Overview

Improved water and sanitation coverage in the Pacific sub-region is very low

- The Pacific sub-region, consisting of 14 Pacific island countries and Papua New Guinea, has a much different water and sanitation profile than the East Asia and Pacific (EAP) region as a whole
- In the Pacific sub-region, both sanitation and water coverage is far below the East Asia average
- At 30 per cent in 2011, sanitation coverage is the same as Sub-Saharan Africa, and lower than any other region in the world
- At 53 per cent, water coverage is lower than all other regions in the world
- The rate of progress in the Pacific is stagnant, with minimal gains made since 1990; no other region has registered slower progress over the last 21 years
- The Pacific sub-region as a whole is very far off track towards achieving either the sanitation or water MDG targets in 2015

Water and sanitation systems in the Pacific are highly vulnerable

- Like in other countries in the region, the freshwater resources of Pacific Island Nations are threatened by population growth, urbanisation, and changing land-use patterns
- However, island nations are particularly threatened by the impact of climate change, notably sea level rise (which can cause seawater intrusion into aquifers), increased temperatures and changing rainfall patterns (affecting groundwater recharge and the viability of rainwater harvesting systems depended on by many)
- The increasing frequency of extreme weather such as tropical depressions and cyclones are posing additional threats to overall water security

Information about this Snapshot

- This snapshot is produced by the UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific.
- The 15 Pacific sub-region countries covered in this snapshot are: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands (Republic of), Micronesia (Fed. States of), Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. This sub-region is different from the MDG region of Oceania, which consists of more countries.
- Unless otherwise indicated, data in this snapshot is from the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) 2011 dataset, the latest available.
- See last page for full citations and credits, and for JMP definitions of improved water and sanitation coverage
Sanitation Trends: Pacific, EAP and World Comparison

- Virtually no progress (1% increase in improved sanitation coverage) has been made in the Pacific sub-region since 1990
- This rate of progress is slower than any region in the world
- At 30 per cent, the Pacific sub-region is tied with the Sub-Saharan Africa region as having the lowest level of improved sanitation coverage in the world
- Open defecation rates are high in the sub-region, especially in Kiribati (37%), Solomon Islands (18%) and Papua New Guinea (12%).

*Population-weighted averages of national sanitation coverage, 1990 and 2011, by sub-region, region and world

The Pacific sub-region is far off track its MDG sanitation target

- The sub-region as a whole and the majority of its countries* are far off track to meet the MDG sanitation target
- No region in the world is more off-track than the Pacific sub-region
- The Pacific sub-region is not likely to meet its MDG target for sanitation

* Six of the ten Pacific countries fall into the JMP categories of not on-track or insufficient progress.
** Five Pacific countries do not have sufficient data to calculate progress on targets: Micronesia, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tokelau and Tonga.
Sanitation Inequities

Sanitation coverage varies greatly from country to country

Sanitation coverage in Pacific countries, 2011, with EAP and World comparators

Urban-rural inequity is very high

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Use of improved sanitation facilities by household wealth quintile, Vanuatu, 2007 (MICS, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quintile</th>
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<th>Unimproved</th>
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<tr>
<td>Richest</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Economic inequities are also large

Use of improved sanitation facilities by household wealth quintile, Vanuatu, 2007 (MICS, 2007)

Other examples of sanitation coverage inequity in the Pacific

Tuvalu: Open defecation is much more common in the Outer Islands (7.3%) than on Funafuti (1.5%) (DHS, 2007)

Vanuatu: More people use improved sanitation facilities in some regions (e.g. Shefa at 72%) than others (e.g. Malampa at 38%) (MICS, 2007)
Water Trends: Pacific, EAP and World Comparison

- At just 53 per cent improved water source coverage in the Pacific sub-region is lower than in any other region in the world.
- Improved water coverage has increased by only 8 per cent from 1990 to 2011, a lower rate than most other regions including Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Coverage has increased only in the “other improved water source” category; the proportion of people with piped water on the premises has actually decreased.

