

PROGRESS ON
DRINKING WATER,
SANITATION AND HYGIENE IN
AFRICA 2000-2020
5 YEARS INTO THE SDGs



Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in Africa 2000-2020: Five years into the SDGs

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INTRODUCTION

The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) produces internationally comparable estimates of progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and is responsible for global monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets related to WASH. This snapshot presents regional estimates for WASH in households, schools and health care facilities in the African Union and assesses progress five years into the SDG period (2015-2020).

Achieving SDG WASH targets in Africa will require a dramatic acceleration in current rates of progress

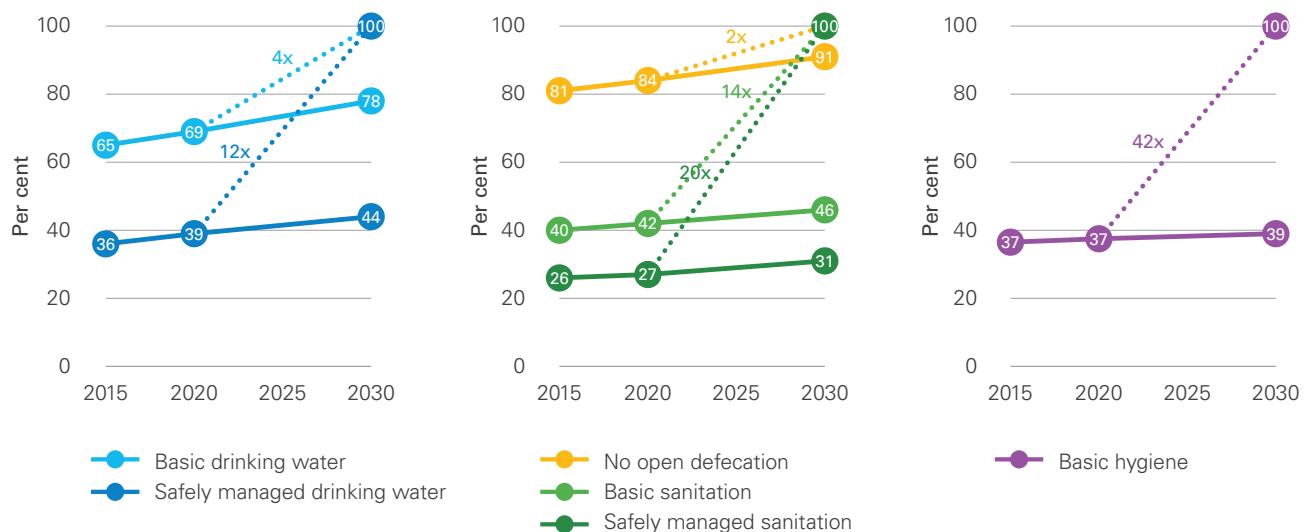


Figure 1: Coverage of WASH services in Africa, 2015-2020 (%), and acceleration required to meet targets by 2030

KEY MESSAGES

1. In Africa, **39%** of the population used safely managed drinking water, **27%** used safely managed sanitation and 37% used basic hygiene in 2020.
2. Achieving the 2030 SDG targets will require a **12x** increase in current rates of progress on safely managed drinking water, **20x** increase for safely managed sanitation and a **42x** increase for basic hygiene services.
3. In urban areas, **2 out of 5** people still lack safely managed drinking water, **2 out of 3** people lack safely managed sanitation, and half the population lacks basic hygiene services.
4. In rural areas, **3 out of 4** people lack safely managed drinking water, **3 out of 4** people lack safely managed sanitation, and **7 out of 10** lack basic hygiene services.
5. Between 2000 and 2020, the population of Africa has increased from **800 million** to **1.3 billion**. **500 million** people have gained access to at least basic drinking water and **290 million** gained access to at least basic sanitation services.
6. But 411 million people still lack even a basic drinking water service, **779 million** lack basic sanitation services (including **208 million** who still practise open defecation), and **839 million** still lack basic hygiene services.
7. Significant inequalities persist between and within countries, including between urban and rural, between sub-national regions and between the richest and the poorest.
8. Among the **42 countries** with **>1%** open defecation in 2020, only **7 countries** are currently on track to eliminate open defecation by 2030.
9. Data availability is improving but large data gaps remain. In 2020, only **21 countries** had estimates for safely managed drinking water, **26 countries** had estimates for safely managed sanitation, and **37 countries** had estimates for basic hygiene services.
10. In Africa **47%** of schools had basic drinking water, 54% have basic sanitation and **38%** have basic hygiene services in 2019.
11. In Africa **46%** of health facilities have basic water services, **29%** have basic sanitation services and **40%** have basic health care waste management services.

DRINKING WATER

3 out of 5 people in Africa lacked safely managed drinking water in 2020

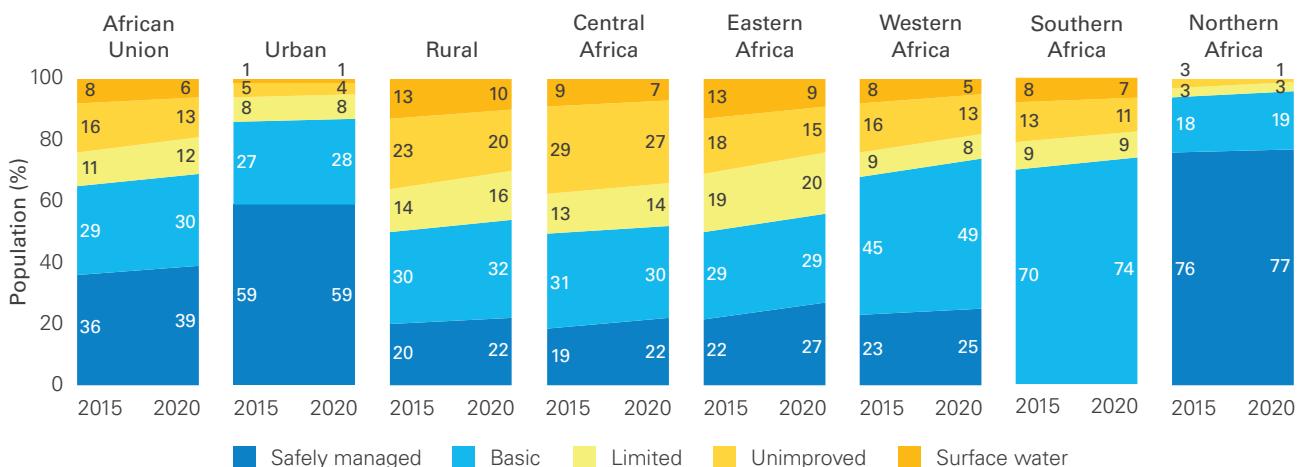
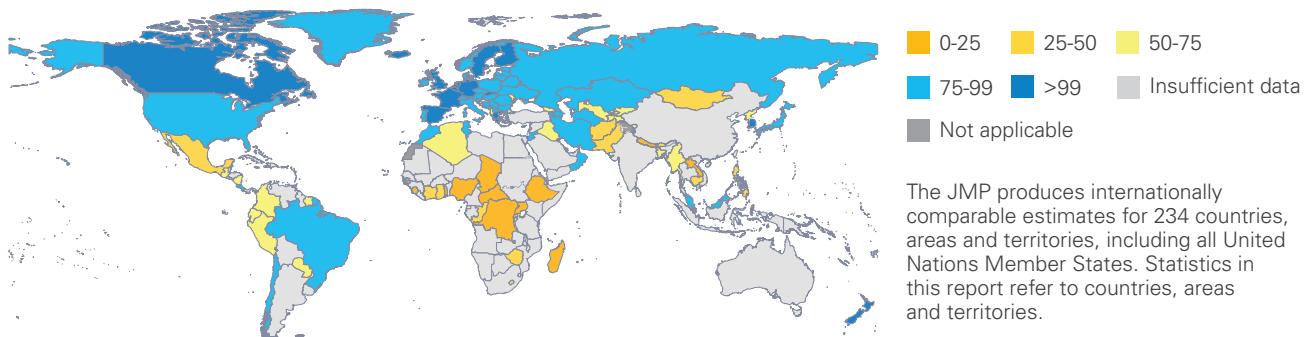


