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Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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Introduction



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Separate latrines for girls and boys in a UNICEF-supported school in Senegal

Almost fifty per cent of the developing world's population – 2.5 billion people – lack improved sanitation facilities, and over 884 million people still use unsafe drinking water sources. Inadequate access to safe water and sanitation services, coupled with poor hygiene practices, kills and sickens thousands of children every day, and leads to impoverishment and diminished opportunities for thousands more.

Poor sanitation, water and hygiene have many other serious repercussions. Children – and particularly girls – are denied their right to education because their schools lack private and decent sanitation facilities. Women are forced to spend large parts of their day fetching water. Poor farmers and wage earners are less productive due to illness, health systems are overwhelmed and national economies suffer. Without WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), sustainable development is impossible.

UNICEF works in more than 90 countries around the world to improve water supplies and sanitation facilities in schools and communities, and to promote safe hygiene practices. We sponsor a wide range of activities and work with many partners, including families, communities, governments and like-minded organizations. In emergencies we provide urgent relief to communities and nations threatened by disrupted water supplies and disease. All UNICEF WASH programmes are designed to contribute to the Millennium Development Goal for water and sanitation: to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe water and basic sanitation.

Latest

Press release

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[Public Library of Science Medicine series on water and sanitation sends wake up call to international health community](#)

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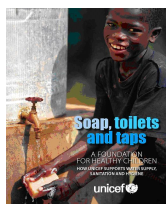
Sanitation and Water for All

The logo for Sanitation and Water for All, featuring the text "Sanitation and Water for All" in a blue and green color scheme.

[Sanitation and Water for All Webpage](#)

[Sanitation and Water for All High Level Meeting Photo Essay, \[Fr\]](#)

UNICEF and WASH



[Soap, toilets and taps: How UNICEF supports water, sanitation and hygiene](#)

Condensed versions in [En](#), [Fr](#) and [Sp](#).

UN Water



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