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A1 Global monitoring instruments for water, sanitation and hygiene

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At national, regional and global levels, various monitoring instruments are utilised by the sector to track progress in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) commitments. This information sheet presents the instruments that inform WASH decision and policy making, and their respective challenges.

MONITORING INSTRUMENTS FOR WASH

The Joint Monitoring Programme

The Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation – a collaboration between the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF – was established at the end of the International Water Decade (1981-1990) to improve monitoring of access to water and sanitation services. The decision was based on recommendations for a better monitoring service after the WHO had monitored progress on these services during the decade.

When the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were established in 2000, WHO/UNICEF's Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation was given the mandate by the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to monitor progress on MDG7.C. MDG7.C aims "to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation" (WHO/UNICEF, 2013a). In 2000, the JMP report highlighted information derived from users as opposed to the previous practice of relying on providers for data.

The following indicators¹ are used to monitor progress in the JMP (WHO/UNICEF, 2013a) are:

7.8 Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source

Improved refers to a water source that, by nature of its construction or through active intervention, is likely to be protected from outside contamination, in particular from contamination with faecal matter.

7.9 Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility

Improved refers to a sanitation facility that is likely to hygienically separate human excreta from human contact.

The JMP global monitoring report is based on national data, which is collected through household surveys, such as: demographic and health surveys, multiple indicator cluster surveys, national census reports and living standards measurement surveys (WHO/UNICEF, 2013b). Since 2006 the JMP reports have been biannual, but are annual from 2013.

¹ A list of improved and unimproved drinking water and sanitation categories may be viewed here: www.wssinfo.org/definitions-methods/watsan-categories/.

As the official monitoring body, WHO/UNICEF's JMP is involved with other international initiatives that monitor the water supply and sanitation sector regionally and globally. These include the UN-Water's Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS) report and regional monitoring activities such as the Country Status Overviews.

Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water

Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS) – a bi-annual publication by the UN-Water and implemented by WHO – reports on investments in water and sanitation service delivery. The report monitors and documents the inputs and components required to create an environment that sustains water, sanitation and hygiene services.² These include: “government policy and institutional frameworks; the volume, sources and targeting of investment; the human resource base; nature of external assistance; and performance” (WHO, 2012).

High level commitments of Sanitation and Water for All

In 2008, the UK and Dutch governments launched Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) as a global call for action at the UN General Assembly. The Sanitation and Water for All “is a global partnership of over 90 developing country governments, donors, civil society organizations and other development partners working together to catalyse political leadership and action, improve accountability and use scarce resources more effectively” (SWA, 2013a). In preparation for the SWA High Level Meetings (HLMs) sector and finance ministers from developing countries, ministers for development cooperation from donor countries and high-level representatives from development banks and other donor institutions gather to advance specific commitments. During the HLM ministers table commitments to be implemented over the next two years and discuss the results of their annual monitoring (SWA, 2013b). Key stakeholders debate on the latest GLAAS report and progress update on previous SWA HLM commitments to track achievements.³

Regional initiatives

Country Status Overviews (CSOs)

The Country Status Overviews (CSOs) are individual country reports which examine countries' level of preparedness to meet the MDG target for water and sanitation, the financing requirements and gaps and the sustainability of the sector. It includes recommendations for each country on steps to improve

performance. Led by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank (WSP), the first CSOs were published in 2006. They benchmarked the preparedness of 16 countries in Africa to meet the MDG for Water and Sanitation. The second set of CSOs, published in 2011, included data from 32 African countries and built upon the method and the process developed in the first round.

CURRENT DEBATE

Although these different global and regional monitoring instruments complement monitoring efforts in the WASH sector, they can simultaneously be fragmented and duplicative as illustrated by an overview diagram of the global monitoring landscape (see next page).

Global monitoring landscape

The increased demand for data on the sector's progress is often driven by donor's needs. Much of the emphasis for monitoring instruments has been on creating regional and global products – the mandate of programmes like JMP. Although strengthening national monitoring systems was part of JMP's original mandate this has been moved to the background since 2005. With the help of national surveys, the JMP report can make global estimates without investing in national monitoring.

