Population using safely managed water services for consumption

Definitions

The population using safely managed drinking water services is measured by the population using an improved on-site water source (accessibility), available when needed (availability), and free from contamination (quality).

- Among the “improved” water sources are the following: piped water in homes, patios or plots; public taps or faucets; pipe wells; protected dug wells; protected springs; bottled water; supplied water and rainwater.
- If the collection point is inside a home, yard, or plot is considered to be “a water source located on site.”
- “Available when needed”: households can access enough water when needed.
- “Contamination-free”: Water complies with relevant national or local regulations. In the absence of such standards, reference is made to WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality.
- Thermotolerant coliforms is the preferred indicator of microbiological quality, and arsenic and fluorine are the priority chemicals for global reporting.

Numerator

Population using improved water sources that meet the following criteria:
1) Accessibility
2) Availability
3) Quality

Denominator

Total population

Measuring unit

Percentage % (X percent)

* Note: calculation of the indicator comes from regression models implemented for urban and rural populations by the inter-agency group WHO and UNICEF’s JMP (Joint Monitoring Program).

Considerations for indicator quality

The composition of this indicator implies multiple data source integration, consequently it is important to have a common level of aggregation to render feasible estimates. It is recommended to consult global estimates, using only data validated by national statistical offices. See “inter-agency group estimates”. A linear regression model is currently used to deal with lack of information for some years, but it is expected that in the coming years models will be adjusted to the so-called “SDG ladder” working as a scale between “surface waters” and “safely managed service” categories.

Interpretation implications

This indicator adds dimensions of accessibility, availability and quality to “improved water sources” used for the MDGs. Given a greater “demand” for this indicator, estimates for this indicator are expected to be lower than for “improved water sources”, not meaning that coverage has worsened.

Context indicator

This indicator is part of a broad strategy to monitor water and hygiene access services by UNICEF and WHO, given its relevance to public health.

ODS framework

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### Alternative data sources
- N/A

### Inter-agency group estimates
- WHO and UNICEF’s JMP: [www.washdata.org](http://www.washdata.org)

### Global monitoring frameworks
- Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health.

### For more information

### References
- SDG metadata repository, United Nations.
- Top questions regarding water, sanitation and hygiene for use in household surveys - 2018 update