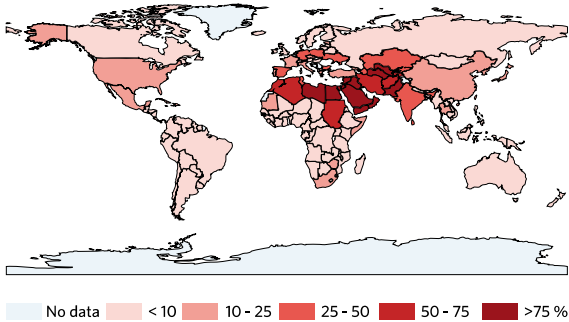


## Almost half of the world's population face a scarcity of water

Surface water and ground water withdrawal as percentage of total actual renewable water resources (around 2000)



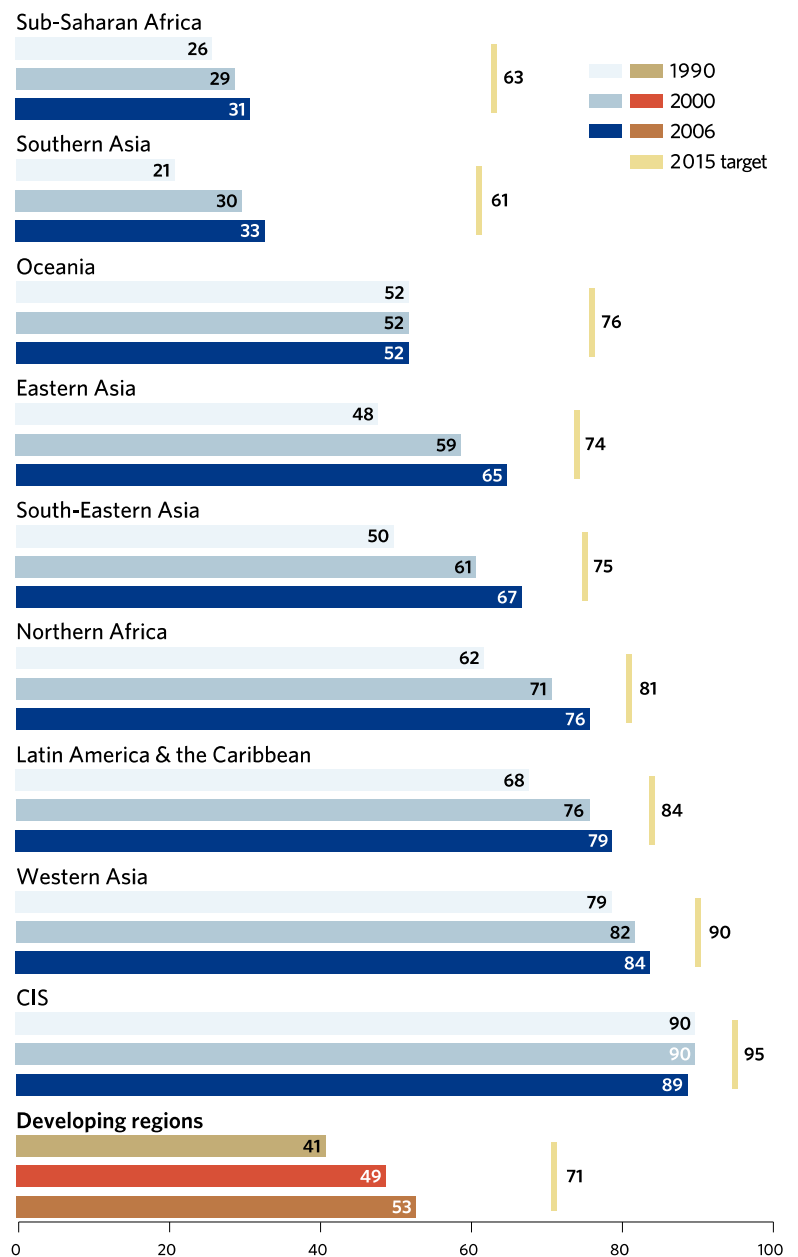
Water use has grown at more than twice the rate of the population for the past century. Although there is not yet a global water shortage, about 2.8 billion people, representing more than 40 per cent of the world's population, live in river basins with some form of water scarcity. More than 1.2 billion of them live under conditions of physical water scarcity, which occurs when more than 75 per cent of the river flows are withdrawn. Northern Africa and Western Asia are seriously compromised, as are some regions within large countries such as China and India. Symptoms include environmental degradation and competition for water. Another 1.6 billion people live in areas of economic water scarcity, where human, institutional and financial capital limit access to water, even though water in nature is available locally to meet human demands. These conditions are prevalent in much of Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Symptoms include lack of or underdeveloped water infrastructure, high vulnerability to short- and long-term drought, and difficult access to reliable water supplies, especially for rural people.

