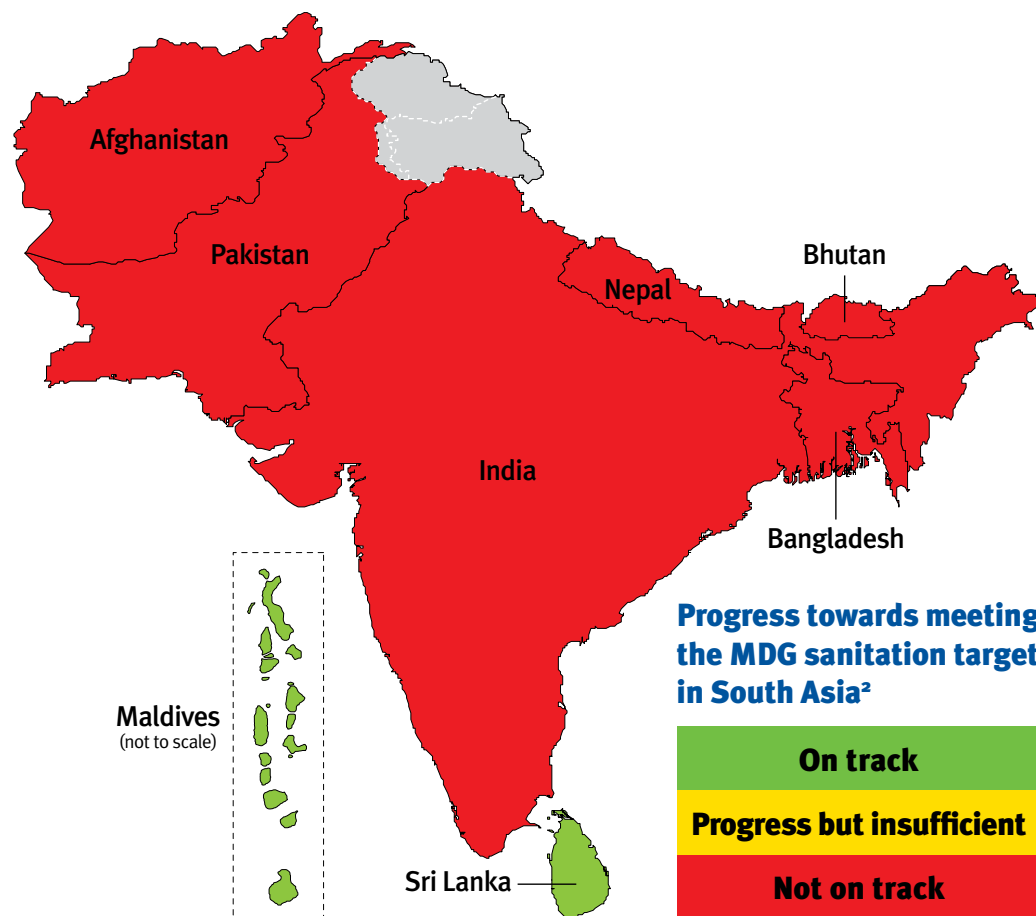


# Sanitation crisis in South Asia

It is not surprising that diarrhoea continues to be a leading cause of child deaths in South Asia when nearly one billion people live without access to adequate sanitation across the region.



During 2008, in the countries shown, over 350,000 children died before their fifth birthday due to diarrhoea caused by poor sanitation and unsafe water.<sup>1</sup> Many more fell seriously ill, compromising their future potential and overburdening health services.

At current rates of progress, the 2015 MDG target for sanitation will not be met in South Asia and this failure comes at enormous social and economic cost.<sup>2</sup> In India alone inadequate sanitation costs the economy US\$53.8 billion annually in lost productivity, healthcare provision and other losses.<sup>3</sup>

The 'Delhi declaration' of 2008 set out clear commitments and milestones for tackling this crisis. The matrix overleaf shows the progress made by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka's governments in meeting their commitments. It was prepared in consultation with governments, donors and civil society by UNICEF, WaterAid, FANSA and WSSCC country offices.



There has been considerable improvement since the first SACOSAN, but there remain many critical areas which require urgent attention in order to free the citizens of South Asia from undignified, inhumane and unhygienic living conditions.


We call on national governments in South Asia to renew the commitments set out in the Delhi Declaration and in particular to:

- Clarify budgetary allocations for sanitation and ensure effective targeting of new investments to poor and un-served populations.
- Strengthen mechanisms for monitoring progress and enhance accountability for results through multi-stakeholder dialogue and review processes.

#### References:

- 1 Calculated from Black et al 2010 and WHO (2008) *Safer Water, Better Health*
- 2 Adapted from UNICEF/WHO (2008) *Joint Monitoring Programme*
- 3 WSP 2011

 Action implemented and maintained  
 Process started/Some action taken

 No action taken  
 Not answered

**Triangle direction:** Up = Improved, Down = Deteriorated

**Triangle colour =** Rating in 2009 assessment

Question		Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Overall	
Sanitation coverage (%) <sup>4</sup>	1990	no data	39.00	no data	18.00	70.00	69.00	11.00	28.00	22.00	
	2008	37.00	53.00	65.00	31.00	98.00	31.00	45.00	91.00	35.00	
Child mortality 2009 (/1000) <sup>5</sup>		198.6	52	78.6	65.6	12.7	48.2	87	14.7		
Diarrhoea deaths as % of all under-five mortality <sup>6</sup>		29%	11%	14%	13%	9%	15%	16%	3%	15%	
Estimated 2008 diarrhoea deaths <sup>6</sup>		89709	20155	169	237482	14	5416	74209	202	427356	
1. Water and sanitation is a basic right in national constitutions.										9	
2. Specific initiatives have been launched to progressively realise sanitation rights.										11	
3. Specific initiatives have started to address the needs of women and marginalised groups.										7	
4. Sanitation has been designated a national priority.										11	
5. Adequate attention is being paid to capacity building of local government institutions.										11	
6. Specific actions have been taken to improve the working conditions of sanitary workers.										4	
7. Sanitation has been sufficiently integrated within health policies and plans.										8	
8. Actions have been taken to mainstream sanitation across sectors and ministries.										8	
9. National policies or strategies for emergencies make provision for WASH services.										10	
10. A national plan of action has been prepared.										12	
11. A sector financing plan and adequate budgetary allocations has been made.										8	
12. A performance monitoring mechanism for sanitation has been established.										8	
13. Inter-Country Working Group activated.		Note: This is a region-wide issue, so this is assessed for the region rather than for countries									8
14. A broad-based alliance to coordinate progress established.										7	
15. A clear institutional home for sanitation has been established.										10	
<b>Overall</b>		12	15	14	18	16	18	14	17		

**In the two years since the last SACOSAN meeting over 750,000 children under five have died from diarrhoea in South Asia. We call on the governments of South Asia to urgently address the sanitation crisis by ensuring that every country has met the commitments set out in the Delhi Declaration.**

To track these commitments between SACOSAN meetings, visit [washwatch.org](http://washwatch.org)

References:  
 4 WHO/UNICEF JMP  
 5 UNICEF 2010  
 6 Black et al 2010

