Fast Facts

Sanitation

In 2011, almost two thirds (64%) of the world population relied on improved sanitation facilities, and since 1990 almost 1.9 billion people gained access to an improved sanitation facility.

However, by end of 2011 2.5 billion people lacked access to an improved sanitation facility. Of these, 761 million use public or shared sanitation facilities and another 693 million use facilities that do not meet minimum standards of hygiene.

The world remains off track to meet the MDG sanitation target, which requires reducing the proportion of people without access from 51 percent to 25 per cent by 2015.

Greatest progress has been made in East Asia, where sanitation coverage has increased from 27% in 1990 to 67% in 2011. This amounts to 626 million people gaining access to improved sanitation facilities over 21 year.

Open defecation

1 billion (15% of the world population) still practice open defecation. The majority (71%) of those without sanitation live in rural areas and 90% of all open defecation takes place in rural areas.

Globally, open defecation rates declined from 24% in 1990 to 15% in 2011. This signifies a drop of 250 million people to 1.04 billion in 2011.

Eastern Asia, South east Asia and the Latin America and Caribbean regions have seen a steady decline since the JMP’s earliest measurement describing conditions in 1990. In South Asia the population practicing open defecation peaked around 1995 – after which it declined. Only in sub-Saharan Africa is the number of people defecating in the open still increasing.

Water

89% of the world population used an improved drinking-water source by end of 2011.

55% enjoyed the convenience and associated health benefits of a piped supply on premises.

An estimated 768 million people did not use an improved source for drinking-water in 2011 and 185 million relied on surface water to meet their daily drinking-water needs.

Definitions

An **improved sanitation facility** is one that hygienically separates human excreta from human contact.

**Open defecation** is when human faeces are disposed of in the fields, forests, bushes, open bodies of water, beaches, and other open spaces.

An **improved drinking-water source** is one that by the nature of its construction adequately protects the source from outside contamination, in particular from faecal matter.

All the information in this report is based on data available up to and including 2011