### TARGET

Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

## More people are using improved sanitation facilities, but meeting the target will require a redoubling of efforts

Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility, 1990, 2000 and 2006 (Percentage)

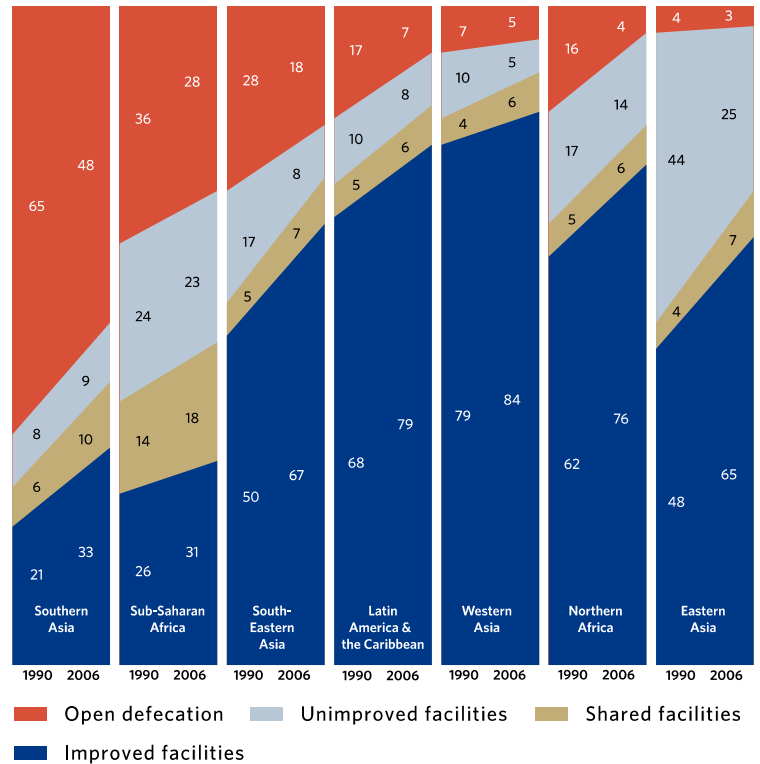


Since 1990, the number of people in developing regions using improved sanitation facilities has increased by 1.1 billion, with significant improvements in South-Eastern and Eastern Asia. Nevertheless, in order to meet the target, the number of people using improved sanitation facilities must increase by about 1.6 billion in the next seven years, substantially more than the growth achieved since 1990. Some 2.5 billion people remain without improved sanitation – more than one billion in Asia and another half billion in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2006, there were 54 countries where less than half the population used an improved sanitation facility; three-quarters of those countries were in sub-Saharan Africa.

Roughly half the world's population now live in rural areas. Nevertheless, rural dwellers represent more than 70 per cent of the people without improved sanitation. In urban areas, improvements in sanitation have failed to keep pace with population growth. In 21 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, only 16 per cent of the poorest quintile of the population have access to improved sanitation, compared to 79 per cent of the population in the richest quintile.

## In developing regions, nearly one in four uses no form of sanitation

Proportion of population by sanitation practices, 1990 and 2006 (Percentage)

