



**SANITATION
AND WATER
FOR ALL**



SWA Partnership Strategy 2020-2030

REGIONAL ROADMAPS
2021-2025

INTRODUCTION TO

REGIONAL ROADMAPS

OVERVIEW

The SWA Partnership Strategy 2020–2030 is made up of the SWA Global Strategic Framework, a Global Results Framework, a Global Roadmap, and Regional Roadmaps for each of SWA’s four regions: Asia-Pacific (AP), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The Regional Roadmaps identify priorities and opportunities in each region for SWA and help to guide the collective action in the region of SWA partners and the SWA Secretariat towards achieving SWA’s Strategic Objectives. The Roadmaps also help prospective partners understand how the SWA partnership can support their work, and how they can contribute to the partnerships’ shared objectives. Roadmap Workplans further detail the major steps for implementing the activities proposed in each regional roadmap. Given the diverse and evolving situations of countries in each region, different countries and partners will focus on particular issues and activities at different times. Relevant elements from constituency-specific strategies, as and when these are developed, will be incorporated into the regional roadmaps.

Each Roadmap is only as good as the commitment of each SWA partner to work together to achieve measurable progress towards achieving the water, sanitation and hygiene targets of the SDGs. The Roadmaps are predicated on the assumption that partners recognise the value of the SWA Partnership and its theory of change for achieving those Goals. Implementing the Roadmaps requires partners to continue to embrace the guiding principles of joint action, and to develop their individual capacity to demonstrate collaborative behaviours when jointly implementing the building blocks of the SWA Framework.

The Regional Roadmaps were developed in a participatory manner, through partner consultations. Regional consultations were held in late 2019 to inform the Global Strategic Framework, and then in 2020 a survey and one-on-one interviews were run in each region by Regional Roadmap Development Committees.

It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the roadmaps as it was unfolding while they were being developed. The pandemic limited the level and modalities of participation of partners in the consultation, and priorities had to include pandemic preparedness and response, and economic recovery.

COVER PHOTO

Children wash their hands in a school in Bethlehem, Palestinian Territories. @UNICEF/Fouad Choufany



Children wash their hands with soap, while other students behind them wait their turn to use latrines, at Katauk Sat Basic Education Primary School, Myanmar. © UNICEF/UNI136039/DEAN

IMPLEMENTATION

The Regional Roadmaps indicate the activities that can be implemented given current capacity levels and assuming the continued commitment of regional partners. Their ambition can be adjusted according to the resources available. Each Regional Roadmap will be accompanied by a Workplan, whose development will be facilitated by the SWA Secretariat. Workplans will detail the key steps involved in implementing key activities, approximate timelines, and the relative roles of SWA focal points, partners and the SWA Secretariat. Workplans will be reviewed annually and approved by the SWA Steering Committee.

Each Regional Roadmap has been aligned with the SWA Results Framework and Activity Monitoring System to identify the relevant indicators which can best track their implementation, and their contribution to outcomes and impact.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRENGTHENING REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

The Regional Roadmaps build on the reach and multistakeholder engagement which SWA has built up in each region, while looking to increase or optimize that engagement in critical areas. SWA has a proven track record in convening ministerial decision-makers in the pursuit of a more collaborative, cross-sector approach to addressing water, sanitation and hygiene issues. A central focus for all four Regional Roadmaps is to strengthen the impact of its Sector and Finance Ministerial Meetings, implementing concrete measures to follow-up on the commitments made, the relationships started, and the country needs identified. This includes continuing to promote the uptake of Mutual Accountability Mechanism

Across all regions, SWA is also recognized for drawing the attention of decision-makers to the Guiding Principles of Leaving No One Behind, shining a light on the challenges faced by the most vulnerable citizens, namely ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, women and other socially marginalized groups. To inform and tailor regional advocacy efforts, an Equality Agenda will prioritize key inequalities in each region and in key countries, while highlighting proven solutions from the region. That Agenda, as well as other important messages, will be articulated by partners from each region of SWA's Global Leaders Council, and by high level regional advocates engaged and nurtured by SWA.

In both SSA and AP the SWA partnership is well established, with a high

percentage of country Governments having become partners, along with dozens of multilateral, bilateral and civil society organizations. In LAC and MENA, and among the Pacific Islands, the partnership is more nascent, limited to a smaller group of countries and very few active non-state partners. In LAC, where international development organizations are less numerous, a growing number countries are classified as middle-income and most WASH funding is from national budgets, government partners greatly outnumber other constituencies. SWA's government partners could grow further, with at least 10 more countries considering joining in AP. Most importantly, SWA's impact at country level depends significantly on its ability to engage effectively with partner governments, and specifically with their SWA focal points in government, as well as in other constituencies. An integral part of the Secretariat's role in each Regional Workplan is, therefore, to advocate for the nomination of focal points in every constituency in every partner country, and to foster stronger engagement with, and between, those focal points. Among other measures, SWA must continually and clearly articulate the mutual support and benefits which being an SWA partner brings, and the value of each activity in the Workplans for focal points and governments.

Across SSA, AP and LAC, increased engagement of the private sector, and of the research & academic communities, could make a significant difference. On the one hand businesses are critical as providers essential water, sanitation and hygiene services. But they are also important for the capital they can mobilize, the jobs they create, and for the competencies they can share in market systems, value chain efficiency, and communications. But increasing private sector engagement will also require, in certain contexts, strengthening trust in public-private partnerships, and in the private sector as a whole. Greater engagement of the research & academic community is expected to strengthen the link between the political and technical aspects of water, sanitation and hygiene - helping provide contextualized evidence to inform advocacy and to support decision-making - and should help overcome national capacity gaps.