*Population-weighted averages of national water coverage, 1990 and 2011, by sub-region, region and world

The Pacific sub-region is off track its MDG water target

- The Pacific sub-region is more off track for its water target than any other region in the world.
- In the case of water, this is mainly because of poor progress in Papua New Guinea*

*Papua New Guinea has a large population relative to the sub-region as a whole and thus significantly affects sub-regional weighted averages (see more on pg. 7)

Water Target Gaps in the Pacific

- Gap between the required coverage in 2011 if country were on-track and actual 2011 coverage (%) for Pacific off-track and insufficient progress countries.
Water Inequities

Improved and piped water coverage varies greatly from country to country

Water coverage in Pacific countries, 2011, with EAP and World comparators

Urban-rural inequity is high

Household wealth influences coverage

Use of improved water facilities by household wealth quintile, Vanuatu, 2007 (MICS, 2007)
Hygiene Practices: Disposal of children’s stools

- One indicator of hygiene practices in households is whether or not children stools (faeces) are disposed of safely (put in a toilet or buried)
- In the Pacific, safe disposal of stools is less common than in East Asia and in developing countries generally

Percentage of children whose stools are disposed of safely according to the latest Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), unweighted average of 6 countries in the Pacific compared to 4 countries in East Asia and the developing world average (see page 8 for a list of these countries)

Household Water Treatment: Vanuatu example

- In Vanuatu, appropriate* household water treatment is uncommon at 15 per cent, far lower than the East Asia average of 60 per cent
- Treatment is slightly more prevalent in urban areas and among higher education levels

* Appropriate treatment methods include boiling, bleaching/chlorinating, filtering, and solar disinfecting

Source: Vanuatu MICS 2007

WASH in Schools

- Access to water and sanitation in schools varies among Pacific countries with available data (see sources last page)
- Much of the variation is due to how standards are defined: Kiribati’s low figures are because the standard includes minimum water quantity per student and toilets per student
- School water systems are highly vulnerable: for example, most schools in Tuvalu depend entirely on rainwater harvesting
Focus on Pacific Island Countries excluding Papua New Guinea

- Papua New Guinea has a large population relative to its neighbours, representing 75 per cent of the sub-region as a whole
- Due to this large population in relation to its neighbours, and its low water and sanitation coverage levels, Papua New Guinea tends to affect overall sub-regional weighted averages disproportionally
- Analyzing the remaining 14 remaining Pacific Island Countries in the sub-region as a group results in a somewhat different picture of water and sanitation coverage

Sanitation: higher levels but still off-track

- Sanitation coverage in the Pacific sub-region not including Papua New Guinea is at similar levels to the East Asia and Pacific region as a whole, and much higher than the Pacific sub-region
- However, because of poor rates of progress since 1990 in many Pacific countries, the sub-region without Papua New Guinea is still off-track its MDG sanitation target

Water: on-track

- The sub-region without Papua New Guinea has similar water coverage levels as the EAP region
- The 14 Pacific Island Countries taken as a whole are on-track to meet the MDG target
- Rural-urban disparities are also less pronounced, with a gap of only 12 percentage points
- However, freshwater resources are extremely vulnerable in the Pacific due to climate variability and change
Sources and Notes

Main water supply dataset: from Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation: 2013 Update (with supplemental data from wssinfo.org), from WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP). JMP data for the Pacific sub-Region is less extensive than for some other regions, but has improved to the point where the publication of this snapshot is now possible.

Country-specific DHS data: from published Demographic and Household Surveys available at measuredhs.com, from USAID and national statistics bureaus. DHS studies available for Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu (and for Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines and Timor-Leste used for comparison purposes on page 6).

Country-specific MICS data: from published Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys available at childinfo.org, from UNICEF, other UN agencies and National Statistics Bureau’s.


Data on WASH in Schools: from government institutional sources, collected by UNICEF.

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JMP Definitions of Improved Water and Sanitation Coverage

Improved drinking water: piped household water connection located inside the user’s dwelling, plot or yard; or other improved drinking water sources including public taps or standpipes, tube wells or boreholes, protected dug wells, protected springs, rainwater collection.

Improved sanitation: facilities likely to ensure hygienic separation of human excreta from human contact, including the following: flush/pour flush to piped sewer systems, septic tanks or pit latrines; ventilated improved pit latrines; pit latrines with slabs.
## Water and Sanitation Coverage Data

### Country estimates, 1990 and 2011

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<td>Improved (%</td>
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</table>
A Snapshot of Water and Sanitation in the Pacific

Country estimates, 2011

Sanitation Coverage
- Improved sanitation facilities
- Shared sanitation facilities
- Unimproved sanitation facilities
- Open defecation

Drinking Water Coverage
- Piped water on premises
- Other improved
- Other unimproved
- Surface water

Note that no distinction between improved sources is made in official estimates for Tokelau or Tonga, so all improved sources are shown to be piped water supply for the purposes of this map.

Data Source:
UNICEF Pacific / Laban / 2014