the guidance note already circulated and available on the SWA website, entitled Suggested guidance for HLCD national advocacy campaigns as well as the outcomes of a meeting of senior finance ministry officials regarding decision-making for WASH. Moderators drew heavily on experience and examples from partners in the room and the boxes on page 16 draw out some of the highlights from the examples they shared.
Examples of national level advocacy from different participants

Using a partnership approach at country level to increase the outreach of messages and consultation around commitments. Jean de Dieu (Madagascar)

In Madagascar the guide on how to conduct a HLCD National Advocacy Campaign has been very useful. The minister of water has been a strong champion of the HLM Commitments and engaged the finance minister, leading to the creation of an SWA committee at national level for the preparation of the 2014 commitments.

Using the media as a vehicle for raising awareness and pressuring government to deliver. Hanan El Muddathir (Sudan)

Civil society and the private sector have together reached out to technical and advisory partners on the government side, bringing in the media (Sudan TV news, press and radio). The meeting they held was considered as a first step in preparing for the HLM 2014 and in issuing a national status report on WASH for Sudan.

Using TV and radio shows to discuss commitments and raise public awareness. Miriam Mukamba (Zambia)

Zambia have developed a country brief as an accessible pamphlet that highlights the ten or so commitments Zambia has made. The CSO forum is planning radio and TV discussion programs to focus on commitments, what has been achieved, progress and gaps. Panellists appearing on both TV and radio will include politicians from the ministries, civil society representative and community members.

Ensuring advocacy and dialogue between civil society and US government is maintained beyond the HLM 2014. John Oldfield (USA)

Civil society in the US is becoming increasingly organised and has met with both USAID and the US Department of State with varying degrees of success. The agenda is to follow up with US Government regarding their 2012 HLM commitments and to discuss potential commitments for the 2014 HLM. The advocacy work to date has perhaps helped prioritize sanitation and - importantly in the US context - influenced the country selection process under the water strategy. A future goal is to get other donor countries to talk with the US government about their respective commitments - this could lead to bolder commitments and stronger donor coordination in the HLCD.
Grabbing the attention of finance ministers – top tips!

- Treat Ministers of Finance not as targets but as human beings who respond to good evidence-based examples of what works and can bring about the biggest returns.
- Ministers of Finance are smart people with incredibly difficult tasks and therefore we need to focus information and the way it is packaged in the most accessible and relevant way.
- Commitments that are made need to be given a human-face, so communities and citizens can digest them and see the relevance to accelerating access to water and sanitation.
- As the WASH Sector we need to be asking the question – how can we help the treasury or ministry of finance to better deliver their jobs and economic growth?

As recounted by Clarissa Brocklehurst, SWA Secretariat, following in-depth engagement during 2013 with selected staff from in-country ministries of finance.

Day Three: Concluding remarks from the Vice Chair

At the end of three highly productive, dynamic, participatory (and exhausting) days, Darren Saywell gave some concluding remarks.

As he observed, the SWA partnership meeting has “provided space for exchanging views, a safe space to discuss creative tensions, a forum to renew our bonds for a stronger partnership and a platform to learn from other sectors’ experience”.

SWA has, in a short space of time, become the leading global political platform for addressing sanitation and water issues. As the partnership matures, partners are building mutual trust and becoming more comfortable with how to work together. A key message coming from the meeting is that the partnership now needs to develop more clarity of purpose and sharpen its mechanisms for working together. Partners need to make best use of the political space that has been carved out, embed WASH in the political agenda at national level, and ensure on-going high-level engagement at global and national levels. A challenge for the future is how to strengthen the linkages between the global and national aspects of the partnership; ensuring that the priorities of partners at global level are compatible with strengthening government-led processes at national level. As more partners become keen to engage, maintaining a core common agenda will be key.

“The vibe of this SWA partners meeting was very upbeat, and we have matured as a partnership. I believe we have seen a real shift from focusing on what SWA is to dealing with how we can use it more effectively. It is clear that we are on the right track and the agenda is not one of radical change but one of sharpening the activities we do and how we use them. The partnership has really carved a space to enter the political sphere. We now need to better leverage our assets”.

Darren Saywell, Vice Chair of SWA
ANNEXES

Annex A: The SWA 2013 Partnership Meeting Agenda and participants list
http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/about/partnership-meetings/swa-partnership-meeting-2013

Annex B: Related documents
- Web links, photographs, video clips, Partner Perspectives and tweets posted http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/about/partnership-meetings/swa-partnership-meeting-2013
- All PowerPoint presentations and speeches http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/partner-workspace/2013-partnership-meeting

Annex C: Other points coming through from the visioning exercise

BIGGER ‘LOCAL’ NETWORK—LOCAL GOVERNMENT—NON TRADITIONAL—DONOR BUY-IN
- Engage district, regional, local
- Increase dialogue at local / national level
- Commitment from ALL partners to push to support at national level
- Partnerships with media, private sector
- SWA Chair to engage with national leadership
- Donors to redeem their pledges
- By 2018 country ownership needs to be much more strengthened

LINKS TO OTHER SECTORS

FOCAL POINTS
- Need to be engaged more effectively, need more support and better identity

LOCAL HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS—HIGH LEVEL ADVOCACY—GET SEXY!
- Replicate process at national level, involve heads of state
- Bring in champions who can influence decisions e.g. celebrities, international icons, head of World Bank etc.
- Securing high level commitments on prioritizing SANITATION at country level
- Need to do more to make WASH feel integrated, rather than shorthand for water.
- SWA needs more visibility; otherwise people won’t care what we say. How do we leverage the partnership more to drive action?
- Be much braver and more ambitious in vision e.g. target date for universal access?

CIVIL SOCIETY
- Grassroots need to have more and more voice to hold their own governments accountable – SWA will play a facilitating / catalysing role
- CSO recognition and support
- Donors to fund capacity building of CSO networks to support SWA at national level

EXTENDED FAMILY
- Links with other partnerships and movements e.g. LatinoSan
- Need to establish clarity on what are the boundaries are of SWA
- Stronger performers are confused about what the value addition of SWA is compared to regional processes where they already table national commitments and make declarations etc.