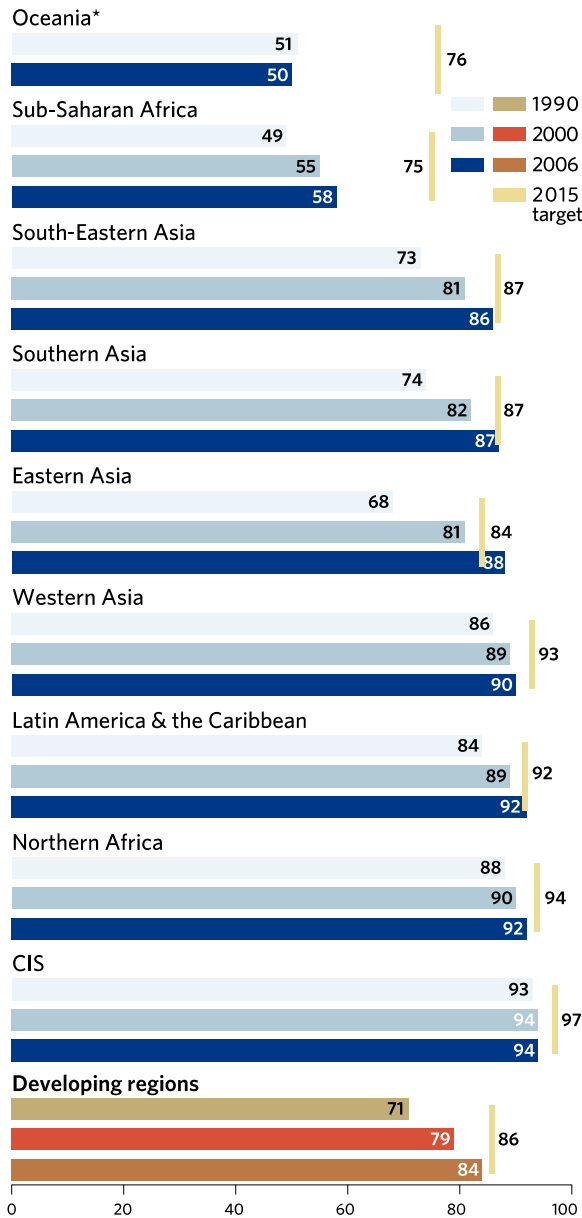


Almost a quarter of the developing world's population live without any form of sanitation. An additional 15 per cent use sanitation facilities that do not ensure hygienic separation of human waste from human contact. Open defecation jeopardizes an entire community, not just those who practise it, because of an increased risk of diarrhoeal diseases, cholera, worm infestations, hepatitis and related diseases.

While open defecation is declining in all regions, it continues to be practised by almost half the population in Southern Asia and more than a quarter of those living in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 1.2 billion people worldwide who practise open defecation, more than one billion live in rural areas.

## Though access to improved drinking water has expanded, nearly one billion people do without

Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source, 1990, 2000 and 2006 (Percentage)



\* Data are not available for 2000.

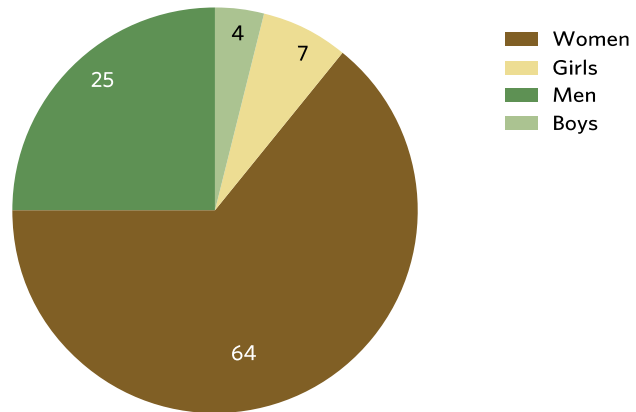
Since 1990, 1.6 billion people have gained access to safe water. At this rate, the world is expected to meet the drinking water target, which would require that 89 per cent of the population of developing regions use improved sources of drinking water by 2015. Still, nearly one billion people today lack safe sources of drinking water.

Progress has been most pronounced in Eastern Asia, where over 400 million people have gained access to improved drinking water sources and coverage has grown by 20 per cent since 1990. Less progress has taken place in sub-Saharan Africa, which now accounts for more than a third of those without improved drinking water supplies and requires a jumpstart to meet the target.

In 2006, an improved drinking water source was available to 96 per cent of the urban population in developing regions, but only 78 per cent of rural inhabitants. Some 742 million rural people lived without access to improved drinking water, compared to 137 million urban residents. The same disparity applies to piped drinking water, with only 30 per cent of piped drinking-water connections in rural households.

## Women shoulder the largest burden in collecting water

Member of the household usually collecting water, 2005/2006 (Percentage)



Recent findings confirm anecdotal evidence that women shoulder the bulk of responsibility for collecting water when none is available on the premises. Women are more than twice as likely as men to collect water, while children usually collect water in 11 per cent of households. More girls than boys fetch water.