Figure 2: Regional, urban and rural drinking water ladders (%), 2015-2020

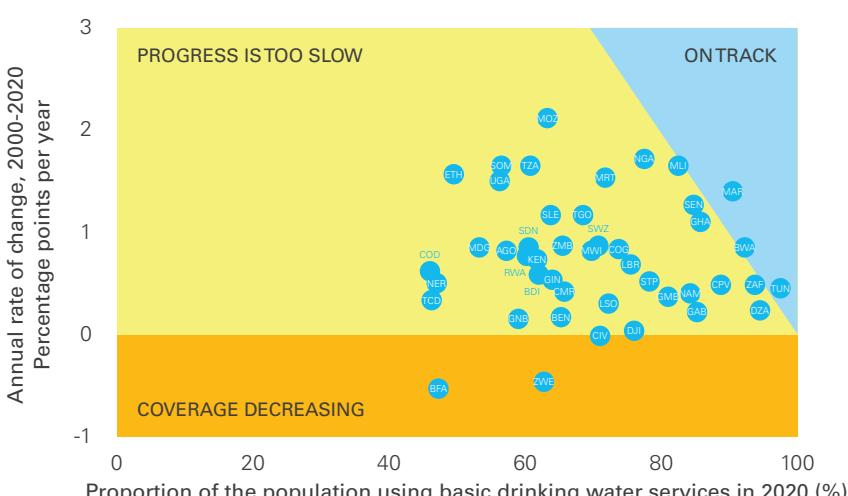
21 countries in Africa had estimates for safely managed drinking water services in 2020



The JMP produces internationally comparable estimates for 234 countries, areas and territories, including all United Nations Member States. Statistics in this report refer to countries, areas and territories.

Figure 3: Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services, 2020 (%)

Only 3 out of 46 countries with <99% coverage are currently on track to achieve universal coverage of at least basic drinking water by 2030



Note: Does not include countries (1) that already had universal (>99%) coverage in 2020, (2) with no estimates for rates of change, i.e. missing data for at least one of the years, and (3) with zero or no trend.

Figure 4: Progress towards universal access to at least basic drinking water services (2000-2020) among countries with <99% national coverage in 2020

411 million people in Africa still lacked basic drinking water services in 2020

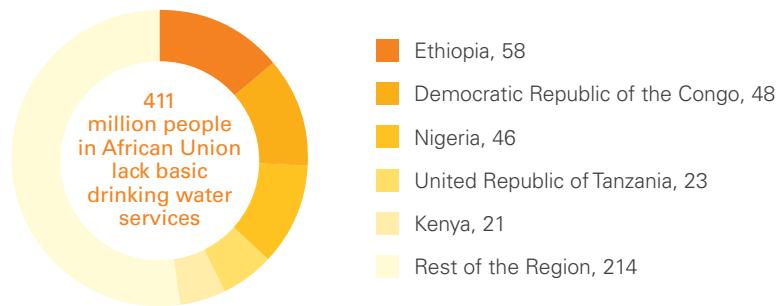


Figure 5: Countries in Africa with the largest number of people who did not use a basic water service in 2020

In many African countries there are large inequalities in access to basic services between the richest and poorest

