

Address by the Minister of Nepal

Rt. Hon'ble Vice President of Republic of Indonesia,
Rt. Hon'ble Vice President of Zimbabwe
Honorable Ministers from different countries,
SWA chairperson and members,
Distinguished delegates,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen!

A very good morning and Selamat Pagi !

I am honored to be invited in this SMM meeting of SWA representing Government of Nepal, Ministry of Water Supply. I would like to thank SWA team for this opportunity to express few words in this assembly themed "building forward better for recovery and resilience" on behalf of Government of Nepal. As we all know, the whole world including Nepal, suffered during 2020 and 2021 because of COVID 19 pandemic, but the situation also recognized the importance of water supply, sanitation and hygiene to cope with different form of diseases. I am feeling to be highly privileged as I am leading the Ministry, which is the sectoral lead of WaSH. However, after leading the Ministry of Water Supply, I felt that this sector is the biggest medicine producer to tackle with different form of morbidities, specially under 5 child morbidities.

While leading the sector, I am quite aware of the challenges such as sectoral fragmentation, initial stage of federalization where the provincial governments and local levels are quite young to realize the WaSH declared in the Constitution of Nepal, climate change and its impact on WaSH, financing, capacity, and information gap of the sector. Moreover, today I would like to emphasize on the opportunities that we are creating while moving forward. The recent activities like preparation of integrated WaSH policy, updating Sector Development Plan, Localization of Sustainable Development Goals through SDG 6.1 and 6.2 and monitoring through National Water Supply sanitation and Hygiene decision support system, approval of an updated national drinking water quality standards, wastewater effluent standards and hygiene for all roadmap which are in line with the commitments of this year. It will make sector resilient and more robust. Nationally Determined Contribution and National Adaptation Plan clearly reflecting WaSH sector show its inter-sectoral importance and I hope it will open new avenues of sustainable financing in our sector. WaSH sector has identified the opportunity and is committed to make the sector ready to access the climate financing.

I would like to thank SWA for providing the opportunities to showcase our good works where we were able to show our decision support system NwASH across the globe. The data creation, transparency and decision support for local governments are the core of this commitment which we have continued in this year as well.

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to take this opportunity to stress out that we take pride of coming from top of the world. However, its evident that we are one of the most vulnerable countries experiencing frequent disasters due to climate change like floods, erratic rainfall and landslides. Furthermore, the water tower of South Asia, Nepal is slowly losing its water resource because of global warming where we are not the contributor. The impact on this sector is in multi folds as we need to adopt the technology carefully, come up with different adaptation options and special arrangements for the vulnerable communities. Although we are trying to conserve water sources from our part, solutions will require capacity, finance and institutional arrangement. We know that the government of Nepal alone won't be able to combat with these criticalities. Further collaboration beyond the borders, peer to peer learning, using the good examples of adaptations across the globe can be the potential solutions and we think SWA will be the perfect platform.

Finally, I would like to thank SWA again for providing me this platform and would like to request to the development partners involved in this sector to **“invest in Nepal’s WaSH as investment upstream will have multiple benefits downstream.”** Thank you.

