



SECTOR MINISTERS' DIALOGUE

WASHINGTON DC | 19 APR 2024

Ambition.
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Latin America and Caribbean Sector Ministers' Dialogue

From commitment to impact: solutions for universal access to water and sanitation

Date:	19 April 2024
Time:	10:00 – 13:00 EST
Co-convenors/host:	Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), UNICEF and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
Place:	Headquarters of the Inter-American Development Bank, Washington DC

Overview – Latin America and the Caribbean

In a global and regional context characterized by widening inequalities, economic instability and enduring debt crises, continuing and unpredictable climate change and public health risks, water and sanitation are consistent themes. For Latin America and the Caribbean, these realities influence how countries are able to reduce poverty while increasing access to safely-managed services.

Since its founding in 2010, the SWA partnership is the only organization to regularly convene High-level Meetings (HLMs) of finance and sector ministers, as well as other high-level representatives on the topic of water and sanitation, fostering on-going high-level political dialogue. These discussions are especially important now, when governments are looking for solutions to address widening inequalities, protect public health, transform access to water, sanitation and hygiene for all and strengthen economies in the face of a changing climate, ecological devastation and ongoing debt crises.

Purpose

The Sector Ministers' Dialogue is taking place directly after the 2024 LAC Finance Ministers' Meeting, and is co-organized by SWA and UNICEF, and hosted by IDB. The agenda will echo the themes of that meeting, but with a focus on the interests and mandates of sector ministers responsible for water, sanitation and hygiene. The meeting will gather relevant experts to present and inspire Sector ministers with forward looking solutions for universal access to water and sanitation, including building the enabling environment to attract new resources, identifying additional sources of finance and to use existing resources more effectively.

This Dialogue, together with the Finance Ministers' Meeting, promotes the development of national financing strategies and public policies and will present solutions to accelerate the

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achievement of the universal access to water and sanitation. In turn, the Dialogue will contribute to the strong political momentum in Latin America including for follow-up and tracking of national commitments through LatinoSan, Ibero-american Summit in November 2024 which will focus on innovation, inclusion and sustainability. It will further serve as a stepping stone towards the SWA global Sector Ministers Meeting scheduled for 2025.

Content

Through three well-moderated ministerial dialogues and high-level discussions, this meeting will consider the interlocking issues of effectively accessing climate finance, while also implementing financial measures to mitigate risks caused by climate related disasters; adopting multisectoral approaches to attract and effectively use investments, including in relation to resource mobilization, for elimination of inequalities; and partnering across sectors and constituencies to ensure sustainable finance and impact. The ministers will discuss sustainable and viable financial solutions within the reality of the climate and debt crises. They will examine the SDG promise to “leave no one behind” and frameworks for the elimination of inequalities which cut across sectors. The third and final ministerial dialogue session will focus on how partners can work together to develop and implement multistakeholder and multisectoral investment packages to accelerate progress, using regional and global processes to further take-stock of progress and build momentum with other sectors, processes and instruments that can serve as milestones to maintain and accelerate progress.

At the Dialogue, experts from different organizations will share inspiring examples of solutions, frameworks and highlight approaches on offer to work with Sector ministers in achieving their mandates, including in expanding available finance for the sector. Sector ministers will have the opportunity to share their experience, and dialogue on the successes and challenges they have encountered in working towards universal access. Representatives from SWA's six constituencies will contribute to the discussions, reflecting especially the importance of multistakeholder approaches, and mutual accountability.

The exchanges will foster cross-country learning, encourage critical questioning, and promote the adoption of approaches which offer ideas for moving beyond “business as usual.” The meeting will result in a Ministerial Declaration in which ministers from the region commit to concrete steps for surmounting financial barriers to achieving universal access to water and sanitation.

The event will contribute to SWA's global efforts to secure a “Triple A” rating for the sector – through Ambition, Action and Accountability. Preparations at the country level for this Dialogue will also contribute to the preparatory process for the Finance Ministers' Meeting.

This three-hour meeting will be held at the Headquarters of the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington DC and will be conducted in Spanish and English.

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Objective and expected outcomes: From commitment to impact: forward looking solutions for universal access

The LAC Sector Ministers' Dialogue builds on the LAC Finance Ministers' Meeting, offering sector ministers responsible for water and sanitation options and solutions for ambitious strategies to reach universal access to water and sanitation.

Participants at the Dialogue, including Sector ministers, will discuss innovative and inspiring approaches for accelerated action towards universal access. Building from the 2024 LAC Finance Ministers' Meeting, the Dialogue will highlight how water and sanitation reinforces the development of other sectors such as education and health: every dollar spent on water and sanitation leads to greater economic and social development across all sectors.

These discussions will lead to the following expected outcomes :

- Sector ministers and their development partners identify approaches which provide promising evidence for accelerated action towards universal access
- Sector ministers consider innovative partnering opportunities to increase investments and sources of funding available for the sector, to ensure resilient access to water and sanitation
 - Sector ministers and their development partners agree to work together to implement sustainable solutions to deliver climate resilient water and sanitation services to those who lack access, and those whose access is jeopardized by unabated climate change, taking account of the fiscal space that governments have, particularly in the context of current discussions on debt.
 - Sector ministers expand their sources of financing for the sector and new partnerships are forged with that intent.
 - Sector ministers and their development partners identify and adopt approaches that foster multisectoral collaboration, including with health, environment, education, and social justice, to eliminate inequalities and deliver on the promise to “leave no one behind.”
 - Sector ministers, global and regional development partners, as well as any other partners from civil society, private sector or research and learning community table/announce their own forward looking commitments including for increasing resource allocation, exploring innovative financing mechanisms and effective use of existing resources, with a view towards universal access.
 - Sector ministers jointly raise the ambition and participate as well as lead in bold and new approaches such as the Heads of State Initiatives, using their authority and influence to improve sector performance and ensure strong national financing strategies for universal access to water and sanitation services.

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These outcomes will translate the discussions and proceedings of the meeting into a ministerial declaration, commitments and tangible actions that contribute to increased investment, improved policy frameworks and regional collaboration in the critical areas of water and sanitation.

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