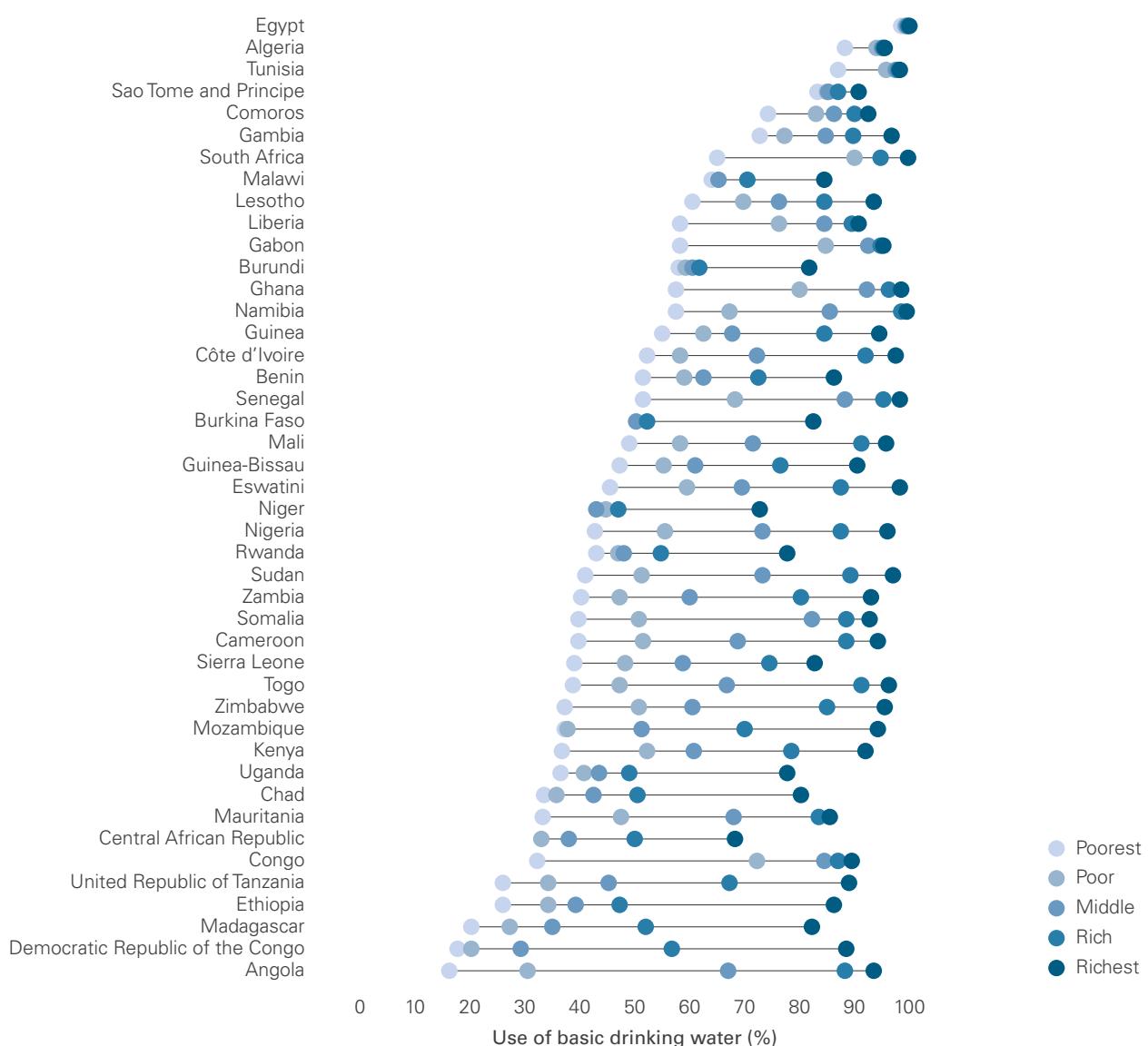


Figure 6: Population using at least basic drinking water services by wealth quintile



SANITATION

Nearly 3 out of 4 people in Africa lacked safely managed sanitation in 2020

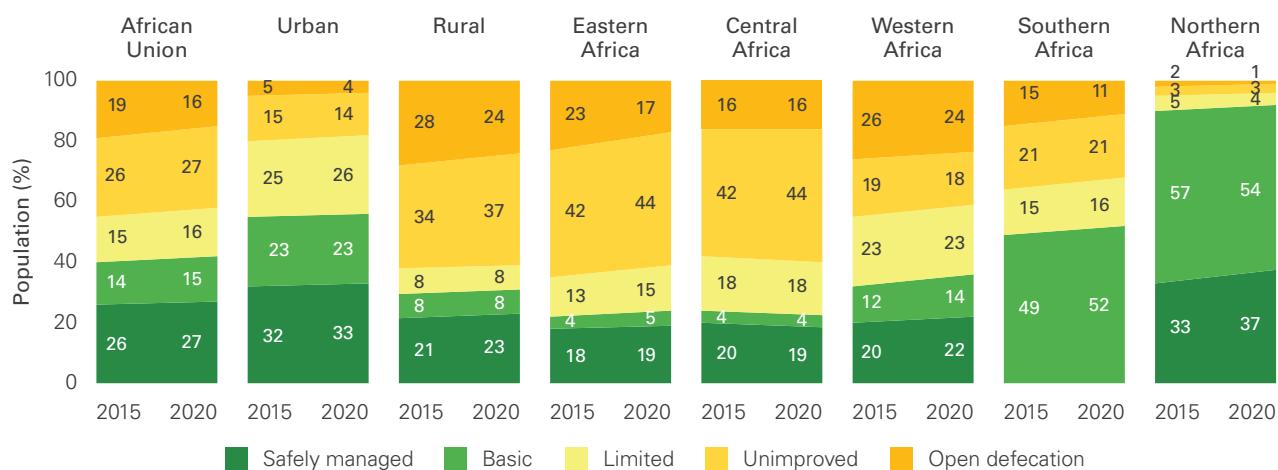


Figure 7: Regional, urban and rural sanitation ladders (%), 2015-2020

26 countries in Africa had estimates for safely managed sanitation services in 2020

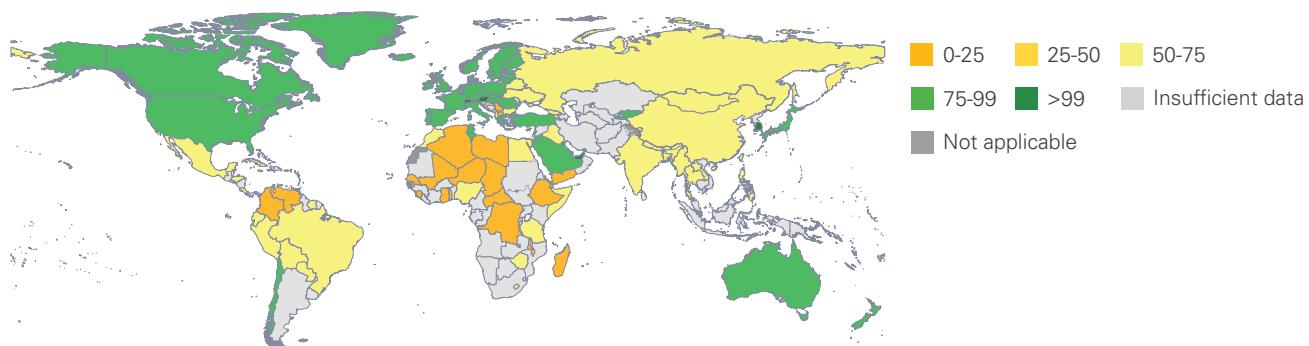
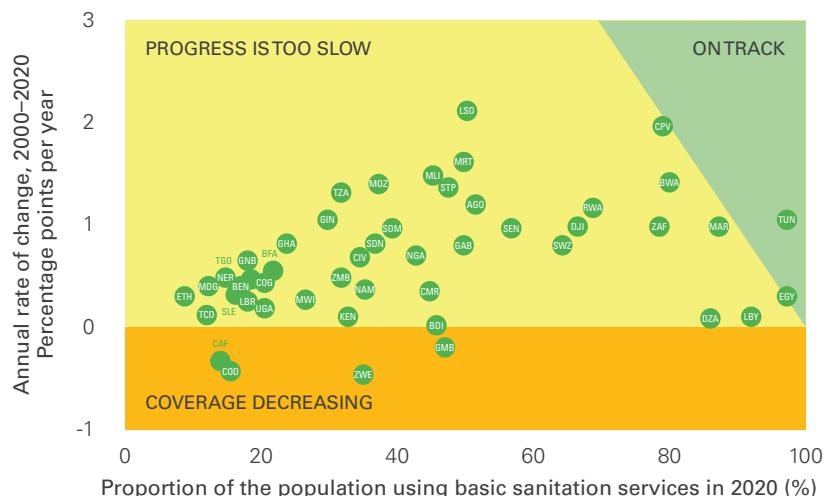


