



SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation

Ensure access to water and sanitation for all



FACTS AND FIGURES

- Despite progress, **2.2 billion people** still lacked safely managed drinking water services, **3.5 billion** lacked safely managed sanitation services, and **2.0 billion** lacked basic hygiene services in 2022
- Approximately **58% of household wastewater** was safely treated in 2022. Progress towards the target of halving the proportion of untreated wastewater by 2030 is limited. Wastewater **statistics are lacking** in many countries and reporting is low, especially from industrial sources.
- **Water-use efficiency worldwide rose 9%**, from \$17.4/m³ in 2015 to \$18.9/m³ in 2020
- Globally, **water stress remains at a safe level of 18.2% in 2020**, but with significant regional variations, including a **worrisome 18% increase in Northern Africa and Western Asia** between 2015 and 2020.
- Although there has been global progress on **integrated water resources management** between 2017 and 2020, it falls far short of meeting target 6.5 by 2030. Encouragingly, **44 countries have nearly achieved** the target and **22 countries have proved that real and rapid progress is possible**, but **urgent acceleration is needed in 107 countries**.
- Data from 2017 and 2020 show that **only 32 out of 153 countries** that share transboundary rivers, lakes, and aquifers have **90% or more** of those waters covered by operational arrangements.
- Surface water bodies, such as lakes, rivers, and reservoirs, are undergoing rapid global changes, with **one in five river basins showing high fluctuations in surface water levels in the past 5 years**
- ODA disbursements to the water sector decreased between 2015 and 2021 from **\$9.6 billion to \$8.1 billion, a decrease of 15%**. Total ODA commitments to the water sector have also **reduced by 12% from \$11.2 billion in 2015 to \$9.8 billion in 2021**.
- Since 2016, the proportion of countries with defined legal or policy procedures for local community participation in rural drinking water and water resources management has remained **above 70%**, while the percentage of countries with substantial levels of participation has consistently stayed **below 40%**.

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To learn more about global progress on the 17 SDGs, [click here to read the latest Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023](#).



WHERE WE STAND

- Despite some progress, **billions still lack access** to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene.
- **Water scarcity is worsening** in many parts of the world due to conflicts and climate change
- **Water pollution** poses a significant challenge to human health and the environment in many countries.
- Achieving **universal coverage by 2030** will require a **6-fold increase** in current global rates of progress on drinking water, a **5-fold increase** for sanitation, and a **3-fold increase** for hygiene.

SPOTLIGHT

WATER ACTION AGENDA

The **UN 2023 Water Conference** co-hosted by the Governments of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands in March 2023 created a watershed moment to take action and scale up solutions to the global water crisis.

As a main outcome of the UN 2023 Water Conference, the **Water Action Agenda** is the collection of water-related voluntary commitments aimed at accelerate progress in the second half of the Water Action Decade (2018-2028) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015-2030). Launched by the Conference's co-hosts during the Dushanbe Conference in June 2022, the Water Action Agenda encourages Member States and other stakeholders across all sectors, industries, and interests to make their voluntary commitments to address the global water challenges in a manner that is inclusive, cross-sectoral and action-oriented. While the voluntary commitments were gathered in the lead-up to the UN 2023 Water Conference and during the Conference itself, **new commitments will continue to be added** to the Water Action Agenda also after the Conference and up until the end of the Water Action Decade 2018-2028 and the 2030 Agenda.



UN SYSTEM IN ACTION

- **SDG 6 Capacity Development Initiative** is an inter-agency coordination platform on freshwater, sanitation, and hygiene-related capacity development work co-coordinated by **UN DESA** and **UNESCO**, with **35 institutional members**. It enables the UN system and its multi-stakeholder partners to "deliver as one" in supporting countries to develop capacities to accelerate progress towards SDG 6.
- In 2020, **UN-Water's offer to the UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinators** was initiated in coordination with the **UN Development Coordination Office (DCO)** to better leverage the full capacities of the UN system in countries systematically and at scale in support of SDG 6. **UN-Water Members and Partners** have supported on topics including interagency coordination, the Common Country Analyses (CCAs), capacity development, innovation and integration of the human rights to water and sanitation.
- **UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (IMI-SDG6)** seeks to support countries in monitoring water- and sanitation-related issues within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and in compiling country data to report on global progress towards SDG 6. Through increasing availability and holistic analysis of high-quality data, the initiative aims to accelerate SDG implementation through better informed water and sanitation policies, regulations, planning and investment at all levels.
- The **UN-Water SDG 6 Data Portal** brings all the United Nations' water and sanitation information into one place, including visualization and analytical tools to support decision-makers, advisors, technical professionals, researchers and students.
- The **Water Resilience Coalition**, an industry-driven, CEO-led initiative by **UN Global Compact CEO Water Mandate**, aims to elevate the mounting crisis of global water stress and its connection to climate change to the top of the corporate agenda and to preserve the world's freshwater resources through collective action in water-stressed basins and through ambitious, quantifiable resilience goals.
- To follow up on the UN 2023 Water Conference, UN-Water Members and Partners developed the **SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023**. The Report provides a "blueprint" to accelerate progress on water and sanitation, including the implementation of Water Action Agenda commitments. It is a concise guide to delivering concrete results – offering actionable policy recommendations directed towards senior decision-makers in Member States, other stakeholders, and the UN System to get the world on track to achieve SDG 6 by 2030.

Other initiatives carried out by UN-Water members and partners under the **SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework** include: **Water and Climate Coalition**, **Hand Hygiene for All initiative**, **World Water Quality Alliance**, **Roadmap for the human rights to water and sanitation**, **National Water Roadmap**, **UN-Water Summit on Groundwater**, among others.

Special thanks to **UN-Water** for providing inputs to the factsheets. For more information about UN system action to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, visit



UN SYSTEM SDG
IMPLEMENTATION
DATABASE