

Water Facts

- 2.2 billion people (1 in 4) still live without **safely managed drinking water**, including 115 million people who drink surface water. ([WHO/UNICEF, 2023](#)).
- 3.5 billion people (4 in 10) still live without **safely managed sanitation**, including 419 million who practise open defecation. ([WHO/UNICEF, 2023](#)).
- 2 billion people still lack **basic hygiene services**, including 653 million with no facility at all. ([WHO/UNICEF, 2023](#)).
- Around 1,000 daily **deaths of children under five** are due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene. ([WHO, 2023](#))
- Children under the age of 15 living in countries affected by **protracted conflict** are, on average, almost three times more likely to die from diarrhoeal diseases caused by a lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene than by direct violence. ([UNICEF, 2019](#))
- More than 2 billion people live in countries under **water stress** and 3.6 billion face **inadequate access to water** at least one month per year. ([WMO, 2021](#))
- Water-related **disasters** account for 70% of all disaster related deaths. ([World Bank Group, 2022](#))
- Since 2000, **flood-related disasters** have increased by 134%. ([WMO, 2021](#))
- In 2023, **glaciers** lost more than 600 gigatons of water, the largest mass loss registered in the last five decades. ([WMO, 2024](#))
- Only 0.5% of water on Earth is **useable and available freshwater**. ([WMO, 2021](#))
- To meet SDG 6, **progress needs to increase**, on average, by 6x for safely managed drinking water, 5x for safely managed sanitation and 3x for basic hygiene. ([WHO/UNICEF, 2023](#))
- 72% of all **freshwater withdrawals** are used by agriculture, 16% by industries, and 12% by municipalities. ([FAO, 2023](#))
- Global **water demand** is projected to increase by 20 to 30% by 2050. ([UN, 2018](#))
- To produce a person's **daily food**, it takes 2,000-5,000 litres of water. A 50% increase in food demand is expected by 2050. ([FAO, 2020](#))
- **Water-use efficiency** has increased by 19.3% globally from 2015 to 2021, but around 58% of countries still exhibit low **water-use efficiency**. ([FAO, 2024](#))
- The world will not achieve **sustainable water management** until 2049. ([UNEP, 2024](#))
- Only 27% of **industrial wastewater** is safely treated. ([UN-Habitat, WHO, 2024](#))
- 42% of **household wastewater** is not safely treated. ([UN-Habitat, WHO, 2024](#))
- Only 56% of monitored water bodies in 120 reporting countries are in "good ambient **water quality**". ([UNEP, 2024](#))
- Just 43 out of 153 countries sharing **transboundary waters** have operational arrangements covering 90% or more of their shared water bodies. ([UNECE, UNESCO, 2024](#))
- Every US\$ 1 invested in water and sanitation **yields a return** of US\$ 4.3. ([UN-Water GLAAS, 2014](#))
- **Aid for water and sanitation** decreased by 5% between 2015 and 2022. ([UN-Water GLAAS, 2022](#)).
- Estimates indicate that **to achieve SDG 6**, over US\$1 trillion will be needed per year. ([World Resources Institute, 2020](#)).