Figure 8: Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services, 2020 (%)

Only 2 out of 48 countries with <99% coverage are currently on track to achieve universal coverage of at least basic sanitation by 2030 and in some countries coverage is decreasing



Note: Does not include countries (1) that already had universal (>99%) coverage in 2020, (2) with no estimates for rates of change, i.e. missing data for at least one of the years, and (3) with zero or no trend.

Figure 9: Progress towards universal access to at least basic sanitation services (2000-2020) among countries with <99% national coverage in 2020

208 million people in Africa still practised open defecation in 2020

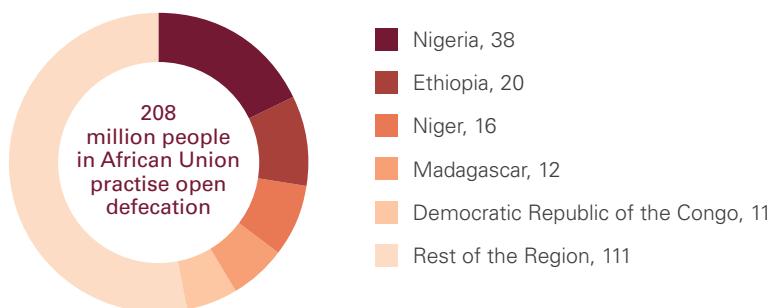


Figure 10: Countries in Africa with the largest number of people practicing open defecation in 2020

Progress in closing the gap in open defecation between the richest and poorest varies across countries

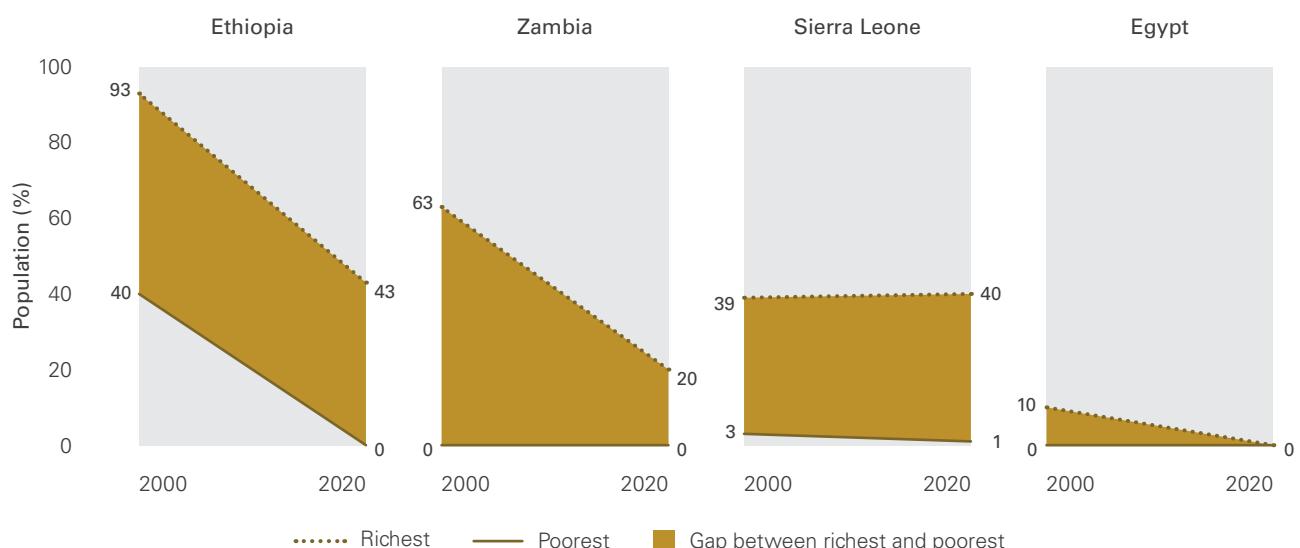


Figure 11: Changes in the gap in open defecation between richest and poorest, by country, 2000-2020 (%)





