

Building partnerships for water and sanitation initiatives in the Pacific Region



Pacific WASH Coalition



The Pacific WASH Coalition supports regional initiatives in the area of water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

The Pacific WASH Coalition includes the following organisations: Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI), the Fiji School of Medicine (FSMed), Live & Learn Environmental Education (LLEE), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF), International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) and the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC).

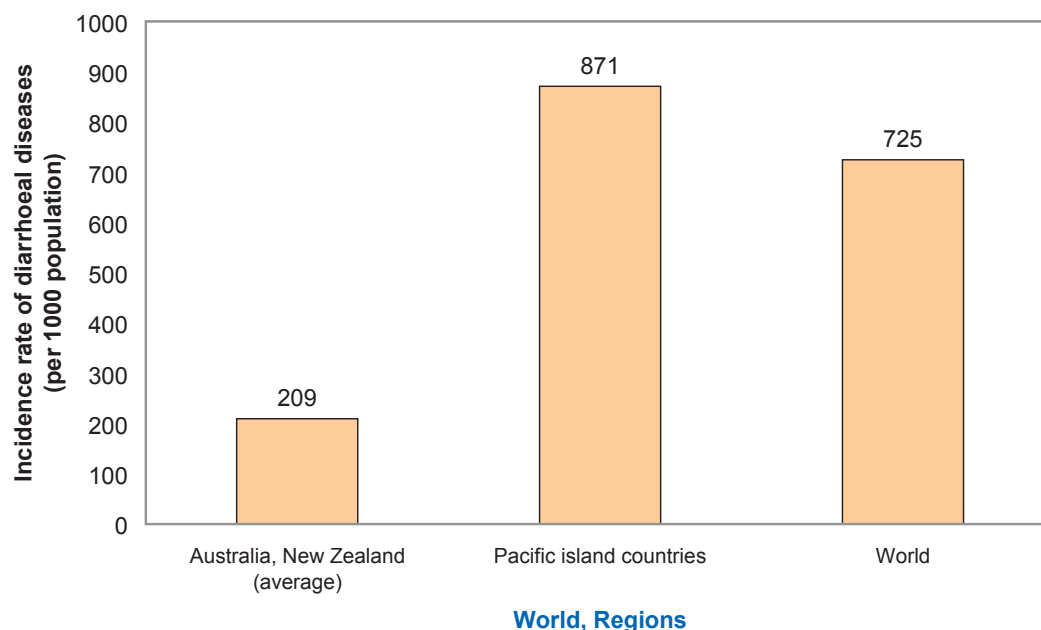
The Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission based in Suva, Fiji has a regional mandate on water and sanitation and provides a secretarial role within the Pacific as a member of the global Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC).

Jointly the Coalition takes a coordinated approach in addressing the issues of access to safe water supply, adequate sanitation and improved hygiene practices for the people in the Pacific.

The Coalition utilises existing frameworks such as the Pacific Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Water Management, the Pacific Wastewater Framework for Action and the Pacific Framework for Action on Drinking Water Quality and Health to support countries achieving the MDG targets on water and sanitation.

Globally, but also in Pacific island countries, there is a vast need to improve hand washing and sanitation. Eighty-eight per cent of cases of diarrhoeal diseases worldwide are attributable to inadequate sanitation, unsafe water and poor hygiene. In the Pacific island countries, the year 2002 saw the incidence of 871 cases of acute diarrhoea per thousand people, causing the death of 2800 people. More severe forms of diarrhoeal diseases include cholera, typhoid and dysentery.

The Pacific island countries present an incidence rate of diarrhoeal diseases 20% greater than the world average and over four times higher than developed countries such as Australia and New Zealand.



Did You Know?

The number of deaths due to diarrhoeal diseases in the Pacific island countries in 2002, most of them children under five, is equivalent to the crash and death of the passengers of nine Boeing 777 jets a year.

Country statistics from the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on access to improve sanitation and improved drinking-water, indicate that on average, approximately only half of the total population of the Pacific islands countries are served with any form of improved sanitation or drinking water.

Diarrhoeal diseases kill 2,800 people in the Pacific region every year. These deaths can be prevented if sanitation and hygiene is improved. Hand washing with soap is the single most cost-effective health intervention.



Did You Know?

Diarrhoeal diseases are amongst the top three killers of children in the world today!

The Pacific WASH Coalition adheres to the principles of Vision 21 and those of WSSCC in a global scenario guided by the Pacific supporting frameworks as mentioned earlier. The Coalition is working to upscale efforts in the area of water and sanitation advocating WASH campaigns but also keeping in mind the need for 'hard' or infrastructure developments that are required to improve access to safe water and adequate sanitation for Pacific people.

Supporting Pacific Island Countries in development of local WASH Coalitions for better collaboration in-country, would ensure an enabling environment is made not only for information sharing, but also to work hand in hand to achieve the common goal of healthy islands with healthy people.

In 2008, WASH campaigns got supported by WSSCC in Tonga and Tuvalu which concentrated in schools especially in the areas of water quality, rainwater harvesting and sanitation and hygiene promotion activities.



Figure 1: Students of Nauti Primary School in Tuvalu engaged in hand washing as part of their WASH campaign activities

More information on regional water, sanitation and hygiene programmes in the Pacific region can be found from:

 **SOPAC's water website:** <http://www.pacificwater.org>

Brief profiles on participating organisations of the Pacific WASH Coalition and how they are contributing towards sustainable development can be found below.

Live and Learn Environmental Education is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation which promotes greater understanding and action toward human and environmental sustainability through education and dialogue building.
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Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International is a network of South Pacific island non-governmental organisations and overseas affiliates working in partnership across the South Pacific. The main function of the FSPI Secretariat is to coordinate the planning and design of regional development projects, based on the needs identified by the members and their constituencies.
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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the world's largest humanitarian organization, with 186 member National Societies. All our work is guided by seven fundamental principles; humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

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World Health Organization is the directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.

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The Fiji School of Medicine is a Tertiary Health Institution striving towards Excellence in Training and Education of Health Professionals in the South Pacific.

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United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) works in more than 90 countries around the world to improve water supplies and sanitation facilities in schools and communities, and to promote safe hygiene practices. We sponsor a wide range of activities and work with many partners, including families, communities, governments and like-minded organizations. In emergencies we provide urgent relief to communities and nations threatened by disrupted water supplies and disease. All UNICEF water and sanitation programmes are designed to contribute to the Millennium Development Goal for water and sanitation: to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe water and basic sanitation.

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SOPAC is the **Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission**. SOPAC is an inter-governmental, regional organisation providing support to Pacific member countries in the field of geosciences. Under its Community Lifelines Programme, SOPAC provides technical support to country counterparts in the field of water resources management, water services and water governance. The water sector is currently implementing regional programmes covering community participation, gender, wastewater and sanitation, awareness, water resources assessment and monitoring, water quality monitoring, water demand management, water safety planning and integrated water resources management and has currently 20 staff members.

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