However global monitoring tools cannot give detailed sector information at national and sub-national levels for each country. More detail in global monitoring reports would substitute national monitoring. The current debate focuses on the idea that the development of strong national sector monitoring systems and processes should be to inform in-country learning and respond to national policy priorities; and not to inform global or regional monitoring only. This leads to the debate whether different definitions should be used so that national governments can achieve results by tweaking the definition for access.

Strengths and weaknesses of global monitoring instruments

Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation

In March 2012, WHO/ UNICEF announced in its JMP report that the MDG for water supply: to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water had been globally reached in 2010 – five years ahead of the deadline.⁴

² The GLAAS report prepared by WHO complements WHO/ UNICEF's JMP's current monitoring practice, which monitors outcomes, such as the number of people using improved water supply and sanitation facilities.

³ A progress update on SWA HLM commitments from 2012 may be drawn here: reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2013%20Progress%20Update%20on%20the%202012%20SWA%20HLM%20Commitments_0.pdf.

⁴ For more information on the MDGs and the SDGs see: A3 Processes leading up to the post-2015 goals for water and sanitation.

GLOBAL MONITORING LANDSCAPE

	Inputs Public/donor finance, Cost recovery (TTT), Human Resources	Sector Processes Policy, Strategy, Planning, Budgeting, M&E	Outputs Water Schemes, Sanitation facilities, Sanitation/hygiene promotion, WASH in schools and health facilities	Outcomes People using improved facilities and practising hygiene
Sub-national (direct, province, state)	Sector information and monitoring systems			Some household surveys
	Programme and project-based monitoring, waterpoint mapping			
Country	Sector Information and monitoring systems Joint sector reviews			Large Household Surveys (DHS, MICS)
	Country Status Overview (CSOs)		Monitoring of WASH in schools	Census
	Bottleneck Analysis Tool (BAT)			
	GLAAS country profiles			
Regional	Country Status Overviews (CSOs)			
	Monitoring of E-Thekwini and other SANs			
	GLAAS regional snapshots			
Global	Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Water (GLAAS)			Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP)
	Monitoring of HLM Commitments		IBNet Utility	
	Creditor reporting System			

Source: Brocklehurst, 2012.

The aggregation of data to a global level made such an announcement possible, whilst there remained glaring regional and country differences. The fact that the percentage of people without access worldwide decreased from 24% to 11% is mainly due to progress made in China and India, both countries with large populations.

The definition of access in the current JMP report reflects the dilemma faced in standardising data. As a global monitoring tool, JMP uses the lowest denominator for access; meaning what is considered a basic level of service in rural Africa might not be acceptable in many South American countries. The progress towards improved access is important information for national governments and local authorities who will need this data to take (corrective) action. This requires more detailed information than global accountability.

Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS)

The contents of GLAAS reports are constantly being enlarged. Compared to the first GLAAS report, which only covered 17 countries, the latest update features key data from 74 countries. Of the 74 participating countries that provided consolidated financial data and streams, only four reported on the "three Ts" (taxes, transfers and tariffs), and another 13 on taxes and transfers only (Smits, 2012).

Some argue that the GLAAS reports serve better bases for and have greater impact in influencing decisions made by ministers of developing countries and by donors; GLAAS, for some, provides the "evidence needed" for evidence-based decision making for the SWA High Level commitments.

Nevertheless WHO's implementation of GLAAS recognises that further engagement with country processes is needed: the GLAAS reports should provide better feedback to countries on data gathered and ensure that the GLAAS processes are more relevant to countries (Swann, 2013).

High-level commitments of SWA

SWA provides an opportunity to establish a shared global WASH monitoring framework. However, some argue that such a framework would mainly serve the interest of donors. Helping them decide where to allocate their funding, what countries to support and how countries can qualify for funds. Others argue that this framework could serve multiple purposes. For example, by clarifying certain measures integral to a sector monitoring system. Improved communications, coordination and understanding of monitoring at different levels should build a more coherent global monitoring framework, especially post-2015.

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Bingo! graphic design

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