HYGIENE

3 out of 5 people in Africa lacked basic hygiene services in 2020

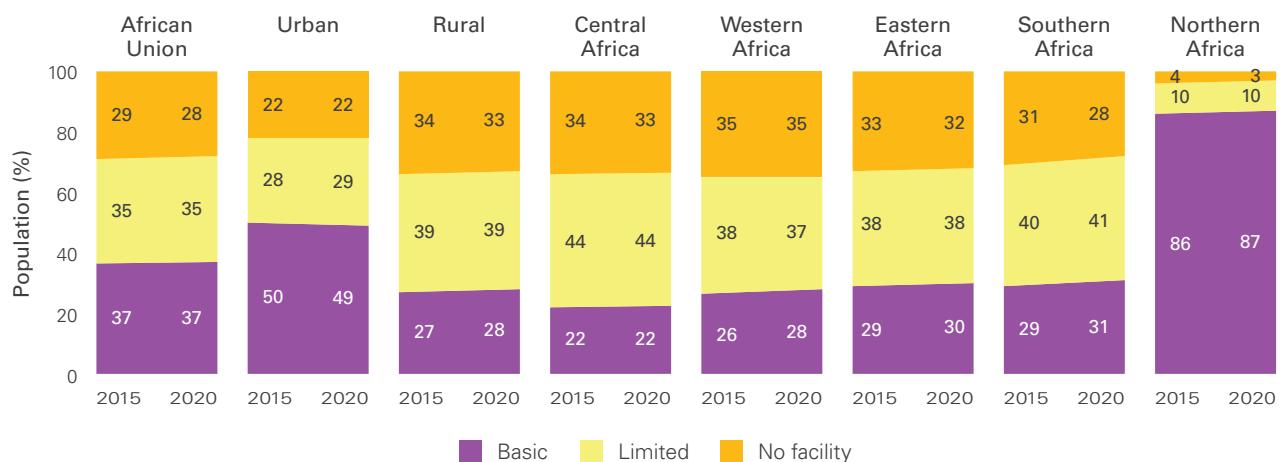


Figure 12: Regional, urban and rural hygiene ladders (%), 2015-2020

37 countries in Africa had estimates for basic hygiene services in 2020

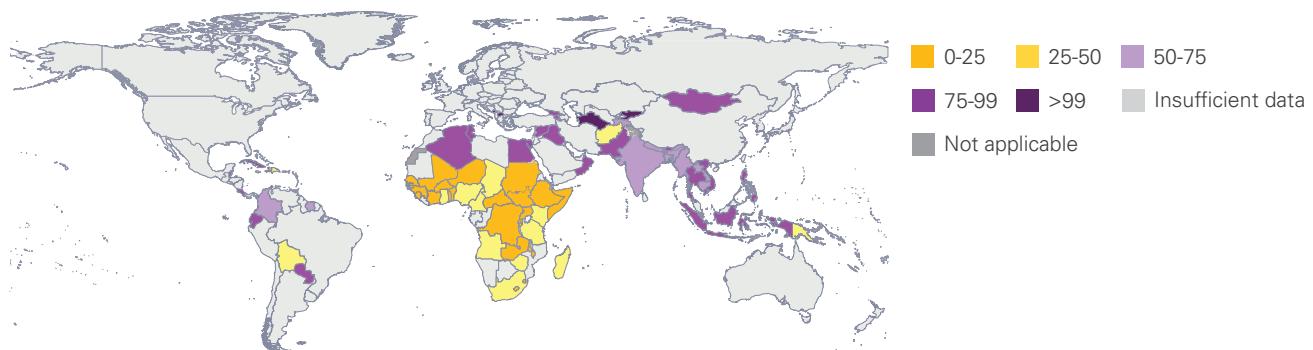


Figure 13: Proportion of population using basic hygiene services, 2020 (%)

839 million people in Africa still lacked basic hygiene services in 2020

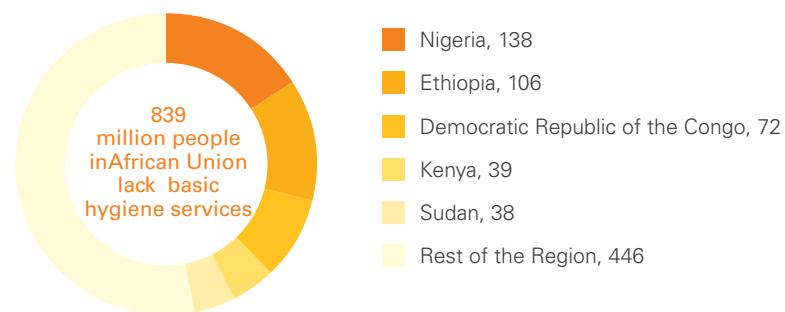


Figure 14: Countries in Africa with the largest number of people who did not use a basic hygiene service in 2020



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In Africa there are large disparities in access to basic hygiene services between and within countries

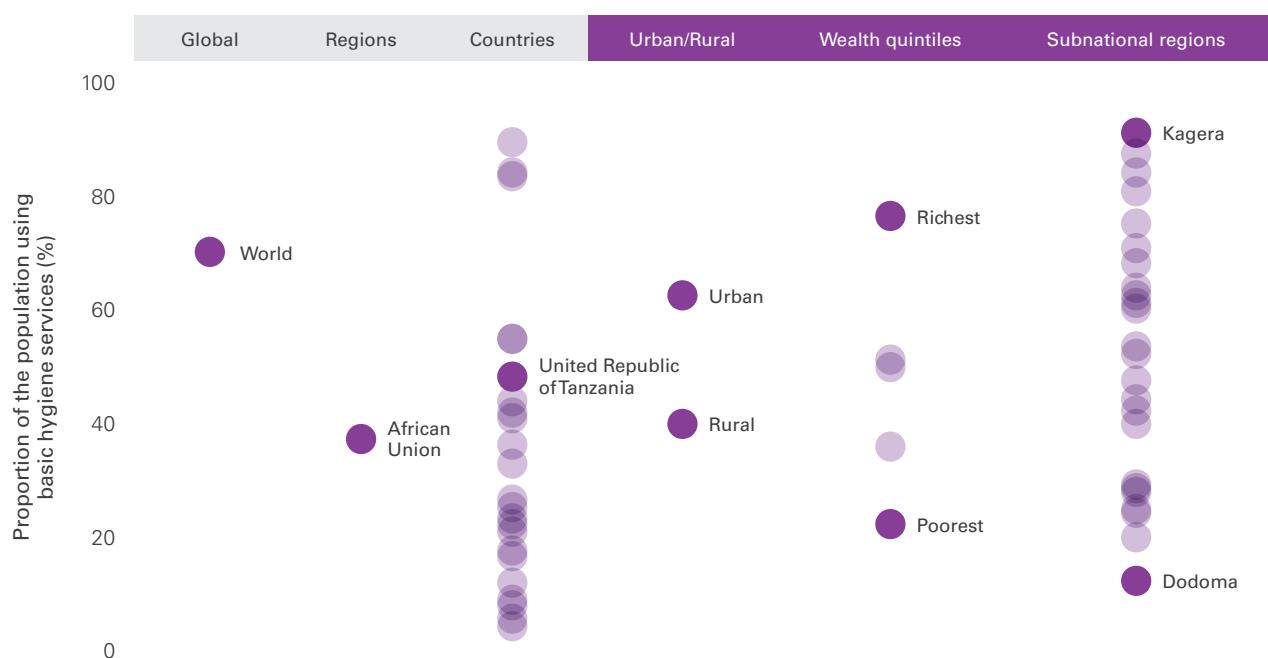


Figure 15: Population with basic hygiene services disaggregated by countries in the African Union and by urban-rural, sub-national region and wealth quintiles within the United Republic Tanzania (%)

SCHOOLS AND HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Only 2 out of 5 schools in Africa had basic hygiene services in 2019

