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## Key global facts and figures

- 2.6 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water sources since 1990, but 663 million people are still without.
- At least 1.8 billion people globally use a source of drinking water that is faecally contaminated.
- Between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of the global population using an improved drinking water source has increased from 76% to 91%.
- But water scarcity affects more than 40% of the global population and is projected to rise. Over 1.7 billion people are currently living in river basins where water use exceeds recharge.
- 2.4 billion people lack access to basic sanitation services, such as toilets or latrines.
- More than 80% of wastewater resulting from human activities is discharged into rivers or sea without any pollution removal.
- Each day, nearly 1,000 children die due to preventable water and sanitation-related diarrhoeal diseases.
- Approximately 70% of all water abstracted from rivers, lakes and aquifers is used for irrigation.
- Floods and other water-related disasters account for 70% of all deaths related to natural disasters.<sup>1</sup>
- Governments need to reprioritise their budget allocations and spending to address the water and sanitation crisis: Global military spending now stands at \$1.76 trillion annually, a sum that towers over the estimated \$10 to \$30 billion a year the UN estimates it would take to provide minimum water services to all.<sup>2</sup>
- The global economic return on sanitation spending is at least US\$ 5.5 per US dollar invested.

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<sup>1</sup> All statistics from United Nations Sustainable Development website: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/>

<sup>2</sup> *Our Right to Water: Assessing progress five years after the UN recognition of the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation*, Maude Barlow (2015) <http://on.thestar.com/1Y4FKZl>