Clean water and sanitation

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Drinking water is essential to life, but only 71 percent of people have water that is considered safely managed.

Access to water at different categories, 2015 (% of global population)

![Bar chart showing access to water in different categories.]

Safely managed water is the highest level of service. It requires an improved water source, located on premises, available when needed, and free from contamination.

Basic water is still improved but availability and freedom from contamination are not guaranteed, and it need not be on premises, but must be within a 30-minute roundtrip.

Limited water is water from an improved source with a roundtrip collection time of more than 30 minutes.

Surface water (such as rivers)

Countries may have similar rates of safely managed access for different reasons.

Components of safely managed water for two countries, 2015 (% of population)

In both Ghana and Nepal an estimated 27 percent of people have access to safely managed water. However, the limiting factor in Ghana is accessibility, whereas in Nepal it is contamination.

In Sub-Saharan Africa 58% of people have access to at least basic water, but less than half of those have access to safely managed water.

Access to safely managed and basic water, 2015 (% of population)

![Bar chart showing access to safely managed and basic water in different regions.]

At least basic water requires only an improved water source within a 30-minute roundtrip, but 42 percent of people in Sub-Saharan Africa lack even that.

People using at least basic water services, 2015 (% of population)

- **Under 50**
- **50–75**
- **75–90**
- **90–100**
- **No data**

Outside Sub-Saharan Africa, Afghanistan, Haiti, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands each have a rate below 65 percent.


Rural dwellers are less likely than their urban counterparts to have access to at least basic water.

People using at least basic water services (%)

- **East Asia & Pacific**
  - Urban
  - Rural
- **Europe & Central Asia**
- **Latin America & Caribbean**
- **Middle East & North Africa**
- **North America**
- **South Asia**
- **Sub-Saharan Africa**
- **Urban Rural**

Only 19 percent of Eritreans have access to basic water. Of those who do not, about half travel too far to qualify, and about half use an unimproved source.


Poorer people are less likely to have the convenience and potential safety of water piped to their homes.

People using piped water on premises, most recent value (%)

- **Guatemala**
- **Tunisia**
- **Yemen, Rep.**
- **Pakistan**
- **Indonesia**
- **India**
- **Mozambique**
- **Ethiopia**
- **Haiti**
- **Nigeria**
- **Tanzania**
- **Niger**
- **Congo, Dem. Rep.**
- **Bangladesh**

Piped water is not always safer. For example, in Bangladesh 80 percent of piped water is contaminated with *E. coli*—no different from surface water.

SDG 6.1

Globally, 6 in 10 people use sanitation facilities that are not safely managed and may contribute to the spread of disease.

Access to sanitation at different categories, 2015 (% of global population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safely managed</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unimproved</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open defecation (such as fields and forests)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The 15 countries with lowest access to at least basic sanitation (out of 210 countries with data).


In Latin America & Caribbean 86 percent of people have access to at least basic sanitation, but only a quarter of those have access to safely managed sanitation.

Access to safely managed and basic sanitation, 2015 (% of population)

![Graph showing access to safely managed and basic sanitation in different regions]

Even by the less demanding standard of at least basic sanitation, many countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, have very low rates of access.

Access to at least basic sanitation, 2015 (% of population)

![Graph showing access to at least basic sanitation in different countries]

Although SDG target 6.2 focuses on safely managed sanitation, many countries lack data for this indicator. Moreover, in some countries few people have access to even basic sanitation.

Note: The 15 countries with lowest access to at least basic sanitation (out of 210 countries with data).

India still has the largest number of people practicing open defecation.

Handwashing makes an important contribution to hygiene, but many households, especially among the poor, lack basic facilities.

Note: The 30 countries with lowest access among the poorest wealth quintile (out of 51 countries with data).