

G L A A S

UN-WATER GLOBAL ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF SANITATION AND DRINKING-WATER



World Health
Organization

2008 PILOT REPORT
TESTING A NEW REPORTING APPROACH

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FOREWORD



THE PUZZLE

According to the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP), 2.5 billion people still remain without improved sanitation facilities and around 900 million people still rely on unimproved drinking-water supplies. Yet diarrhoeal disease is the third leading cause of death from infectious diseases, and in 2004 diarrhoeal disease alone caused more deaths than HIV/AIDS. The majority of these deaths are among children under 5 years of age. Such deaths could be prevented by improving the way we manage sanitation and drinking-water. Although these improvements are achievable, sanitation and drinking-water are not given high enough priorities by several donors and recipient governments alike. Why?

One reason is that it is difficult to make evidence-based policy decisions in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors. For example, although 2008 is the International Year of Sanitation and sanitation presents a huge challenge for the future, it is currently difficult to see what financial resources are available for the sector because sanitation funds are usually lumped together with funding for water supply, water resources management, health care or education. This makes it almost impossible to relate improvements in sanitation service levels to the money spent in the sector. As a consequence, it is difficult to make informed decisions on investment.

If the full picture of the sanitation and drinking-water sector is a puzzle, then service levels (reflected in the coverage figures) are pieces of the puzzle. Other pieces are information on institutional capacity, the policy framework, human resources capacity, and the flows of sector funds together with the capacity to absorb them. An important piece is the capacity to translate all this information into better sanitation and drinking-water services, resulting in healthier and more dignified living conditions, and a more productive working environment.

Numerous activities are currently being undertaken at the global, regional or country level by international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, multilateral agencies and governments to monitor or report on one or more pieces of the puzzle. Each of these efforts provides a perspective on the sanitation and drinking-water sectors. But there is no comprehensive mechanism that allows policy-makers to look at the whole puzzle together and see how the different pieces of the picture change over time.

In this pilot report, UN-Water, through WHO as the agency in charge of developing the GLAAS report, is exploring a new way of presenting a global and all-round picture of the sanitation and drinking-water sectors that will complement the information provided by the WHO/UNICEF JMP reports and by the *World Water Development Reports*. The uniqueness of this new approach consists in attempting to bring all the pieces of the puzzle together, to see both what is happening in each area and how each of the pieces fits into the global picture.

We hope you will find this document interesting, and that it will stimulate discussion on how to improve the evidence base for policy-making in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors.

Pasquale Steduto
Chair UN-Water

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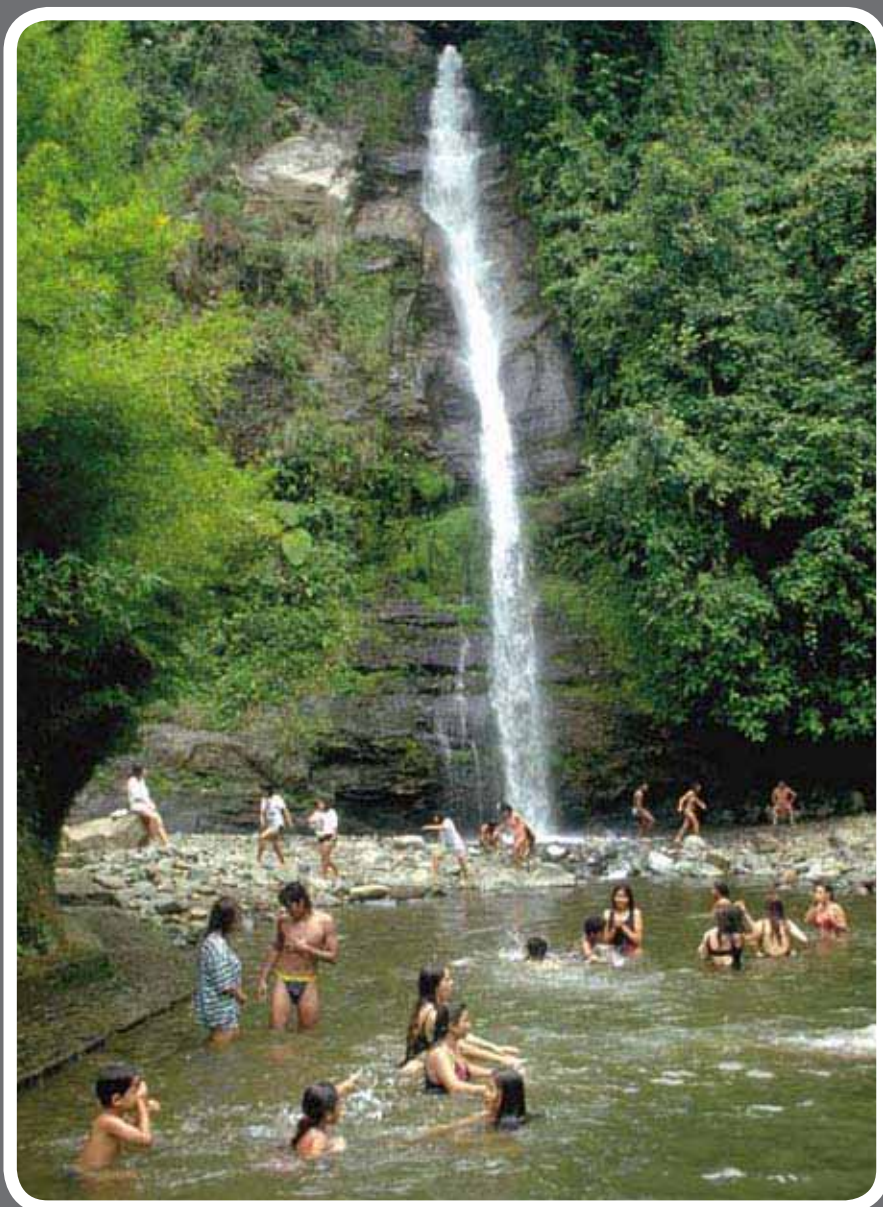


Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
BMGF	The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
EC	European Commission
ESA	External support agency
EU	European Union
EUWI	European Union Water Initiative
EUWI-AWG	European Union Water Initiative – Africa Working Group
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GBS	General budget support
GLAAS	Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water
IWRM	Integrated water resources management
JMP	WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
O&M	Operation and maintenance
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD–DAC	OECD – Development Assistance Committee
OECD–DAC CRS	OECD–DAC Creditor Reporting System
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNU	United Nations University
WHO	World Health Organization
WSP	Water Sanitation Program
WWDR	World Water Development Report

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UN-Water is a mechanism to strengthen co-ordination and coherence among all UN bodies dealing with water-related issues, from health to farming, environment to energy, food to climate, and sanitation to disasters. It was set up in 2003, through a decision by the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination. UN-Water evolved from many years of close collaboration among UN agencies and a firm belief that still more can be done to strengthen the UN system in its effort to work more effectively on water and sanitation issues, which are among the most urgent challenges of our time. UN-Water is not another agency. Instead, UN-Water adds value to existing UN programmes and projects and fosters more co-operation and information-sharing among UN agencies and outside partners.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) is a UN-Water pilot initiative technically coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO). UN-Water GLAAS constitutes a new approach to reporting on progress in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors that aims to strengthen evidence-based policy-making towards and beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The purpose of this GLAAS report is to present the concept of a possible global, periodic, comprehensive reporting mechanism to inform policy-making in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors

The data sources used in this pilot report are the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP), the OECD Development Assistance Committee Creditor Reporting System (OECD-DAC CRS), other United Nations statistics, as well as information specifically collected by GLAAS staff for this pilot study from seven countries and, jointly with the European Union Water Initiative – Africa Working Group, from 25 external support agencies.

The lessons learned from this pilot study are that:

- integrated data collection is a complex process for countries, generally requiring extensive coordination among ministries;
- only around half the respondents (4 out of 7 pilot countries and 13 out of 25 external support agencies) were able to provide disaggregated financial data for the sanitation and drinking-water sectors;
- the sources and levels of contributions to the sanitation and drinking-water sectors from households and the private sector are unknown in most of the pilot countries;
- the pilot countries generally do not capture investments in capital maintenance and in operation and maintenance.

The conclusions of this pilot study are the following:

1. Integrating information from different relevant sources is a new and useful way to look globally at the sanitation and drinking-water sectors.
2. Current data sources are available to support a global periodic comprehensive reporting mechanism, but there are some crucial gaps in information, for example relating to the periodicity and geographical extent of reporting, the level of disaggregation of data, and the comparability of the information presented.
3. Countries and external support agencies appear able to provide the missing information on the sanitation and drinking-water sectors, but to do so places heavy demands on their time and resources.
4. With further analysis, the overview of the sanitation and drinking-water sectors presented in this pilot report could be used to improve sector indicators of progress towards and beyond the MDGs.
5. A global, periodic, comprehensive reporting mechanism, as envisaged in this pilot report, faces great challenges, but at the same time there is a huge potential for such an innovative tool to support evidence-based policy-making in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors.

WHAT IS GLAAS?

The Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) is a UN-Water pilot initiative, technically coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO). UN-Water GLAAS is seeking a new approach to reporting progress in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors in order to strengthen evidence-based policy-making towards and beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The characteristics of such a new reporting approach include:

- assessing the capacity of countries and external support agencies to progress and contribute to the attainment of the MDG target to “halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking-water and basic sanitation”;

- analysing, on a global scale, the institutional, human resource and financial capacities of countries in relation to status and trends in service levels in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors;

- identifying barriers to and drivers for extending and improving service levels in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors;

- recognizing the value of ongoing MDG monitoring initiatives being conducted at various levels within the United Nations system, and by nongovernmental organizations, multilateral agencies and governments;

- complementing existing initiatives, such as the WHO/

UN-Water GLAAS aims to decrease the reporting burden of countries and external support agencies and to help in harmonizing their different reporting mechanisms. By so doing, UN-Water GLAAS would increase the comprehensiveness and accountability of information in the sanitation and drinking-water sectors.



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