

Media Update

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UNICEF

PRESS RELEASE

Billions of people will lack access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene in 2030 unless progress quadruples – warn WHO, UNICEF

Latest estimates reveal that 3 in 10 people worldwide could not wash their hands with soap and water at home during the COVID-19 pandemic

GENEVA/NEW YORK, 2 July 2021 – Billions of people around the world will be unable to access safely managed household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services in 2030 unless the rate of progress quadruples, according to a new report from WHO and UNICEF.

The Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) report – ***Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000 - 2020*** – presents estimates on household access to safely managed drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services over the past five years, and assesses progress toward achieving the sixth sustainable development goal (SDG) to ‘Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030’. For the first time, the report also presents emerging national data on menstrual health.

In 2020, around 1 in 4 people lacked safely managed drinking water in their homes and nearly half the world’s population lacked safely managed sanitation. COVID-19 has highlighted the urgent need to ensure everyone can access good hand hygiene. At the onset of the pandemic, 3 in 10 people worldwide could not wash their hands with soap and water within their homes.

“Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, yet millions of people across the

world lack access to a reliable, safe supply of water,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. “Investment in water, sanitation and hygiene must be a global priority if we are to end this pandemic and build more resilient health systems.”

Some progress reported, but not enough

The report notes some progress towards achieving universal access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. Between 2016 and 2020, the global population with safely managed drinking water at home increased from 70 per cent to 74 per cent; safely managed sanitation services grew from 47 per cent to 54 per cent; and handwashing facilities with soap and water increased from 67 per cent to 71 per cent.

In 2020, for the first time, more people used improved on-site sanitation, such as pit latrines and septic tanks, which can effectively contain and treat waste, rather than sewer connections. There is need for governments to ensure adequate support for safely managed on-site sanitation, including faecal sludge management.

Urgent need for investment

The report makes clear that, if current trends persist, billions of children and families will be left without critical, life-saving WASH services, stating that by 2030:

- Only 81 per cent of the world’s population will have access to safe drinking water at home, leaving 1.6 billion without;
- Only 67 per cent will have safe sanitation services, leaving 2.8 billion without;
- And only 78 per cent will have basic handwashing facilities, leaving 1.9 billion without.

The report also notes vast inequalities with vulnerable children and families suffering the most. To achieve universal access to safely managed drinking water by 2030, the current rate of progress in the Least Developed Countries would need to increase ten-fold. In fragile contexts, where people were twice as likely to lack safe drinking water, it would need to accelerate by a factor of 23.

“Even before the pandemic, millions of children and families were suffering without clean water, safe sanitation, and a place to wash their hands,” said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. “Despite our impressive progress to date to scale-up these lifesaving services, the alarming and growing needs continue to outstrip our ability to respond. The time has come to dramatically accelerate our efforts to provide every child and family with the most basic needs for their health and well-being, including fighting off infectious diseases like COVID-19.”

Other key findings from the report include:

- Eight out of 10 people without basic water services lived in rural areas. Meanwhile, safely managed sanitation services reached 62 per cent of the world’s urban population, but only 44 per cent of its rural population.
- Sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing the slowest rate of progress in the world. Only 54 per cent of people used safe drinking water, and only 25 per cent in fragile contexts.
- Emerging data on menstrual health show that, in many countries, a significant proportion of women and girls are unable to meet menstrual health needs, with significant disparities in particular among vulnerable groups, such as the poor and those with disabilities.

Accelerating WASH coverage will require prioritization at the highest levels of decision making by international agencies, governments, civil society and the private sector. For this to happen, WASH must be a regular fixture on the agenda at high-level political meetings to ensure member states keep track of progress. This is important in the context of the forthcoming mid-term review of the Water Action Decade in 2023 – the first UN conference on water and sanitation in almost 50 years.

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Note for editors:

The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene is responsible for monitoring global progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and indicators relating drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). The JMP produces national, regional and global estimates of progress on WASH in households, schools and health care facilities.

Related links:

[WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme \(JMP\) for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene](#)

[WHO: Water, sanitation and hygiene \(WASH\)](#)

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UNDP

PRESS RELEASE

European Union launches a new Rule of Law programme in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Newly Merged Districts and in Balochistan

Islamabad, 02 July 2021—Today, the European Union and its partners launched a programme that aims to promote the rule of law and enhance the criminal justice system in Pakistan, with a specific focus on the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan. Anchored in the vision that an enhanced and reformed justice sector is the only sustainable solution for addressing critical and systematic weaknesses in justice delivery, the programme spans from 2021 till 2025, and is financed with EUR20 million.

