

THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON SANITATION AND WATER SUPPLY:

TRANSLATING POLITICAL COMMITMENTS INTO CONCRETE ACTIONS



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Despite numerous political commitments and billions of dollars of investment by donors, national governments, and private actors, many countries are off-track to meet the MDG target on sanitation and water supply. Why has progress been so slow and uneven? Part of the answer lies in political will: not enough high-level support for reforms needed to make progress possible. Part lies in national capacities: not enough capacity to plan and use existing financing to establish sustainable services. And part lies in financing: not enough money going where it is needed most, both in terms of donor funding and national budget allocations.

The Global Framework for Action on Sanitation and Water Supply (GF4A) will bring together national governments, donors, and other development partners to address these obstacles. Building on existing initiatives, the GF4A will provide a global platform to bring political focus and accountability to the sanitation and water supply sector and help donors and development partners to coordinate their efforts and to direct resources where they are most needed. The GF4A will assist off-track countries to develop actionable national plans and attract financing, and on-track countries to ensure their progress is sustained to achieve the MDG target and to go beyond 2015 towards the ultimate goal of universal coverage.

WHY THE GF4A IS NEEDED

Despite the pivotal role of sanitation and water supply in meeting all of the MDGs, the sector remains a low priority on national and international agendas. Sanitation is the most off-track of all the MDG targets, and sub-Saharan Africa the most off-track region. While aid for sanitation and water supply has been increasing, it is not well targeted. According to a recent OECD report only 23% of aid for the sector went to the countries most in need (least-developed countries) between 2002 and 2007.

Although a number of programmes and funds have been established to increase access to sanitation and safe water, their success has been piecemeal, and they have thus far failed to address key bottlenecks in the most off-track countries, such as the lack of sector capacity to plan, implement and monitor for sustainable results. The fragmentation and lack of coordination that characterises the sector is preventing international efforts from having the greatest impact. Ultimately, progress must be made at country level, led by national governments. However, donors, developing countries and other development partners can improve coordination at a global level in order to ensure the necessary tools are available at the national level.

HOW THE GF4A WILL SPEED PROGRESS TOWARDS THE MDG TARGET

The GF4A aims to increase the effectiveness of existing initiatives and commitments by providing a mechanism for: greater accountability, better coordination for pro-poor targeting of financing, strategic analysis and resolution of bottlenecks, and regular reporting on investments and outcomes.

The GF4A will utilize and build on existing global and national declarations, institutions and efforts. It will provide concrete steps for translating the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action into tangible results. Similar initiatives in other sectors, such as education and health, have yielded positive results. The outcomes of the GF4A will be:

- **Greater political commitment** to improve sustainable access to sanitation and water supply to meet and go beyond the MDG target.
- **Better targeting of external resources** to countries in greatest need, **increased utilisation and effectiveness** of existing resources at country level and **additional resources mobilised** for national sanitation and water supply plans.
- **Improved capacity** of countries to design, implement and monitor sanitation and water supply plans—ensuring sustainable progress towards the MDG target and beyond.

GF4A OVERVIEW

GF4A Objective	GF4A Activity
Strong, actionable national plans with implementation strategies that will enable countries to achieve and go beyond the MDG target	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for national planning & capacity building
Improved information for decision-making: annual data and analysis on investments, outcomes, and bottlenecks for sanitation and for water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UN-Water Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)
Mutual accountability between aid agencies & recipient governments & between governments & their people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High Level Meeting (HLM) & Regional Meetings
Better targeting & mobilisation of funding. As part of a broad international effort, the aim of the GF4A is to ensure that no credible national plan should fail for lack of finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aid effectiveness & financing modalities• GLAAS Report with gap analysis

ACTIVITIES

- **SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING:** Enables off-track countries to develop actionable national plans and build implementation capacity by **linking them with development partners and sources of preliminary funding.**
- **UN-WATER GLOBAL ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF SANITATION AND DRINKING-WATER (GLAAS):** Responds to the need for an **annual comprehensive source of information on sanitation and water supply.** Building on relevant existing global and national data and information, GLAAS – led by WHO - puts together a comprehensive picture of progress towards the MDG target, including drivers and bottlenecks in key areas such as institutional capacity, national budget allocations, and funding flows.
- **ANNUAL HIGH LEVEL MEETING (HLM):** Provides a **global platform to galvanise political will, coordinate action and ensure accountability.** The HLM and the regional meetings leading up to it will use the GLAAS findings to identify obstacles to progress and work to secure the necessary commitments to resolve them. Those commitments can then be used to monitor and hold governments accountable. The first HLM will be hosted by UNICEF in the Spring of 2010.
- **AID EFFECTIVENESS AND FINANCING MODALITIES:** Ultimately, aid-effectiveness must occur at the country level. However, the GF4A will work to **improve the targeting of existing aid flows through better donor coordination and harmonisation at the global level and enabling off-track countries and fragile states to fully and effectively utilise and leverage available and new forms of capital flows.** The GF4A will not create a large vertical fund, although a small 'pump-priming' fund to support national planning is being discussed.

CURRENT PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW)
- African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEWS)
- UK Department for International Development (DFID)
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for International Cooperation (DGIS)
- End Water Poverty, an umbrella for 150 NGOs
- IrishAid, Department of Foreign Affairs
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- UN-Water
- WaterAid
- Water and Sanitation Program, World Bank
- Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

CONTACT INFO:

The GF4A needs your input and support. If you are interested in learning more, participating in one of the GF4A working groups (Aid-Effectiveness & Finance Modalities, GF4A Governance, or Political & Communications Strategy) or becoming a core partner and contributing to the development of the GF4A, please contact Cindy Kushner (ckushner@unicef.org).