

Annex 1

Country Papers Summary

The country papers of the *Asian Water Development Outlook (AWDO) 2007* provide a brief overview of 12 selected countries, covering the status and performance of the water sector, the key issues and challenges to be addressed, and an

indication of the way forward. Data and background information for each country have been obtained primarily from published sources in the public domain, additional data collection and analysis being outside the scope of the literature search undertaken. Achievement of the country paper goals has been constrained by limited availability of data and published information on the current status, as well as detailed future plans.

Some of the limitations of the country papers are discussed in Box A1.1, with suggestions made concerning the possible direction of future revisions.

One of the main purposes of the *AWDO 2007* is to focus the attention of national leaders and key decision makers on the need to increase investments in the water sector if the MDG targets are to be achieved by 2015. Although some countries have made good progress, others need to make dramatic improvements as can be seen from Table A1.1. Nearly half of the

Box A1.1: Country Paper Limitations and Future Development Options

- The country papers are based on a literature search of materials and information in the public domain.
- References and data refer to different dates due to available source materials. Consistency, for example using Millennium Development Goals progress data, is preferable to using latest data that might not be authoritative or be based on the same definition.
- The main focus is on water supply and sanitation (WSS), with water resources and other subsectors covered generally. Future versions could update WSS data and consider focus on water resources, irrigation, conservation, or pollution control, etc.
- There is a need for much more comprehensive data on utilities, especially on sanitation and wastewater treatment, and proposed future investments, e.g., What is needed to achieve the goals? What proportion of gross domestic product is this? What is being allocated? How can the gap be filled? What gives the best return for every dollar invested?

Table A1.1: Progress in Achieving MDG Targets, and IDWA Values

Country	Urban water (%)	Rural water (%)	Urban sanitation (%)	Rural sanitation (%)	IDWA value
Bangladesh	82	72	51	35	37
Cambodia	64	35	53	8	19
PRC	93	67	69	28	61
Fiji	43	51	87	55	n/a
India	95	83	59	22	60
Indonesia	87	69	73	40	59
Kazakhstan	97	73	87	52	74
Pakistan	96	89	92	41	39
Philippines	87	82	80	59	80
Samoa	90	87	100	100	n/a
Sri Lanka	98	74	98	89	51
Viet Nam	99	80	92	50	76

Key	Target already met	On track for 2015	Off-track — expected to hit target after 2015	Off-track and regressing
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IDWA = index of drinking water adequacy; MDG = Millennium Development Goal
 Coverage figures from published WHO/UNICEF data for 2004. Although not the latest data available from individual countries, which may use different definitions and are likely to be overoptimistic in their assessments, they provide consistency in performance comparisons. For Cambodia, definitions of improved facilities and urban/rural areas were changed after 1990, so MDG target progress from 1990 to 2004 is not directly comparable.

targets for 11 of the countries in the table will not be met by 2015!

The MDGs must not be considered as an end in themselves. Even for countries that have already met one or more of the water targets, attention must now be focused on the next stage—for instance, provision of services to the remaining 50% of the 1990 unserved proportion of the population, or stricter MDG definitions. The sometimes large variations in reported MDG progress illustrate the confusion and differences in interpretation of what constitutes an improved water supply or improved sanitation. Simply providing access does not necessarily mean all problems are solved and all benefits are received. For example, an improved water supply must also provide good quality water delivered

at the tap, and improved sanitation must include effective waste disposal and wastewater treatment.

The reality in most of the 12 country papers is that water delivered from improved facilities may be substandard and sewage is not treated. It is also questionable whether it is appropriate to define goals and monitor progress in percentage terms as this requires very good base data and good on-going data collection. Percentages are a poor indicator when increases in the general population and the proportion of those served/unserved are considered, in addition to rural/urban migration which simply moves people from a rural MDG index to an urban one. It is very likely that current MDG achievement figures overestimate the real picture because the

Box A1.2: Common Issues (and some solutions) in Selected Countries

Too many players in the sector with poor clarity of responsibilities	Simplify and reform the sector
Poor implementation of policies, laws, and regulations	Enforce firmly and make people accountable regardless of whether private or public sector
Water resources poorly managed	Implement integrated water resource management on basin catchment area basis over long-term horizons, say 20 years
Water resources being used inefficiently	Improve poor irrigation practices
Water resource contamination from deforestation, mine discharges, untreated municipal and industrial effluents, agricultural fertilizer and pesticide run-off, saline irrigation drainage	Enforce pollution control measures
Poor service levels, possibly even where coverage reasonable	Increase supply hours, improve quality at the tap, etc.
High water connection fees prevent the urban poor from being connected	Give free connections and recover costs from tariff
Low tariffs do not reflect the true service cost for sustainability	Recover at least operating and maintenance costs initially
Low levels of municipal and industrial effluent treatment	Construct more treatment plants and improve operational performance
Limited institutional and managerial capacity in some departments and utilities	Increase institutional and human resources capacity
Conflicts of interest, e.g., where provincial governments set water tariffs and own utilities	Establish independent or highly respected regulator
Poor water sector governance	Make utilities autonomous—no political interference, ring-fence utility revenues, etc.
Consumers unaware of the “true” value and scarcity of water	Sensitize and educate, run public awareness campaigns

present MDG target definitions do not cover all necessary quantity and quality interventions, such as treatment of wastewater from improved sanitation.

Some of the main issues (and solutions) from the country papers are listed in Box A1.2.

Key messages from the country papers are:

- There is need for better quality and more comprehensive data, especially from water utilities.
- Policy development is not the issue; the need is for implementation and enforcement of existing policies and legislation. This can only be achieved if there is accountability and a strong regulation/monitoring regime in place.
- Many governments need to dramatically increase water sector investments, especially in sanitation. As a general guide, the aim should be to spend a minimum of 1% of gross domestic product on the water sector.