Jointly implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the programme aims to support reform processes to ensure delivery of people-centered justice, enhance access to justice for all, particularly women and less privileged/marginalized groups; and improve service delivery of the security sector in line with constitutional safeguards and international standards. The project will provide technical assistance to legal reforms and the Rule of Law roadmaps in KP and Balochistan. Special focus will be set on access to justice through free legal aid and alternative dispute resolution, as well as legal literacy for citizens. On the institutional side, the project will assist in upgrading facilities and processes to enhance citizen friendly service delivery.

The launch event was held in a socially distanced setting, with many participants and key stakeholders attending virtually. Honourable Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed graced the occasion as Chief Guest, along with Her Excellency Ms. Androulla Kaminara, EU Ambassador to Pakistan and Representatives of the three UN Agencies.

Honourable Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed thanked the EU and UN agencies for their support and expressed his confidence in the programme. “I am certain that together, we will be able to enhance access to justice for all, particularly women, less privileged and the marginalized groups and improve service delivery. The Government of Pakistan will extend all its support to the programme, enabling it to achieve its goal.”

EU Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Ms. Androulla Kaminara thanked the UN agencies, provincial and federal government, and other important stakeholders for their support in strengthening the Rule of Law in Pakistan. “Inclusive access to justice for all is an important prerequisite for a peaceful and just society. Today’s programme builds on the long-term commitment of the EU to improving the Rule of Law and access to justice for all in Pakistan. The new program is part of the priorities of the EU-Pakistan Strategic Engagement Plan 2019 and financed under the EU Multi-Annual Indicative Program 2014-2020. Both strategic documents support the implementation of the Vision 2025 in the focal areas: rural development, education, good governance, human rights, and Rule of Law.”

Spokesperson to Government of Balochistan, Mr. Liaquat Ali Shahwani, thanked the EU and UN agencies for their continued support towards the justice system in Pakistan. "The Rule of Law programme is indeed an important milestone in advancing the provision of an enabling environment, peace, and security for the citizens of Balochistan and we are most grateful for this support."

Finance Minister, Government of KP, Mr. Taimur Saleem Khan Jhagra, expressed the KP Government’s appreciation for the programme, calling it a significant opportunity to address the various challenges faced by the province in securing citizen rights and access to justice. “The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has prioritized access to justice and strongly believes in the principle of “**Leave No One Behind**” in our development agenda as well.”

Speaking at the occasion, UNDP Resident Representative Mr. Knut Ostby said “I commend the European Union’s ongoing strategic support for key Rule of Law, security and Justice sector institutions for strengthened citizen’s access

to justice. UNDP's work strongly hinges upon the support that key government institutions have extended to our programmes over the years. We feel privileged and honoured by this support. As we proudly partner with our sister UN agencies for inclusive and sustainable impact, our focus will be on taking forward the key lessons learned, on efficiently utilized resources, on inclusiveness and leaving no one behind. Being here today is a demonstration of our firm belief in rule of law, right to a fair trial, equality before law, as envisioned in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. ”

UN Women Pakistan Country Representative Ms. Sharmeela Rassool stated that, “In Pakistan, women constitute of almost 50% of the entire population. Yet they are not represented proportionately in receiving or delivering of basic and critical services including effective service delivery in the justice sector. UN Women is committed to deepening our efforts to ensure inclusion of women in formal justice delivery mechanisms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan to ensure their rights are safeguarded for promotion of a fair, efficient, gender-responsive and inclusive society.”

UNODC Pakistan Country Representative Mr. Jeremy Milsom hailed the programme as a milestone achievement and reiterated that, “UNODC is committed to working as a strategic partner to the Federal and provincial Government of Balochistan, implementing and strengthening transformative reforms across the chain of rule of law institutions towards delivery of a free and fair justice for all, including vulnerable and marginalized groups to support inclusive, just and citizen-friendly rule of law for the people.”

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lasting solutions for people and planet.

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Photo Captions:

Image 1: Honourable Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed and EU Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms. Androulla Kaminara, along with other dignitaries at the launch of the EU funded project 'Promoting the Rule of Law and Enhancing the Criminal Justice System in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Newly Merged Districts and Balochistan'.

Image 2: Honourable Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed and EU Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms. Androulla Kaminara at the launch event of the EU funded project 'Promoting the Rule of Law and Enhancing the Criminal Justice System in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Newly Merged Districts and Balochistan'.

Image 3: UNDP Resident Representative speaking at the launch of the EU funded project 'Promoting the Rule of Law and Enhancing the Criminal Justice System in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Newly Merged Districts and Balochistan'.