



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** of the  
**Report of the First Consultation on Post-2015  
Monitoring of Drinking-Water and Sanitation**  
Berlin, 3-5 May 2011

WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for  
Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP)



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If the MDG target for drinking-water and sanitation is met, there will have been a 50% reduction of those without access from the baseline year of 1990 to the target year of 2015. However, even if this target is met, in 2015 there will still be huge numbers of people without access to improved drinking-water sources (an estimated 700 million), and even more without access to improved sanitation (an estimated 1.7 billion; however, current trends indicated that this target will be missed by one billion, and that by 2015 2.7 billion will lack access). Using stricter definitions to include drinking-water quality and collection time, and environmentally-sound wastewater management, would result in significantly higher estimates of people without sustained access.

Therefore, global targets for drinking-water and sanitation after 2015 are still necessary. Moreover, given that access is defined by the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) as 'basic' or in minimum terms, there are significant developmental benefits that would result from populations receiving safer and more efficient, affordable, reliable, convenient and environmentally-sound drinking-water and sanitation services. Hence, future targets should give a comprehensive vision to which populations, government and sector professionals aspire, and indicators should be defined to measure progress towards it.

In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly recognized access to safe drinking-water and sanitation as a human right essential to the full enjoyment of life and all other human rights. Later that year, the United Nations Human Rights Council affirmed this human right.

Fundamental to the human rights framework is the concept of progressive realization: governments cannot solve the drinking-water and sanitation situation overnight, but they must make tangible and expedited progress towards the realization of this human right. Human rights principles also define various characteristics against which the enjoyment of the right can be assessed: availability, safety, acceptability, accessibility, affordability, participation, non-discrimination and accountability. If the recognition of the human right to safe drinking-water and sanitation is to have any meaning, future targets and monitoring systems must endeavour to take all these various aspects into account. A distinctive feature of the human rights framework is the principle of non-discrimination, requiring looking beyond average attainments and disaggregating datasets according to prohibited grounds of discrimination.

The objectives of the consultation on post-2015 monitoring of drinking-water and sanitation, held in Berlin on 3, 4 and 5 May 2011, were, through broad stakeholder representation, to review the current global drinking-water and sanitation monitoring landscape, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current MDG target, explain and discuss the relevance to future targets and monitoring of the human right to water and sanitation, design a process of related target and indicator development, and reach agreement on a roadmap towards having functional indicators ready for use by 2015.

There was broad agreement throughout the three days that global goals, targets and indicators are necessary, and that more attention should be directed to ensuring that future monitoring systems are defined to respond to the informational needs of decision-makers

and capacities at national level, as well as at regional and international levels. The global and national monitoring systems should feed into national decisions on overall resource allocations, targeting of services, and selection of interventions to meet equity and coverage goals.

There was much debate on the options and needs for the post-2015 targets and monitoring system – Should the monitoring system be left as it is? Should it be adjusted? Or should it be replaced altogether? Indeed, there were many criticisms of the current indicators measuring access and the system to monitor them, especially their usefulness at national level.

There was a general consensus among participants that an altogether new monitoring system is unnecessary, too difficult to implement and ultimately counter-productive. The existing system can and should be improved to address the concerns raised during the consultation and previously in other forums. Therefore, the preferred option would be to find a way of recalibrating existing targets, using a range of basic versus more advanced indicators based on the technology category or service ladder concept. This would reflect, where feasible, the most measurable and important human rights criteria. A large number of expectations for indicators were listed during the consultation (e.g. measurable, comparable, policy-relevant, time-bound, cheap to collect). Two linked types of monitoring would be needed to meet the different needs at different levels:

*For monitoring future global development targets:* to keep basic access in the centre of global targets, with special attention to the human rights criteria, and to ensure consistency with current monitoring; to explore the inclusion of more water supply and sanitation indicators; to explore different standards for rural and urban areas; and to propose indicators for capturing the equity dimension.

*For more detailed sector and human rights monitoring:* to expand the set of indicators using a number of service level and human rights criteria - indicators that would be collected and monitored partially through strengthening the existing national water sector monitoring infrastructure and operations in the rural and urban sub-sectors, and partially through additional human rights monitoring. Non-discrimination and equity would become central components of monitoring. A large number of expectations for indicators referred to above invites the working groups to rise to the challenge of proposing indicators that respond best to these expectations.

Furthermore:

The attainment of universal coverage through at least basic access to both drinking-water and sanitation services should be reflected in the future targets. This aspiration was common among participants both within the sector as well as those representing the human rights community. However, there was no consensus on whether this question would be relevant for post-2015 development goals, given that the time horizon for future goals remains unclear and thus the attainability of any 100% goal among a new set of goals is doubtful.

Given that sanitation is more off-track globally than drinking-water, it was recommended that ‘sanitation’ should be placed before ‘water’ in the text of any new goals or targets.

Given their centrality in development, many participants concurred with the proposal of exploring whether water and sanitation can be raised to the level of a ‘goal’ (under the current MDG classification).