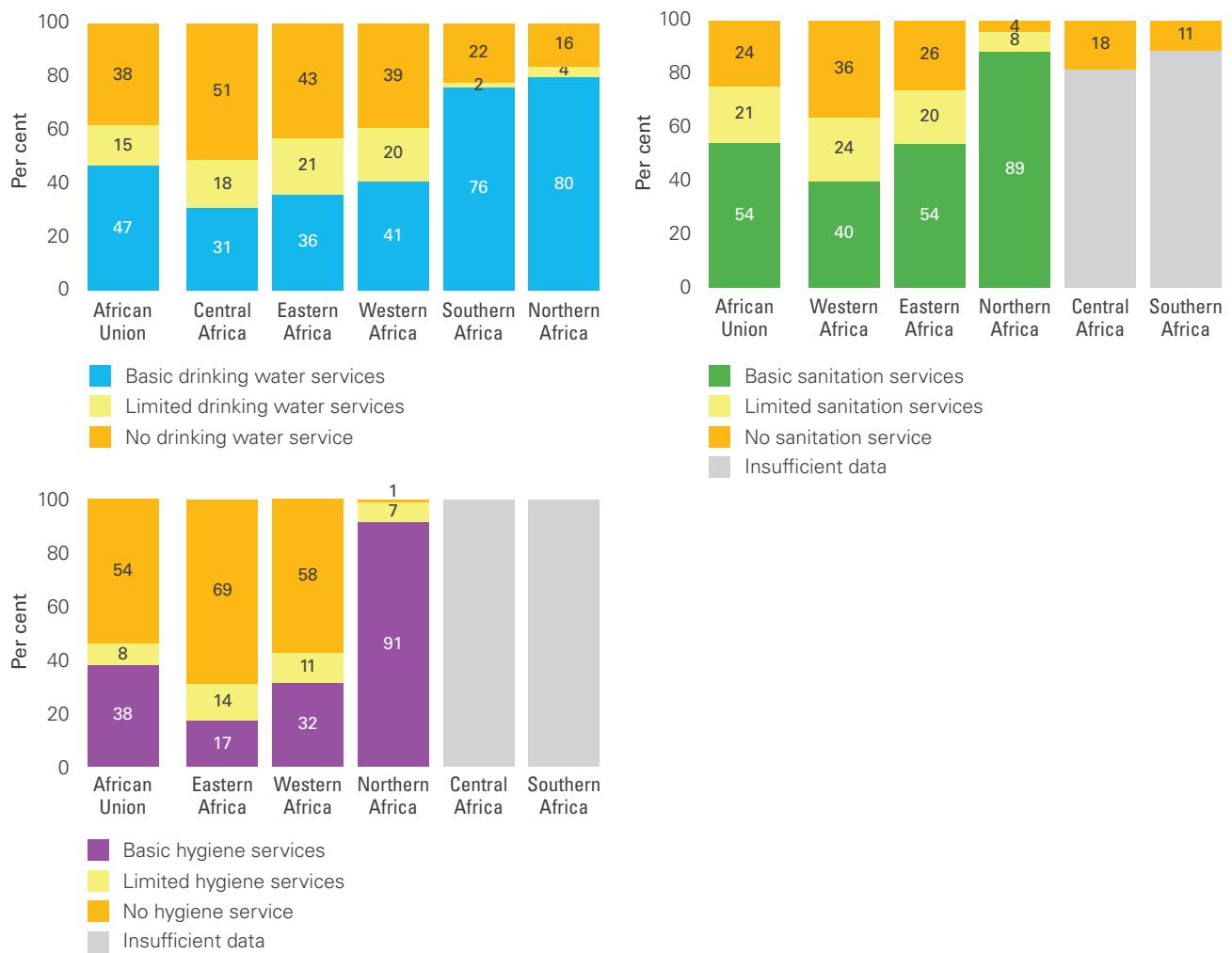


Figure 16: Regional and subregional service ladders for WASH in schools (%), 2019

Less than half the health care facilities in Africa had basic water services in 2019

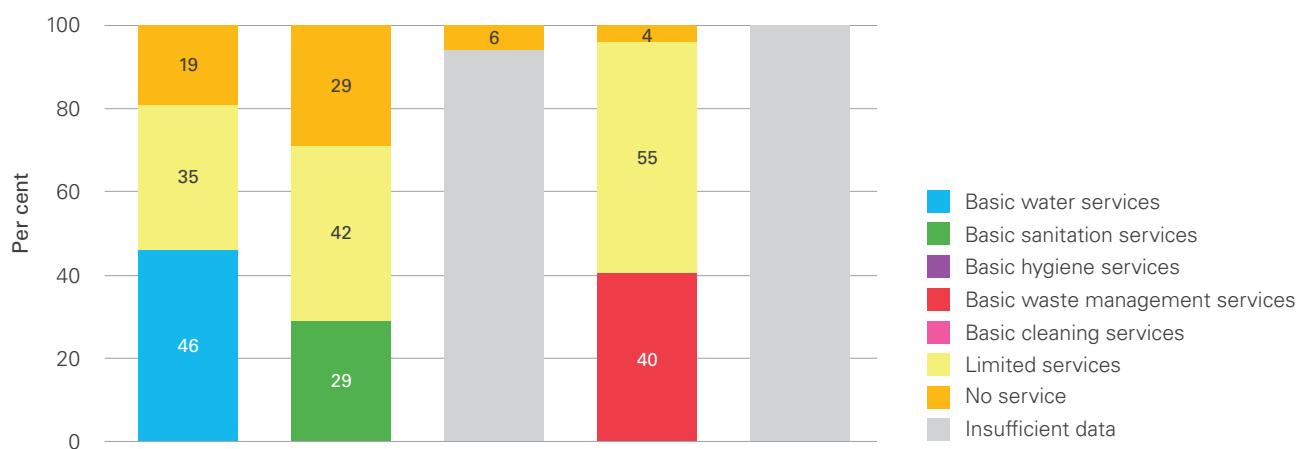


Figure 17: Service ladders for WASH in health care facilities in Africa (%), 2019



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DATA TABLES

Regional estimates for WASH in households in Africa

BASIC DRINKING WATER				National						Rural						Urban			
Region	Year	Population (thousands)	% urban	At least basic	Limited (more than 30 mins)	Unimproved	Surface water	Annual rate of change in basic	At least basic	Limited (more than 30 mins)	Unimproved	Surface water	Annual rate of change in basic	At least basic	Limited (more than 30 mins)	Unimproved	Surface water	Annual rate of change in basic	
Central Africa	2015	136 479	42	50	13	29	9	-	30	13	42	14	-	76	13	10	1	-	
Central Africa	2020	158 620	45	52	14	27	7	0.47	32	14	42	12	0.31	77	14	8	<1	0.18	
Eastern Africa	2015	343 830	26	50	19	18	13	-	40	21	23	17	-	80	12	5	2	-	
Eastern Africa	2020	392 564	29	56	20	15	9	1.23	45	24	19	12	1.21	83	12	4	2	0.58	
Northern Africa	2015	189 005	55	94	3	3	<1	-	90	4	5	<1	-	97	2	<1	<1	-	
Northern Africa	2020	207 033	56	96	3	1	<1	0.45	94	4	2	<1	0.74	98	2	<1	<1	0.14	
Southern Africa	2015	164 351	49	70	9	13	8	-	53	12	20	15	-	88	5	6	1	-	
Southern Africa	2020	184 002	51	74	9	11	7	0.64	58	13	16	13	0.76	89	4	6	<1	0.15	
Western Africa	2015	347 665	44	68	9	16	8	-	53	11	24	12	-	86	6	6	2	-	
Western Africa	2020	397 206	48	74	8	13	5	1.19	58	12	21	9	1.05	91	4	4	1	0.84	
African Union	2015	1 181 330	41	65	11	16	8	-	50	14	23	13	-	87	7	5	1	-	
African Union	2020	1 339 424	44	69	12	13	6	0.84	54	16	20	10	0.88	89	6	4	<1	0.37	

BASIC SANITATION				National						Rural						Urban			
Region	Year	Population (thousands)	% urban	At least basic	Limited (shared)	Unimproved	Open defecation	Annual rate of change in basic	At least basic	Limited (shared)	Unimproved	Open defecation	Annual rate of change in basic	At least basic	Limited (shared)	Unimproved	Open defecation	Annual rate of change in basic	
Central Africa	2015	136 479	42	24	18	42	16	-	18	8	49	25	-	-	33	31	33	4	
Central Africa	2020	158 620	45	23	18	44	16	-0.17	0.00	16	7	52	25	-0.38	0.14	32	31	33	4
Eastern Africa	2015	343 830	26	22	13	42	23	-	17	7	47	29	-	-	36	30	28	6	
Eastern Africa	2020	392 564	29	24	15	44	17	0.51	-1.23	19	8	51	22	0.41	-1.34	38	33	25	4
Northern Africa	2015	189 005	55	90	5	3	2	-	85	5	5	5	-	-	94	4	1	<1	
Northern Africa	2020	207 033	56	92	4	3	1	0.45	-0.38	88	4	6	2	0.67	-0.70	95	4	1	<1
Southern Africa	2015	164 351	49	49	15	21	15	-	34	8	31	27	-	-	64	23	10	3	
Southern Africa	2020	184 002	51	52	16	21	11	0.74	-0.86	38	7	33	22	0.82	-1.09	66	24	9	1
Western Africa	2015	347 665	44	32	23	19	26	-	23	12	25	39	-	-	43	36	12	9	
Western Africa	2020	397 206	48	36	23	18	24	0.71	-0.51	25	12	25	37	0.39	-0.39	48	34	10	8
African Union	2015	1 181 330	41	40	15	26	19	-	29	8	34	28	-	-	55	25	15	5	
African Union	2020	1 339 424	44	42	16	27	16	0.41	-0.65	31	8	37	24	0.33	-0.78	56	26	14	4

SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER		National						Rural						Urban					
Region		Proportion of population using improved water supplies						Proportion of population using improved water supplies						Proportion of population using improved water supplies					
		Safely managed	Accessible on premises	Available when needed	Free from contamination	Piped	Non-piped	Safely managed	Accessible on premises	Available when needed	Free from contamination	Piped	Non-piped	Safely managed	Accessible on premises	Available when needed	Free from contamination	Piped	Non-piped
Central Africa	19	19	44	38	33	30	2	2	36	25	10	34	41	41	56	55	64	25	
Central Africa	22	22	47	40	35	31	3	3	39	26	11	35	45	45	57	57	64	27	
Eastern Africa	22	22	55	27	34	35	10	10	51	15	22	39	53	53	64	61	68	24	
Eastern Africa	27	27	61	32	37	39	13	13	58	20	24	45	60	60	68	62	68	27	
Northern Africa	76	87	76	82	86	10	67	81	67	73	81	13	84	91	84	88	91	9	
Northern Africa	77	89	77	83	88	11	70	87	70	76	86	11	82	92	82	89	90	10	
Southern Africa	-	44	58	-	54	25	-	18	51	-	27	38	65	71	65	89	81	12	
Southern Africa	-	48	59	-	55	27	-	21	55	-	27	43	63	74	63	90	81	12	
Western Africa	23	28	59	28	25	52	14	14	48	23	14	49	34	44	72	34	37	55	
Western Africa	25	32	64	30	24	58	16	16	53	25	16	54	34	49	75	34	33	62	
African Union	36	37	59	39	42	34	20	20	51	25	26	38	60	60	70	60	65	29	
African Union	39	40	62	42	43	38	23	23	55	28	28	42	59	63	71	59	63	33	

SAFELY MANAGED SANITATION		National						Rural						Urban							
Region		Proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities (excluding shared)				Proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities (including shared)		Proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities (excluding shared)				Proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities (including shared)		Proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities (excluding shared)		Proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities (including shared)					
		Safely managed	Disposed of in situ	Emptied and treated	Wastewater treated	Latrines and other	Septic tanks	Sewer connections	Safely managed	Disposed of in situ	Emptied and treated	Wastewater treated	Latrines and other	Septic tanks	Sewer connections	Safely managed	Disposed of in situ	Emptied and treated	Wastewater treated	Latrines and other	Septic tanks
Central Africa	20	20	-	-	34	6	1	17	17	-	-	26	<1	<1	24	24	-	-	46	15	3
Central Africa	19	19	-	-	31	8	1	15	15	-	-	22	<1	<1	23	23	-	-	42	19	2
Eastern Africa	18	18	-	-	29	3	2	15	15	-	-	23	<1	<1	25	25	-	-	49	11	6
Eastern Africa	19	19	-	-	33	5	2	16	16	-	-	25	<1	<1	27	27	-	-	52	13	6
Northern Africa	33	-	-	33	7	22	65	-	-	-	22	12	41	37	42	-	-	42	4	7	88
Northern Africa	37	-	-	37	7	16	72	28	-	-	28	12	34	46	45	-	-	45	4	3	92
Southern Africa	-	-	-	-	27	12	25	31	31	-	-	36	4	2	-	-	-	-	17	19	50
Southern Africa	-	-	-	-	28	15	26	35	35	-	-	39	5	1	-	-	-	-	16	24	49
Western Africa	20	20	-	-	36	14	6	18	18	-	-	30	4	2	23	23	-	-	43	25	10
Western Africa	22	22	-	-	35	18	6	19	19	-	-	30	5	2	25	25	-	-	41	31	10
African Union	26	18	-	7	28	11	16	21	18	-	3	25	7	5	32	18	-	13	32	16	32
African Union	27	20	-	8	29	12	17	23	19	-	4	26	7	6	33	20	-	13	32	19	31

HYGIENE				National			Rural			Urban			
Region	Year	Population (thousands)		% urban	Basic	Limited (without water or soap)	No facility	Basic	Limited (without water or soap)	No facility	Basic	Limited (without water or soap)	No facility
Central Africa	2015	136 479	42	22	44	34	14	47	39	34	39	28	
Central Africa	2020	158 620	45	22	44	33	14	48	38	33	40	28	
Eastern Africa	2015	343 830	26	29	38	33	23	39	38	44	35	21	
Eastern Africa	2020	392 564	29	30	38	32	24	39	37	44	36	20	
Northern Africa	2015	189 005	55	86	10	4	81	15	4	90	6	3	
Northern Africa	2020	207 033	56	87	10	3	83	13	3	90	7	3	
Southern Africa	2015	164 351	49	29	40	31	17	47	36	42	32	26	
Southern Africa	2020	184 002	51	31	41	28	18	49	33	43	34	23	
Western Africa	2015	347 665	44	26	38	35	19	43	39	36	33	31	
Western Africa	2020	397 206	48	28	37	35	20	41	39	37	32	31	
African Union	2015	1 181 330	41	37	35	29	27	39	34	50	28	22	
African Union	2020	1 339 424	44	37	35	28	28	39	33	49	29	22	

Regional estimates for WASH in Schools in Africa

Region	Year	School age population (thousands)			% urban			% pre-primary			% primary			% secondary			National			Pre-primary			Primary			Secondary		
		% pre-primary	% primary	% secondary	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic water service (improved and available)	Limited water service (improved, not available)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)			
Central Africa	2019	60 998	44	22	42	36	31	18	51	-	-	-	-	43	-	-	30	17	53	-	-	50	-	-	50			
Eastern Africa	2019	145 376	28	21	43	36	36	21	43	-	-	-	-	22	-	-	37	21	43	27	33	40	-	-	40			
Northern Africa	2019	51 537	55	15	45	41	80	4	16	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	79	2	20	92	<1	8	-	-	8			
Southern Africa	2019	64 438	48	21	47	32	76	2	22	-	-	-	-	22	-	-	67	<1	33	77	<1	23	-	-	23			
Western Africa	2019	139 570	46	16	45	39	41	20	39	-	-	-	-	39	-	-	40	37	23	40	58	16	26	-	-	26		
African Union	2019	461 918	41	19	44	37	47	15	38	-	-	-	-	38	-	-	43	15	41	57	12	32	-	-	-			

Region	Year	School age population (thousands)			% urban			% pre-primary			% primary			% secondary			National			Pre-primary			Primary			Secondary		
		% pre-primary	% primary	% secondary	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable and single-sex)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not usable or not single-sex)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)			
Central Africa	2019	60 998	44	22	42	36	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	18	-	-	53	19	28	60	25	15	-	-	15			
Eastern Africa	2019	145 376	28	21	43	36	54	20	26	-	-	-	-	26	-	-	53	19	28	60	25	15	-	-	15			
Northern Africa	2019	51 537	55	15	45	41	89	8	4	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	90	6	4	97	<1	2	-	-	2			
Southern Africa	2019	64 438	48	21	47	32	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Western Africa	2019	139 570	46	16	45	39	40	24	36	-	-	-	-	36	-	-	40	36	27	38	46	24	29	-	-	29		
African Union	2019	461 918	41	19	44	37	54	21	24	-	-	-	-	24	-	-	52	20	27	60	21	19	-	-	-			

Region	Year	School age population (thousands)			% urban			% pre-primary			% primary			% secondary			National			Pre-primary			Primary			Secondary		
		% pre-primary	% primary	% secondary	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)	Basic hygiene service (facility with water and soap)	Limited hygiene service (facility with water, but no soap)	No hygiene service (no facility or no water)			
Central Africa	2019	60998	44	22	42	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Eastern Africa	2019	145376	28	21	43	36	17	14	69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	10	72	24	19	58	-	-	-			
Northern Africa	2019	51537	55	15	45	41	91	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	93	6	<1	>99	<1	<1	-	-	-	<1		
Southern Africa	2019	64438	48	21	47	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Western Africa	2019	139570	46	16	45	39	32	11	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	11	58	26	17	57	-	-	-			
African Union	2019	461 918	41	19	44	37	38	8	54	-	-	-	-	54	-	-	38	7	55	42	9	49	-	-	-			

Regional estimates for WASH in Health Care Facilities in Africa

Region	Year	Population (thousands)	% urban	National				National				National						
				Basic water service (improved, available and on premises)	Limited water service (improved, not available and/or not on premises)	No water service (no facility or unimproved)	Improved water source	Improved water on premises	Basic sanitation service (improved, usable, sex-separated with facilities for staff, menstrual hygiene facilities, and users with limited mobility)	Limited sanitation service (improved, not meeting all criteria for basic)	No sanitation service (no facility or unimproved)	Improved	Improved and useable	Basic hygiene service (hand hygiene at points of care and handwashing facility with water and soap at toilets)	Limited hygiene service (hand hygiene facilities missing at points of care or toilets)	No hygiene service (hand hygiene facilities missing at points of care and toilets)	Handwashing facilities at points of care	Handwashing facility near toilets
Central Africa	2019	154 014	44	28	45	26	74	33	-	-	33	67	65	-	-	-	78	-
Eastern Africa	2019	382 531	28	43	39	18	82	71	53	21	26	74	67	-	-	2	68	-
Northern Africa	2019	203 493	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Southern Africa	2019	179 956	50	67	24	8	92	-	25	-	-	-	76	-	-	-	80	-
Western Africa	2019	386 908	47	49	28	23	77	55	15	47	37	63	51	59	32	9	74	69
African Union	2019	1 306 903	43	46	35	19	81	57	29	42	29	70	62	-	-	6	73	-

Region	National				National				National							
	Basic waste management (waste segregated and treated and disposed of safely)	Limited waste management service (Waste not segregated or treated and disposed of safely)	No waste management service (waste not segregated nor treated and disposed of safely)	Waste segregated	Waste treated	Basic Environmental Cleaning (Cleaning protocols and staff trained)	Limited Environmental Cleaning service (Cleaning protocols or some staff trained)	No Environmental Cleaning service (No protocols and no staff trained)	Protocols for cleaning	Training on cleaning	Improved	Improved and useable	Basic hygiene service (hand hygiene at points of care and handwashing facility with water and soap at toilets)	Limited hygiene service (hand hygiene facilities missing at points of care or toilets)	No hygiene service (hand hygiene facilities missing at points of care and toilets)	
Central Africa	19	81	0	26	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern Africa	45	49	6	69	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Africa	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Southern Africa	-	-	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Western Africa	42	51	7	65	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
African Union	40	55	4	61	54	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



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