All members, both governments and partners, agree that more support is needed for the sharing of good practices, lessons learnt and expertise, especially on the subject of cross-sector collaboration. Despite many challenges, the Covid-19 pandemic has also spawned new partnerships and cross-sector opportunities that need to be documented and multiplied. SWA is recognized for its convening ability at the global level, and Regional Workplans recommend concrete ways that SWA can foster more learning and sharing at the regional level. This will mostly translate into SWA influencing and supporting the convening and capacity development activities of regional technical or inter-governmental bodies. In a limited number of instances, SWA partners will organize country-to-country

exchanges.

SWA's efforts must build upon, and avoid duplicating, what is already being done in each region. An integral part of the Secretariat's role in each Regional Workplan is therefore to track events and processes at the country and regional level, making concrete recommendations to align SWA's processes and calendar. This intelligence will inform SWA's advocacy and capacity development activities.

Building on its experience and strength at convening actors within the WASH sector, Roadmaps prioritize support for national WASH actors to engage key sectors such as Health, Nutrition and Agriculture. In a limited number of cases, SWA will leverage its partners, expertise, and voice to strengthen national multi-stakeholder platforms for WASH coordination. Revitalizing poorly performing platforms may require SWA partners to catalyze or support Governments to prepare a situation analysis and a stakeholder mapping, to help them prepare and implement action plans, and to engage new stakeholders in those platforms. In countries without coordination platforms, SWA partners may coordinate their advocacy to encourage Ministries to take a leading role in WASH, nominate a Focal Point and establish a platform.

At both regional and national levels, SWA will ensure WASH is linked to key regional development agendas, specifically Integrated Water Resources Management, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation, Public Health and Emergencies, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Corruption and Transparency. SWA will ensure WASH priorities and opportunities for synergies are well represented at regional events, and support national WASH programmes to link with national programmes on those themes.

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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION



Renovated Toilet at Kawthariyet El Seyad Intermediate Public School, Lebanon. © UNICEF/UNI343180/Choufany

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following specific challenges and opportunities have shaped the Regional Roadmap for MENA.

Governments have demonstrated strong will to address issues of drinking water and safely managed water, but more holistic approaches are needed to tackle this water-stressed region's many challenges

- Governments have invested significantly in innovation, infrastructure and desalination
- But the disproportionate use of water resources in Agriculture remains a challenge, highlighting that siloed approaches need to become more holistic
- Climate change and environmental degradation, population displacement, transboundary and geopolitical water issues, conflict, public health emergencies, refugee crises and densely populated informal settlements all pose significant challenges

Decision-making is Government-centric, with multi-stakeholder engagement limited to information-sharing, but the COVID-19 pandemic has initiated partnerships that could be institutionalized

- Civil Society Organizations are broadening their involvement, but their action is still largely focused on hygiene and sanitation issues in informal settlements and refugee camps
- The private sector's role is largely framed in terms of procurement and funding
- Female participation in decision-making in the WASH sector is low
- The COVID-19 pandemic has created cross-sector collaborations that have enabled greater information-sharing and have yielded demonstrated results, despite being informal coordination mechanisms. These are promising entry points for building SWA's engagement.

Current SWA partners want to deepen their engagement with SWA, and hope more partners will join

- SWA's engagement is limited to just 5 countries in the region, and almost exclusively to Government actors. Some of these are highly engaged in SWA, but others only moderately and need to better understand better how SWA can support their work.
- SWA's is recognized as a unifying body that can bring legitimacy to constituents, as a consultative agency that can support CSO's with technical support and guidance, and as a convener that can

facilitate networking and funding opportunities for governments.

- Systems need to be put in place to ensure the continuity of countries' engagement with SWA, despite high rate of turnover in SWA focal points
- Several existing initiatives are key entry points for strengthening SWA engagement:
- Numerous institutions conduct research on water and sanitation in the region, such as the West Asia North Africa Institute, but joint platforms and learning mechanisms are scarce.
- The Arab League hosts the Arab Ministerial Water Council, part of the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA), and the Water and Disaster Management Unit
- The Arab Water Summit

ROADMAP PHASES AND ACTIVITIES

There is consensus that an in-depth assessment of the MENA region and a drive for greater engagement with more countries and constituencies is needed before a robust roadmap can be developed. The Roadmap for MENA is thus organized in two phases. An initial 18-month phase will broaden and deepen SWA' engagement in the region, while developing a Roadmap for 2023-2025, which will be finalized in late 2022. The High-level activities for Phase 1 are presented below.

PHASE 1:

Broaden and deepen SWA engagement, develop a future Roadmap

1.1 Develop a Country Engagement Plan

- Prioritize countries for engagement
- Map key actors in government and other constituencies to be engaged
- Identify entry points, contacts for each key actor
- Implement a coordinated drive engaging additional countries and constituencies

1.2 Develop a Regional Partnership Plan

- Approach existing regional organisms and develop a plan for collaboration with each
 - Arab Ministerial Water Council, and its Annual Arab Water Forum
 - Arab Water Week
 - West Asia-North Africa Institute (WANA)

1.3 Strengthen relationship with existing partners

- Design and deliver an advocacy campaign and capacity development activities (in partnership with one or more of the regional bodies above) focused on:
 - The SWA framework and approaches, including the MAM
 - Promoting SDG-6 as a framework for development policy
 - Innovative approaches for funding the sector
 - Data collection and monitoring systems

1.4 Develop Phase 2 of Roadmap for 2022-2025



A school girl from Minya, Egypt is trying to improve the way she washes her hands. © UNICEF/UNI303956/Younis



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