The importance of raising a hygiene behaviour indicator to the level of a target was emphasized on several occasions: a hygiene task force will assess the feasibility of formulating an appropriate global target for hygiene, with corresponding indicators.

Future indicators could distinguish between urban and rural areas. Urban-specific indicators should preferably capture intra-urban disparities, distinguish between urban and periurban or single out slum areas.

As well as the longer time horizon of future targets (expected to be between 15 and 30 years), it is necessary to set interim 5-yearly targets to motivate as well as hold to account politicians and sector leaders for the medium-term political and planning horizon. Note that accountability is through two separate but linked commitments by governments – commitments to achieving future development goals, and commitments to human rights.

The crucial role that nationally owned and led monitoring systems play in sector development was raised as a key issue that cannot be ignored in sector monitoring post-2015. National systems should be based on local monitoring and decision-making needs. However, given the enormity of this task and the limited JMP resourcing, other sector partners will continue to play a major role in developing national monitoring capacity.

Reporting of sub-indicators for a range of marginalized groups was also considered crucial to measuring impact. Wherever relevant and possible, concerns of non-discrimination and equity related to fulfilling the right to access to water and sanitation should be reflected in future indicators.

#### Next steps

The participants commended WHO and UNICEF and thanked the host government for their vision in organizing this consultation at this time, when there is a real opportunity to shape the future of drinking-water and sanitation monitoring.

The key elements of the roadmap were outlined in session 4:

1. advancement of the post-2015 monitoring process;
2. identification of global targets and indicators;
3. integration with broader political and environmental agendas.

These three elements should be developed over the coming 6-12 months in a coordinated manner (see table). Specifically, WHO and UNICEF should lead or oversee the following activities as a matter of priority (in chronological order):

- Circulate the meeting report among participants and confirm the conclusions of the consultation.
- Share the report with the Steering Committee of the Sanitation and Water for All partnership and other key stakeholders.
- Agree on the composition of a larger consultative group for taking the post-2015 process forward – ensuring a stronger representation of developing countries, including the human rights community and key regional partners such as development banks, and representatives from bilateral cooperation – and establish a consultative process and communication platform. This will include:
  - formulating and circulating a roadmap, a work plan and a communication strategy, including resourcing plans and offers of contributions;
  - establishing terms of reference and membership for a limited number of working groups for development of post-2015 targets and indicators, including issues such as equity, economics and global versus national monitoring, either as cross-cutting issues within the water, sanitation and hygiene working groups, or as stand-alone but linked working groups;
  - establishing a peer and partner group made up of high-calibre individuals, led by developing countries, who are able and ready to challenge world leaders and conventional wisdom;
  - defining research needs arising from the preceding components, and the time scale needed for their accomplishment.
- Sensitize sector professionals and politicians on the integration of the human rights framework into post-2015 water and sanitation monitoring.
- Seek early feedback from (selected) countries on the proposed new targets and indicators, before the proposals are taken to countries through the official United Nations process.
- Identify and lobby relevant decision-makers from the larger development and environment community on the specific process and timelines for agreeing future water and sanitation targets within the broader process of deciding future (global) development goals. To succeed in this, it was suggested that short key advocacy messages should be formulated, in coordination with (selected) United Nations Member States, including both developing and developed countries.

## Elements of a roadmap to post-2015 monitoring

Objective	Process / activity	Timeline	Lead / responsibility
Advancement of the design of the post-2015 monitoring process	Single coherent roadmap formulated and agreed	Third quarter 2011	JMP
	Communication strategy for post-2015 process	Fourth quarter 2011	JMP
	Link and communicate with larger United Nations processes and MDG summits	On-going	UNSGAB, JMP
	Web platform for communication of consultation stakeholders	First quarter 2012	JMP
	Increase participation from developing countries, and engage with countries and regions	Fourth quarter 2011–second quarter 2012	JMP, regional banks
	Comprehensive proposal for targets and indicators completed	Fourth quarter 2012	
Identification of global targets and indicators	Create working groups for post-2015 monitoring	Third quarter 2011	JMP, other lead agencies
	Working groups conduct their work (meetings, reviews, research)	Fourth quarter 2011 – second quarter 2012	Designated working group leads
	Clarify roles and responsibilities on monitoring the ‘enabling environment’		JMP / GLAAS
	Broader consultations	First half 2012	JMP
Integration with broader political and environmental agendas	Communicate this process with political bodies and financiers	Fourth quarter 2011 – first quarter 2012	UNSGAB, JMP
	Agree monitoring mandates within United Nations	On-going	JMP, UNSGAB
	Link water, sanitation and hygiene sector to environmental agenda	On-going	Designated organizations

JMP, WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation; UNSGAB, United Nations Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation.

Notes: JMP implies the joint leadership of WHO and UNICEF; the timelines and lead agencies are indicative and not exhaustive, and have not been committed to.

