

Press Release: Financing Water Supply and Sanitation in a Changing Climate

Smart Water Supply and Sanitation Investments Can Meet Both Humanitarian and Climate Goals

October 22nd, Oakland, California – Smart investments in water supply and sanitation can benefit both the climate and those living in poverty, finds a new report from the Pacific Institute and Water.org.

Financing Water Supply and Sanitation in a Changing Climate explores the connections between water, sanitation, and hygiene and climate change, and finds that the energy use and associated greenhouse gas emissions from water supply and sanitation systems can be reduced through water and energy efficiency improvements and the adoption of renewable or lower-greenhouse gas emissions energy options, such as biogas recovery. Doing so would make water supply and sanitation systems less vulnerable to climate impacts on energy systems while reducing emissions.

Forty percent of the global population – three billion people – live without soap and water available at home. The study also finds that climate changes, especially impacts on water availability, water quality, and water and sanitation facilities, may undermine progress toward achievement of SDG 6 by pushing communities “down” the ladder from safely managed to basic or even limited service and increasing the financial gap to meet SDG 6.

“Poor and marginalized populations are especially vulnerable because they rely on more vulnerable water supply and sanitation systems, are subject to weaker institutional protections, and have limited access to funding,” says report co-author Heather Cooley, Director of Research at the Pacific Institute. “But there’s good news: our research shows that the right kinds of investments can meet both humanitarian and climate goals.”

The report includes recommendations for climate-friendly and climate-resilient investment strategies. For example, water supply systems benefit from changes in management strategies like protecting and diversifying water sources and improving governance institutions, as these strategies are often more important than technology in improving climate resilience. Another finding is that for sanitation systems, key vulnerabilities can be reduced by selecting technologies less sensitive to local climate risks.

The report also finds that mobilizing new funding is critical to developing climate resilient water supply and sanitation systems. Innovative new financing approaches hold promise, especially new forms of bonds such as “green” and “catastrophe” bonds, microfinance and microinsurance, and favorable taxing strategies.

Learn more and download the report [here](#).

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Founded in 1987, the Pacific Institute is a global water think tank that combines science-based thought leadership with active outreach to influence local, national, and international efforts in developing sustainable water policies. Our mission is to create and advance solutions to the world’s most pressing water challenges. From working with Fortune 500 companies to disenfranchised communities, we lead local, national, and international efforts in developing sustainable water policies and delivering meaningful results.

Water.org is an international nonprofit organization that has positively transformed more than 30 million lives around the world through access to safe water and sanitation. Founded by Gary White and Matt Damon, Water.org pioneers market-driven financial solutions to the global water crisis. For more than 25 years, they've been providing families with hope, health and the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty.