

State of systems for drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene

Global update 2025



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UN-Water Global Analysis
and Assessment of Sanitation
and Drinking-Water



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Contents

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Foreword | ix |
| Acknowledgements | x |
| Acronyms and abbreviations | xiii |
| GLAAS 2025 report summary indicators | xv |
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| Why monitoring WASH systems matters now | 1 |
| Acting on the findings of this report | 2 |
| Overview of the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle | 3 |
| 2. Policies, plans, institutional arrangements and national targets | 7 |
| Policies and plans | 7 |
| Institutional arrangements | 8 |
| National targets | 10 |
| 3. Monitoring, review and use of data for decision-making | 13 |
| National monitoring indicators for WASH | 14 |
| WASH MISs | 17 |
| Monitoring service provider key performance indicators | 17 |
| Reviewing progress through JSRs | 18 |
| Data use in decision-making | 20 |
| Monitoring and data use for decisions on public health and WASH | 21 |
| 4. Regulation and surveillance | 23 |
| Regulation and regulatory authorities | 23 |
| Risk management approaches | 25 |
| Independent surveillance | 26 |
| 5. Human resources | 27 |
| WASH human resources needs | 27 |
| Women in the WASH workforce | 28 |
| Challenges facing WASH human resources | 28 |
| Actions being taken to address human resources gaps | 30 |
| Protecting the rights and safety of workers | 31 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 6. Finance | 33 |
| Development and implementation of WASH financing plans/strategies | 33 |
| Estimated costs for WASH plans/strategies | 34 |
| Sufficiency of financial resources for WASH | 35 |
| National government WASH budgets | 38 |
| Trends in national government WASH budgets | 40 |
| Cost recovery | 42 |
| Total expenditure on WASH | 43 |
| WASH expenditure by country | 45 |
| Sources of funding for WASH | 47 |
| 7. Development partner support for WASH | 49 |
| Water supply and sanitation ODA | 49 |
| Development partner WASH strategies | 51 |
| Priority WASH areas for development partners | 52 |
| Development partner support for WASH and gender | 54 |
| Development partner WASH targets | 56 |
| Leveraging and mobilizing funds for WASH | 56 |
| Future focus and impacts of a new aid environment | 58 |
| 8. SDG 6 MoI Targets 6.a and 6.b | 59 |
| SDG Target 6.a: International cooperation and capacity-building support | 60 |
| SDG Target 6.b: Participation of local communities | 63 |
| 9. Leaving no one behind | 67 |
| Human rights to water and sanitation | 67 |
| Affordability of WASH services | 67 |
| Equity measures for vulnerable populations and settings | 69 |
| Measures to reach women and girls | 70 |
| Menstrual health and hygiene | 71 |
| 10. Climate and WASH | 73 |
| Defining climate-resilient WASH | 73 |
| Climate in WASH policies and plans/strategies | 74 |
| Risk assessments for climate-resilient WASH | 75 |
| Monitoring climate-resilient WASH | 77 |
| Climate finance and WASH | 80 |
| Development partner support for WASH and climate | 80 |
| Annex: Contributors | 83 |

Figures

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1.1 Countries, territories and development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle | 5 |
| Figure 2.1 Number of countries reporting formally approved policies supported by resourced plans for urban and rural drinking-water and sanitation | 7 |
| Figure 2.2 Number of lead government agencies or institutions identified per country, by WASH subsector ($n = 102$) | 9 |
| Figure 2.3 Percentage of countries that have drinking-water, sanitation or hand hygiene targets | 11 |
| Figure 3.1 Example national planning, monitoring and review cycle of a WASH system | 13 |
| Figure 3.2 A2A's theory of change | 16 |
| Figure 3.3 Percentage of countries conducting JSRs in which priority actions are set, previous priority actions are reviewed, and progress towards national targets is validated and reviewed ($n = 100$) | 18 |
| Figure 3.4 Percentage of countries conducting JSRs at least every 2 years, by World Bank income group | 19 |
| Figure 3.5 Percentage of countries using sanitation data in decision-making for sector review and planning, common country respondents across five GLAAS cycles ($n = 44$) | 20 |
| Figure 3.6 Percentage of countries using data for decision-making for planning processes and/or sector review and for resource allocation | 21 |
| Figure 3.7 Percentage of countries using WASH data for a majority of decisions related to WASH and public health | 21 |
| Figure 4.1 Percentage of countries with national regulations, standards or guidelines along the sanitation service chain | 23 |
| Figure 4.2 Percentage of countries with regulatory authorities, by World Bank income group | 24 |
| Figure 4.3 Percentage of countries using and implementing risk management approaches for urban and rural drinking-water | 25 |
| Figure 4.4 Frequency of independent surveillance in practice compared to requirements for drinking-water, wastewater and sludge surveillance | 26 |
| Figure 5.1 Percentage of countries with at least 75% of the human resources needed for key WASH functions | 27 |
| Figure 5.2 Percentage of countries with at least 40% of all WASH positions and 40% of leadership positions held by women, by World Bank income group | 28 |
| Figure 5.3 Percentage of countries identifying severe constraints to human resources, by WASH subsector | 29 |
| Figure 5.4 Percentage of countries reporting sufficiency of trained professionals from WASH training institutions, by WASH subsector | 29 |
| Figure 5.5 Percentage of countries with marketing strategies to attract people to the WASH workforce and that target women ($n = 99$) | 30 |
| Figure 5.6 Percentage of countries with measures fully in place for the rights of drinking-water and sanitation workers | 31 |
| Figure 5.7 Percentage of countries with measures fully in place for the safety of drinking-water and sanitation workers | 32 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 6.1 Existence and status of WASH financing plans/strategies | 33 |
| Figure 6.2 Estimated annual WASH plan/strategy cost (US\$ millions, current) | 34 |
| Figure 6.3 Sufficiency of funding from all sources to reach national sanitation targets (<i>n</i> = 77)..... | 36 |
| Figure 6.4 Available funds versus funds needed to reach national targets (US\$ millions, current) | 37 |
| Figure 6.5 Reported government WASH budgets, by latest fiscal year available (US\$ per capita and US\$ millions, current) (<i>n</i> = 58) | 39 |
| Figure 6.6 Reported government WASH budgets (US\$ millions, constant 2024 US\$) | 40 |
| Figure 6.7 Percentage of countries with domestic absorption rates greater than 75% | 42 |
| Figure 6.8 Percentage of countries indicating at least 80% of O&M costs are covered by tariffs or household contributions | 43 |
| Figure 6.9 Summary of annual WASH expenditure (<i>n</i> = 58)..... | 43 |
| Figure 6.10 Annual WASH expenditure per capita (US\$)..... | 44 |
| Figure 6.11 Total WASH expenditure as a percentage of GDP and per capita (58 countries with a total population of 2.1 billion) | 45 |
| Figure 6.12 Total and public WASH expenditure as a percentage of GDP and per capita (58 countries, 2.1 billion population)..... | 46 |
| Figure 6.13 Sources of funding for WASH (<i>n</i> = 40) | 47 |
| Figure 7.1 ODA commitments and disbursements to water supply and sanitation, 2010–2023 (US\$ millions, constant 2023 US\$) | 50 |
| Figure 7.2 Percentage of global water and sanitation ODA commitments directed to each SDG region, 2020–2023 | 50 |
| Figure 7.3 Percentage of global water and sanitation ODA commitments directed to each SDG region, 2023 | 51 |
| Figure 7.4 Main water and sanitation priority areas for development partners (<i>n</i> = 18) | 53 |
| Figure 7.5 Water and sanitation ODA disbursements marked as significant or principal for the gender equality marker, 2010–2023 | 54 |
| Figure 8.1 ODA commitments and disbursements for the water sector, 2010–2023 | 61 |
| Figure 8.2 Percentage of ODA-recipient countries that reported alignment of donor funds with national water sector plans, by World Bank income group..... | 62 |
| Figure 8.3 Percentage of countries that define participation procedures for rural drinking-water in law or policy and have high levels of participation, by SDG region | 64 |
| Figure 8.4 Percentage of countries that define women’s participation procedures for rural drinking-water in law or policy and have high levels of women’s participation, by SDG region | 65 |
| Figure 9.1 Percentage of countries that have and use financial schemes to make WASH more affordable | 68 |
| Figure 9.2 Percentage of countries with measures in policies and plans that monitor service provision and direct financial resources to improve and extend sanitation services to specific populations and settings..... | 69 |
| Figure 10.1 Percentage of countries with indicators to monitor climate-resilient WASH | 77 |
| Figure 10.2 Proportion of water and sanitation ODA designated for climate change adaptation or mitigation as the principal or significant objective, 2010–2023 | 81 |

Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1.1 Countries, territories and development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle | 5 |
| Table 1.2 Distribution of GLAAS 2024/2025 participating countries, by World Bank income group | 5 |
| Table 2.1 Percentage of countries addressing safely managed services in WASH policies and plans (<i>n</i> = 102) | 8 |
| Table 2.2 Percentage of countries self-reporting the safely managed service level for national, urban and rural drinking-water and sanitation targets | 11 |
| Table 3.1 Percentage and examples of countries reporting existence of national monitoring indicators agreed and tracked against baseline, by topic area | 15 |
| Table 3.2 Percentage of countries reporting different types of data in an MIS (<i>n</i> = 71) | 17 |
| Table 3.3 Country examples of changes brought about as a result of a JSR | 19 |
| Table 4.1 Percentage of countries by regulatory model for drinking-water and sanitation regulatory authorities | 24 |
| Table 6.1 Sufficiency of funding to implement WASH plans and to meet national targets | 35 |
| Table 6.2 Trends in funding needs and funding gaps for sanitation (common country respondents in the GLAAS 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles) | 37 |
| Table 6.3 Estimated WASH expenditure (all respondents) | 45 |
| Table 6.4 Breakdown of WASH funding sources from four GLAAS cycles for all responding countries | 48 |
| Table 7.1 ODA commitments and disbursements in 2022 and 2023 | 49 |
| Table 7.2 Development partner WASH strategies | 52 |
| Table 7.3 Summary of development partner targets for access to drinking-water and sanitation | 56 |
| Table 8.1 SDG 6 MoI targets and indicators | 59 |
| Table 8.2 Percentage of countries reporting at least 75% of rural populations have opportunities for participation for sanitation and drinking-water services | 64 |
| Table 9.1 Measures to extend WASH services to people living in poverty, by World Bank income group | 70 |
| Table 9.2 Measures to extend WASH services to women and girls, by World Bank income group | 71 |
| Table 9.3 Percentage of countries addressing menstrual health and hygiene in their WASH policies and plans (<i>n</i> = 99) | 71 |
| Table 10.1 Percentage of countries addressing climate in WASH policies and plans | 74 |
| Table 10.2 Measures to improve and extend services to populations disproportionately affected by climate change, by SDG region | 75 |

Boxes

| | |
|--|----|
| Box 2.1 India's leadership in rural water supply | 9 |
| Box 3.1 Bridging political leadership, monitoring and financial accountability for WASH through HoSI and WASH accounts | 14 |
| Box 3.2 A2A: towards a set of core indicators and a common monitoring and review framework for WASH systems | 15 |
| Box 4.1 Strengthening water and sanitation regulatory systems: a global call to action | 25 |
| Box 7.1 WHO and UNICEF contributions to implementation of the UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation | 53 |
| Box 8.1 Rethinking monitoring of the MoI for SDG 6 (Targets 6.a and 6.b) | 60 |
| Box 9.1 WASH accounts: strengthening financial monitoring for evidence-based decision-making | 68 |
| Box 10.1 SWA's definition of climate-resilient WASH | 73 |
| Box 10.2 JMP/GLAAS review of indicators for global monitoring of climate-resilient WASH | 77 |



Foreword

With less than five years until 2030, we are at a critical moment to review SDG 6 and take decisive action to accelerate implementation. The world has made great progress since 2015, but the promise of safe drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) remains unfulfilled for billions.

The choices we make now will determine whether we achieve our common goals and ensure WASH is a catalyst for better public health and its transformational benefits, particularly for vulnerable people.

To understand where we should direct our efforts, we must look beneath the surface to examine national WASH systems and diagnose what holds them back.

The UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2025 report provides a global evidence base on the state of national WASH systems. This report, co-led by WHO and UNICEF, reinforces both organizations' commitment and collaboration on global WASH monitoring.

Data from 105 countries and territories, and 21 development partners, reveal significant opportunities to accelerate progress – by improving budget execution, reducing inefficiencies and losses, and investing in the skilled workforce needed to drive progress.

We must also continue tracking progress and making sure funding reaches underserved groups. At the same time, integrating climate resilience into WASH systems will help make services better fit for the future.

As we approach the end of the 2030 Agenda and begin to shape the policy landscape beyond, there is unprecedented ambition behind SDG 6.

The upcoming UN Water Conferences in 2026 and 2028 are pivotal moments to focus on action and promote the transparency and trust required for sustained political and financial commitment in the years ahead.

The strength of our collective response depends on data and evidence. The findings of the GLAAS 2025 report aim to guide and galvanize national efforts and help realize our shared global ambition of safe water and sanitation for all.



Alvaro Lario
Chair of UN-Water and President of the International
Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



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UN-Water reports and other relevant publications

UN-Water coordinates the efforts of United Nations entities and international organizations working on water and sanitation issues. By doing so, UN-Water seeks to increase the effectiveness of the support provided to Member States in their efforts towards achieving international agreements on water and sanitation. UN-Water publications draw on the experience and expertise of UN-Water's Members and Partners.

United Nations World Water Development Report

The United Nations World Water Development Report is UN-Water's flagship report on water and sanitation issues, focusing on a different theme each year. The report is published by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on behalf of UN-Water, and its production is coordinated by the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP). The report gives insight on the main trends concerning the state, use and management of fresh water and sanitation, based on work done by the Members and Partners of UN-Water. Launched in conjunction with World Water Day, the report provides decision-makers with knowledge and tools to formulate and implement sustainable water policies. It also offers best practices and in-depth analyses to stimulate ideas and actions for better stewardship in the water sector and beyond.

United Nations System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation

After the United Nations 2023 Water Conference, United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/77/334 requested "the Secretary-General to present a United Nations system-wide water and sanitation strategy in consultation with Member States before the end of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly". The goal of the Strategy is to enhance United Nations system-wide coordination and delivery of water-related priorities resulting in more strategic, effective, coherent and efficient support to Member States in their efforts to accelerate progress on national plans and priorities, internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, and transformative solutions to current and future water-related challenges. The Strategy was launched in July 2024 at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York.

Collaborative Implementation Plan

The Collaborative Implementation Plan outlines how the United Nations system will jointly implement the United Nations System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation. Covering the period 2025–2028, it identifies shared priorities and actions to strengthen coordination, align agency workplans and deliver more coherent and effective support to Member States.

UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)

The GLAAS report is produced by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on behalf of UN-Water. It provides a global update on the policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, human resources base, and international and national finance streams in support of water and sanitation. It is a substantive input to the activities of Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) as well as the progress reporting on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.

Progress reports of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP)

The JMP is affiliated with UN-Water and is responsible for global monitoring of progress towards SDG 6 targets for universal access to safe and affordable drinking-water and adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene services. Every two years, the JMP releases updated estimates and progress reports for drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene in households (as part of the progress reporting on SDG 6), schools and health care facilities.

UN-Water Country Acceleration Case Studies

To speed up the achievement of SDG 6 targets as part of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, UN-Water releases SDG 6 Country Acceleration Case Studies to explore countries' pathways to achieving faster progress on SDG 6 at the national level. The case studies document replicable good practices for achieving the SDG 6 targets as well as look at how progress can be accelerated across SDG 6 targets in a country. Since 2022, studies have been released from Bhutan, Brazil, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Ghana, Jordan, Pakistan, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia and Senegal.

United Nations SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation

The SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation is a publication of the United Nations prepared by UN-Water that is strategically timed as an input to the periodic in-depth review of SDG 6 during the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. By identifying gaps, trends, and priority actions, the reports help governments, United Nations entities and partners understand what is needed to accelerate progress and ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

UN-Water Policy and Analytical Briefs

UN-Water's Policy Briefs provide short and informative policy guidance on the most pressing freshwater-related issues that draw upon the combined expertise of the United Nations system. Analytical Briefs provide an analysis of emerging issues and may serve as a basis for further research, discussion and future policy guidance.

More information: www.unwater.org/unwater-publications



Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| A2A | Align to Accelerate |
| ADA | Austrian Development Agency |
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| AECID | Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo |
| AFD | Agence Française de Développement |
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| BMZ | Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany |
| COVID-19 | coronavirus disease |
| CRS | Creditor Reporting System |
| FCDO | Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| GDP | gross domestic product |
| GLAAS | Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water |
| HoSI | Heads of State Initiatives |
| JICA | Japan International Cooperation Agency |
| JJM | Jal Jeevan Mission |
| JMP | WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene |
| JSR | joint sector review |
| KPI | key performance indicator |
| MIS | management information system |
| MoI | means of implementation |
| <i>n</i> | sample size |
| NGO | nongovernmental organization |
| NRW | non-revenue water |
| ODA | official development assistance |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| O&M | operations and maintenance |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SHF | The Sanitation and Hygiene Fund |
| Sida | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SWA | Sanitation and Water for All |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| WASH | drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| WSP | water safety plan |



GLAAS 2025 report summary indicators

| Policies, plans, institutional arrangements and national targets | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|--------------|
| | Drinking-water (urban/rural) | Sanitation (urban/rural) | Hand hygiene |
| With a formally approved policy and costed plan with sufficient human and financial resources | 13/8 | 9/6 | 3 |
| Addressing safely managed services in drinking-water and sanitation policies/plans | 80/77 | 75/65 | – |
| With one or two lead government agencies or institutions | 73/70 | 71/75 | 80 |
| With national targets | 85 | 87 | 49 |
| With national targets that most closely align with safely managed service levels (self-reported) | 62 | 56 | – |

| Monitoring, review and use of drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) data for decision-making | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | | |
|--|--|------------|--------------|
| | Drinking-water | Sanitation | Hand hygiene |
| Having a defined set of national monitoring indicators | | | 75 |
| Having a national management information system with key data | | | 71 |
| Conducting joint sector reviews | | | 73 |
| Using data to make decisions to respond to disease outbreaks | | | 64 |
| Using data in a majority of decisions on resource allocation | 60 | 60 | 36 |
| Using data in a majority of decisions in planning processes and/or sector reviews | 69 | 67 | 40 |

| Regulation and surveillance | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| | Drinking-water (urban/rural) | Sanitation (sewered/on site) |
| With standards in place for drinking-water quality | 82/88 | – |
| With regulations or standards for service delivery requirements | 86/75 | – |
| With minimum requirements for toilets | – | 89 |
| With minimum requirements for containment and on-site treatment | – | 79 |
| With minimum requirements for emptying and conveyance through sewer networks / transport | – | 70 |
| With minimum requirements for wastewater / faecal sludge treatment | – | 84/71 |
| With regulations, standards or guidelines for safe use of treated wastewater and/or sludge | – | 64 |
| With regulatory authorities | 91/83 | 82/72 |
| With regulatory authorities that publish publicly accessible reports (on drinking-water quality / wastewater flows and faecal sludge volumes) | 43/38 | 27/19 |
| With regulatory authorities that take corrective action to improve performance and address non-compliance | 61/56 | 46/42 |
| With sufficient human resources for regulation | 24 | 19 |
| Implementing risk management approaches at a significant scale | 42/27 | 19 |
| Where surveillance is conducted between 95% and 100% of required frequency | 21/12 | 9/8 |

| Human resources | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | | |
|--|--|------------|--------------|
| | Drinking-water | Sanitation | Hand hygiene |
| That have conducted a national human resources needs assessment for WASH | 33 | | |
| That have a national-level collaboration framework with vocational and higher education institutions to attract WASH professionals | 40 | | |
| With sufficient (at least 75%) human resources | 26 | 15 | 18 |
| That have a severe constraint of insufficient financial resources to pay for staff | 24 | 35 | 30 |
| That have a severe constraint of skilled workers not wanting to live and work in rural areas | 39 | 42 | 35 |

| Finance | 2016/2017 | 2018/2019 | 2021/2022 | 2024/2025 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Percentage of countries ^a providing cost estimates for WASH plans (%) | – | 66 | 74 | 66 |
| Average annual increase in government WASH budgets (%) | 4.9 | 11.1 | 5.0 | 2.6 |
| Government WASH budget per capita (US\$, current), average of all respondents excluding China | 8.98 | 9.14 | 12.45 | 9.61 |
| Total WASH expenditure per capita (US\$, current), average | 32 | 33 | 38 | 34 |
| Total WASH expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product, average (%) | 0.84 | 0.72 | 1.02 | 0.83 |
| Percentage of WASH funding derived from users, average (%) | 64 | 66 | 60 | 50 |

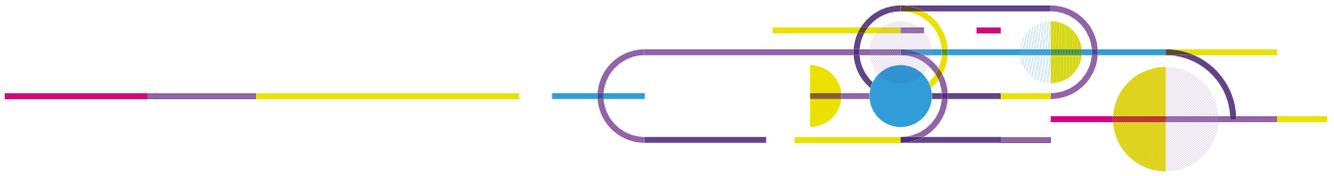
| Development partner support for WASH | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Official development assistance (ODA) disbursements for water supply and sanitation (constant 2024 US\$) | 6.8 billion | 6.7 billion | 7.3 billion | 6.9 billion |
| Percentage of total ODA commitments for water and sanitation (%) | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 2.8 |
| Breakdown of water and sanitation ODA commitments between water/sanitation (%) | 60/40 | 60/40 | 63/37 | 66/34 |

Sustainable Development Goal 6 means of implementation Targets 6.a and 6.b

| Target 6.a: International cooperation and capacity-building support | | | | |
|--|--|---|--------------|-------------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| ODA disbursements for the water sector (constant 2024 US\$) | 8.5 billion | 8.2 billion | 8.9 billion | 8.7 billion |
| Percentage of countries ^a where donor funds are fully (95–100%) aligned with national plans for the water sector (%) | – | – | 30 | 29 |
| Target 6.b: Participation of local communities | | | | |
| | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | | | |
| | Rural drinking-water | Water resources planning and management | | |
| With defined procedures in law or policy for community and user participation | 92 | 89 | | |
| With defined procedures in law or policy for women's participation | 60 | 59 | | |
| With high levels of community and user participation | 38 | 28 | | |
| With high levels of women's participation | 30 | 24 | | |
| | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | | | |
| | Drinking-water | Sanitation | Hand hygiene | |
| That recognize the human rights to water and sanitation in the constitution or legislation | 87 | 83 | – | |
| With widely used financial schemes to make services affordable, urban/rural | 41/32 | 32/22 | 16 | |
| With measures to reach populations living in poverty in national WASH policies and plans | 87 | 85 | 70 | |
| Where progress to extend service provision to populations living in poverty is tracked and reported | 56 | 54 | 37 | |
| With measures that are consistently applied to direct financial resources to populations living in poverty | 40 | 33 | 27 | |
| Gender and WASH | | | | |
| With measures to reach women and girls in national WASH policies and plans | 76 | 78 | 70 | |
| Where progress to extend service provision to women and girls is tracked and reported | 49 | 50 | 42 | |
| With measures that are consistently applied to direct financial resources to women and girls | 27 | 24 | 24 | |
| | Percentage of countries (%) ^a | | | |
| | Drinking-water | Sanitation | Hand hygiene | |
| Addressing risks of climate variability and climate change to WASH services in WASH policies/plans | | 80 | | |
| Addressing climate resilience of WASH technologies and management systems in WASH policies/plans | | 73 | | |
| Addressing climate change mitigation in WASH policies/plans | | 70 | | |
| Performing climate risk assessments | | 57 | | |
| | Drinking-water | Sanitation | Hand hygiene | |
| With indicators to monitor climate resilience, urban/rural | 39/37 | 38/28 | 19 | |
| With measures to reach populations disproportionately affected by climate change in national WASH policies and plans | 74 | 68 | 65 | |
| Where progress to extend service provision to populations disproportionately affected by climate change is tracked and reported | 51 | 42 | 39 | |
| With measures that are consistently applied to direct financial resources to populations disproportionately affected by climate change | 29 | 20 | 23 | |

^a The denominator for each percentage varies based on the number of responding countries per question.

Sources: GLAAS 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Creditor Reporting System, 2025.



1. Introduction

The UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2025 report, jointly developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), provides a comprehensive, in-depth look at the status of national drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) systems. It presents the findings from the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey completed by 105 countries and territories, comprising 62% of the global population from all Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) regions, as well as from the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey completed by 21 development partners (Fig. 1.1).

The report examines the status of key components of WASH systems: policy, plans, institutional arrangements and national targets; monitoring, review and use of data for decision-making; regulation and surveillance; human resources; and finance. In addition to presenting a global snapshot of the status, it also offers analysis of data disaggregated by participating country, WASH subsector, SDG region and income group, among others. It showcases examples from countries and development partners, highlights trends and positive signs of progress, and identifies gaps and persistent challenges where greater attention and efforts are required.

Together with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), WHO is a co-custodian responsible for monitoring the SDG 6 targets on means of implementation (MoI) (Targets 6.a and 6.b). This report provides an expanded analysis of the two SDG 6 MoI targets and indicators: (6.a) international cooperation and capacity-building support and (6.b) local participation. In addition, it includes sections on development partner support and leaving no one behind. With growing recognition of the importance of water supply and sanitation for climate mitigation and adaptation, this report also has a section on climate and WASH that explores how countries are incorporating aspects of climate-related risk, resilience, adaptation and mitigation into WASH systems. This is the seventh GLAAS report since the pilot in 2008.

Why monitoring WASH systems matters now

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2015, more than a billion people have gained access to safely managed water and sanitation and basic hygiene. However, despite steady progress, billions still remain without access. The latest WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) global estimates for WASH in households, published in August 2025, indicate that 2.1 billion people (26%) still lack access to safely managed drinking-water, 3.4 billion people (42%) still lack safely managed sanitation and 1.7 billion (20%) still lack basic hygiene services (1).

Consequently, at least 1.4 million people – many of them children – died from preventable causes linked to unsafe water and poor sanitation in 2019 (2). In 2024 alone, there were over 560 000 cases and 6000 reported deaths from cholera (a preventable disease) in 60 countries, exposing persisting inequalities in access to even basic WASH services (3). Moreover, climate-related hazards, shocks and stresses present an ever-growing threat to WASH services everywhere.

Closing the gap towards universal access to safely managed WASH services relies upon the systems and the MoI that deliver and sustain them. Understanding the vital factors in WASH systems that accelerate country progress, and aligning to take action to address them, could lead to the transformational changes required to put the sector on course.

While there are many global and national reports on WASH progress, few report on WASH systems and “diagnose” challenges and gaps. Periodically monitoring the status of WASH systems and their MoI can help governments, development partners and other stakeholders to:

- identify systemic gaps in governance, financing and capacity that hinder service delivery;
- better address disparities in access and equity, guiding targeted interventions to reach vulnerable populations;
- track progress towards global commitments on SDG Targets 6.a and 6.b;
- inform investment decisions by highlighting where resources are most needed and most effective;
- support policy coherence by connecting WASH to health, climate, education and economic development;
- enable early action by detecting emerging risks and resilience challenges in WASH systems;
- strengthen coordination among sectors and stakeholders through shared data and insights; and
- promote transparency and trust, encouraging sustained political and financial commitment.

Acting on the findings of this report

Ten years since the adoption of the SDGs and with less than 5 years left until 2030, the GLAAS 2025 report presents the latest data and evidence on the status of WASH systems. The report is strategically timed to be used as a key resource that can:

- support countries that are assessing progress and updating plans and budgets for the final 5 years of the SDGs;
- provide insights for development partners, international financial institutions and the private sector looking to invest effectively for maximum impact;
- serve as a crucial input of data and evidence into the upcoming global policy dialogue on SDG 6 as part of the in-depth review during the 2026 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- contribute to the preparatory process for the UN 2026 Water Conference to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, in particular the interactive dialogue themes on “Water for People” and “Investment in Water” that will take place in the United Arab Emirates from 2 to 4 December 2026;
- share examples showing how specific countries and development partners have found innovative solutions to tackle persistent challenges such as strengthening the monitoring of WASH systems and integrating climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience into WASH services;

- offer inputs into other platforms and processes that may benefit from GLAAS data such as those of the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) partnership and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and
- contribute evidence to the technical case for water and sanitation in the post-2030 sustainable development framework.

While comprehensive, the analysis in this report provides a global snapshot of the valuable information available from the GLAAS 2024/2025 data set covering 105 countries and 21 development partners. WASH practitioners, researchers, policy-makers, civil society organizations, investors and citizens are invited to explore the data set, conduct further analysis and examine specific details, to build greater understanding and contribute towards more effective action to deliver on the collective promise of available and sustainably managed water and sanitation for all. The complete GLAAS 2024/2025 data set is available on the GLAAS data portal (4).

Overview of the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle

Methodology

Each GLAAS cycle is open to governments and development partners around the world, who provide data on WASH systems through the GLAAS country and development partner surveys (5). For this GLAAS cycle, WHO and UNICEF officially strengthened their collaboration on GLAAS. In early 2024, governments were invited to participate in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle through WHO and UNICEF regional and country offices, and data collection took place from April until the end of 2024. Development partners were invited to participate in the development partner survey in early 2025, and data collection took place from April to July 2025.

The GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey was open to all interested countries and territories, in line with the universality principle of the SDGs. Participation in the country survey was voluntary. It involved data collection, supported in most cases by multistakeholder review workshops and data validation. Countries and territories were requested to provide information on the GLAAS process and data use through a feedback form. Based on feedback forms from 65 countries, the median number of days to complete the GLAAS country survey was 44, and women represented over half of participants in the GLAAS process in 62% of countries (31 of 50 countries). Twenty-four per cent of countries (13 of 54) reported using government funds in addition to seed funding provided by WHO, UNICEF or other partners to support the process.

This report summarizes trends and indicators for WASH by subsector. The majority of GLAAS country survey questions seek disaggregated data for urban sanitation, rural sanitation, urban drinking-water, rural drinking-water and hand hygiene, as well as groupings for institutional WASH for schools and health care facilities. In many cases, data are available at this disaggregated level. However, depending on the country situation, data may be available only at more aggregated groupings such as sanitation and drinking-water services, or urban and rural areas. In addition, when presented with summaries at the subsector level, the scope of services within these subsectors may differ substantially across countries. For example, one country may budget for full service provision, subsidies for the poor, collection and treatment of waste, and so forth under rural sanitation, while in another country, the same description may cover only rural outreach workers. Definitions for urban and rural are based on national definitions, and may differ among participants. No attempt to define “urban area” or “rural area” at a global level has been made.

Data quality

Mechanisms to improve data quality have been strengthened over GLAAS cycles.

- A thorough and systematic quality assurance process is conducted 2–3 weeks from receipt of the final survey submission and then shared with each country/territory focal point for review. This process includes checking for missing data, internal inconsistencies within the survey, external discrepancies with external data sources and national documentation, and comparison with previous cycle results.
- For the first time, GLAAS country highlights summarizing key results have been made available when possible through the GLAAS data portal on a rolling basis, before the release of this GLAAS 2025 report. This provides countries/territories with the opportunity to review their results and comment, thus engaging them further in the process.
- There are broader stakeholder participation and more robust GLAAS processes at country level, including a multistakeholder validation process in most countries with a median of seven government ministries/institutions and two nongovernmental entities involved in the process in each country. Approximately 34% of countries conducted multistakeholder reviews including all government and nongovernment stakeholders as part of the validation, with an additional 38% performing multistakeholder reviews that did not include all stakeholders.

Data coverage

Globally, 105 countries and territories completed the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.^{1,2} This covers a population of 5 billion, representing 62% of the world's population. It includes 91% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa and 92% of the population of least developed countries. Twenty-one development partners completed the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey. The annex to this report lists the thousands of individuals involved in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle.

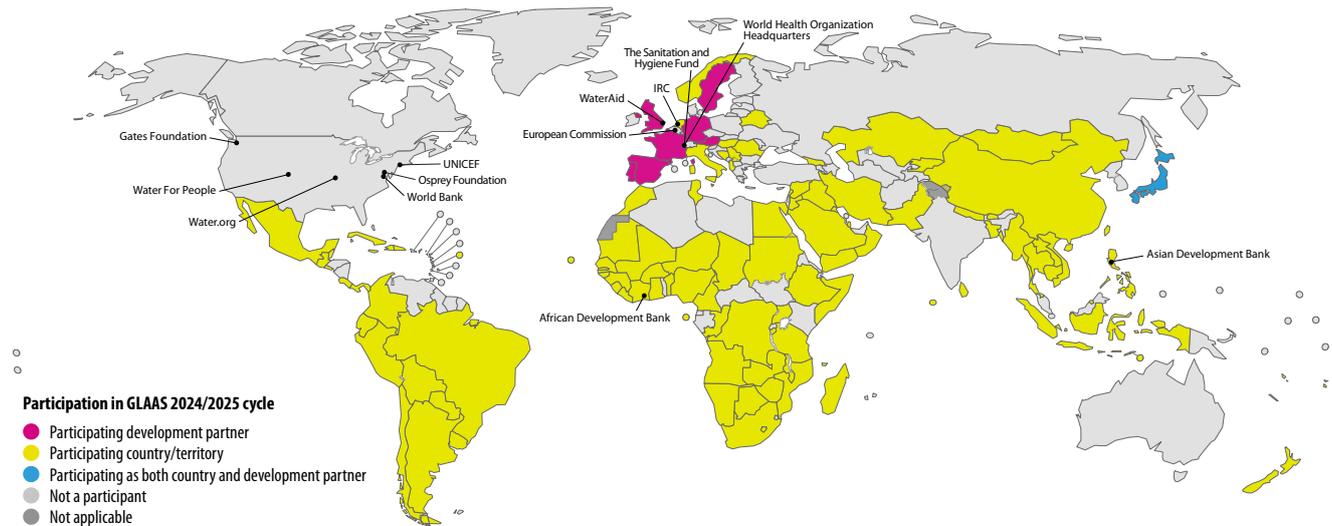


Globally, 105 countries and territories and 21 development partners participated in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, involving thousands of individuals and hundreds of institutions (Fig. 1.1; Tables 1.1 and 1.2).

¹ Including one territory: the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem. Statistics in this report refer to countries and territories.

² While 105 countries submitted GLAAS country surveys, not every country answered every question. Therefore, throughout the report, there are different sample sizes for different analyses.

Fig. 1.1 Countries, territories and development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle



Map production: Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health, WHO.
Sources: GLAAS 2024/2025 country and development partner surveys.

Table 1.1 Countries, territories and development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle

| Countries and territories (105 total) |
|---|
| Albania, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turks and Caicos Islands, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe |
| Development partners (21 total) |
| African Development Bank (AfDB), Agence Française de Développement (AFD, France), Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID, Spain), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Austrian Development Agency (ADA, Austria), Camões - Institute for Cooperation and Language, I.P. (Portugal), European Commission, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ, Germany), Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Gates Foundation, IRC WASH (Stichting IRC, International Water and Sanitation Centre), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Osprey Foundation, The Sanitation and Hygiene Fund (SHF), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WaterAid, Water For People, Water.org, World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO) |

Sources: GLAAS 2024/2025 country and development partner surveys.

Table 1.2 Distribution of GLAAS 2024/2025 participating countries, by World Bank income group^a

| World Bank income group | Number of countries per income group | Number of countries participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle | Per cent breakdown of countries in each income group participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle | Per cent breakdown of countries among GLAAS 2024/2025 participants (n = 105) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Low income | 26 | 19 | 73% | 18% |
| Lower-middle income | 51 | 38 | 75% | 36% |
| Upper-middle income | 53 | 32 | 60% | 30% |
| High income | 63 | 16 | 25% | 15% |
| Total | 193 | 105 | 54% | 100% |

^a Based on World Bank analytical classification of economies for fiscal year 2025 (ending 30 June 2025 and based on GNI per capita of 2023).
Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

References³

1. Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000–2024: special focus on inequalities. Geneva: World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund; 2025 (<https://washdata.org/reports/jmp-2025-wash-households>). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
2. Burden of disease attributable to unsafe drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene, 2019 update. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023 (<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/370026>). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
3. Weekly Epidemiological Record. Wkly Epidemiol Rec. 2025;100(36):347–364 (<https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/382541/WER10036-eng-fre.pdf>) (in English, French).
4. GLAAS data portal [website]. World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://glaas.who.int>).
5. GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle [website]. Water Sanitation and Health, World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/water-sanitation-and-health/monitoring-and-evidence/wash-systems-monitoring/un-water-global-analysis-and-assessment-of-sanitation-and-drinking-water/2024-2025-cycle>).

³ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.

2. Policies, plans, institutional arrangements and national targets

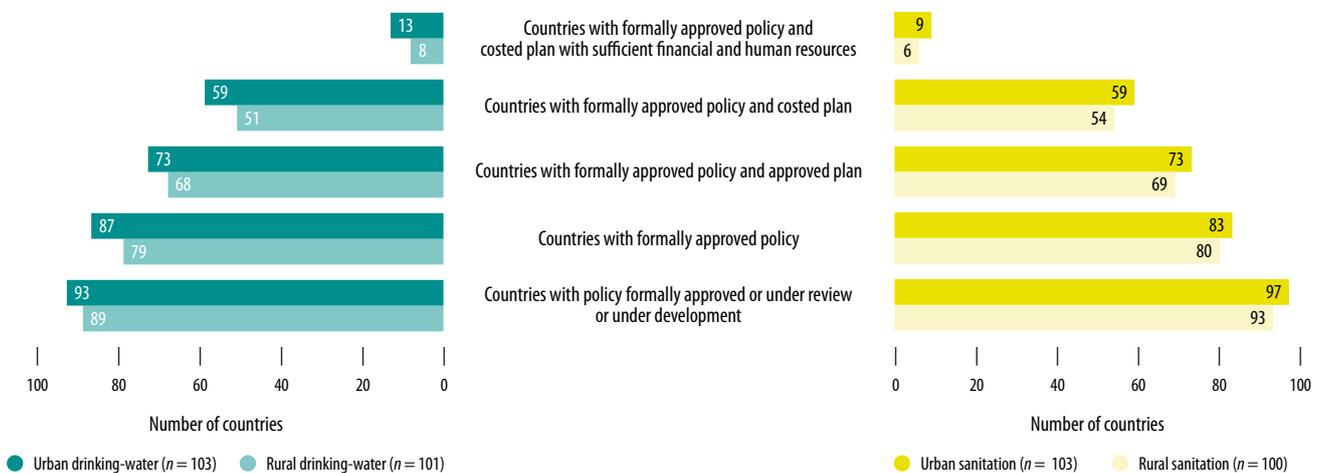
National policies and plans play a central role in guiding sector development. WASH policies define a long-term vision for the sector and generally span a longer time frame, whereas WASH plans provide an operational strategy and roadmap for implementation, usually over a shorter time frame. WASH plans often include well-defined targets to enable systematic monitoring of progress, to guide allocation of resources to priority areas, and to foster political will and accountability. Additionally, institutional arrangements help determine the types of policies and plans in place. This section focuses on policies, plans, institutional arrangements and national targets.

Policies and plans

Most countries participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey reported having an approved policy and plan in place for urban drinking-water (70%), rural drinking-water (67%), urban sanitation (70%) and rural sanitation (69%), but only a small minority (fewer than 13%) reported sufficient financial and human resources⁴ to implement plans (Fig. 2.1). This is in line with results from previous GLAAS cycles, and reflects a need to focus on sufficiency of financial and human resources to implement policies and plans.

For urban and rural drinking-water and sanitation, most countries reported having policies and plans, but few have sufficient financial and human resources to implement their plans.

Fig. 2.1 Number of countries reporting formally approved policies supported by resourced plans for urban and rural drinking-water and sanitation



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

⁴ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, “sufficient financial resources” and “sufficient human resources” are defined as having at least 75% of what is needed.

Access to safely managed drinking-water and safely managed sanitation is a key element of SDG 6. Ninety-two per cent of countries (94 of 102) reported including access to safely managed drinking-water in at least one of their WASH policies/plans. Eighty-eight per cent of countries (90 of 102) reported including access to safely managed sanitation services in at least one of their WASH policies/plans. Table 2.1 provides a breakdown of which subsector policies/plans include access to safely managed services.



Table 2.1 Percentage of countries addressing safely managed services in WASH policies and plans (*n* = 102)

| Content of WASH policy/plan | Type of WASH policy/plan | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Any WASH policy/plan (%) | Urban (%) | Rural (%) |
| Safely managed drinking-water | 92 | 80 | 77 |
| Safely managed sanitation | 88 | 75 | 65 |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

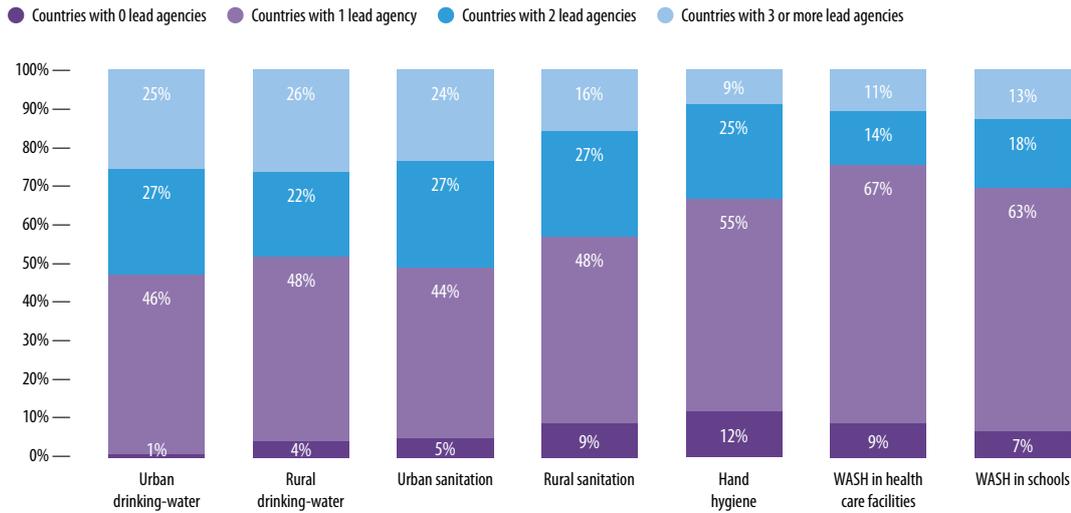
Institutional arrangements

Results from the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle show that institutional roles and responsibilities for government and national institutions in the WASH sector are often not clearly defined. Although governance systems and arrangements vary across countries, the absence of a lead agency or the presence of too many lead agencies create obstacles for institutional coordination, advocacy and communication, ultimately undermining effective implementation. These findings are consistent with a World Bank report, which states that “Low absorptive capacity also reflects systemic regulatory and institutional challenges that pervade the water sector.” (1)

Almost all responding countries reported having at least one lead agency in place for urban drinking-water (Fig. 2.2). Nine per cent of countries (9 of 102) indicated there is no lead agency for rural sanitation, and 12% (12 of 102) indicated the same for hand hygiene. Having a lead agency in place can support championing of issues specific to the subsector, including advocacy for funding and clear policy direction. Box 2.1 highlights how India has improved access to drinking-water in rural areas with the consolidation of water-related functions under a single ministry.



Fig. 2.2 Number of lead government agencies or institutions identified per country by WASH subsector (*n* = 102)



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Box 2.1 India's leadership in rural water supply

India has demonstrated significant progress in rural drinking-water supply through the community-driven Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), launched in 2019 with strong political will. Safely managed drinking-water coverage in rural areas has increased from 54% in 2015 to 73% in 2024 (2), and according to the JJM Dashboard (3), by November 2025, 81% of the rural population (157 million households) had tap water connections.

With JJM, India has established a robust institutional framework in collaboration with states, union territories and local bodies, as well as transparent data systems such as the JJM Dashboard. Regulatory mechanisms have matured, with comprehensive drinking-water quality standards (IS:10500-2012) ensuring 55 L per capita per day of safe drinking-water. Systematic processes now exist for service coverage monitoring, water quality reporting and addressing non-compliance.

Financial commitment has surged, with rural drinking-water supply expenditure approaching US\$ 50 billion, enabling extensive infrastructure development. States have adopted detailed O&M policies defining roles across governance levels and incorporating user charges for sustainability. Digital platforms such as the JJM Integrated Management Information System and JJM Dashboard and rural piped drinking-water supply scheme identification numbers facilitate digital monitoring.

Equity considerations are embedded in policy design, ensuring access for marginalized and vulnerable populations through targeted measures and systematic monitoring. This reflects India's commitment to universal and equitable access to safe drinking-water under decentralized, community-led governance.

The consolidation of water-related functions under the Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2019, coupled with strong national and state-level leadership in the WASH sector, has accelerated innovation. Innovations are taking place in drinking-water supply management, use of solar power, portable water quality testing kits, solid and liquid waste management, faecal sludge management and integration of WASH data. Additionally, India plans to participate in future GLAAS cycles, highlight the importance it places on monitoring WASH systems.

Eleven per cent of countries (11 of 102) indicated they have three or more lead agencies for WASH in health care facilities, and a quarter of countries indicated the same for urban drinking-water (25%, 26 of 102), rural drinking-water (26%, 27 of 102) and urban sanitation (24%, 24 of 102). Having multiple lead agencies for a subsector can work if roles are clearly defined and mandates are divided among different agencies with strong coordination mechanisms in place. However, it could lead to inefficiencies and working to cross-purposes in countries where roles are not clearly defined and mandates overlap.

When asked about overlapping roles and responsibilities, just under two thirds of countries (64%, 65 of 102) reported fully or partially overlapping roles and responsibilities for WASH among government institutions.



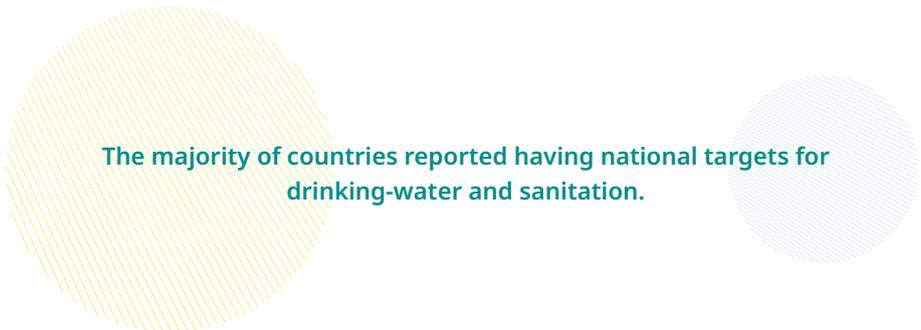
Sixty-four per cent of countries reported overlapping roles and responsibilities for WASH among national ministries and institutions.

Countries also reported gaps in institutional arrangements, indicating some ministries that should have a role in WASH are uninvolved. Over 20% of countries (21 of 103) reported there are ministries and institutions not involved in WASH that should be involved. For example, several countries noted their ministries of finance, agriculture and labour are not involved in WASH, but should be actively engaged.

National targets

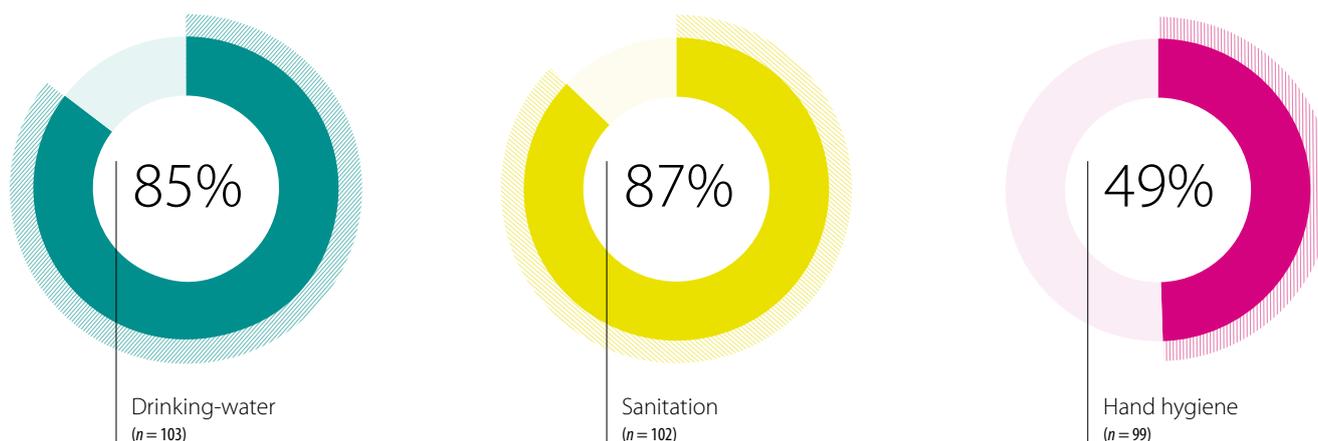
National WASH targets are defined and set to align with national priorities while taking into account global and regional frameworks. They should be reviewed regularly to remain relevant and actionable. The 2030 Agenda states that “[SDG] Targets are defined as aspirational and global, with each Government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances.” (4)

Eighty-five per cent of countries reported having national drinking-water targets, and 87% reported having national sanitation targets. The percentage for national hand hygiene targets was lower, at 49% (Fig. 2.3).



The majority of countries reported having national targets for drinking-water and sanitation.

Fig. 2.3 Percentage of countries that have drinking-water, sanitation or hand hygiene targets



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

The GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey asked countries to self-report the service level to which their targets most closely align, based on the JMP service ladder. Fifty-six per cent of countries reported their national sanitation target aligns with the safely managed service level, while 62% reported the same for their national drinking-water target (Table 2.2).

Urban sanitation and drinking-water targets are more likely to be aligned to the safely managed service level compared to rural targets.

Table 2.2 Percentage of countries self-reporting the safely managed service level for national, urban and rural drinking-water and sanitation targets

| | National (%) | Urban (%) | Rural (%) |
|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sanitation | 56 (n = 89) | 65 (n = 68) | 46 (n = 67) |
| Drinking-water | 62 (n = 87) | 69 (n = 74) | 53 (n = 70) |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

References⁵

1. Funding a water-secure future. Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank; 2024 (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/publication/funding-a-water-secure-future>).
2. Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000–2024: special focus on inequalities. Geneva: World Health Organization and United Nations Children’s Fund; 2025 (<https://washdata.org/reports/jmp-2025-wash-households>). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

⁵ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.

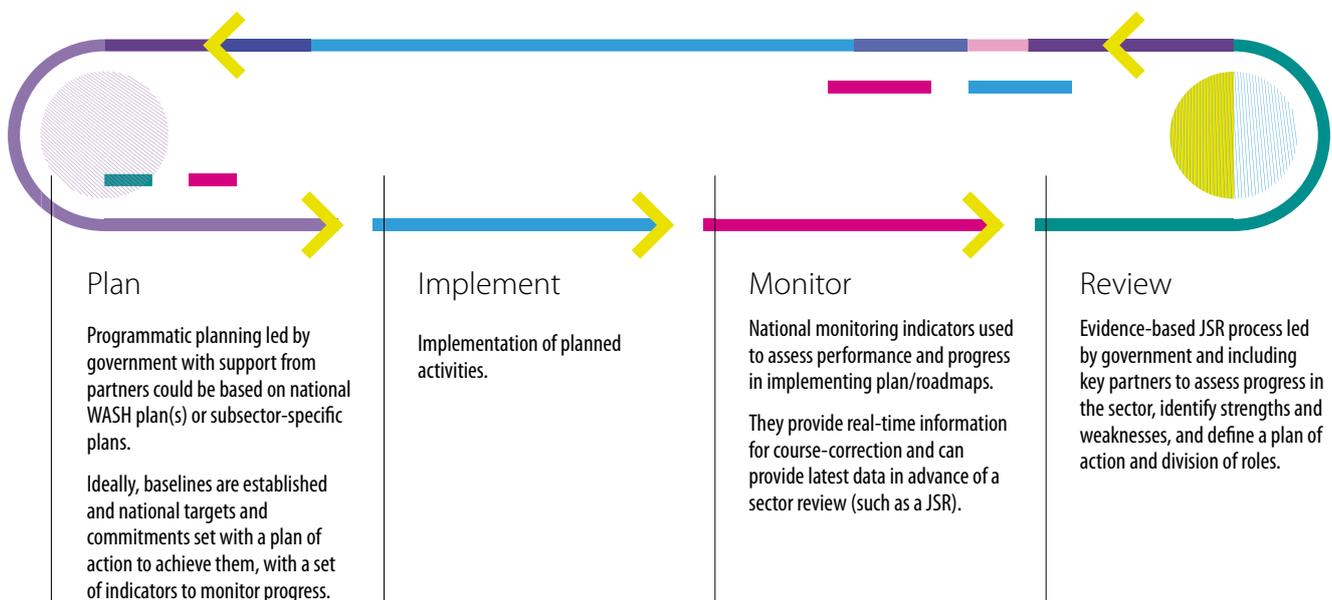
3. Jal Jeevan Mission - Har Ghar Jal dashboard [website]. Government of India; 2025 (<https://ejalshakti.gov.in/jjmreport/JJMIndia.aspx>).
4. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: United Nations General Assembly; 2015 (A/RES/70/1; <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>).

3. Monitoring, review and use of data for decision-making

National monitoring systems for WASH include regular data collection for national monitoring indicators aligned with national targets, with data collected at subnational level aggregated up to national level where relevant, and a defined system for data management and reporting, for example through a WASH management information system (MIS).

National monitoring systems provide data and information for government-led review mechanisms such as joint sector reviews (JSRs), sector performance reports, and government and stakeholder decision-making processes, including development of WASH sector policies, strategies and plans. They also support monitoring of national commitments to global and regional initiatives, such as those in the Heads of State Initiatives (HoSI) (Box 3.1) and the UN Water Action Agenda global commitment registry platform (1). Fig. 3.1 shows a national planning, monitoring and review cycle. Results on WASH plans and national targets were covered in the previous section, and now this section focuses on monitoring and review results.

Fig. 3.1 Example national planning, monitoring and review cycle of a WASH system



Box 3.1 Bridging political leadership, monitoring and financial accountability for WASH through HoSI and WASH accounts

Launched in 2023, HoSI supports high-level commitments by presidents and prime ministers worldwide to prioritize WASH through mandates such as national sector compacts or presidential initiatives. Aligning with efforts to accelerate progress towards SDG 6, the compacts elevate WASH as a national priority, backed by measurable targets, dedicated financing and cross-sector coordination.

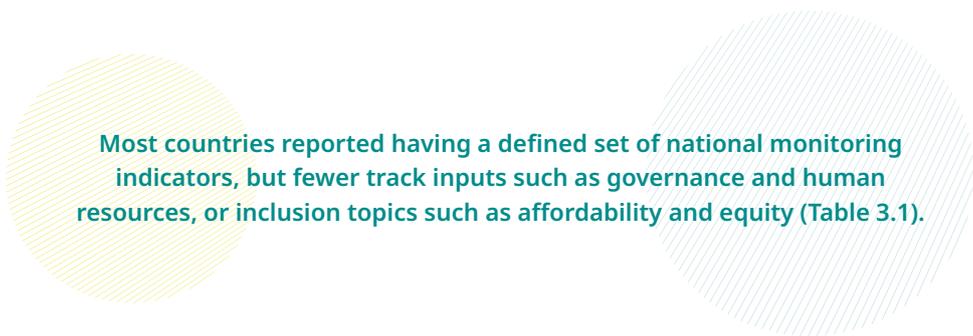
HoSI is a joint initiative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, FCDO, SWA, UNICEF, IRC and WaterAid. The countries currently involved in HoSI include Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, Liberia, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, South Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Recently, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Zambia also joined. Ghana, Indonesia, Nepal and South Sudan have announced HoSI, spearheading progress on WASH. Among them, more than US\$ 3 billion was announced in presidential compacts or initiatives to expand and sustain WASH services. To track financial commitments and spending, countries that are developing or have signed presidential compacts can benefit enormously from putting in place methods for monitoring financial flows.

WHO launched WASH accounts in 2012 to provide a standardized methodology for tracking WASH expenditure. They are a powerful tool for governments participating in HoSI. WASH accounts enable governments to identify spending gaps, set realistic targets, track commitments and design credible financing strategies. As of June 2025, more than 10 countries engaged in HoSI have developed or are developing WASH accounts. For countries that are drafting country commitments under HoSI, the evidence generated from WASH accounts can support the establishment of a baseline for realistic, yet ambitious, country commitments on public finance for WASH. For countries that have established country commitments under HoSI, the commitments need to be embedded in a solid monitoring framework to ensure regular assessment, review and action and to ensure follow-through on commitments, including pledges of increased public finance to WASH. By bridging HoSI and WASH accounts, governments and partners can strengthen monitoring frameworks, transform financial planning and facilitate mutual accountability towards country commitments to accelerate progress towards SDG 6.

National monitoring indicators for WASH

National monitoring indicators are used to monitor different aspects of WASH plan implementation. The GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey asked about different topic areas of national monitoring indicators to assess the extent to which countries monitor areas other than the commonly monitored indicators on outcomes such as coverage of WASH service levels and outputs such as service delivery. Seventy-five per cent of countries (76 of 101) indicated they have a defined set of national monitoring indicators to monitor progress in implementing national WASH plans.

The most common types of indicator that are agreed and tracked against baseline data include service coverage (63%, 48 of 76 countries), service delivery (57%, 43 of 76) and infrastructure (53%, 40 of 76). Fewer countries have indicators tracked against baselines for inputs such as finance (37%, 28 of 76), human resources (34%, 26 of 76) and governance (34%, 26 of 76), as well as for affordability (33%, 25 of 76), economic impacts (30%, 23 of 76) and equity (28%, 21 of 76). Sixty-one per cent of countries (46 of 76) indicated there is a process in place to regularly monitor the national indicators and include the results in reviews, such as JSRs. Most countries (84%, 65 of 77) reported data are collected at subnational level and consolidated at the national level to monitor one or more of the national monitoring indicators.



Most countries reported having a defined set of national monitoring indicators, but fewer track inputs such as governance and human resources, or inclusion topics such as affordability and equity (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Percentage and examples of countries reporting existence of national monitoring indicators agreed and tracked against baseline, by topic area

| Indicator topic area | Percentage of countries (%) (n = 76) | Example |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Service coverage | 63 | Bhutan: Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services |
| Service delivery | 57 | Lesotho: Number of persons served by new and rehabilitated projects per year |
| Service quality | 54 | Madagascar: Percentage of wastewater treated |
| Infrastructure | 53 | Lao People's Democratic Republic: Number of wastewater treatment systems constructed |
| Health impacts | 46 | Burundi: Reduction in mortality rate from waterborne disease |
| Service planning | 46 | Mongolia: Length of water supply network newly built and to be renovated (in kilometres) |
| Surveillance | 46 | Thailand: Number of village water supply systems that have undergone water quality inspection |
| Environmental impacts | 43 | Serbia: Number of water bodies of surface water in at least the good classification of ecological status |
| Regulation | 41 | Italy: Percentage of services compliant with regulatory standards |
| Finance | 37 | Burkina Faso: Proportion of mobilized funds spent |
| Community participation | 36 | Guinea: Percentage of projects involving local committees |
| Governance | 34 | Brazil: Percentage of municipalities with a municipal basic sanitation policy |
| Human resources | 34 | Timor-Leste: Number of trained professionals in the water and sanitation sectors, including community health workers and local WASH committees |
| Affordability | 33 | Nigeria: Percentage of household income spent on WASH services |
| Economic impacts | 30 | Uganda: Percentage increase in the economic return on investment in WASH |
| Equity | 28 | Peru: Proportion of the population in the lowest monthly household expenditure quintile with access to drinking-water through a network or public drinking fountain |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

The results from the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey have contributed valuable and timely evidence to the Align to Accelerate (A2A) initiative, which will define a core set of national monitoring indicators that would be balanced across inputs and processes, outputs, outcomes and impact, aiming to strengthen national monitoring and review systems. Box 3.2 provides more information on A2A.

Box 3.2 A2A: towards a set of core indicators and a common monitoring and review framework for WASH systems

With less than 5 years remaining until 2030 and still significant gaps to close, it is clear that a step change is needed to fulfil the promise of water and sanitation for all. Now is a crucial time for key WASH stakeholders to consolidate evidence and learning and test new monitoring methods that can be used to inform the approach for water and sanitation in the post-2030 sustainable development agenda.

Although there are still gaps in evidence, monitoring of WASH systems has been taking place for over 10 years. There is a sufficient body of experience and global expert opinion that can start to shape a common approach. There is a huge opportunity to capitalize on the momentum and broad base of support from country champions and a committed group of international partners (technical and donors) that are ready to act. Therefore, WHO and UNICEF, in close collaboration with the World Bank, launched the A2A initiative that aims to define and agree on a set of core indicators to monitor the strength and performance of WASH systems and a common monitoring and review framework, through a process of sector-wide multistakeholder consultation.

The expected outputs of A2A are given below.

- **A small number of core indicators for WASH systems:** A globally agreed set of 15–18 core indicators that track essential components of WASH systems balanced across the WASH results chain and taking into account equity and climate risk management.
- **A common monitoring and review framework:** A standardized framework that countries can use to guide sector reviews, planning and decision-making. This framework will support harmonized monitoring across partners and government and help embed systems thinking into national WASH planning and management.

Box 3.2 continued

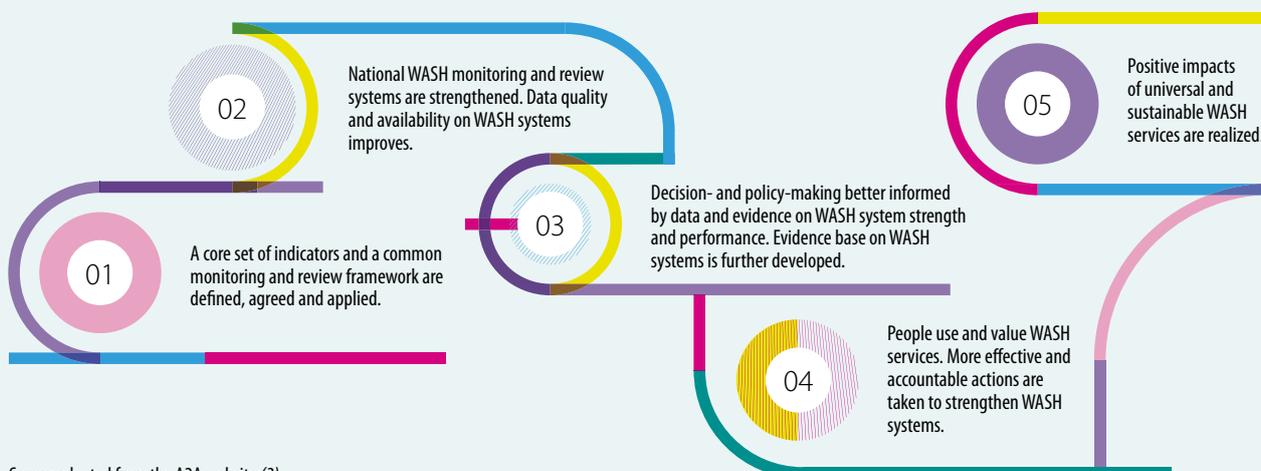
- **Tools and guidance for data visualization:** Practical tools and guidance for data visualization, interpretation and use of the core indicators during national WASH sector reviews. These resources will help stakeholders translate data into actionable insights for the reviews.
- **Integration into national and global monitoring:** The indicators will be gradually incorporated into national monitoring systems and global monitoring, such as GLAAS. This will support reduced duplication and burden of reporting on countries and support the long-term vision of GLAAS to move towards harvesting data from countries rather than conducting surveys every 2 years.

The A2A initiative aims to add value by the following.

- **Reducing fragmentation** of country-level systems strengthening and monitoring initiatives by providing a common framework that can be used by countries to coordinate across ministries and levels of government, as well as with stakeholders, partners and donors. A2A will foster better harmonization and coherence among development partners and countries.
- **Providing a focus** on incorporating WASH systems-related indicators into national monitoring systems and review processes. This will allow for consistent tracking of the strength and performance of WASH systems in a country over time and across countries.
- **Facilitating improved collaboration** in data generation, analysis and use, and alignment of support behind country monitoring plans and processes. Over time, A2A will strengthen national monitoring systems and reduce the reporting burden on countries.

In addition to supporting the longer-term vision of GLAAS, A2A complements and supports operationalization of key global efforts to strengthen WASH systems, such as SWA's mutual accountability mechanism, the World Bank's Global Challenge Program to fast-track water security and climate adaptation, the work of Agenda for Change, the WASH Systems for Health programme, and WASH systems strengthening approaches by WHO and UNICEF. A2A is expected to support planning and preparation for the post-2030 development agenda by strengthening national monitoring systems and data sources, and by providing an evidence base to inform the selection of MoI indicators. Fig. 3.2 highlights A2A's theory of change.

Fig. 3.2 A2A's theory of change



Source: adapted from the A2A website (2).

WASH MISs

A WASH MIS provides a tool or platform to collect, manage, analyse and report data in a standardized format, including for national monitoring indicators. Seventy-one per cent of countries (71 of 100) reported having a national MIS with key WASH data. Of the countries that have an MIS with WASH data, 99% (70 of 71) reported including data on drinking-water, 90% (64 of 71) on sanitation and only 48% (34 of 71) on hand hygiene.

Subnational governments (76%, 54 of 71) or service providers (75%, 53 of 71) are the entities most commonly reporting into the MIS. The most common types of data are service coverage (94%, 67 of 71), drinking-water quality (85%, 60 of 71) and water consumption (79%, 56 of 71) (Table 3.2).⁶ This aligns with the results showing that national monitoring indicators most often include indicators on service coverage and service delivery and quality.

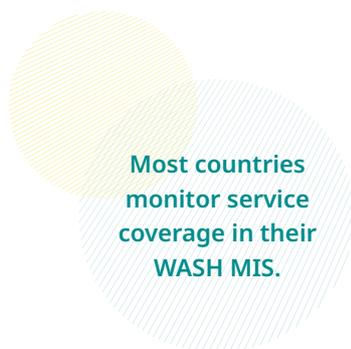


Table 3.2 Percentage of countries reporting different types of data in an MIS (n = 71)

| Type of data reported to an MIS | Percentage of countries (%) |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Service coverage / populations served | 94 |
| Quality of drinking-water | 85 |
| Water use / consumption rates | 79 |
| Quality of source water | 76 |
| Service quality | 75 |
| Functionality of WASH infrastructure | 75 |
| Tariffs / water fees | 65 |
| Volume / quality of treated effluent / faecal sludge | 64 |
| Non-revenue water (NRW) | 60 |
| Staffing / human resources | 58 |
| Service provider financial data | 48 |
| Government WASH budgets / expenditures | 46 |
| WASH-related morbidity / mortality | 41 |
| Donor or nongovernmental organization (NGO) programmes | 28 |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Monitoring service provider key performance indicators

Monitoring the key performance indicators (KPIs) of service providers is a crucial part of WASH monitoring systems in countries. It is often one of the data streams captured through WASH MISs. The ability to monitor KPIs signals the maturity of WASH monitoring systems, reflecting institutional capacity and functioning data and reporting structures, although with a stronger focus on urban rather than rural WASH. It also provides a strong foundation for evidence-based decision-making to improve service delivery and coverage. The GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey asked whether the following KPIs were monitored.

- NRW quantifies physical and commercial losses in water supply operations, due to factors such as leaks and breakages in the distribution system, unauthorized or unbilled consumption and billing errors. Seventy per cent of countries (68 of 97) indicated they monitor NRW, many of which monitor through a WASH MIS.

⁶ It is possible that the results may be an underestimate of the percentage of countries that reported these types of data are included in an MIS; for example, participating countries may have considered only data elements that are reported into a single integrated MIS in their country.

- The percentage of wastewater treated, monitored through SDG indicator 6.3.1, is linked to a reduction of environmental and health risks. Sixty-three per cent of countries (61 of 97) indicated they monitor the proportion of urban wastewater treated, while 33% (32 of 96) monitor the proportion of rural wastewater treated.
- Service provider staffing per 1000 population served measures the adequacy and efficiency of human resources for service delivery. Fifty-six per cent of countries (53 of 95) reported this indicator is monitored.

These findings suggest that while many countries have begun to track key service provider KPIs, expanding and strengthening this monitoring – particularly beyond urban areas – will be essential for building mature WASH monitoring systems that can drive service improvements.

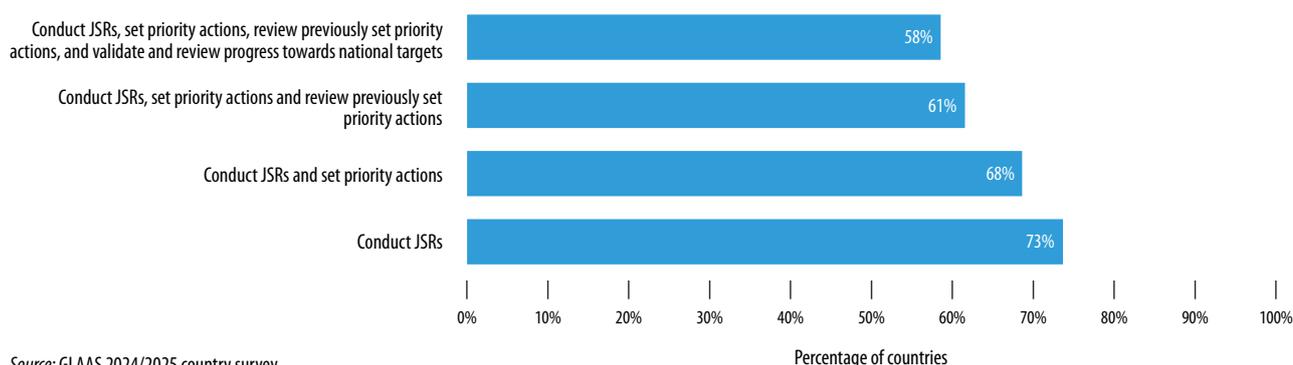
Reviewing progress through JSRs

Periodic review of progress and performance based on monitoring data and other inputs is key for optimizing allocation of resources and to adjust planning based on an assessment of successes and bottlenecks. A JSR is one such review process that brings together government, development partners, civil society and other stakeholders to assess progress towards WASH targets, identify challenges in implementing WASH plans, and agree on priorities and follow-up actions. It plays a key role in strengthening coordination, alignment and accountability within the sector.



Seventy-three of 100 countries reported conducting JSRs, of which 68 use the review process to set priority actions (Fig. 3.3). Fifty-eight of these countries review priority actions from previous JSRs and review progress towards national targets during their JSRs.

Fig. 3.3 Percentage of countries conducting JSRs in which priority actions are set, previous priority actions are reviewed, and progress towards national targets is validated and reviewed (n = 100)

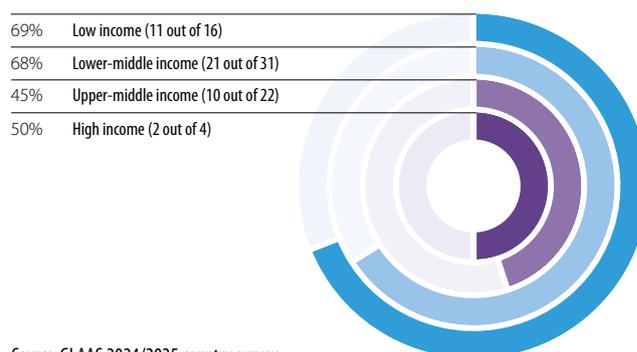


Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Sixty per cent of countries (44 of 73) indicated they conduct JSRs at least every 2 years. However, 32% (23 of 73) reported they are conducted on an ad hoc basis, indicating a lack of regularity of JSR processes. A larger proportion of low- and lower-middle-income countries conduct JSRs at least every 2 years compared to upper-middle- and high-income countries (Fig. 3.4).

Out of the 73 countries that reported conducting JSRs, all countries invite relevant government agencies to participate in the review, with 77% (56 of 73) indicating high participation (at least 75% of invited agencies attending). Additionally, 88% of countries (64 of 73) invite development partners active in the sector to participate in the review, with 59% (38 of 64) reporting high participation from partners. Table 3.3 highlights changes that have been brought about because of a JSR.

Fig. 3.4 Percentage of countries conducting JSRs at least every 2 years, by World Bank income group



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Table 3.3 Country examples of changes brought about as a result of a JSR

| Country | Example |
|--------------|--|
| Belarus | Proposals prepared to update a number of normative, regulatory and methodological acts, including the list of monitored indicators |
| Benin | Advocacy for increased financing for the sector, particularly for sanitation |
| Brazil | Adjustment and inclusion of new indicators, including a new municipal management module for rural sanitation regulation through the new National Sanitation Information System |
| Burkina Faso | Improved private sector involvement in the Sectoral Framework for Dialogue on Environment, Water, and Sanitation |
| Colombia | Programmes to strengthen job skills for the drinking-water and basic sanitation sector in conjunction with the National Apprenticeship Service |
| Congo | Promulgation and publication of Decree No. 1555-2023 of 15 September 2023, establishing the General Directorate of Sanitation |
| Indonesia | In 2024, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing accelerated the revisions of government regulation No. 122/2015 to include the compliance of water safety plan (WSP) implementation |
| Iraq | Establishment of a regulatory framework that includes institutional arrangements and the functions of each, as well as understanding the resources and needs among neighbouring riparian countries |
| Kyrgyzstan | Additional financial resources of more than US\$ 400 million will be allocated by the World Bank to the drinking-water supply sector for villages |
| Mali | Prioritization of the construction of WASH facilities focusing on sites lacking them |
| Mongolia | WSPs updated in eight province centres and integrated with sanitation safety planning |
| Morocco | Prioritization of projects; integrating climate change into the planning process; accelerating seawater desalination |
| Mozambique | The last joint assessment meeting (2023) analysed progress and established the basis for defining targets for the next cycle (2025–2029) |
| Nigeria | Ebonyi, Kwara, Nasarawa and Yobe states received increased financial allocations for WASH |
| Senegal | Additional funding secured and funding to be redirected to rural areas |
| Serbia | Secured additional funds for construction and improvement of drinking-water and sanitation infrastructure, particularly for wastewater treatment plants |
| Sierra Leone | Informed the need for institutional reform outlining clear roles and responsibilities in the WASH sector, which led to the review of the existing WASH policy 2010 to be rebranded as a climate-informed WASH policy |
| Uganda | Promoted joint planning among sector players, for example in developing strategic WASH interventions under the National Development Plan IV |

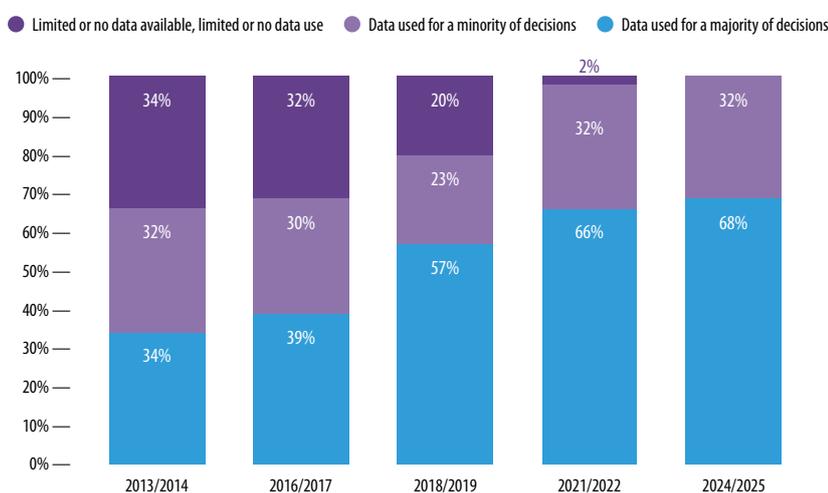
Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Data use in decision-making

Sixty-seven per cent of countries (66 of 99) reported using data for a majority of decisions for national-level planning processes and sector reviews for sanitation, and 69% (68 of 99) reported the same for drinking-water. The proportion of countries indicating use of sanitation data for sector review and planning demonstrate a marked increase over five GLAAS cycles, as shown in Fig. 3.5 for the 44 countries that responded to this question across the five cycles. Data for drinking-water reflect a more modest increase, although starting from a higher baseline.



Fig. 3.5 Percentage of countries using sanitation data in decision-making for sector review and planning, common country respondents across five GLAAS cycles ($n = 44$)



Sources: GLAAS 2013/2014, 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys.

Overall, 60% of countries (60 of 100) reported using data for the majority of decisions on the allocation of resources for sanitation and drinking-water. Fewer countries reported use of hand hygiene data for decision-making, with only 36% of countries (34 of 95) reporting they use data for a majority of decisions on resource allocation for hand hygiene (Fig. 3.6).

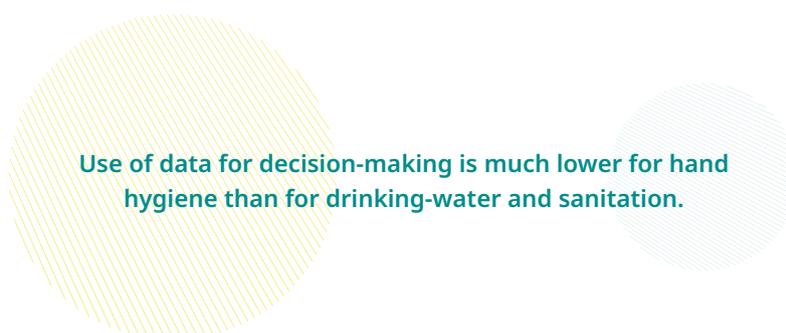
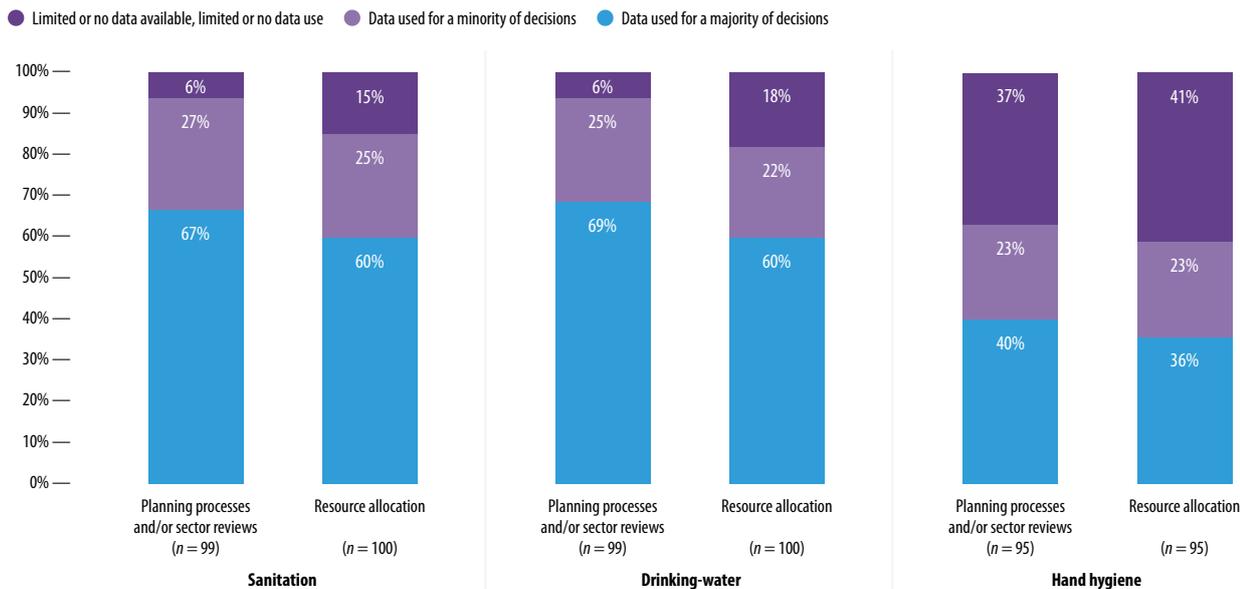


Fig. 3.6 Percentage of countries using data for decision-making for planning processes and/or sector review and for resource allocation



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

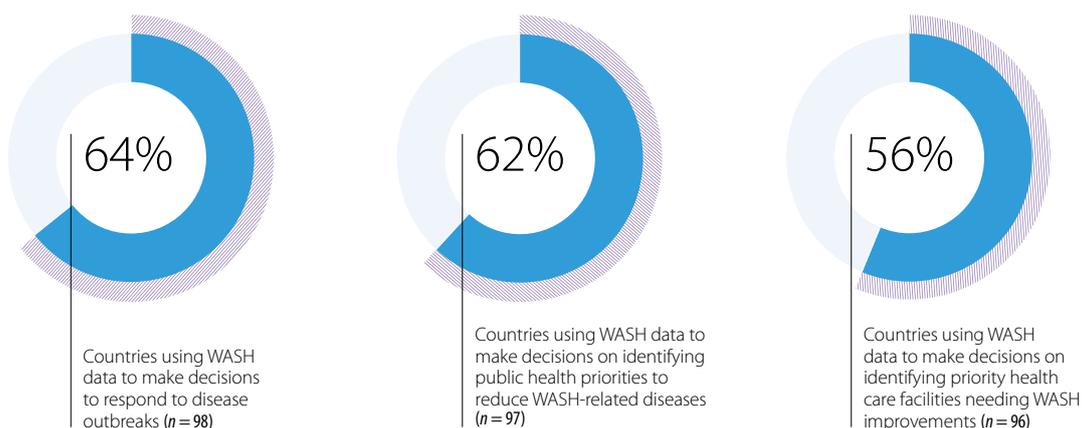
Monitoring and data use for decisions on public health and WASH

Close collaboration with the health sector is needed to ensure available WASH data are fully utilized to strengthen services and to inform the planning of health interventions, as well as to support outbreak response, including wastewater surveillance for diseases such as coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Forty-one per cent of countries (29 of 70) indicated their WASH MIS includes data on WASH-related morbidity and mortality. Sixty-two per cent of countries (43 of 69) indicated data on WASH in health care facilities are collected through an MIS.

Over half of countries indicated WASH data are used for making a majority of decisions to respond to disease outbreaks, identify public health priorities and identify priority health care facilities in need of WASH improvements (Fig. 3.7).



Fig. 3.7 Percentage of countries using WASH data for a majority of decisions related to WASH and public health



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Examples of how countries use WASH data in decisions for health include the following.

- In **Hungary**, WASH data will be used for target setting in the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health.
- In **Indonesia**, during health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, hand hygiene data became particularly vital in planning and monitoring the effectiveness of public health interventions. Data on hand hygiene facilities and practices at home, in public spaces and in health care settings guided national and local governments in crafting COVID-19 response strategies, including mass hand hygiene campaigns.
- In **Iraq**, monitoring indicators of waterborne disease outbreaks involves tracking any changes in these indicators and examining other contributing factors, such as an increase in diarrhoea cases over time and across regions. This includes regular checks on chlorine levels in various water samples and bacteriological testing to ensure water is safe for human consumption, alongside stool sample testing to detect cholera pathogens.
- In **Lesotho**, WASH data support outbreak responses by identifying contaminated water sources.
- Based on the results of the evaluation of the WASH services of health institutions in 2023, **Mongolia** identified the health institutions that need improvement as a matter of priority.
- In **Thailand**, WASH data enable accurate assessment of which health care facilities are at high risk of WASH-related issues, allowing for correct prioritization of facilities that need improvement.
- In **Uganda**, data guide the setting of national priorities such as in the National Development Plan to improve population health and safety under the Human Capital Development Programme.

References⁷

1. Water Action Agenda [website]. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/action-networks/water>).
2. Align to accelerate - monitoring the strength of WASH systems [website]. Water Sanitation and Health, World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/water-sanitation-and-health/monitoring-and-evidence/align-to-accelerate>).

⁷ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.

4. Regulation and surveillance

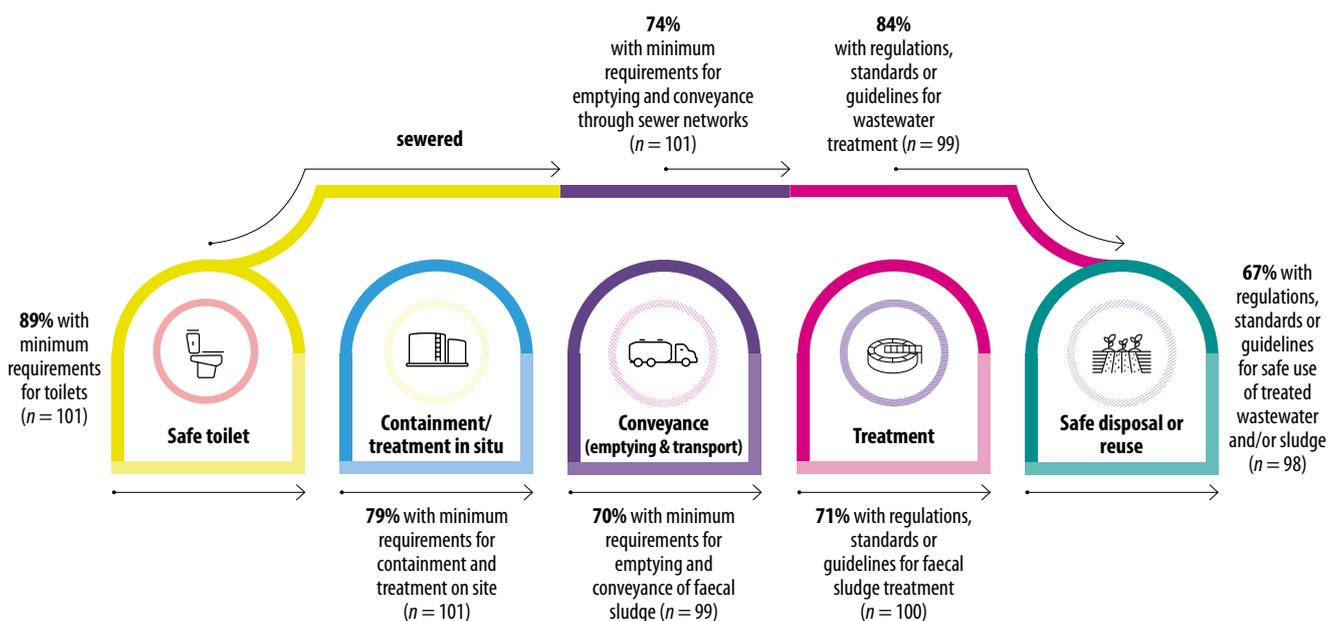
Regulations, regulatory frameworks, risk management approaches and independent surveillance are essential for delivering quality drinking-water and sanitation services, and are the focus of this section.

Regulation and regulatory authorities

Nearly 90% of countries reported having standards in place for urban (89%, 92 of 103) and rural (88%, 90 of 102) drinking-water quality. In terms of service delivery requirements, 86% of countries (82 of 95) reported having defined regulations or standards for urban drinking-water and 75% (68 of 91) for rural drinking-water. Along the sanitation service chain, most countries also reported having regulations, standards or guidelines in place (Fig. 4.1), but those that address faecal sludge management are less common than those for sewerage sanitation. Regulations for safe disposal or reuse of faecal sludge and wastewater are least common overall.

More countries have regulations, standards and guidelines in place for sewerage sanitation than for faecal sludge management.

Fig. 4.1 Percentage of countries with national regulations, standards or guidelines along the sanitation service chain

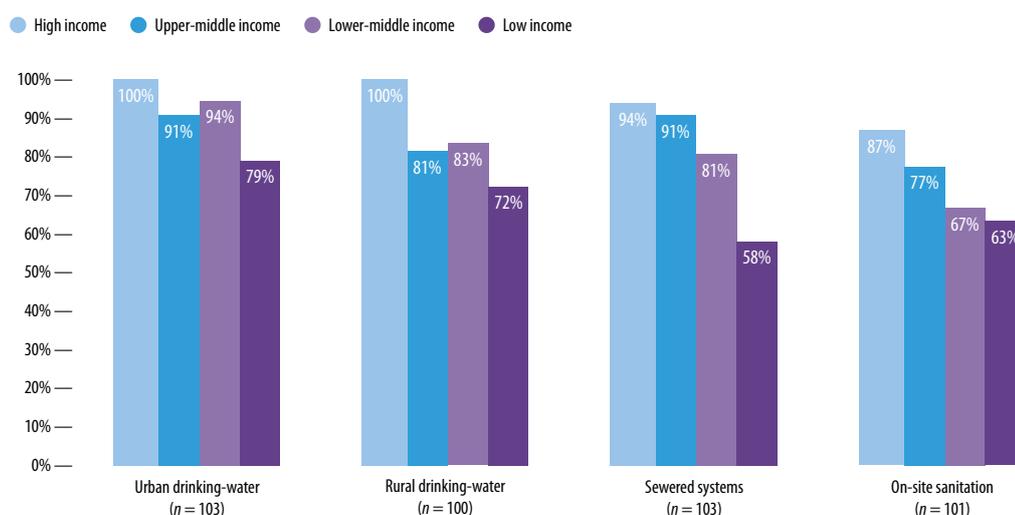


Sources: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey; *Guidelines on sanitation and health* (1).

Regulation is an important mechanism to ensure compliance with established service standards and norms. Most countries reported having regulatory authorities for urban (91%, 94 of 103) and rural (83%, 83 of 100) drinking-water and for seweraged (82%, 84 of 103) and on-site (72%, 73 of 101) sanitation. However, lower-middle- and low-income countries are less likely to report having regulatory authorities, especially for seweraged sanitation where only 58% of low-income countries (11 of 19) reported having a regulatory authority (Fig. 4.2).

Compared to higher-income countries, low-income countries are less likely to have regulatory authorities in place, especially for sanitation.

Fig. 4.2 Percentage of countries with regulatory authorities, by World Bank income group



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Countries use various regulatory models, with over half of countries reporting ministerial regulation as the most common regulatory model, followed by regulation by agency (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Percentage of countries by regulatory model for drinking-water and sanitation regulatory authorities

| | Urban drinking-water (%) (n = 94) | Rural drinking-water (%) (n = 86) | Seweraged sanitation (%) (n = 85) | On-site sanitation (%) (n = 72) |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ministerial regulation: A government ministry is tasked with regulating the sector | 62 | 59 | 64 | 67 |
| Regulation by agency: An agency is established to regulate in an autonomous manner | 29 | 30 | 24 | 18 |
| Regulation by contract: No separate regulatory agency is used, and the public sector asset holder that is a signatory to a contract monitors the performance of the operator against the terms of the contract | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Regulation by sourcing to a third party: External contractors are used to perform certain duties, such as tariff review, benchmarking or dispute resolution | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Self-regulation: Service providers, such as public utilities, regulate their own activities, set tariffs and monitor their own performance (this may be legally mandated, but often arises due to the absence of a more formal regulatory structure) | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Mixed / other: A combination of two or more models or other | 6 | 7 | 8 | 7 |

Sources: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey; *State of the world's drinking-water* (2).

The mandates and efficacy of each regulatory authority may vary. For example, only 61% of countries (57 of 94) reported that urban drinking-water regulatory authorities fully enforce planning and action to address non-compliance, and only 43% (40 of 94) publish publicly accessible reports on drinking-water quality.

One barrier to effectiveness could be the inadequacy of resources to support and enforce regulations. Since 2021, countries have consistently reported a lack of human resources for the regulation of sanitation and drinking-water. In the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, only 24% of countries (23 of 95) reported having at least 75% of the human resources needed for drinking-water regulation and only 19% (18 of 96) reported having at least 75% of the human resources needed for sanitation regulation. Box 4.1 presents a global call to action to strengthen water and sanitation regulation.

Box 4.1 Strengthening water and sanitation regulatory systems: a global call to action

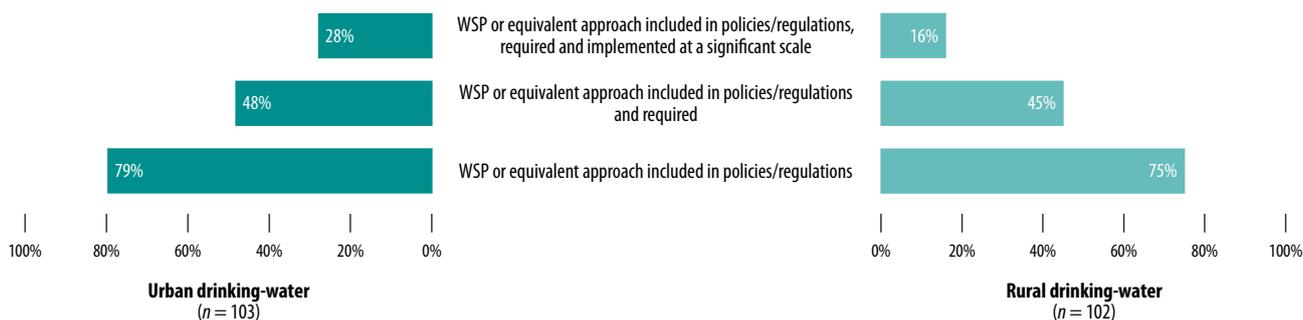
In June 2025, WHO, UNICEF, the International Water Association and over 40 other partners launched the Global Call to Action on Strengthening Water and Sanitation Regulatory Systems, marking a major step in growing the momentum to improve delivery of services, accountability and public health. The call to action states: “To stem the global water and sanitation crisis, there is not a moment to lose. Strengthened regulatory systems are essential to delivering safe, affordable and sustainable water and sanitation services, protecting public health and fostering resilience against mounting challenges such as climate change and rapid urbanization. We urge governments, regulators and all stakeholders to prioritize robust governance frameworks, allocate essential resources and establish transparent and accountable mechanisms. By advancing regional regulatory associations, fostering stakeholder engagement and adopting sustainable financing solutions, we can build an enabling environment that ensures universal and inclusive access to equitable services and safeguards the human rights to safe drinking-water and sanitation. The world cannot wait – let’s move from commitment to action.” (3)

Risk management approaches

Risk management approaches – such as water safety planning and sanitation safety planning – aim to enhance the safety of water and sanitation services by proactively identifying, assessing and managing risks across the service chain. The majority of countries reported including water safety planning or equivalent approaches in policies/regulations for urban (79%, 81 of 103) and rural (75%, 76 of 102) drinking-water (Fig. 4.3). Of those, fewer countries require the implementation of these approaches, and even fewer reported implementing risk management approaches for drinking-water at a significant scale.



Fig. 4.3 Percentage of countries using and implementing risk management approaches for urban and rural drinking-water



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

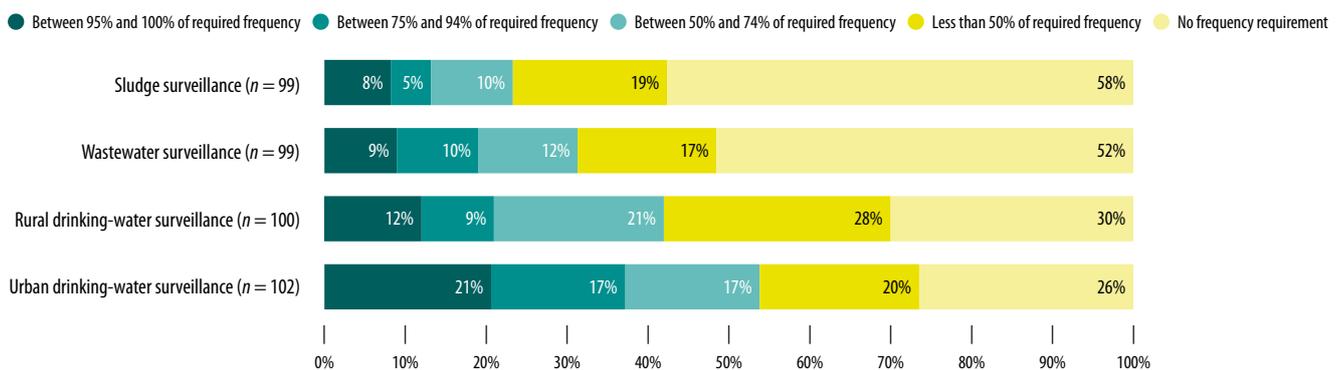
Independent surveillance

Independent surveillance of drinking-water quality, wastewater and faecal sludge is an important function that ensures services, and the quality of those services, are delivered in line with established standards. Surveillance should be performed regularly in line with requirements, and the data should be used to inform planning and preventive and/or corrective action.

While most countries reported having regulations or standards for drinking-water and sanitation, GLAAS 2024/2025 data show there is a gap between the mandated surveillance and how often surveillance takes place. For example, in urban areas, only 21% of countries (21 of 102) reported drinking-water surveillance is undertaken at 95–100% of the required frequency (Fig. 4.4).



Fig. 4.4 Frequency of independent surveillance in practice compared to requirements for drinking-water, wastewater and sludge surveillance

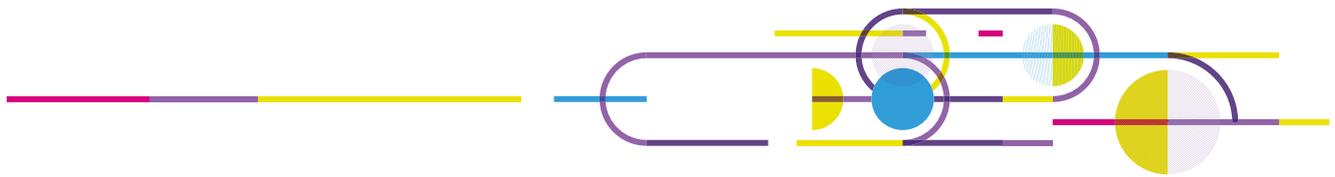


Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

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⁸ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.



5. Human resources

Human resources are essential to WASH systems to ensure services are delivered, especially in rural and hard-to-reach settings. This section focuses on WASH human resources, including expressed needs, women in the workforce, challenges, actions being taken to address gaps, and protecting the rights and safety of workers.

WASH human resources needs

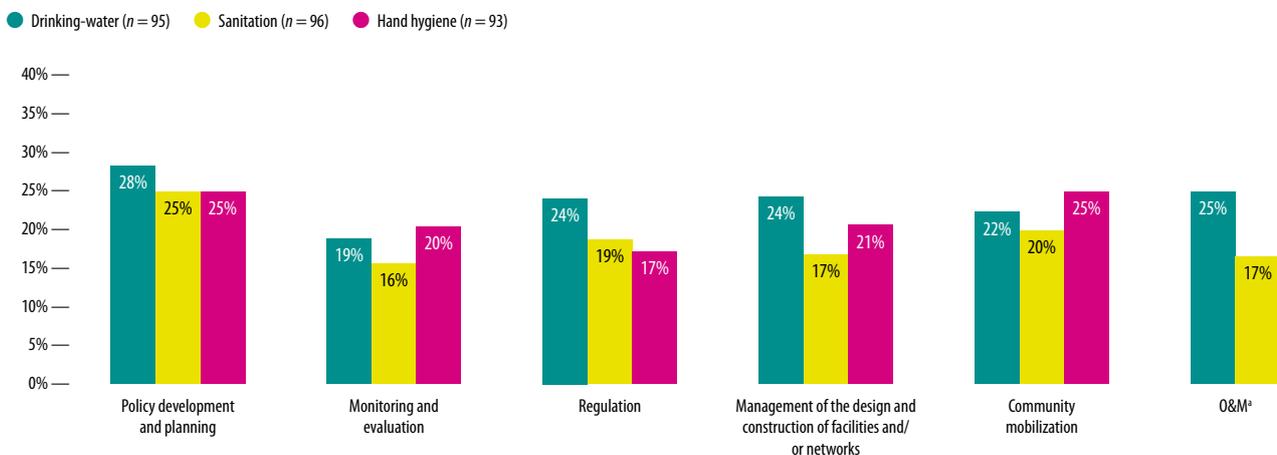
GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey data suggest that insufficient human resources are a significant constraint to WASH service delivery. Less than a third of countries reported having sufficient human resources⁹ for drinking-water (26%, 25 of 95), sanitation (15%, 14 of 95) or hand hygiene (18%, 17 of 92).

Yet only a third of countries (32 of 98) conduct a national human resources needs assessment to capture a detailed account of the human resources landscape for WASH. Of those countries, more countries (53%, 17 of 32) conduct assessments on an ad hoc basis, followed by 31% (10 of 32) conducting annual assessments. Seventy-five per cent of countries (24 of 32) conducting national assessments have used the results to inform national plans and strategies.

When it comes to specific functions, such as regulation and operations and maintenance (O&M), few countries have sufficient human resources to carry them out (Fig. 5.1), especially for sanitation.



Fig. 5.1 Percentage of countries with at least 75% of the human resources needed for key WASH functions



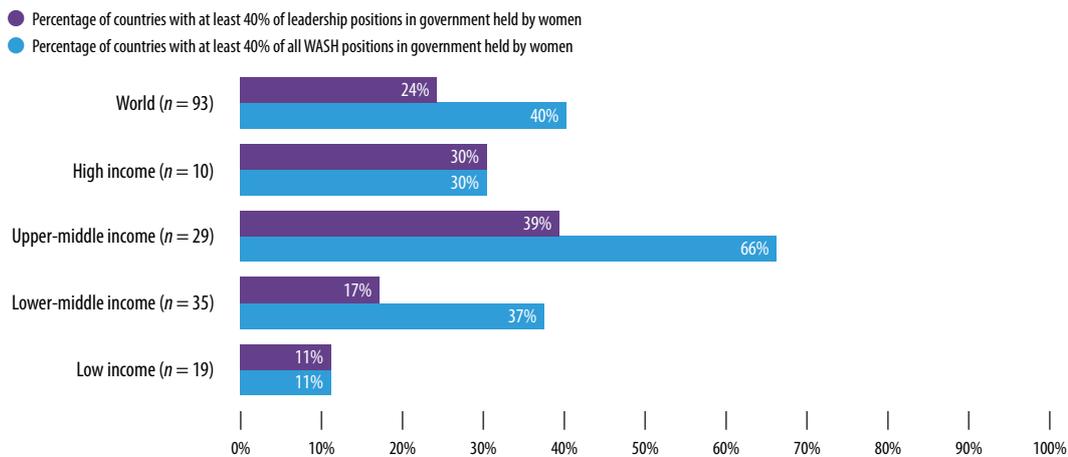
^a A question on sufficient human resources for O&M in hand hygiene was not asked in the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey. Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

⁹ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, "sufficient human resources" is defined as having at least 75% of what is needed.

Women in the WASH workforce

As access to water and sanitation affects everyone, it is important to understand how women are involved in the WASH workforce. Forty per cent of countries (37 of 93) reported women hold at least 40% of government WASH positions. However, only 24% of countries (22 of 92) reported women hold at least 40% of leadership positions.¹⁰ In low-income countries, only 11% of countries (2 of 19) reported at least 40% of all WASH positions in government are held by women as compared to 66% of upper-middle-income countries (19 of 29) (Fig. 5.2).

Fig. 5.2 Percentage of countries with at least 40% of all WASH positions and 40% of leadership positions held by women, by World Bank income group



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

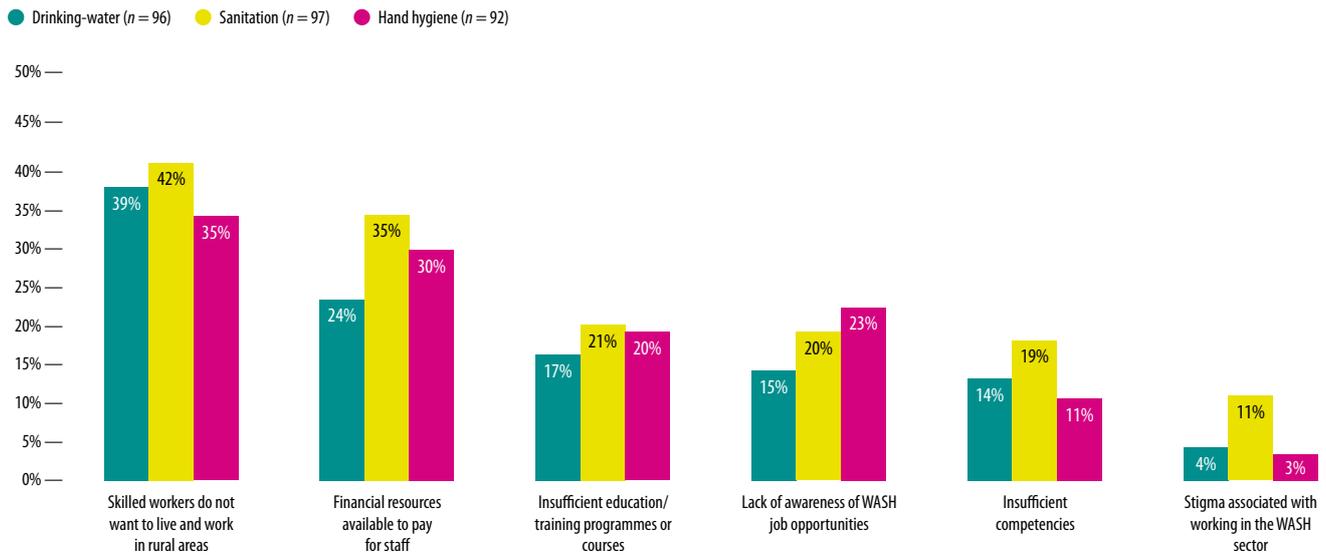
Challenges facing WASH human resources

Through the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, countries identified challenges facing WASH human resources. Over a third of countries indicated skilled workers do not want to live and work in rural areas. Insufficient resources available to pay for staff was also reported as a main constraint to WASH human resources (Fig. 5.3). Eleven per cent of countries indicated that a constraint for sanitation is the stigma associated with working in the WASH sector.

Severe constraints to WASH human resources are that skilled workers do not want to live and work in rural areas, and there are insufficient financial resources to pay for staff.

¹⁰ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, "leadership position" refers to unit or department managers, directors, executives or other senior officials in government ministries/institutions.

Fig. 5.3 Percentage of countries identifying severe constraints to human resources, by WASH subsector

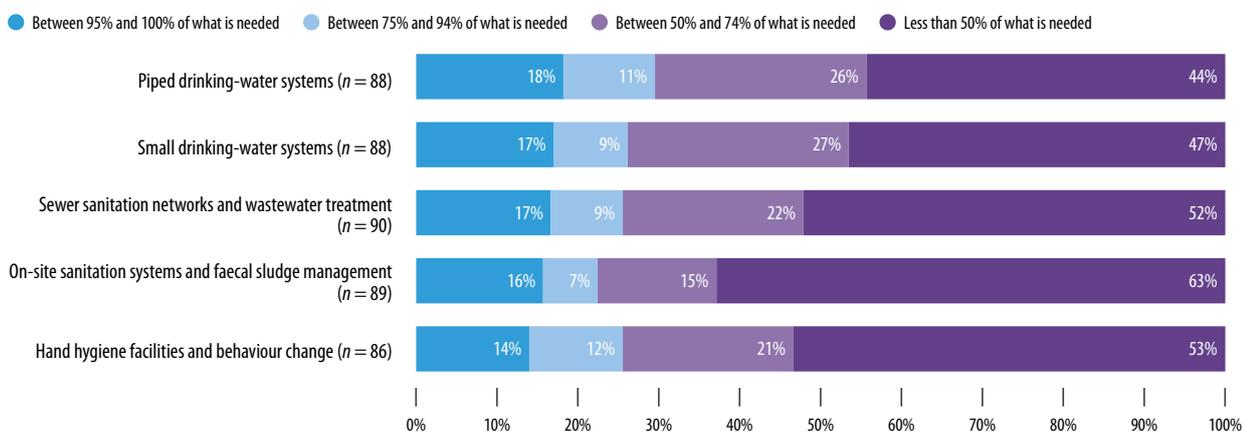


Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Another key challenge is maintaining and increasing the supply of human resources. Over 70% of countries have technical and vocational training centres (72%, 71 of 99) and universities (78%, 76 of 98) that provide education related to or specific to WASH. However, institutions are not able to supply enough trained professionals to meet WASH human resources needs. In fact, fewer than 20% of countries reported training institutions are able to supply enough (95–100%) trained professionals to meet the needs in any subsector (Fig. 5.4).

Most countries reported having an insufficient supply of trained professionals from training institutions to meet needs for WASH.

Fig. 5.4 Percentage of countries reporting sufficiency of trained professionals from WASH training institutions, by WASH subsector



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Actions being taken to address human resources gaps

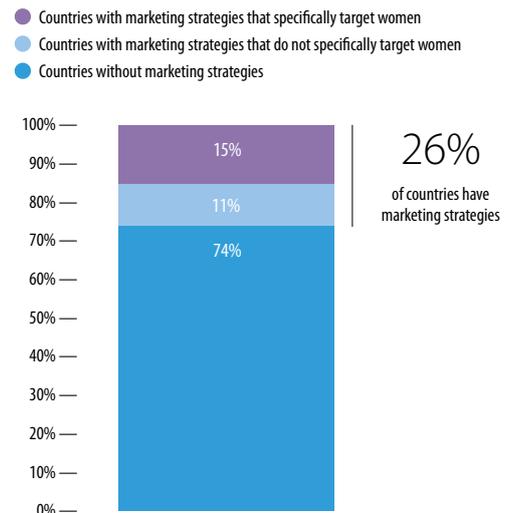
Reaching the ambitious targets under SDG 6 and expanding WASH coverage will require significant growth of the WASH workforce to meet demands, especially in rural areas that need to attract a skilled WASH workforce. Some countries are acting to address the needs and challenges in retaining and maintaining human resources for WASH.

Attracting and recruiting the WASH workforce

A key component to maintaining and growing the WASH workforce is attracting skilled workers to the sector. Only 26% of countries (26 of 99) reported having marketing strategies to attract people to the WASH workforce. Of the countries using a marketing strategy, 58% (15 of 26) reported that those strategies specifically target women for the WASH workforce (Fig. 5.5).



Fig. 5.5 Percentage of countries with marketing strategies to attract people to the WASH workforce and that target women (n = 99)



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Examples of marketing strategies are given below.

- **Congo** has developed a programme for young professionals in water and sanitation to attract young people to the sector.
- **Fiji** has advocacy programmes on live television and radio, advertises success stories and has attractive salary packages.
- **Madagascar** has organized a Water Fair, which includes sanitation and hygiene, as well as developing collaborative professional training for water professions.
- To attract more qualified chemists, geologists, sociologists and technical staff, **Sri Lanka's** National Agency for Water Supply and Sewerage ensures it pays higher salaries than the private sector.
- **Thailand** has scholarships for specific fields or disciplines that are in high demand by government agencies and runs career pathway campaigns to show students career trajectories and where there are opportunities to advance, which attracts candidates to specific positions.

Examples of how countries are targeting women in their marketing strategies include the following.

- **Mexico** has public and open competitions through gender calls aimed at women.

- In **Nigeria**, there are sensitization activities in schools for women to encourage them to join the WASH sector.
- **Qatar's** marketing strategies that specifically target women for the WASH workforce often focus on gender-inclusive messaging and initiatives that highlight the vital role women play in WASH. These strategies include showcasing female role models in WASH careers, emphasizing the importance of gender diversity and addressing cultural or social barriers that may discourage women from entering the field. Additionally, campaigns highlight the positive impact of women's involvement in WASH on community well-being and empowerment, encouraging their participation through grants and career advancement support.
- **Zambia** has internship programmes that target technical and vocational training centres with marketing strategies targeting female trainees with awards for best performance.

Additionally, to address gaps in the number of trained professionals entering the WASH workforce, nearly 40% of countries (37 of 95) reported having a national-level collaboration framework with vocational and higher education institutions to attract professionals.



Nearly 40% of governments collaborate with vocational and higher education institutions to attract WASH professionals.

Countries noted that these frameworks include activities such as research agreements, specialized training programmes, curricula reviews, continued education programmes and internship or trainee programmes between the educational institutions and the government, regulators and/or major service providers.

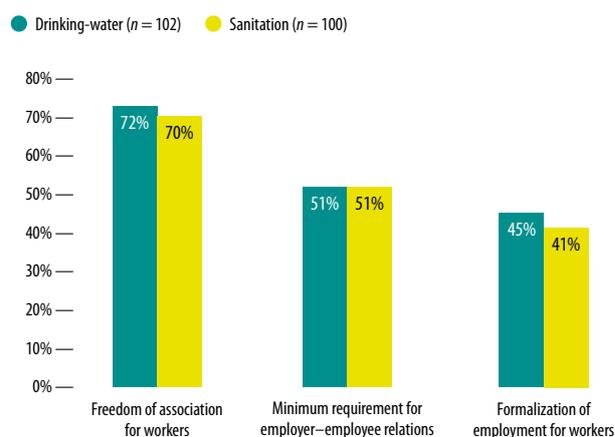
Protecting the rights and safety of workers

Countries indicated that while most do not have measures in place to protect the safety of workers, some are setting a good example by protecting worker rights. Over 70% of countries reported having measures to protect workers' freedom of association, while just over half have minimum requirements for employer–employee relations such as the provision of health insurance, vaccinations, contractual stability and/or minimum wage. However, less than half of countries have measures in place to formalize employment for workers (Fig. 5.6).



Less than half of countries have measures in place to formalize employment for drinking-water and sanitation workers.

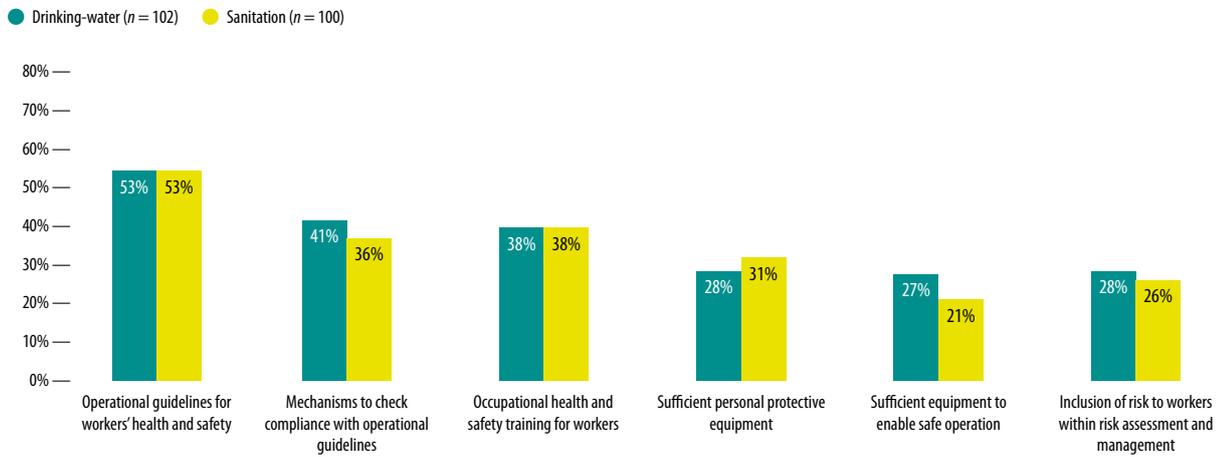
Fig. 5.6 Percentage of countries with measures fully in place for the rights of drinking-water and sanitation workers



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

In terms of worker safety, just over half of countries have operational guidelines for worker health and safety. However, when it comes to sufficient equipment, less than a third of countries have measures fully in place to ensure these safety requirements, which is particularly concerning for sanitation workers (Fig. 5.7).

Fig. 5.7 Percentage of countries with measures fully in place for the safety of drinking-water and sanitation workers



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

6. Finance

Finance for WASH and its effective utilization is critical for extending and sustaining WASH services. This section focuses on the development and implementation of WASH financing plans and strategies, cost estimates for plans and strategies, adequacy of financial resources for WASH, government budget data, cost recovery, and WASH expenditure and its sources.

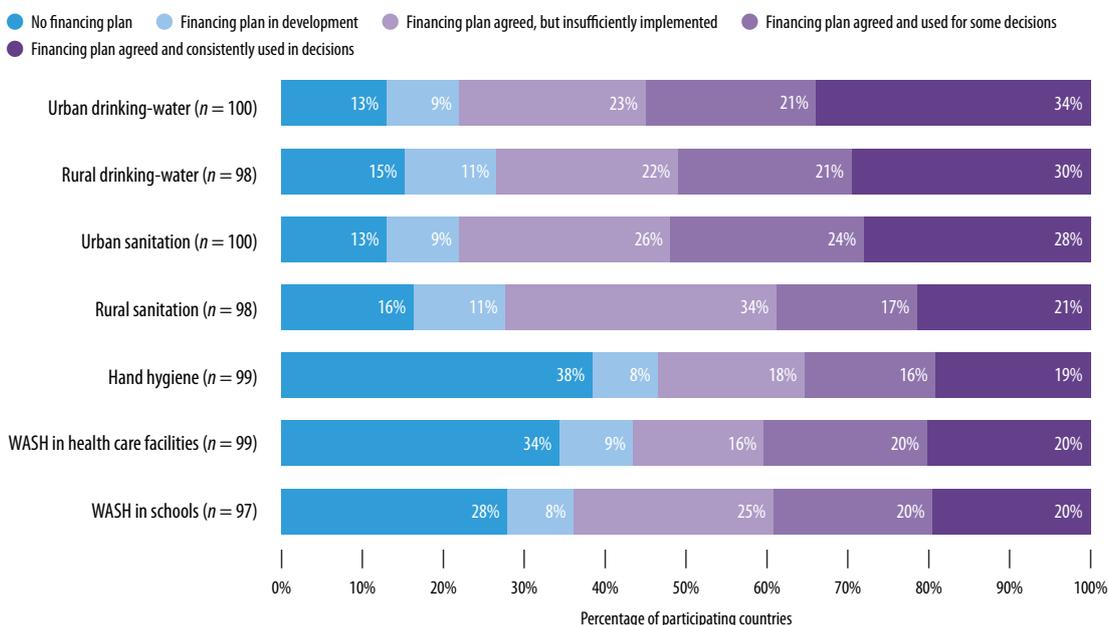
Development and implementation of WASH financing plans/strategies

Having WASH financing plans/strategies is one way to strengthen system performance and make better use of existing funding by defining and prioritizing capital needs, improving government coordination and transparency, and defining the desired levels of service while identifying the existing and potential sources of revenue.

Despite the potential, more than a third of countries have reported that three WASH areas – hand hygiene, WASH in schools and WASH in health care facilities – do not have financing plans/strategies to identify funding sources and guide investments, although potentially these are integrated into broader education or public health strategies (Fig. 6.1). Furthermore, while it is encouraging that 75% of countries reported the existence of financing plans/strategies for drinking-water and sanitation, opportunities to improve plan implementation are high, especially for rural sanitation where 34% of countries reported insufficient implementation.

Most countries reported having agreed WASH financing plans/strategies for drinking-water and sanitation.

Fig. 6.1 Existence and status of WASH financing plans/strategies



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Estimated costs for WASH plans/strategies

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, governments were asked to report on WASH implementation plans and strategies,¹¹ including estimated investment costs disaggregated by service type.

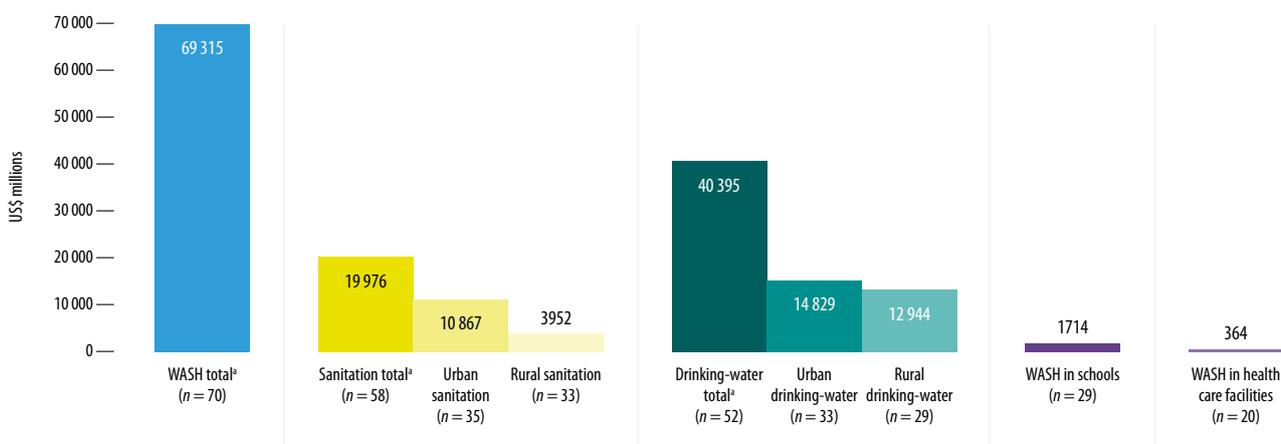
Consistent with previous GLAAS cycles, the scope and time frame of reported cost estimates of strategies and plans remain diverse. Several countries provided estimated aggregate costs that cover the entire WASH sector. For example, the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan estimates WASH investment needs of US\$ 1 billion per year over 10 years, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia's Comprehensive Sectoral Development Plan of the Ministry of Environment and Water estimates US\$ 620 million per year in WASH investments over 5 years.

Countries also provided cost estimates by WASH service. For example, Nepal's WASH Sector Development Plan estimates sanitation investment needs of US\$ 575 million per year over 20 years, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo estimates drinking-water investment needs of US\$ 700 million per year over 10 years within its National Water, Hygiene and Sanitation Programme.

Overall, 70 responding countries, representing a population of 4.2 billion people,¹² provided plan/strategy cost estimates for one or more WASH areas, or for WASH overall. Time frames for these plans and strategies range from 1 to 30 years, and were annualized and converted to United States dollars for comparison purposes. The data in Fig. 6.2 show estimated annual plan costs of over US\$ 69 billion per year. These are estimates from governments and do not represent funding that has been secured. Additionally, while different governments estimate costs in different ways, the data provide insights into the scope of country strategies and overall WASH investment needs.

Across 70 countries, over US\$ 69 billion in annual costs is estimated to implement WASH plans and strategies.

Fig. 6.2 Estimated annual WASH plan/strategy cost (US\$ millions, current)



^a WASH total includes the estimated costs of sanitation and drinking-water plans, as well as plans that could not be disaggregated by sanitation and drinking-water. Sanitation and drinking-water totals include the estimated costs of urban and rural plans, as well as plans that could not be disaggregated by urban and rural areas.

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

¹¹ WASH implementation plans and strategies cited by responding countries include a wide-ranging scope of WASH services (for example, sanitation or drinking-water only, institutional WASH, or plans specific to urban or rural areas), time frames, coverage and anticipated service levels.

¹² Including China with a population of 1.4 billion, although China estimated only annual rural drinking-water costs of US\$ 6.2 billion. Thus without China, the total estimated annual cost for 69 countries and 2.9 billion people is US\$ 58 billion.

Cost estimates among services and service areas

In terms of urban and rural areas, 60% of estimated WASH strategy costs reported by countries are for urban WASH investments versus 40% for rural WASH investments. In terms of services, 67% of estimated WASH strategy costs reported by countries are for drinking-water investments, while 33% are for sanitation investments.

Sufficiency of financial resources for WASH

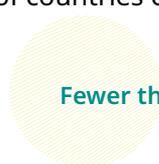
Adequate financial resources are essential for the WASH sector to expand and enhance services, maintain existing infrastructure, carry out effective O&M and support proper planning. While countries have made improvements in costing WASH plans and increasing WASH budgets, the lack of sufficient financial resources continues to be a critical issue, slowing progress in service provision and hindering service quality.

As in previous GLAAS cycles, countries were requested to provide information on the sufficiency of funding in two areas: (a) to implement WASH plans/strategies and (b) to reach national targets (which may extend beyond current WASH planning cycles).

Despite some year-to-year variation, from the GLAAS 2013/2014 cycle to the 2024/2025 cycle, over 75% of countries consistently reported insufficient funding¹³ to implement sanitation plans/strategies and to achieve national sanitation targets, while over 66% of countries reported insufficient funding to implement drinking-water plans/strategies and to reach national drinking-water targets.

However, incremental improvements have been seen from the GLAAS 2018/2019 cycle to the 2024/2025 cycle, when the percentage of countries reporting sufficient funding to reach WASH targets doubled for urban and rural sanitation and rural drinking-water, albeit from low numbers in 2018 (from 7% to 14% for sanitation, and from 7% to 16% for rural drinking-water for 45 countries that participated in both the GLAAS 2018/2019 and 2024/2025 cycles).

Table 6.1 presents summary results from the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey for all responding countries. Fewer than 25% of countries indicated they have sufficient funding¹⁴ to implement their plans, and fewer than 20% of countries estimated they have sufficient funding to achieve national targets.



Fewer than 20% of countries indicated sufficient funding to reach national targets.

Table 6.1 Sufficiency of funding to implement WASH plans and to meet national targets

| WASH area | Percentage of countries with costed plans reporting sufficient funding to implement plans | Percentage of countries reporting sufficient funding from all sources to reach national targets |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Urban sanitation | 18% (16 of 89) | 15% (11 of 75) |
| Rural sanitation | 14% (11 of 81) | 9% (6 of 67) |
| Urban drinking-water | 25% (19 of 77) | 19% (14 of 74) |
| Rural drinking-water | 20% (15 of 75) | 13% (9 of 69) |
| Hand hygiene | 12% (7 of 57) | 11% (7 of 65) |
| WASH in health care facilities | 22% (11 of 51) | 17% (11 of 65) |
| WASH in schools | 20% (12 of 59) | 17% (11 of 66) |

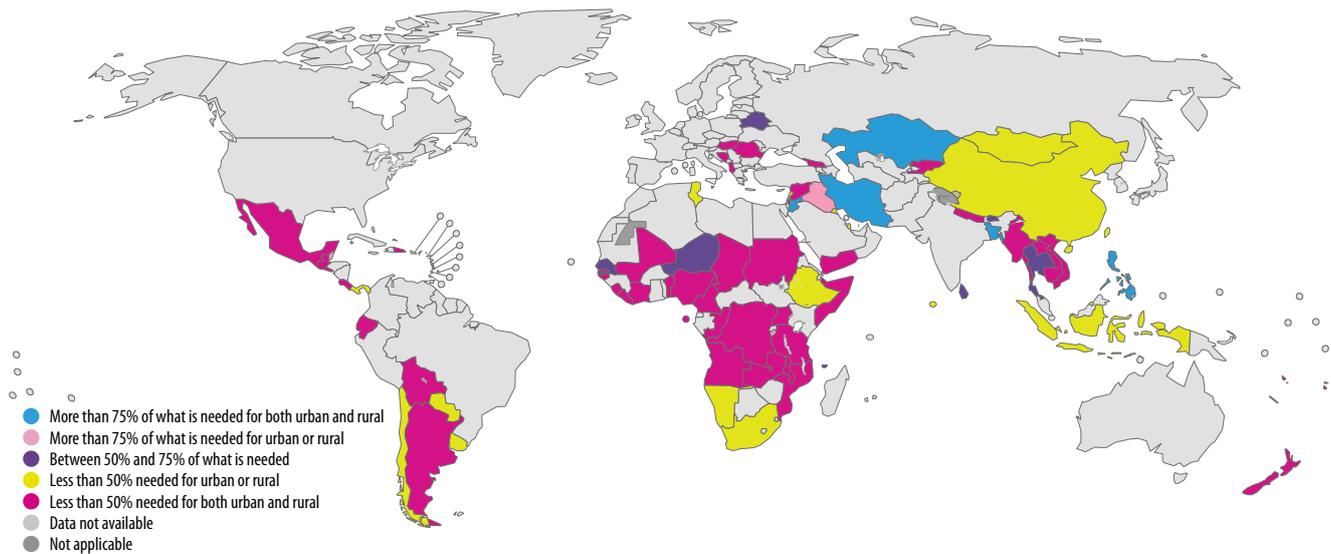
Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

¹³ “Insufficient funding” is defined as having less than 75% of what is needed to implement national WASH plans/strategies.

¹⁴ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, “sufficient funding” is defined as having at least 75% of what is needed to implement national WASH plans/strategies.

A majority of countries reported insufficient financial resources to meet sanitation targets, most notably in sub-Saharan Africa (Fig. 6.3).

Fig. 6.3 Sufficiency of funding from all sources to reach national sanitation targets (n = 77)



Map production: Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health, WHO.
 Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

In addition to the country estimates of financial sufficiency, 20 countries¹⁵ were able to report quantitative funding gaps by subsector based on specific needs estimates and available funding (Fig. 6.4). Estimates of national funding needs came from national development plans, action plans, sector development plans, budgets and cost studies.

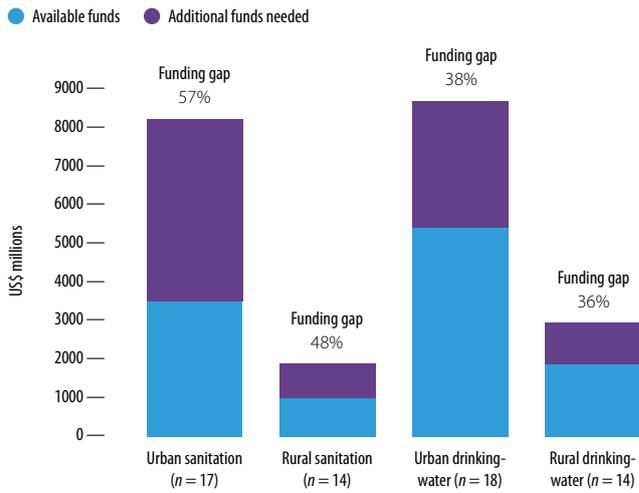
For these 20 countries, it was estimated that US\$ 20.8 billion is needed per year to reach national targets for WASH and that US\$ 11.2 billion per year is available. The funding gap for urban sanitation is the largest of the four WASH subsectors,¹⁶ with an annual funding gap for 17 countries of US\$ 4.4 billion, or 57% of US\$ 7.7 billion in cited urban sanitation needs. Across WASH, the resulting funding gap of 46% in these countries reinforces estimates suggesting that greater investment is needed to achieve WASH targets.

¹⁵ Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burkina Faso, Cuba, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Pakistan, Peru, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Tunisia and Uganda.

¹⁶ The four subsectors assessed were urban sanitation, rural sanitation, urban drinking-water and rural drinking-water. Two countries had quantitative needs and funding availability information for other WASH areas including hand hygiene, WASH in schools and WASH in health care facilities.

Quantitative data from 20 countries reveal a WASH funding gap of 46% between identified needs and available funding for WASH to reach national WASH targets.

Fig. 6.4 Available funds versus funds needed to reach national targets (US\$ millions, current)



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

While these funding gaps remain significant, limited quantitative data¹⁷ from countries indicate there have been improvements in reducing gaps from 2021 to 2024. For example, half of countries (four of eight) that reported urban sanitation needs and available funding in both the GLAAS 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles indicated funding needs and funding gaps for urban sanitation have declined (Table 6.2). The funding gap for these eight countries was reduced from 30% to 23% of total needs. Similarly, the rural sanitation funding gap was reduced from 55% to 42% of total needs for seven countries that reported data in both GLAAS cycles.

Trend data in eight countries show estimated availability of funds for urban sanitation increasing and funding gaps decreasing from the GLAAS 2021/2022 cycle to the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle.

Table 6.2 Trends in funding needs and funding gaps for sanitation (common country respondents in the GLAAS 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles)

| | Urban sanitation (n = 8) | Rural sanitation (n = 7) |
|--|--|--|
| Needs declining, funding gap decreasing | Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Uganda | Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Pakistan, Uganda |
| Needs declining, funding gap increasing | Cuba, Pakistan | Cuba |
| Needs increasing, funding gap decreasing | South Africa | |
| Needs increasing, funding gap increasing | Tunisia | South Africa |
| 2021 Funding needs | US\$ 1.8 billion | US\$ 1.7 billion |
| 2021 Funding availability | US\$ 1.3 billion | US\$ 753 million |
| 2021 Funding gap | 30% | 55% |
| 2024 Funding needs | US\$ 2.4 billion | US\$ 1.4 billion |
| 2024 Funding availability | US\$ 1.9 billion | US\$ 800 million |
| 2024 Funding gap | 23% | 42% |
| 2021–2024 Funding needs trend | 33% | –18% |
| 2021–2024 Funding availability trend | 48% | 6% |

Sources: GLAAS 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys.

¹⁷ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, fewer than 20% of countries (20 of 105) provided data on the availability of WASH funding needs versus WASH funding availability. Of these 20 countries, only eight also provided data on WASH funding needs versus funding availability in the GLAAS 2021/2022 country survey.

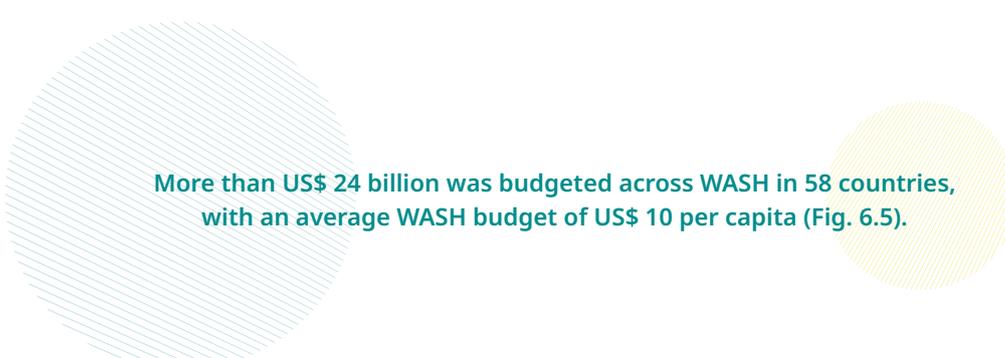
As in previous GLAAS cycles, countries were asked to identify specific areas where funding gaps exist. They continued to report shortfalls in several key areas, including: (a) capital for expanding services, (b) O&M (leading to deferred maintenance) and (c) human resources capacity to implement programmes and services. In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, additional funding gap areas were highlighted, including: infrastructure rehabilitation projects, faecal sludge management, institutional capacity-building, monitoring and evaluation efforts, and purchasing equipment and supplies.

National government WASH budgets

Fifty-eight countries reported information on their WASH-specific government budgets. While the quantity of financial data has improved with each successive GLAAS cycle, it is important to note: (a) some countries reported budgets for just a few ministries and institutions and not for all agencies/institutions involved in WASH; (b) a few countries reported only a collective budget for all WASH; (c) WASH budget allocations may be underreported due to the lack of disaggregated budgets for certain ministries; (d) WASH budget allocations may vary over time due to data availability differences or different methods used to determine the budgets from one GLAAS cycle to another; and (e) WASH budget allocations may show some variability among countries, depending on whether countries included activities beyond drinking-water and sanitation services provision and hand hygiene, such as water resources and waste management.

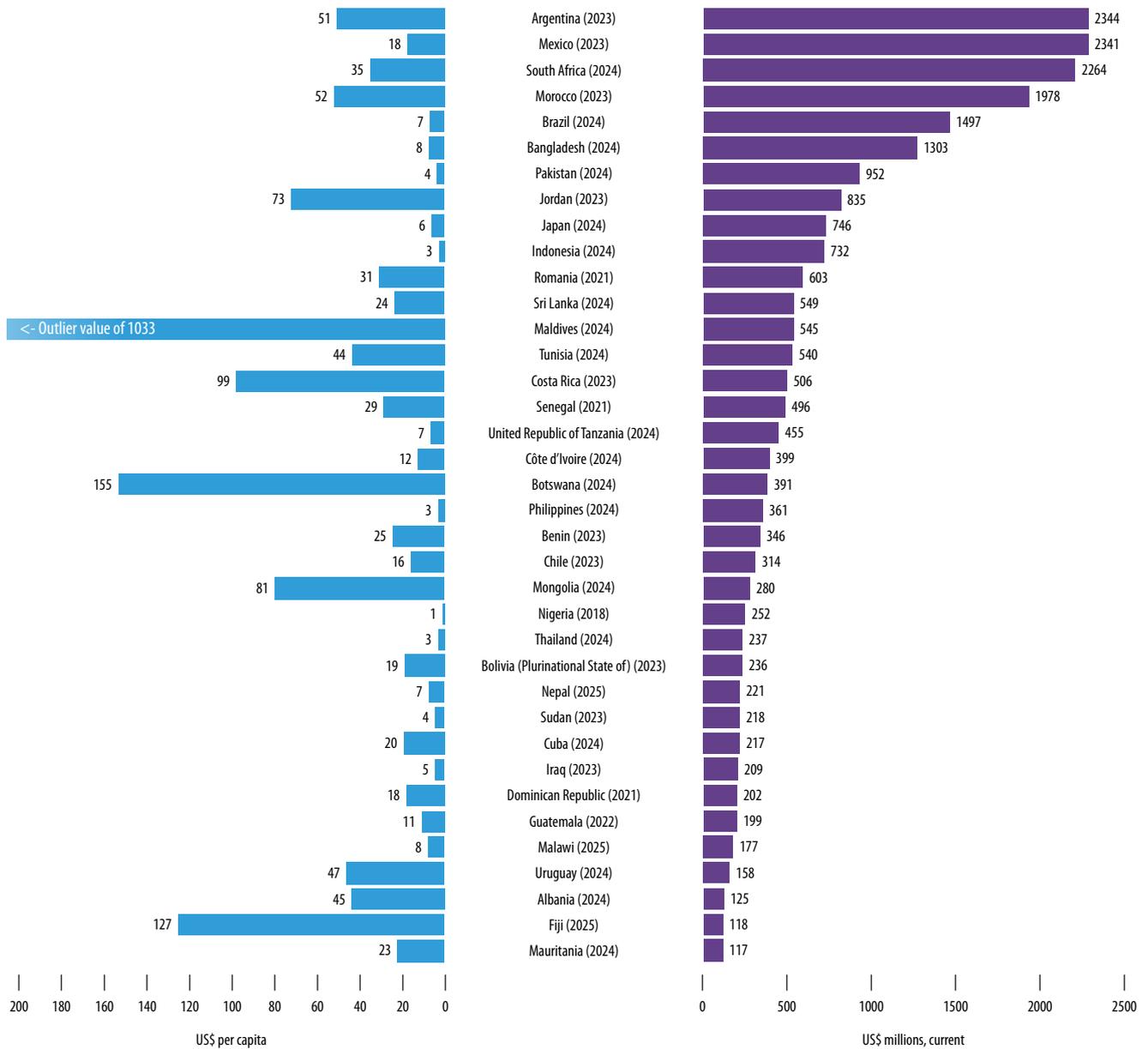
Annual aggregate WASH budgets ranged from over US\$ 2.3 billion in Argentina, to less than US\$ 1 million in some less-populated countries. Overall, the annual WASH budget per capita for these 58 countries ranged from less than US\$ 1 to US\$ 1033.

Reporting of low WASH budgets in some countries may arise from various factors. In certain cases, user contributions – through tariffs and out-of-pocket spending – may serve as the primary source of WASH funding and investment. In other cases, the scope of budgets may cover only certain WASH functions such as planning and oversight, and may not reflect the cost of service provision or investment. Additionally, lack of available disaggregated budget data may also cause some underreporting. Conversely, low government spending may simply reflect insufficient public investment in the sector.



More than US\$ 24 billion was budgeted across WASH in 58 countries, with an average WASH budget of US\$ 10 per capita (Fig. 6.5).

Fig. 6.5 Reported government WASH budgets, by latest fiscal year available (US\$ per capita and US\$ millions, current) (n = 58)



Note: An additional 21 countries reported national WASH budgets of under US\$ 100 million.
 Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

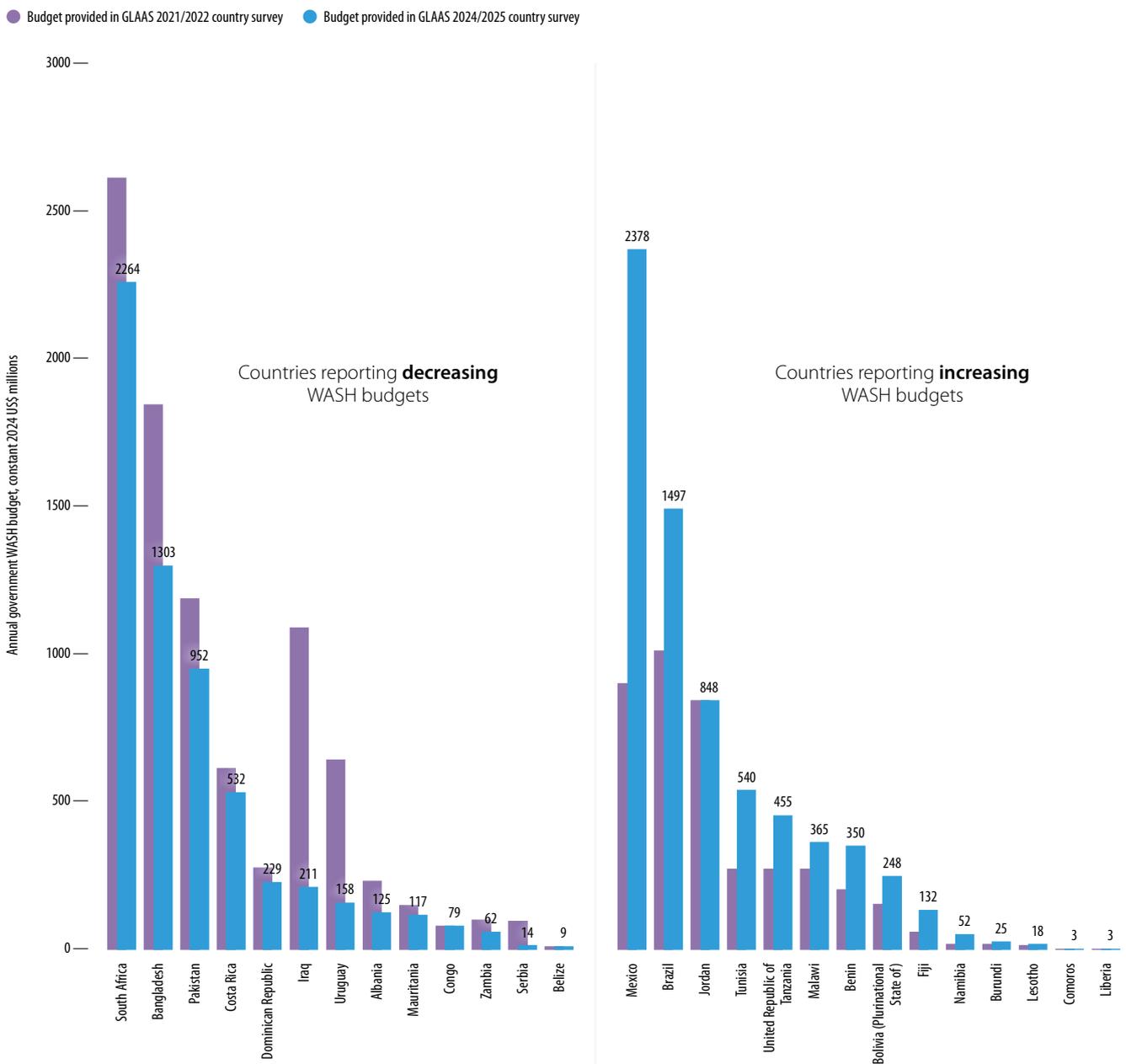
Government budgets for WASH may include on-budget donor grants or loans. While donor support may be a small proportion of overall WASH funding, nearly half of responding countries reported at least one government ministry or institution receives a significant share (greater than 25%) of its WASH budget from donors. Institutions supported include the ministries of water, environment and health, and national utilities. For example, in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Ministry of Water Resources receives financial support from donors, accounting for more than 25% of the drinking-water budget, and in Lesotho, the Ministry of Natural Resources (Water) receives significant donor funding, primarily for water infrastructure projects and capacity-building.

Trends in national government WASH budgets

Trend data on national government WASH budgets are limited, with only 27 countries able to provide comparable WASH budget data between the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle and the previous GLAAS cycle in 2021/2022 (Fig. 6.6). The average annual rate of budget increase for these 27 countries is 2.6%, but after adjusting for inflation with local price indexes and applying constant currency exchange rates, the average annual rate of budget change in real terms is 0.0% over a 3 year period. Fourteen countries reported budget increases, while 13 countries reported budget decreases.

Data from 27 countries show that on average, government WASH budgets have increased at 2.6% per year, but have been stagnant when adjusted for inflation from 2021 to 2024.

Fig. 6.6 Reported government WASH budgets (US\$ millions, constant 2024 US\$)



Note: Annual budgets have been adjusted for inflation and reflect a constant (2024) currency exchange rate to US\$.

Sources: GLAAS 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys.

Maintaining comparable WASH budget data across survey years within countries depends on several factors, including the consistency of ministries involved in WASH reporting, the availability of disaggregated budget data and variations in reporting practices. Country-reported budgets were compared to previous reporting cycles at the ministry level. Variability in these budgets can arise from a range of factors, such as shifts in sector priorities, overall government budget increases/reductions, phased financing of large infrastructure projects, or changes in ministry staffing, roles and responsibilities.

Examples of budget increases that have outpaced inflation reported in the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey include the following.

- In **Mexico**, the National Water Commission reported a nominal WASH budget increase from 13 711 million to 41 572 million pesos (US\$ 611 million to US\$ 2341 million) from 2020 to 2023.
- In **Tunisia**, the National Sanitation Office increased its nominal budget from 231 million to 903 million dinars (US\$ 82 million to US\$ 291 million) and the National Water Supply and Distribution Company increased its nominal WASH budget from 332 million to 702 million dinars (US\$ 118 million to US\$ 225 million) from 2020 to 2024.

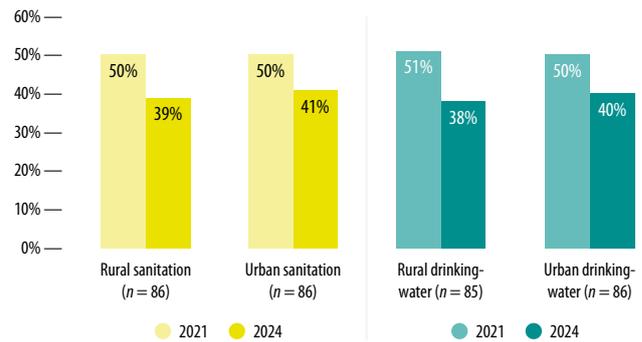
Forty-eight per cent of countries (13 of 27) reported reductions in national WASH budgets. Examples of budget decreases and budgets that have not outpaced inflation include the following.

- In **Bangladesh**, while Water and Sewerage Authorities and the Department of Public Health Engineering reported a nominal WASH budget increase from US\$ 788 million to US\$ 841 million, this increase is diminished to a decrease of 22% when adjusted for inflation. It was also offset by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, which experienced a WASH budget decrease of US\$ 237 million (72% decrease) from 2020 to 2024.
- In **Pakistan**, the combined WASH budgets of the four provincial governments and the Islamabad Capital Territory increased from 225 billion to 265 billion rupees (US\$ 808 million to US\$ 952 million) from 2022 to 2024 – an 18% nominal increase. However, due to high inflation over the same period, this represents a 20% decrease in real terms.
- In **Uruguay**, the State Sanitary Works experienced a nominal budget decrease from US\$ 444 million to US\$ 105 million from 2020 to 2024, leading to an overall decrease in WASH budget from US\$ 494 million to US\$ 157 million.

While some WASH budgets may be stable or increasing, governments are increasingly limited in their spending by how well budget allocations can be absorbed/utilized by the relevant ministries. Sixty per cent of countries reported using less than 75% of domestic capital commitments for urban and rural drinking-water supply and sanitation (Fig. 6.7). Lengthy and complex procurement processes are most often cited as obstacles in improving the efficient and timely use of domestic capital commitments for WASH. Irregular funding flows and untimely execution of projects are also reported. This GLAAS survey result is consistent with a key finding from a World Bank report that the sector's budget execution rates average about 72% based on an analysis of public expenditure data from 65 countries in 2019 and 2020 (1).



Fig. 6.7 Percentage of countries with domestic absorption rates greater than 75%



Sources: GLAAS 2021/2022 and GLAAS 2024/2025 country surveys.

Cost recovery

Cost recovery of O&M expenditure is a key measure of financial sustainability of service providers. It indicates the extent to which the costs of providing WASH services are covered by service provider revenues, which largely consist of tariffs, tax revenue, interest, user fees and other funds. While sources of revenue may vary, countries were requested to solely estimate the sufficiency of tariffs and household contributions to cover O&M expenses.

Despite many countries indicating legal frameworks exist and tariff reviews are performed every 1–2 years (with most reviews being performed at least once every 5 years), less than a third of responding countries indicated user tariffs are sufficient to recover at least 80% of O&M costs.

Owing to insufficient cost recovery from tariffs and household contributions, most countries use some form of subsidy from the national treasury, local, provincial or state budgets, or other communal services (cross-subsidization) to cover operating deficits. However, these deficits are often not covered in full.

Inefficient cost recovery may be the result of several factors, including the lack of political will to raise tariff rates to cost recovery levels and tariff rates set too low to maintain affordability. For example, **Panama** reported that costs are not fully recovered through tariffs or household contributions, nor are they covered by contributions from other sources, leading to a lack of investment and inadequate O&M of the systems. For urban sanitation (sewerage and treatment), tariffs have not been applied, so the national government subsidizes this service through the Panama Sanitation Programme and the National Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers (a 100% subsidy on sanitation). Similar cost recovery issues are seen for urban drinking-water, with rates not updated for 30 years and where resources are insufficient.

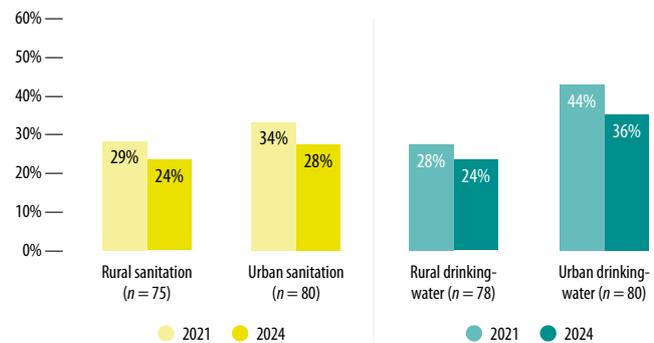
Another factor potentially leading to low levels of cost recovery includes high NRW that is not accounted for in tariff reviews. **Belize** and **Myanmar** highlighted NRW as problematic to cost recovery, while **Jordan** and **Mongolia** reported efforts to reduce NRW to improve cost recovery. In the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, 56 countries reported an average of 39% NRW for their three largest water suppliers.

Countries cited a wide range of impacts from insufficient cost recovery, including delayed liability payments, delayed maintenance, low workforce investment capacity (for hiring and training), increased response times and delayed household connections. The **Democratic Republic of the Congo** noted that such operational inefficiency results in increased release of pollutants into the environment, a higher proliferation of disease vectors and ultimately poorer health.

Despite the importance of maintaining service quality, functionality and retaining workforce capacity, trends in cost recovery are decreasing. Cost recovery data from common country respondents in the GLAAS 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles were compared. In all subsectors, fewer countries reported being able to recover 80% of O&M costs from tariffs and household contributions in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle than in the 2021/2022 cycle (Fig. 6.8).

Cost recovery trends show tariffs and household contributions continue to be inadequate to recover full O&M costs in two thirds of countries.

Fig. 6.8 Percentage of countries indicating more than 80% of O&M costs are covered by tariffs or household contributions

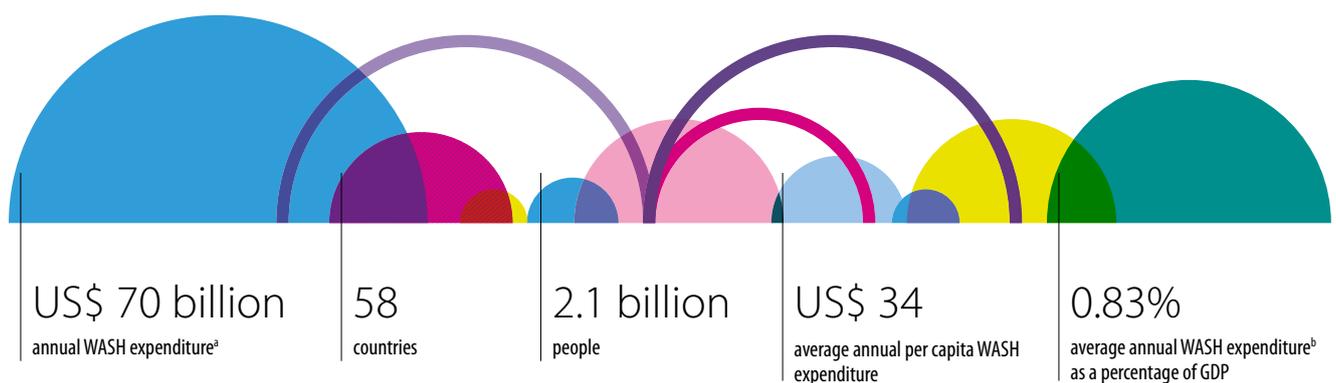


Sources: GLAAS 2021/2022 and GLAAS 2024/2025 country surveys.

Total expenditure on WASH

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, 55% of countries (58 of 105) reported an estimated aggregate WASH expenditure of US\$ 70 billion (for capital and O&M expenses).¹⁸ These 58 countries represent a population of over 2 billion, and an average annual WASH expenditure of US\$ 34 per capita, inclusive of public expenditure¹⁹ as well as spending by users (households, commercial and industrial). Total expenditure from all sources comprises an average 0.83% of gross domestic product (GDP) (Fig. 6.9).

Fig. 6.9 Summary of annual WASH expenditure (n = 58)



^a Actual expenditure years ranged from 2020 to 2023 in the responses to the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

^b Annual WASH expenditure in this context includes all WASH expenditure, including public expenditure and expenditure by users.

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

¹⁸ While data on total WASH expenditure and their sources were received from 58 countries, there was a wide variation in the details provided due to challenges in obtaining information on all sources of funding for WASH.

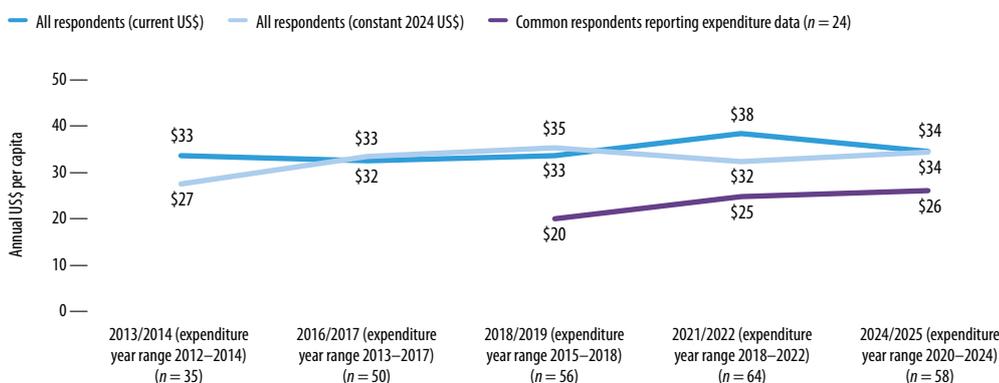
¹⁹ Public expenditure encompasses spending by central, state and local governments, and includes bilateral and multilateral grants and repayable financing received or incurred by government entities.

Overall trends for WASH expenditure indicate increased spending on WASH from 2018 to 2024. Twenty-four countries (representing 1 billion people) that have consistently reported expenditure data in the GLAAS 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles show an increased WASH expenditure²⁰ from US\$ 18.5 billion to US\$ 26.4 billion (42% increase) from 2018 to 2024, which is an annual average increase in WASH expenditure of 6.7%.

When assessing WASH expenditure per capita, trends show that, on average, countries have increased WASH spending to keep pace with increasing population and inflation.²¹ Fig. 6.10 highlights the trend in WASH expenditure per capita for all responding countries from the GLAAS 2013/2014 cycle onwards. Assessing all country respondents shows a relatively stable trend of WASH expenditure per capita of US\$ 32 to US\$ 34 over the GLAAS 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles. The 24 countries that provided WASH expenditure data in the GLAAS 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles show a lower overall WASH expenditure per capita, but do show an increasing trend from US\$ 20 to US\$ 26 per capita from 2018 to 2024.

WASH expenditure per capita trends show that, on average, countries have increased WASH spending to keep pace with increasing population and inflation.

Fig. 6.10 Annual WASH expenditure per capita (US\$)



Sources: GLAAS 2013/2014, 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys.

Table 6.3 summarizes WASH expenditure data from all responding countries for the past five GLAAS cycles. It shows the extent of how countries are increasingly able to report data on WASH expenditure. Average GDP expenditure among all country respondents varies from 0.72% to 1.02% of GDP, with some of this variation due to differing respondent groups representing a mix of different country income levels.

²⁰ Adjusted for inflation and common currency exchange rate.

²¹ Two countries (Argentina and Lebanon) with hyperinflation rates greater than 100% per year during 2021–2024 and 2020–2023, respectively, were excluded from the expenditure trend analysis.

Table 6.3 Estimated WASH expenditure (all respondents)

| Indicator | 2013/2014 (expenditure year range 2012–2014) | 2016/2017 (expenditure year range 2013–2017) | 2018/2019 (expenditure year range 2015–2018) | 2021/2022 (expenditure year range 2018–2022) | 2024/2025 (expenditure year range 2020–2024) |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Number of countries with expenditure data / Number of survey respondents | 35 / 94 (37%) | 50 / 84 (60%) | 56 / 115 (49%) | 64 / 124 (52%) | 58 / 105 (55%) |
| Total reported expenditure (US\$ millions) ^a | 39 968 | 52 553 | 63 670 | 73 168 | 69 956 |
| Population represented (millions) | 1202 | 1630 | 1956 | 1932 | 2060 |
| Annual WASH expenditure per capita (US\$) | 33 | 32 | 33 | 38 | 34 |
| Annual WASH expenditure (as a percentage of GDP) ^b | 0.84% | 0.72% | 0.78% | 1.02% | 0.83% |

^a Expenditure sourced from government, external support and user contributions.

^b Information on GDP was sourced from the World Development Indicators (World Bank), which derive estimates using World Bank and OECD national accounts data.

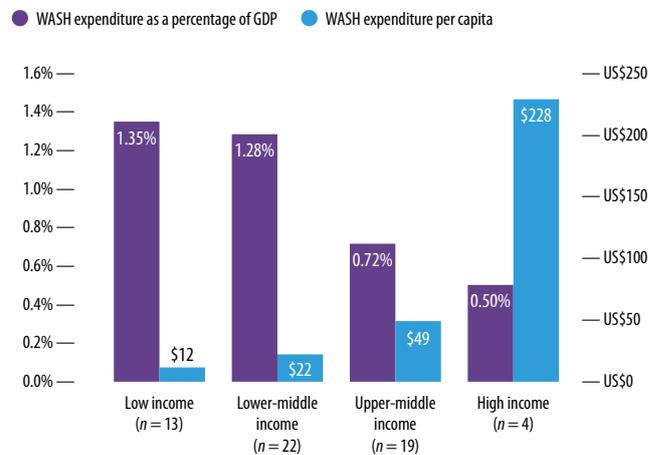
Sources: GLAAS 2013/2014, 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys.

WASH expenditure by country

WASH expenditure varies by country income group, with low-income countries spending less per capita on WASH but a greater proportion of their GDP than higher-income countries. While per capita WASH expenditure in four reporting high-income countries averages almost US\$ 230 per capita, 13 low- and 22 lower-middle-income countries average US\$ 12 and US\$ 22 per capita WASH expenditure, respectively. Conversely, average WASH expenditure as a percentage of GDP is higher in low-income countries (1.35%) than in high-income countries (0.50%) (Fig. 6.11).

Low- and lower-middle-income countries spend less per capita but a greater proportion of their GDP on WASH than higher-income countries.

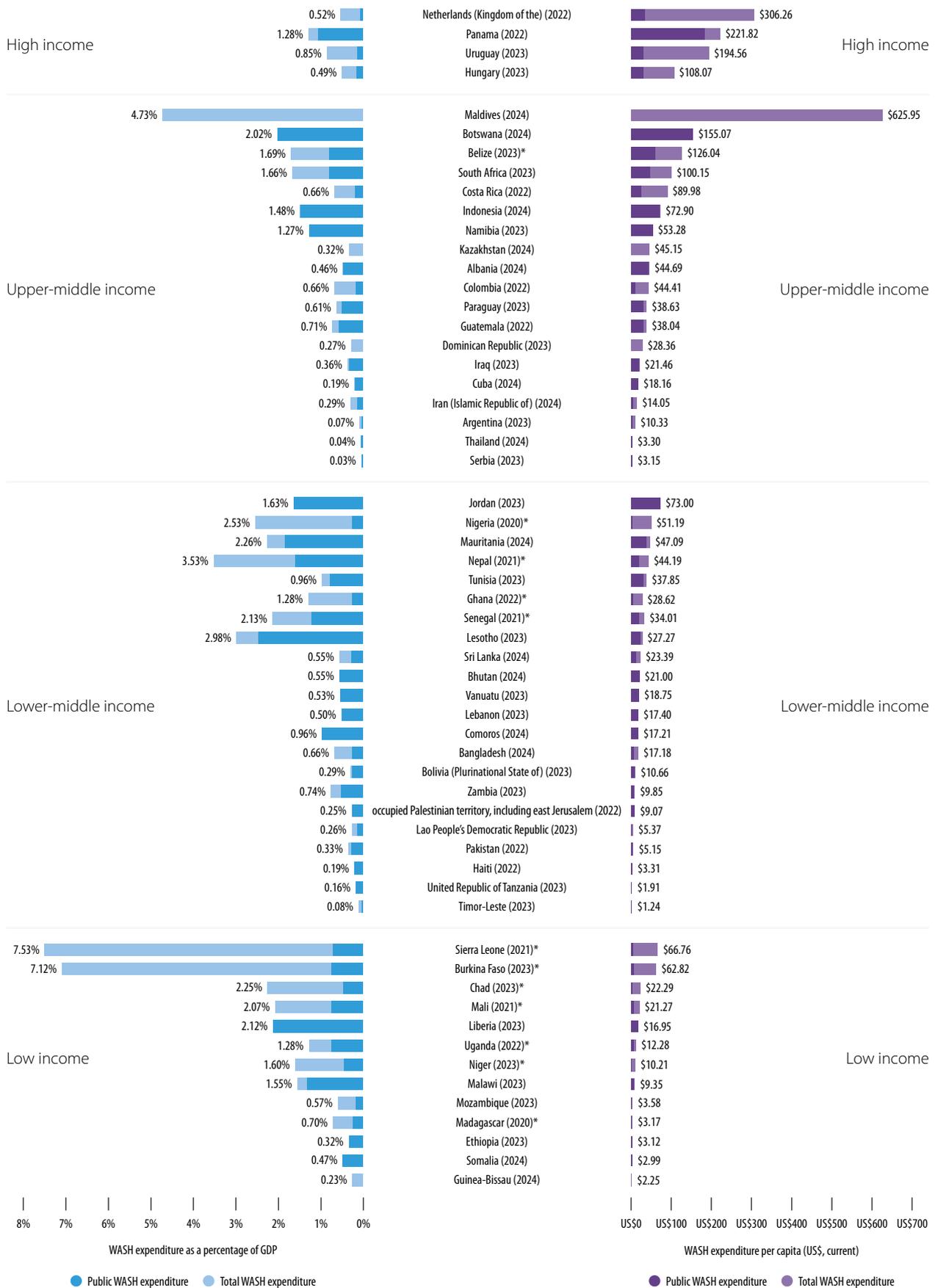
Fig. 6.11 Total WASH expenditure as a percentage of GDP and per capita (58 countries with a total population of 2.1 billion)



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Within country income groups, there exists a wide variation in WASH spending as a percentage of GDP and per capita expenditure (Fig. 6.12).

Fig. 6.12 Total and public WASH expenditure as a percentage of GDP and per capita (58 countries, 2.1 billion population)



Notes: Public expenditure in this context includes central, state and local government expenditure, as well as external assistance and repayable finance, while total WASH expenditure includes users. If expenditure from government and external sources was not reported, no public expenditure data are shown. In cases where data show 100% public expenditure, this indicates no household expenditure was reported. Countries with an asterisk reported WASH accounts data in their country survey response.

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Sources of funding for WASH

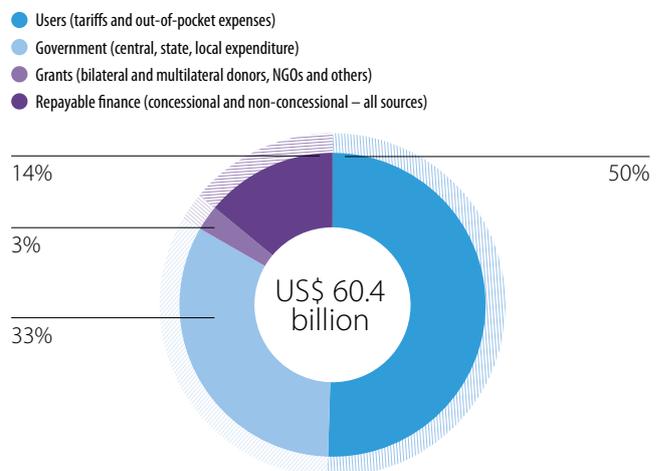
The main sources of funding for WASH are: user tariffs and fees contributed by users of WASH services (which also include the value of labour and material investments of households managing their own WASH); domestic taxes that are channelled through central, state and local governments, and which are used to fund or subsidize WASH services; grants from international donors and NGOs; and loans, which may be concessional in nature (having a grant element that may be derived from favourable lending terms and/or time frames) or non-concessional from international development banks or private institutions. While loan disbursements may be a contributing source of funding WASH in a particular fiscal year, ultimately, loan and interest payments are borne by users or recipient governments.

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, 40 countries, representing 1.75 billion people, provided data on their overall WASH expenditure (inclusive of capital, O&M expenditure and debt financing) by all funding sources: users (including household, commercial and industrial users, through tariffs and out-of-pocket expenditure), governments (at central, regional and local levels), grants and donations (from donors, NGOs and other organizations) and repayable financing.²²

The total annual WASH expenditure in those 40 countries was US\$ 60.4 billion, with an average annual per capita expenditure of US\$ 35, of which users pay 50%. In addition, in future years, through taxes and user charges, users will be the source for the repayment of loans, which comprised 14% of funding sources (Fig. 6.13).

Expenditure data from 40 countries show that user expenditure, through tariff payments and out-of-pocket expenses, contributes to 50% of overall WASH spending.

Fig. 6.13 Sources of funding for WASH (n = 40)



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

²² Repayable finance includes concessional and non-concessional repayable financing from all sources, including from international financial institutions, bilateral donors, banks and financial institutions, and other loan providers. Consistent with the TrackFin methodology for developing WASH accounts, the source of funding is mapped to the entity providing the repayable financing, representing the immediate origin of the expenditure flow for the financial year in question, rather than the entity that ultimately pays back the debt through loan repayments.

Expenditure trends highlight increasing government and public financing for WASH.

Data from the GLAAS 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles indicate that a majority of WASH expenditure is made by users. Funding classified as grants from bilateral donors, multilateral donors and NGOs comprises less than 4% of overall WASH funding, although some concessional lending will have a grant element. Expenditure data also indicate that funding from repayable financing increased from 8% to 14% of WASH funding flows from 2021 to 2024, for all country survey respondents (Table 6.4),²³ as well as for 16 common country respondents that provided detailed expenditure data in the GLAAS 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles.

Table 6.4 Breakdown of WASH funding sources from four GLAAS cycles for all responding countries^a

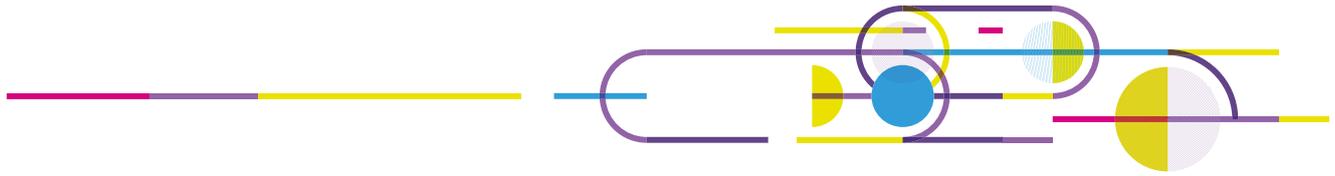
| Indicator | 2016/2017 (expenditure year range 2013–2017) | 2018/2019 (expenditure year range 2015–2018) | 2021/2022 (expenditure year range 2018–2022) | 2024/2025 (expenditure year range 2020–2024) |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Number of responding countries | 28 | 34 | 45 | 40 |
| Total reported WASH expenditure (US\$ millions, current) | 44 688 | 52 437 | 65 336 | 60 356 |
| Percentage from users (tariffs and out-of-pocket expense) | 64% | 66% | 60% | 50% |
| Percentage from government (central, state, local expenditure) | 25% | 22% | 29% | 33% |
| Percentage from grants (bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs and others) | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Percentage from repayable finance (concessional and non-concessional – all sources) | 8% | 9% | 8% | 14% |

^a Includes countries that provided total WASH expenditure data and information on user and government expenditure for each of the four GLAAS cycles.
Sources: GLAAS 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 country surveys.

Reference

1. Funding a water-secure future. Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank; 2024 (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/publication/funding-a-water-secure-future>), accessed 21 November 2025.

²³ For 16 countries that responded to the GLAAS 2018/2019, 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 cycles. Average repayable financing sourced from the 16 countries rose from 5% to 8% of total WASH funding from the GLAAS 2021/2022 country survey to the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.



7. Development partner support for WASH

Aid and technical assistance from development partners is an important component and funding source to build, strengthen and maintain WASH systems and services in many developing countries. While development partner support for WASH remains high, major shifts are ahead in the official development assistance (ODA) landscape. Twenty-one development partners, including multilateral development banks, bilateral donors and NGOs, completed the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey. In this section, data from the GLAAS development partner survey are complemented with ODA data from the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS). This section focuses on trends in water and sanitation ODA, priorities, targets and strategies of development partners, leveraging funding and looking towards the future of aid for WASH.

Water supply and sanitation ODA

Bilateral and multilateral donors that report development aid activities to the OECD reported total ODA commitments of US\$ 306 billion in 2023, a 1.1% decrease from US\$ 309 billion in 2022 (Table 7.1). ODA commitments for water supply and sanitation also decreased, much more significantly than total ODA, from US\$ 9.4 billion to US\$ 8.5 billion from 2022 to 2023, a 9.0% decrease (Table 7.1; Fig. 7.1).



Water supply and sanitation ODA commitments declined more significantly than total ODA commitments from 2022 to 2023.

Table 7.1 ODA commitments and disbursements in 2022 and 2023

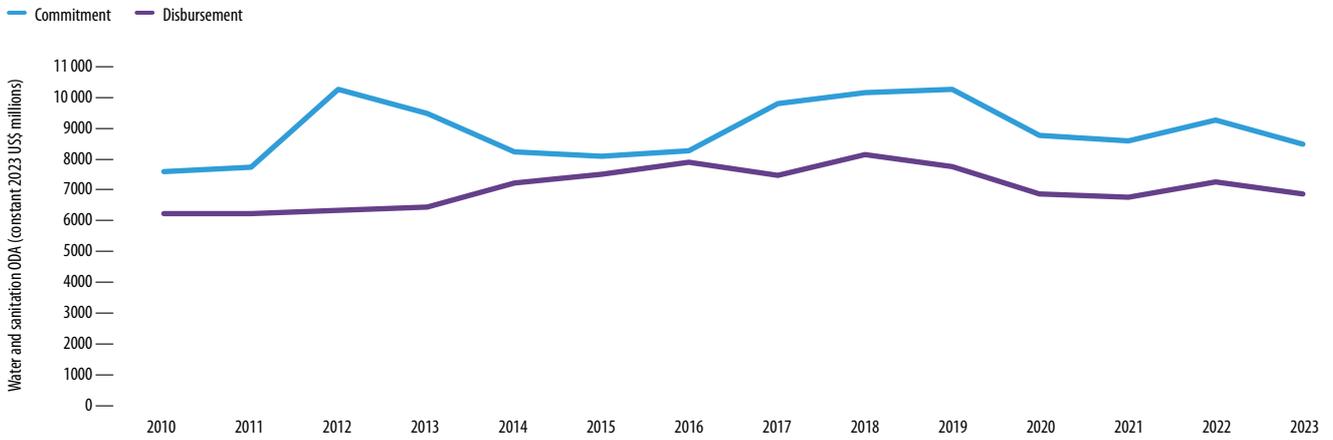
| | Commitments (US\$ billions, constant 2023 US\$) | | | Disbursements (US\$ billions, constant 2023 US\$) | | |
|---|--|-------|-------------------|--|-------|-------------------|
| | 2022 | 2023 | Percentage change | 2022 | 2023 | Percentage change |
| Total ODA | 309.4 | 305.6 | -1.1% | 292.1 | 288.9 | -1.1% |
| Water and sanitation ODA | 9.4 | 8.5 | -9.0% | 7.3 | 6.9 | -5.5% |
| Water and sanitation ODA (as a percentage of total) | 3.0% | 2.8% | | 2.5% | 2.4% | |

Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.



ODA commitments to water supply and sanitation decreased by 9% from 2022 to 2023.

Fig. 7.1 ODA commitments and disbursements to water supply and sanitation, 2010–2023, US\$ millions (constant 2023 US\$)



Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.

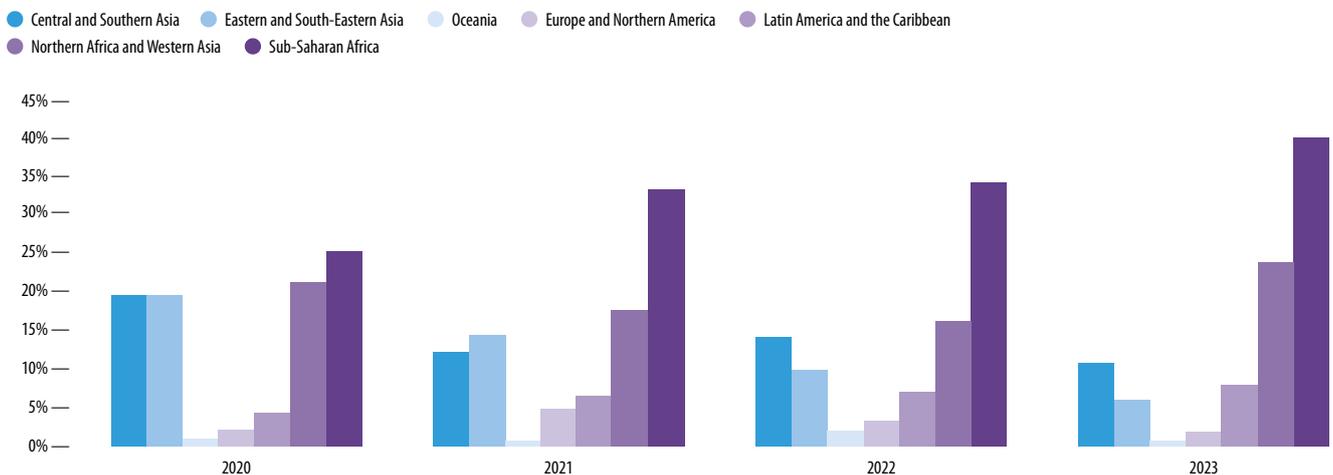
Geographical distribution of water and sanitation ODA

The geographical distribution of ODA for water supply and sanitation has shifted markedly since 2020. In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of water supply and sanitation ODA commitments increased from 25% in 2020 to 40% in 2023, while Central and Southern Asia saw a decrease from 19% to 11%, and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia saw a decrease from 19% to 6% over the same period (Fig. 7.2).



Water supply and sanitation ODA commitments shifted markedly from 2020 to 2023, with more funds committed to sub-Saharan Africa.

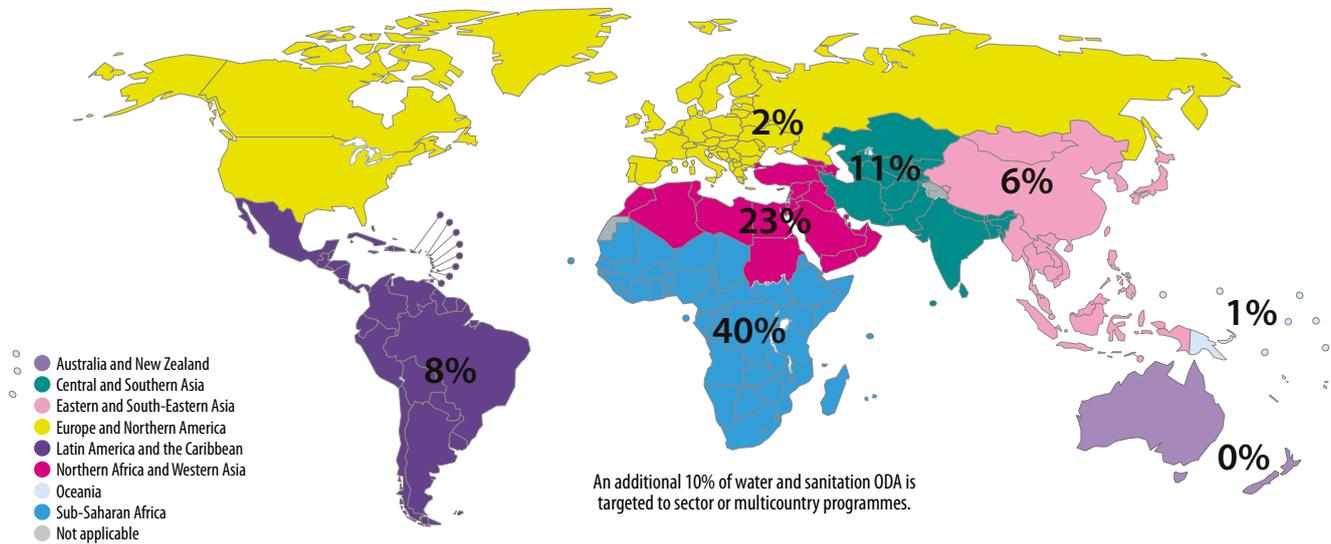
Fig. 7.2 Percentage of global water and sanitation ODA commitments directed to each SDG region, 2020–2023



Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.

Sub-Saharan Africa received 40% of all water supply and sanitation ODA commitments in 2023 (Fig. 7.3).

Fig. 7.3 Percentage of global water and sanitation ODA commitments directed to each SDG region, 2023



Note: SDG regional groupings were used for regional analyses to ensure consistency with SDG reporting. SDG regions are based on the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (known as M49) and are primarily based on geographical location. More information is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/>.

Map production: Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health, WHO.

Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.

Sanitation and drinking-water disbursements

Since 2010, disaggregated ODA data to basic and large water supply and sanitation systems have been collected by subsector (i.e. water supply or sanitation). While not all projects are amenable to disaggregation, over US\$ 3.2 billion (48%) in ODA disbursements was disaggregated between the two subsectors in 2023. Trend data indicate that the percentage of ODA to sanitation fluctuates between 31% and 40% of allocable ODA, and that it declined from 40% to 34% from 2021 to 2023.

Development partner WASH strategies

Seventeen development partners that participated in the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey reported they have a multiyear strategy specifically for water or WASH (Table 7.2), with eight revising their water or WASH strategies in 2024 or 2025 to address climate resiliency in WASH, increase prioritization on WASH system strengthening, add menstrual hygiene management and/or focus on reinventing the toilet.

Table 7.2 Development partner WASH strategies

| Organization | Title of WASH strategy | Last revised |
|---------------------|--|--------------|
| ADB | Strategy 2030 Water Sector Directional Guide | 2021 |
| AECID | Sectoral Action Plan for Water | 2010 |
| AFD | Water and Sanitation - Sectoral intervention framework | 2024 |
| AfDB | The African Development Bank Group Water Strategy 2021–2025: Towards a Water Secure Africa | 2021 |
| BMZ | Core Area Strategy: Conserving nature and natural resources, protecting life on Earth | 2024 |
| European Commission | European Water Resilience Strategy 2025–2050 | 2025 |
| Gates Foundation | Making reinvented toilets more affordable | 2024 |
| IRC | Destination 2030 Theory of Change | 2021 |
| JICA | JICA Global Agenda for Sustainable Water Resources Management and Water Supply: Cluster Strategy for Supporting the Growth of Water Utilities | 2021 |
| | JICA Global Agenda for Environmental Management: Cluster Strategy for Promotion of Healthy Environment through Appropriate Environmental Regulations and Pollution Control | 2021 |
| Osprey Foundation | Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Program – Strengthening Systems and Seeding Innovation | 2025 |
| SHF | Strategy Framework, 2022–2025 | 2021 |
| UNICEF | UNICEF Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016–2030 | 2016 |
| WaterAid | Global Strategy 2022–2032 | 2022 |
| Water For People | Strategic Plan 2025–2027: Learning, Adapting, and Growing for Significant Impact | 2024 |
| Water.org | FY 2024–26 Strategy | 2025 |
| World Bank | World Bank Group Water Strategy 2025–2030 | 2024 |
| WHO | WHO Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy, 2018–2025 | 2023 |

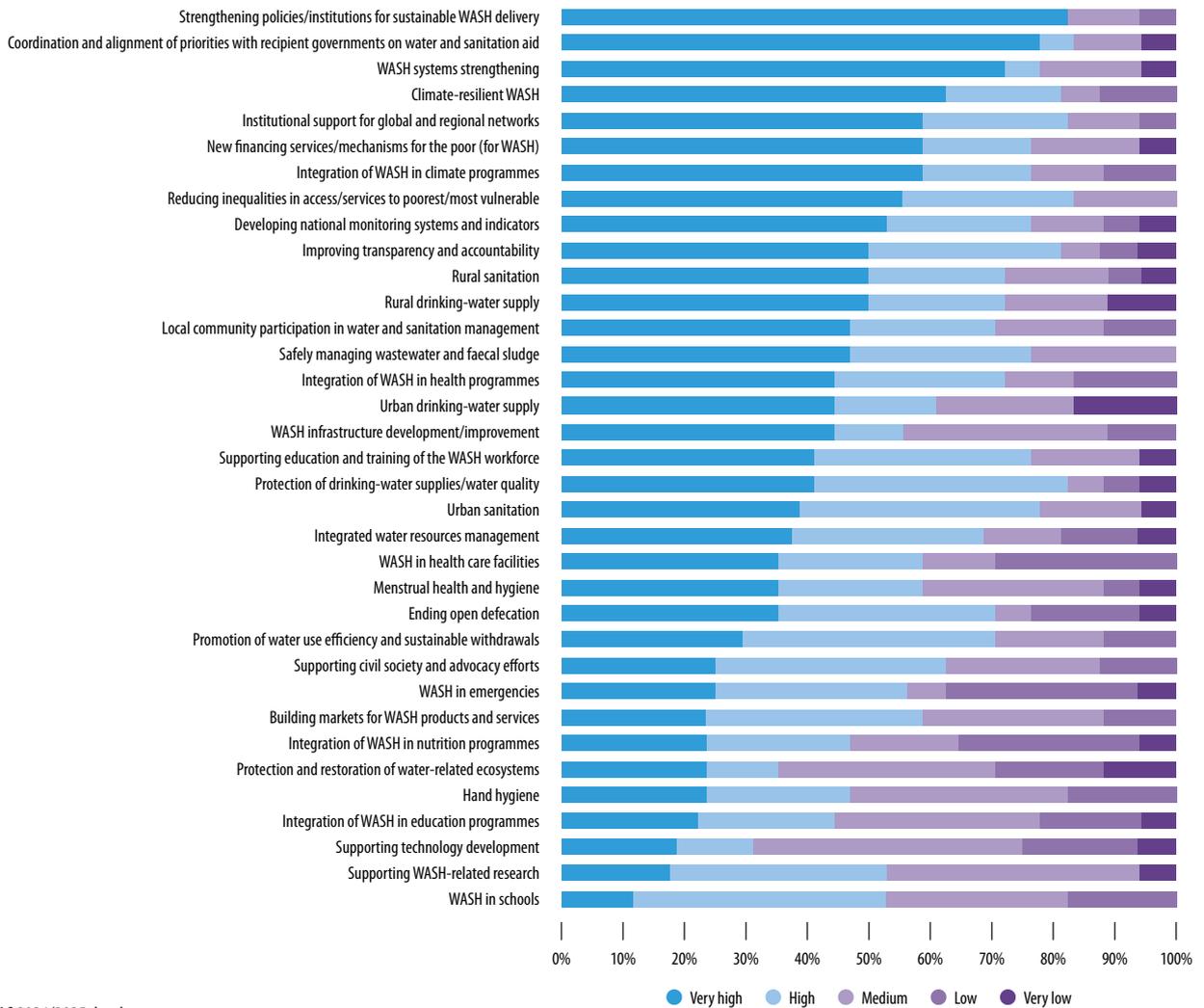
Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey.

Priority WASH areas for development partners

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey, development partners were asked to rank priority areas for water and sanitation from “very low” to “very high” on a five-point scale. Results show there is a wide range of development partner priorities. Nevertheless, four areas emerged as high priorities for the majority of development partners: (a) strengthening policies and institutions for sustainable WASH delivery, (b) coordination and alignment of priorities with recipient governments on water and sanitation, (c) WASH systems strengthening and (d) climate-resilient WASH (Fig. 7.4). See section 10 on climate and WASH for information on how development partners are addressing climate-resilient WASH. Box 7.1 provides an example of coordination and alignment through the UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation.



Fig. 7.4 Main water and sanitation priority areas for development partners (n = 18)



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey.

Box 7.1 WHO and UNICEF contributions to implementation of the UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation

Following up on the historic UN 2023 Water Conference, the General Assembly adopted resolution 77/334. This resolution requested the Secretary-General to present a UN system-wide strategy for water and sanitation to enhance the coordination and delivery of water priorities across the UN system, and in this context, to place particular emphasis on the water-related needs of developing countries. UN-Water prepared the first UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation and its collaborative implementation plan for 2025–2028 to reflect a common vision and identify a set of six Priority Collaborative Actions that the UN system and its partners will work on together, to drive progress on water and sanitation during 2025–2028.

As Members of UN-Water, WHO and UNICEF are actively engaged in operationalizing and implementing several Priority Collaborative Actions.

- **Action 1.2:** Together with UNEP, WHO is co-leading the preparation of technical inputs from the UN system and its partners for “Water beyond 2030”.
- **Action 2:** UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations co-lead the Country-level Engagement Task Force that promotes collaboration for joint country programming that strives to enable UN country teams to use SDG 6 as a catalyst for integrated development solutions.
- **Action 4:** As members of the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6, WHO and UNICEF support unified efforts to improve availability and use of evidence and learning to accelerate progress.

Additionally, WHO and UNICEF are also supporting the implementation of the strategy and its plan through individual and joint actions within their mandated areas and respective work programmes. These efforts are reflected in the contributing actions database hosted by UN-Water.

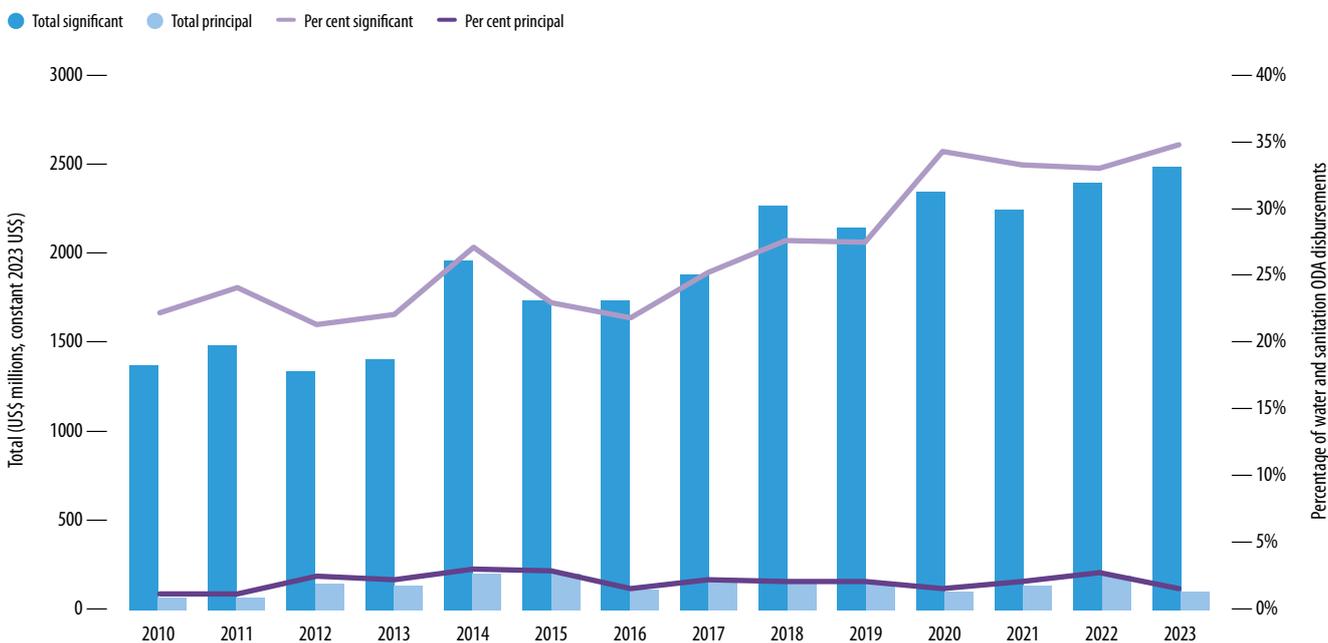
Development partner support for WASH and gender

When donors report to the OECD-CRS on ODA, they categorize how their ODA targets gender equality. The gender equality policy marker has three categories, defined as follows (1).

- **Principal:** Gender equality is the main objective of the project/programme and is fundamental to its design and expected results. The project/programme would not have been undertaken without this objective.
- **Significant:** Gender quality is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the project/programme, often explained as gender quality being mainstreamed in the project/programme.
- **Not targeted:** The project/programme has been screened against the gender marker but has not been found to target gender equality.

The percentage of water and sanitation ODA disbursements with a significant gender equality component rose between 2010 and 2023, increasing to 35% in 2023 (Fig. 7.5).

Fig. 7.5 Water and sanitation ODA disbursements marked as significant or principal for the gender equality marker, 2010–2023



Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.

Ten development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey reported that gender is a top-five aid priority for their organization, and five development partners noted menstrual health and hygiene is a high priority or focus for their WASH activities. Below are examples of some development partners' specific activities/programmes related to gender and WASH.

- **AECID** implements gender mainstreaming in three areas: (a) addressing women's specific needs in water and sanitation; (b) promoting the conditions for women's effective social and political

participation in water management decisions; and (c) providing technical, administrative and system management and operation training, contributing to women's professionalization in traditionally male-dominated positions.

- **AFD** aims to maximize reducing gender inequalities through specific actions, including:
 - the design of infrastructure adapted to the needs of women and girls, in particular for public toilets, schools and health centres;
 - the definition of gender-sensitive awareness campaigns on hygiene and the uses of water, to target messages and adapt implementation arrangements, as well as to integrate specific topics such as menstrual hygiene;
 - the consideration of gender in subsidized connections policies and campaigns;
 - the consideration of women's voices in the decision-making process for project implementation, as well as for resources and service management; and
 - the evolution of operators' human resources policies and implementation strategies to develop women's access to training and employment opportunities and to promote the development of inclusive working environments.
- The **European Commission's** action "Beyond pipes and toilets: promoting the human rights to water and sanitation through advocacy, coordination and accountability" seeks to advance the human rights to safe drinking-water and sanitation, especially for women, girls and vulnerable groups, through advocacy, multistakeholder engagement and improved monitoring.
- **FCDO's** WASH for Health Programme strengthens national WASH systems by embedding gender and inclusion into local planning and monitoring. It supports gender inclusion at a community level, involving women and women-led organizations in WASH planning and budgeting.
- As part of the WASH for Health Programme, **IRC** published a learning note that looks at integrating gender-, equity- and social-inclusion-based approaches into WASH systems strengthening approaches.
- **SHF** integrates gender equality and social inclusion across all pillars of its strategy – building markets, scaling value chains and ensuring sustainable impact. In 2024, SHF launched Capital M, its flagship initiative for menstrual health market development. Capital M provides a structured pathway to drive systemic market reform, tackle volume, scale and enterprise development under a single, unified platform. It is designed to expand access to menstrual health products by making a range of options available on local markets that women and girls want to use, trust and can afford.
- **Water For People** has mainstreamed gender and inclusion in all of its programming. One specific example is in the Plurinational State of Bolivia where Water For People is implementing the Women Plumber Certification Initiative, where more than 70 Indigenous women are taking on an unexpected yet vital role: training to become plumbers. Breaking gender stereotypes, these women are gaining technical and business skills to ensure water access in their communities. They are not only learning how to install showers, tanks or irrigation systems, but also stepping into leadership roles in a field traditionally dominated by men.
- In the 2024 fiscal year, all 23 approved **World Bank** water projects conducted gender analysis and included gender actions that will be monitored during implementation. Of these 23 projects, 14 addressed voice and agency, two targeted gender-based violence and six focused on health. In terms of employment, 12 projects included the creation of medium- and high-skilled job opportunities for women.

Development partner WASH targets

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey, development partners were asked to report their specific global or regional targets for increasing access to water and sanitation services. Table 7.3 highlights those targets.

Table 7.3 Summary of development partner targets for access to drinking-water and sanitation

| Organization | Target | Description of target measure | Time frame |
|---------------------|--|--|------------|
| AECID | 4.4 million | People and households with drinking-water service, new sanitation services and awareness of hygiene | |
| AFD | 20 million (drinking-water); 5 million (sanitation) | Number of people benefiting from a safely managed drinking-water service; number of people benefiting from a safely managed sanitation service between 2025 and 2030 | By 2030 |
| BMZ | 6 million per year (drinking-water); 4 million people per year (sanitation) | Number of people with access to new or improved drinking-water supply and number of people with access to new or improved basic sanitation or wastewater treatment | By 2030 |
| European Commission | 70 million | Individuals with access to an improved drinking-water source and/or sanitation facility | By 2030 |
| IRC | 20 million | People served with safe, reliable and sustainable water and sanitation services | By 2030 |
| JICA | 30 million (improved drinking-water service); 50 countries and 500 million people (beneficiaries of improved environment including sanitation) | Water utility service population growth by 30 million and promotion of healthy environment through appropriate environmental regulation and pollution control | By 2030 |
| UNICEF | 60 million | Additional people with access to basic sanitation services, additional people with access to safe and available water, and people reached with basic hygiene | 2022–2025 |
| WaterAid | 400 million | Direct and indirect reach, including: achieving sustainable and safe services, prioritizing WASH across the health sector, strengthening WASH resilience to climate change, and increasing quantity and quality of financing | 2033 |
| Water For People | 7 million | People with beyond basic services: basic service plus one or more components of safely managed services (on-premises, available when needed, free from contamination) | By 2027 |
| Water.org | 31.5 million | People with WASH improvements (basic + safely managed services) | 2024–2026 |
| World Bank | 155.8 million (27.2 million safely managed) | People provided with water, sanitation and/or hygiene (number provided with safely managed services) | |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey.

Leveraging and mobilizing funds for WASH

Globally, external aid in the form of grants and repayable finance comprises less than 18% of total WASH funding (Fig. 6.13), while available funding is only a third to a half of what is needed for countries to meet their national targets. Recognizing that funding needed to reach national targets exceeds current financial flows and that development aid may become increasingly scarce in the coming years, development partners are seeking to leverage limited resources to mobilize additional funding for WASH from government, commercial finance, the private sector and other donors. Sixteen development partners provided examples that highlight how their organizations have been able to leverage their financial or technical assistance to encourage increased funding for the WASH sector.

- **Co-financing with other partners:** JICA has supported the development of a water supply plan for Kigali, Rwanda, including a feasibility study on priority projects. The JICA plan has helped mobilize development funds from other development partners, including the construction of a water treatment plant supported by the Hungarian Government with a US\$ 52 million loan. In addition, loans from

the Saudi Development Fund and the OPEC Fund for International Development (US\$ 20 million and US\$ 21 million, respectively) have supported the construction of water transmission and distribution facilities.

- **Leveraging aid through ongoing partnerships and trust funds:** **ADA** and **AfDB** noted support to the African Water Facility, which has provided grants and technical assistance to ensure projects are bankable and viable and has led to the mobilization of 10 times the investment amounts. **FCDO**, along with other partners, has leveraged its funds through support to the Global Water Security & Sanitation Partnership to increase knowledge and scale up water sector investments. **AFD**, along with other development partners, has supported SWA to help encourage increased financing/funding commitments by national governments. The **Gates Foundation** cites its legacy contributions to all major development banks as contributing to increased leveraging across Africa and Asia.
- **Leveraging technical and financial support to catalyse investment in water utilities:** **Germany**, in cooperation with other partners, announced the transformative Urban Water Catalyst Initiative at the UN 2023 Water Conference to emphasize the critical role of water operators in driving sustainable economic, environmental and social development, and achieving the human rights to water and sanitation. The Urban Water Catalyst Initiative seeks to improve urban WASH services by enhancing the operational and financial performance of water utilities in countries such as Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. It also aims to enhance access to financing for sustainable investments in climate-resilient and socially inclusive drinking-water and sanitation infrastructure. The initiative will be implemented through a Turnaround Facility, established as a foundation in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- **Secure matching funding from governments or the private sector:** **SHF** has mobilized additional resources from the public and private sectors, with a view to creating sustainable and resilient markets. A successful example is in Uganda, where the government supports a results-based finance programme for sanitation. **Water For People** has principles/criteria for making an investment in any country, which include securing co-finance from national governments. An example is the Rulindo Challenge in Rwanda, where the national government has provided over US\$ 12 million to a joint programme to achieve universal and sustainable services. This arrangement in Rwanda has helped lead to approval of a US\$ 300 million loan from AfDB to the Government of Rwanda for two national programmes focused on sustainable and resilient services.
- **Support and advocacy to encourage governments to commit more funds to WASH and attract additional resources:** In Burundi, **UNICEF** and partners have advocated for increased sectoral investment and sector reform, leading the government to double WASH budget allocations from 2019 to 2025. **WaterAid** has prioritized national policy advocacy and influencing for increasing WASH financing. In Uganda, the Ministry of Water and Environment and WaterAid Uganda have successfully secured US\$ 9.5 million from the Adaptation Fund for climate adaptation measures including climate-resilient WASH in the Mpologoma River basin. **WHO** has contributed to activities such as government roadmaps, pilots and national policies that have the aim of expanding financing envelopes and stakeholder engagement. In Mozambique, post-training assessments have shown significant participant improvement, reinforcing institutional ownership and paving the way for broader implementation and investment in WASH in health care facilities.
- **Using blending instruments to reduce commercial or private sector risk of WASH investments:** **AFD** has financed a 3 million euro grant, which uses an innovative financial tool that mobilizes private

finance – the Development Impact Bond – for an integrated programme to improve menstrual hygiene management in Adama, Ethiopia. **Water.org's** flagship WaterCredit initiative has mobilized over US\$ 6.5 billion in capital from financial institutions and households cumulatively. In Peru, Water.org has collaborated with financial institutions and the national development bank on a blue bond, which has generated US\$ 26.5 million in capital for water and sanitation expansion and improvements among households. The **European Commission** has used the Latin American and Caribbean Investment Facility as a regional blending mechanism to support and leverage investment projects in countries benefiting from the European Union's external cooperation. By strategically combining a limited amount of grant funding with financing from eligible financial institutions and the private sector, the European Commission aims to maximize the development impact of these investments.

- **Supporting WASH markets: Sida** has provided grant support to the organization WASTE and its programme Take-a-Stake with the purpose to invest in small- and medium-sized WASH enterprises and with the aim to prove investment worthiness.

Future focus and impacts of a new aid environment

Given the shifting aid environment, development partners recognize that the decreasing availability of financial resources may dramatically reshape their strategies and priorities for WASH.

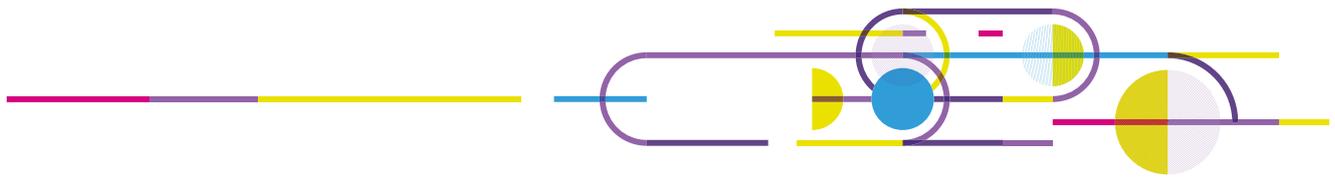
Among **bilateral donors**, several indicate strong commitments to supporting the WASH sector, but recognize that reductions to funds for ODA will occur in the future (**AFD, FCDO**) and that there is an increased need to focus on financial leveraging. **BMZ** remains strongly committed to supporting the WASH sector through contributions to transitional aid and long-term development cooperation support. **JICA**, the largest bilateral donor to the water and sanitation sector (in terms of aid disbursements), indicates there are no foreseen impacts on its plans or strategies related to WASH.

Among **multilateral organizations**, **UNICEF** plans to focus additional efforts on climate resilience and financing, but foresees negative impacts on WASH programming and staffing, and humanitarian response capacity. Meanwhile, **AfDB** envisions bigger investments in water and WASH for 2026–2030 to attain or move closer to SDG 6 targets and will remain active in exploring innovative ways to increase financing. **ADB** also sees an increase in financing. A significant expansion of ADB's financing commitments is expected, which will grow by 50% over the next decade, from US\$ 24 billion in 2024 to over US\$ 36 billion in 2034. This will have related and direct impacts on growth in investment for WASH. The **European Commission** expects to increase leveraging of its aid through the Global Gateway tools, blended finance and private sector engagement to close the WASH funding gap.

For **NGOs**, many recognize that the new aid environment will make raising funds more challenging and more competitive (**WaterAid, Water.org**), even in the sphere of private and corporate funding. **IRC** expects to be increasingly focused on demonstrating the change and impact of system strengthening, and ensuring work towards the SDG targets remains well focused. Climate resilience and finance are priorities.

Reference

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8. SDG 6 MoI Targets 6.a and 6.b

When UN Member States adopted the universal, integrated and transformative 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs in September 2015, they expressed their determination “to mobilize the means required to implement” it (1). Given the central importance of sufficient “means of implementation” to achieve the SDGs, Member States adopted 43 MoI targets under Goals 1–16, denoted by letters, and a dedicated Goal 17: *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development*.

The MoI underpin the achievement of the sustainable development outcomes envisaged by the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs. The UN describes MoI as “the interdependent mix of financial resources, technology development and transfer, capacity-building, inclusive and equitable globalization and trade, regional integration, as well as the creation of a national enabling environment required to implement the new sustainable development agenda, particularly in developing countries” (2). For SDG 6 – *Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all* – two of the eight targets are formulated as MoI targets: Target 6.a addresses international cooperation and Target 6.b focuses on local participation to improve water and sanitation management, which are measured by indicators 6.a.1 and 6.b.1, respectively. Table 8.1 provides the full text of the SDG 6 MoI targets and indicators.

Table 8.1 SDG 6 MoI targets and indicators

| SDG 6 target | Indicator |
|--|---|
| 6.a. By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies | 6.a.1. Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance that is part of a government-coordinated spending plan |
| 6.b. Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management | 6.b.1. Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management |

WHO is responsible for global monitoring and reporting on the indicators for Targets 6.a and 6.b (indicators 6.a.1 and 6.b.1, respectively) in collaboration with the OECD and UNEP.

This section focuses on results on SDG Targets 6.a and 6.b. Box 8.1 highlights how monitoring the MoI for SDG 6 could be strengthened up to 2030 and beyond.

Box 8.1 Rethinking monitoring of the MoI for SDG 6 (Targets 6.a and 6.b)

Despite broad agreement on the importance of the MoI for achievement of the SDGs, the formulation of SDG 6 MoI targets and indicators is suboptimal. The translation of the multifaceted MoI targets into measurable indicators has been problematic, and the indicators lack directionality, making meaningful data aggregation and interpretation difficult.

Recognizing the urgent need to address the systemic barriers to progress, WHO has developed a strategic white paper titled “Improving monitoring of the Means of Implementation for water and sanitation”, published in April 2025, where the MoI refer to the structural and institutional enablers needed to support country-level implementation for the whole of SDG 6, including governance, financing, data, capacity development and innovation (3). Developed as an input to the strategic planning of GLAAS, the paper assesses challenges in translating MoI concepts into effective indicators relevant across the scope of SDG 6 and highlights the need for more meaningful, policy-relevant data.

Four actions were identified that can improve the monitoring of the MoI for water and sanitation up to 2030 and for the processes leading up to “post-2030”. The actions are listed below.

- Communicate a “bigger picture” narrative about the MoI for SDG 6 beyond the two existing SDG 6 MoI indicators (6.a.1 and 6.b.1). Give higher profile to the MoI for SDG 6 in policy briefs, SDG reports, UN conferences and high-level meetings on water and sanitation.
- Invest in country-level efforts to strengthen national monitoring and review systems and data-collection “pipelines” for priority MoI-type areas for SDG 6 acceleration.
- Generate evidence, document lessons learned and synthesize technical recommendations on water and sanitation drivers of progress and good practices for monitoring MoI-type targets and indicators. Develop and test potential candidate MoI-type indicators for water and sanitation across SDG 6. Provide timely technical inputs related to MoI for water and sanitation in global and regional processes.
- Advocate for MoI for water and sanitation. Facilitate dialogue and build consensus around MoI-related topics and monitoring for water and sanitation. Leverage the UN Financing for Development processes and SDG 17, as well as meetings of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators to bring greater attention and build support for an improved approach for MoI targets and indicators in the post-2030 sustainable development framework.

SDG Target 6.a: International cooperation and capacity-building support

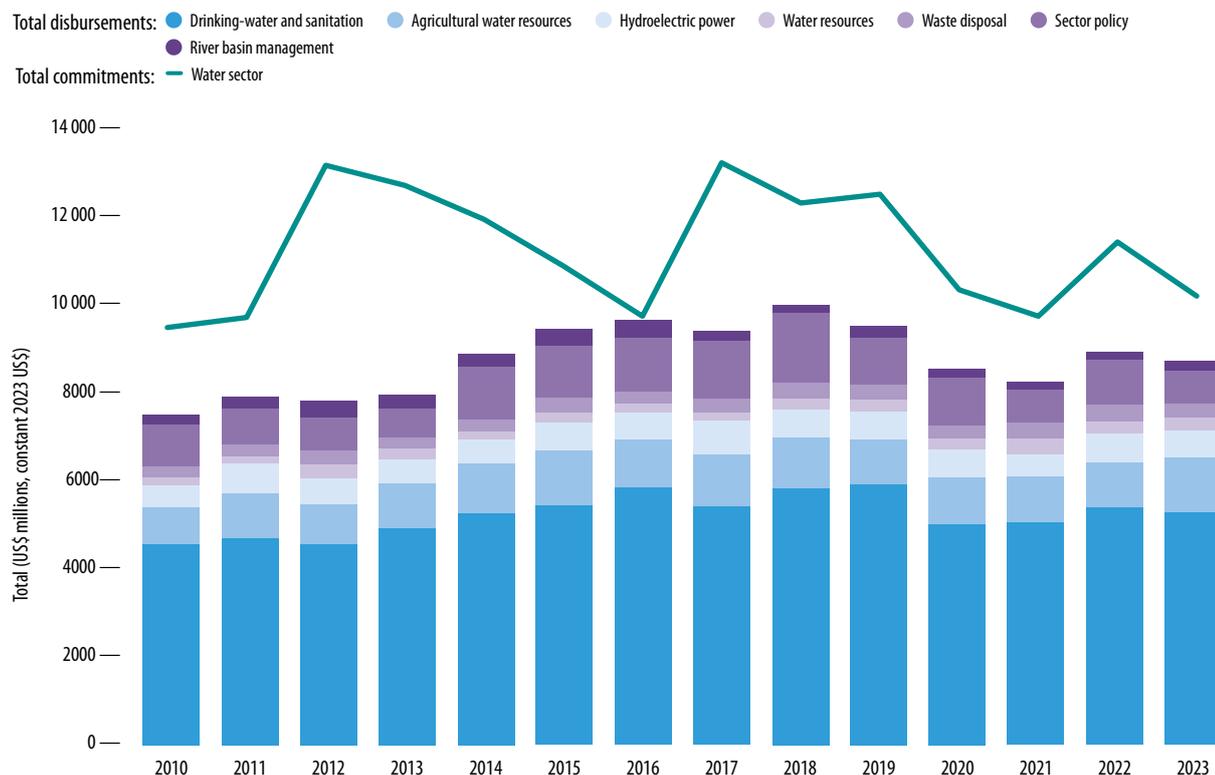
Indicator 6.a.1: Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance that is part of a government-coordinated spending plan

SDG Target 6.a aims to increase international cooperation and capacity-building support. It is monitored primarily through volume of ODA funding for the water sector. As an MoI target for all outcome targets under SDG 6, the scope of water sector ODA goes beyond water supply and sanitation ODA. It also includes ODA for agricultural water resources and hydroelectric power plants. Donor countries report annually on the amount of ODA they provide for water-related activities and programmes to the OECD-CRS. Recipient countries report on indicator 6.a.1 through the GLAAS country survey questions related to “external financing”.

The data reported for SDG indicator 6.a.1 are based on ODA disbursements – the amount of actual payments from donors to recipients. Disbursements reflect the amount of aid received by recipients in a specific year, whereas commitments reflect donors’ intent to provide aid in the future. Water sector ODA disbursements showed an overall increasing trend between 2010 and 2018, followed by a decrease until 2021 due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic (Fig. 8.1). While disbursements showed a small increase in 2022 to US\$ 8.9 billion, they then declined slightly to US\$ 8.7 billion in 2023. ODA commitments to the water sector decreased more substantially – from US\$ 11.4 billion in 2022 to US\$ 10.2 billion in 2023 – indicating possible future reductions in ODA. Commitments tend to show greater fluctuations as donors often make multiyear commitments that are accounted for in the year in which the agreement is signed. Commitments and disbursements for the same year should not be compared directly to each other, as the commitments recorded are paid out and recorded as disbursements in subsequent years.

Following a rebound in 2022, ODA commitments and disbursements for the water sector decreased by 9% and 2%, respectively, from 2022 to 2023.

Fig. 8.1 ODA commitments and disbursements for the water sector, 2010–2023



Notes: This chart includes ODA only and excludes private grants. The ODA disbursement for education and training in water supply and sanitation (14081) is incorporated into the drinking-water supply and sanitation category. This ODA disbursement has ranged from US\$ 29 million (2014) to US\$ 74 million (2023) per year from 2010 to 2023, or less than 1% of all water sector ODA disbursements in all years.

Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.

Alignment of donor funds with national plans

Alignment of donor funding with national priorities and spending plans is a key element of indicator 6.a.1. With ODA facing an uncertain future, there is an increasing need for better alignment and better internal coordination to ensure available funds are spent efficiently on priorities that are agreed between governments and donors.

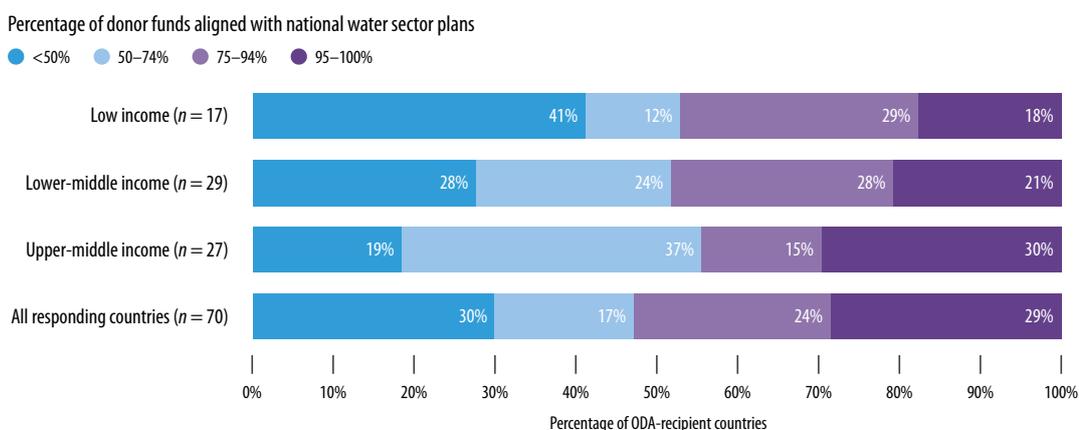
Reporting of donor alignment with recipient country national plans shows a mixed picture. In 2024, 30% of all responding countries reported low alignment²⁴ between donor funding and national water sector plans, with low-income countries more likely to report low funding alignment compared to higher-income countries (Fig. 8.2).

²⁴ "Low" alignment corresponds to less than 50% of funds aligned with the national water sector plan.

However, funding alignment has improved since the GLAAS 2021/2022 cycle, with over half of responding countries in 2024/2025 cycle reporting that at least 75% of external funds are aligned with national water sector plans. The greatest increase is seen in low-income countries, where twice as many countries reported at least 75% alignment in the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle compared to the 2021/2022 cycle.

Over half of countries reported funds are predominantly²⁵ aligned with national water sector plans, and fund alignment has improved in low-income countries since the GLAAS 2021/2022 cycle.

Fig. 8.2 Percentage of ODA-recipient countries that reported alignment of donor funds with national water sector plans, by World Bank income group



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

That donors rank coordination and alignment with recipient governments as a high priority (Fig. 7.4) contrasts interestingly with findings in this section that reflect recipient countries’ perspectives on donor alignment with national plans. This differing perspective between donors and recipients was also highlighted by the Water Policy Group in the 2021 *Listening to national water leaders* report where national water leaders of 47% of the surveyed countries considered international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes to be not adequate. However, for 70% of surveyed donor countries, national water leaders considered their country is doing enough to achieve international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes (4). There seems a need for more mutual understanding between donor and recipient countries related to aid alignment and adequacy.

Future of ODA to the water sector

Data reported to the OECD-CRS show there has been little change in the top donors to the water sector since 2015, with the International Development Association (part of the World Bank), Japan, Germany and European Union institutions constituting the top four donors in 2015 as well as in 2023, contributing 60% of ODA disbursements to the sector in 2023. However, since 2024, multiple donors have announced broad cuts to ODA, and it is expected that ODA for the water sector will be affected in coming years. While it is not yet possible to quantify the impacts for the water sector, a number of bilateral donors that have announced cuts to aid collectively contributed US\$ 2.4 billion or 28% of ODA to the water sector in 2023. It is expected that the effects on water sector ODA will start to be visible in the next OECD-CRS reporting cycle.

²⁵ “Predominantly” is defined here as funds that are at least 75% aligned with water sector plans.

SDG Target 6.b: Participation of local communities

Indicator 6.b.1: Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management

Under SDG 6, the MoI Target 6.b is monitored through the GLAAS country survey section on “Governance”. The target aims to support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management. Strengthening community participation is fundamental to adapt and sustain solutions for water and sanitation management to local contexts and to ensure no one is left behind. However, implementing and monitoring effective participatory processes remains complex (5, 6). Indicator 6.b.1 is being measured through “Proportion of countries with clearly defined procedures in law or policy for participation by service users and communities in planning programmes” and “Proportion of countries with a high level of users and communities participating in planning programmes” for six subsectors: (a) urban sanitation, (b) rural sanitation, (c) urban drinking-water supply, (d) rural drinking-water supply, (e) hygiene promotion and (f) water resources planning and management. The data for two representative subsectors are reported to the UN Statistical Division to be included in the SDG global database: rural drinking-water supply, and water resources planning and management.

The GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey found that 92% of countries (92 of 100) reported having defined procedures for local community participation in law or policy for rural drinking-water, and 89% (91 of 102) for water resources planning and management. However, only 38% of countries (38 of 100) of countries reported having high levels²⁶ of community participation for rural drinking-water, and 28% (27 of 98) for water resources planning and management. Communities with high levels of participation have regular opportunities to take part in planning processes and may even have formal representation in decision-making processes for water and sanitation management. In contrast, communities with low levels of participation receive information from decision-makers, but have limited opportunities to influence decisions.



Fewer than 40% of countries have high levels of community participation for rural drinking-water and even fewer for water resources planning and management.

Community participation can take different forms and is closely related to accountability mechanisms for service providers. Table 8.2 shows the percentage of countries where at least 75% of the rural population has access to different types of participation and accountability mechanisms. The results by World Bank income group show that rural populations in low-income countries are less likely to have access to all types of participation and accountability mechanisms compared to middle- and high-income countries.

²⁶ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, “high levels of participation” includes countries responding that they have “high” or “very high” levels of participation on a six-point scale. A “high level of participation” is defined as having users/communities with regular opportunities to formally take part in relevant policy, planning and management processes, and having processes that are documented and acted upon by the responsible entities. A “very high level of participation” is defined as users/communities having formal representation in government processes contributing to joint decision-making on issues and activities, as appropriate, and having processes that are documented and subject to redress if responsible entities fail to act accordingly.

Table 8.2 Percentage of countries reporting at least 75% of rural populations have opportunities for participation for sanitation and drinking-water services

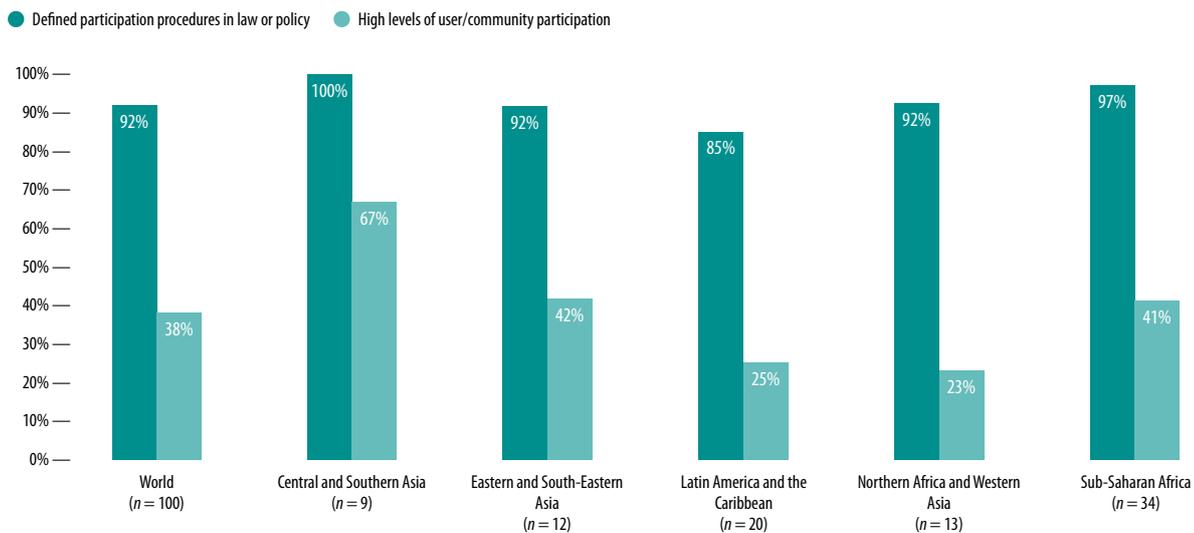
● 0–25% ● 26–50% ● 51–75% ● 76–100%

| World Bank income group | <i>n</i> | Access to publicly available information | Regular opportunities for public engagement (such as meetings with service providers or local government responsible for WASH services) | Access to formal feedback systems | Mechanisms to receive, document and resolve conflicts and resolve conflicts through regulatory authorities |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| All responding countries | 94 | 31% | 37% | 36% | 38% |
| Low income | 19 | 11% | 16% | 5% | 21% |
| Low-middle income | 36 | 31% | 44% | 42% | 31% |
| Upper-middle income | 28 | 29% | 32% | 39% | 46% |
| High income | 11 | 73% | 64% | 64% | 73% |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Regionally, all countries in Central and Southern Asia (100%, 9 of 9) and almost all countries in sub-Saharan Africa (97%, 33 of 34) reported having defined participation procedures in law or policy for rural drinking-water (Fig. 8.3). The percentage of countries that reported high levels of community participation in rural drinking-water is also highest in countries in Central and Southern Asia (67%, 6 of 9).

Fig. 8.3 Percentage of countries that define participation procedures for rural drinking-water in law or policy and have high levels of participation, by SDG region



Note: This chart shows only those regions for which data were available for at least 50% of countries or at least 50% of the population in the region. Based on these criteria, the following regions were excluded: Australia and New Zealand, Europe and Northern America, and Oceania.

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Participation of users and communities is constrained by a lack of financial and human resources. Only 9% of countries (8 of 92) reported having sufficient²⁷ financial resources to support the participation of users and communities for rural drinking-water and sanitation, and only 11% (10 of 89) for water resources planning and management. Similarly, only 13% of countries (12 of 89) reported having sufficient human resources to support participation in rural drinking-water, and only 13% (11 of 83) for water resources planning management.

²⁷ In the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, “sufficient financial resources” and “sufficient human resources” are defined as having at least 75% of what is needed.

Countries with a designated agency or institution responsible for participatory procedures are more likely to report high levels of participation. Forty-seven per cent of countries (24 of 51) reported having a responsible agency or institution and high levels of participation in rural sanitation and drinking-water, compared to countries with low levels of participation, where only 2% (1 of 51) reported having a responsible agency or institution. This is aligned with findings from the SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey question on local participation in water resources planning and management (for further information, see the country reports (7) and the global reports (8)).



Countries with a designated agency or institution responsible for participatory procedures are far more likely to report high levels of participation.

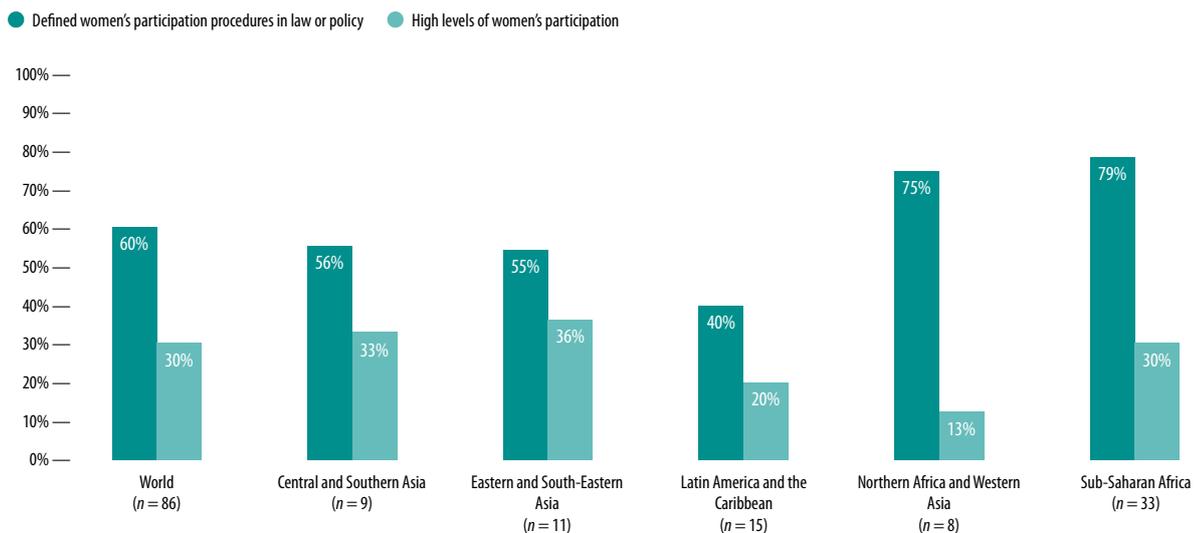
Women’s participation in WASH

For rural drinking-water globally, 60% of countries (52 of 86) reported they define women’s participation procedures in law or policy. However, this is far fewer than the 92% of countries defining user and community participation in law and policy. Countries also reported women’s participation remains low, with less than a third of countries (30%, 26 of 86) reporting high levels of women’s participation, globally. Women’s participation is reported to be highest in responding countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (Fig. 8.4).



While procedures for women’s participation are in place for a majority of countries, participation itself remains low.

Fig. 8.4 Percentage of countries that define women’s participation procedures for rural drinking-water in law or policy and have high levels of women’s participation, by SDG region



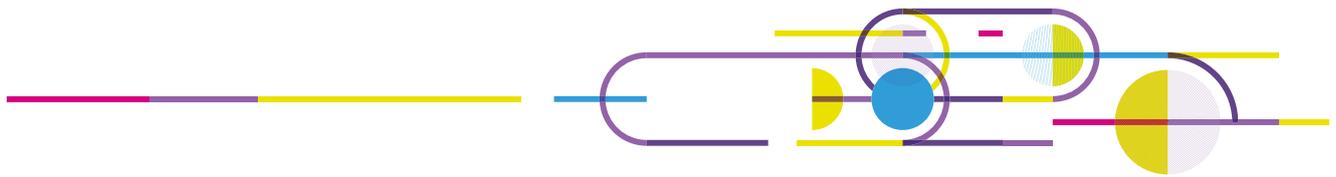
Note: This chart shows only those regions for which data were available for at least 50% of countries or at least 50% of the population in the region. Based on these criteria, the following regions were excluded: Australia and New Zealand, Europe and Northern America, and Oceania.

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

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²⁸ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.



9. Leaving no one behind

“Leaving no one behind” is a key component of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, water and sanitation are formally recognized as human rights. Leaving no one behind in this context therefore means working to extend and sustain access to all. This section focuses on recognizing the human rights to water and sanitation, affordability of WASH services, measures that governments have put in place to reach underserved populations and settings, and issues related to gender and WASH.

Human rights to water and sanitation

In 2010, a UN General Assembly resolution formally recognized the human right to water and sanitation, acknowledging that equitable access to safe and clean drinking-water and sanitation is essential to the realization of all human rights (1). In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, 87% of countries (90 of 103) reported recognizing the right to water in their constitution or legislation, and 83% (86 of 103) recognized the right to sanitation.



A majority of countries recognize the human rights to water and sanitation in their constitution or legislation.

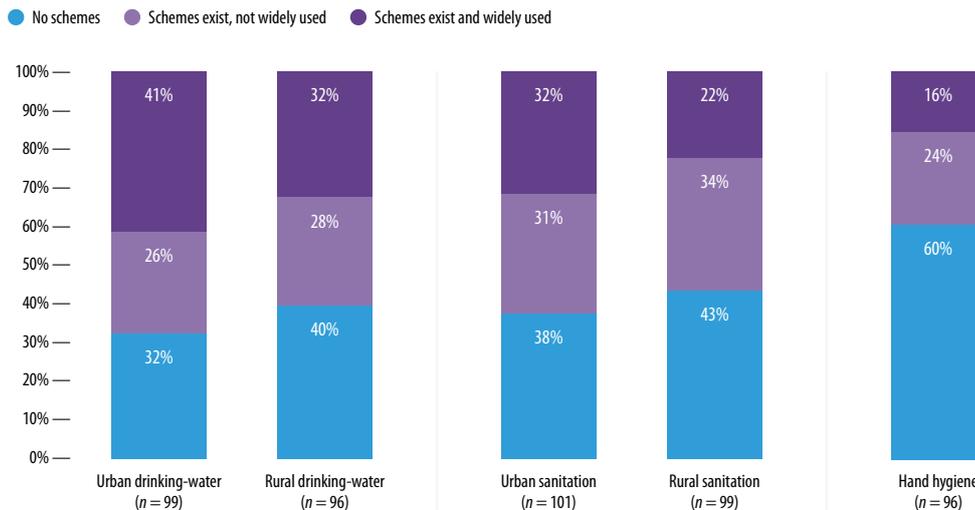
Affordability of WASH services

Affordability is also expressed within the UN recognition of the human rights to water and sanitation and is an integral element of SDG Target 6.1. Financial schemes such as fee exemptions, subsidies and reduced tariffs contribute to making WASH services affordable for households, especially for rural populations or populations living in vulnerable situations. To support the affordability of WASH services, countries reported they are most likely to have financial schemes in place for urban drinking-water and urban sanitation, and least likely to have schemes in place for rural drinking-water, rural sanitation and hand hygiene (Fig. 9.1).



Financial schemes to make services affordable are least likely for rural drinking-water and sanitation, and hand hygiene.

Fig. 9.1 Percentage of countries that have and use financial schemes to make WASH more affordable



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Evidence from WASH accounts indicates that households contribute the largest share of expenditure for WASH, the majority of which come from out-of-pocket expenditure, especially on hygiene products. The burden of paying for WASH services is also disproportionate, often most affecting rural and poor populations. For example, WASH accounts results from Bangladesh show that the poorest households spend the highest percentage of their income on WASH in urban and in rural settings (2). Box 9.1 provides more information on WASH accounts.

Box 9.1 WASH accounts: strengthening financial monitoring for evidence-based decision-making

Previous GLAAS cycles have highlighted persistent challenges in the availability and quality of financial data for WASH. In response, a growing number of countries are adopting the TrackFin methodology to develop WASH accounts, which provides a comprehensive, standardized overview of WASH financial flows and expenditure. WASH accounts enable governments and partners to make evidence-based decisions by answering four key questions.

- What is the total expenditure in the WASH sector?
- What are funds being spent on?
- Who is financing WASH services and by how much?
- Who provides WASH services and what are their expenditures?

By providing a clear picture of how resources are allocated and spent, WASH accounts enable governments and development partners to identify financing gaps, compare spending against investment plans, and monitor international commitments and progress towards financial targets (such as the Ngor Declaration on Sanitation and Hygiene in Africa). WASH accounts support better planning and help ensure funds are used efficiently and effectively, promoting greater transparency, coordination and accountability. For example, Senegal used the results from two cycles of WASH accounts covering 7 years of data to inform the new Sectoral Development Policy Letter, a key strategic and planning document for the WASH sector. The government is also working to institutionalize the process within the Ministry of Water and Sanitation by training staff, preparing an implementation manual, taking responsibility for mobilizing resources to sustain WASH accounts and launching the third national WASH survey with the National Statistics and Demographic Agency.

As of September 2025, 40 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have developed or are developing WASH accounts. As more countries adopt this approach, WASH accounts are proving to be a vital tool to enhance financial transparency, align investments with national priorities and accelerate progress towards universal access to WASH services.

The GLAAS data portal provides more information on WASH accounts and WASH accounts highlights with results from countries (3).

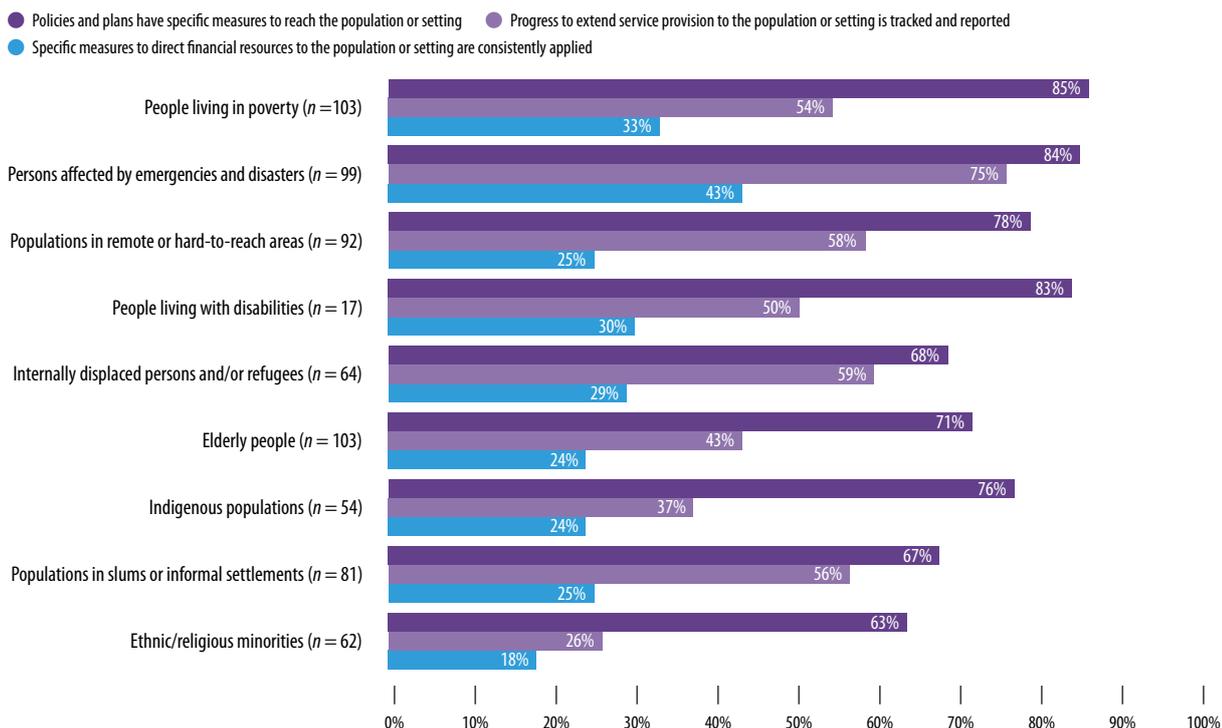
Some countries have taken other measures to address affordability. Forty-two per cent of countries (39 of 92) reported having defined the affordability of WASH services in policies or plans. Several countries have identified targets or indicators for affordability. Forty-five per cent of countries (44 of 98) reported having a national target for the affordability of drinking-water and 47% (34 of 72) have national indicators for affordability. In many cases, the targets or indicators reported establish a threshold based on percentage of disposable household income spent on WASH. For example, Lao People’s Democratic Republic reported a monthly water bill for poor households (with two incomes) should not exceed 5% of the monthly household income. Some countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Zambia, reported using surveys, such as standard of living surveys or household expenditure surveys, to monitor affordability and implement tariff revisions.

Equity measures for vulnerable populations and settings

The GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey included questions to understand what measures countries have in place to reach vulnerable populations and settings. These include populations such as people living with disabilities, people who are elderly or Indigenous populations, as well as in settings such as remote or hard-to-reach areas, slums or informal settlements and internally displaced persons and/or refugee camps.



Fig. 9.2 Percentage of countries with measures in policies and plans that monitor service provision and direct financial resources to improve and extend sanitation services to specific populations and settings



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

For people living in poverty, results indicate that most countries have specific measures in national policies and plans to reach these populations, but monitoring progress and financial resource allocation are often inadequate (Table 9.1).

Low-income countries are least likely to report having specific measures to target financial resources to people living in poverty.

Table 9.1 Measures to extend WASH services to people living in poverty, by World Bank income group

0–39% 40–59% 60–79% 80–100%

| | World Bank income group | Number of countries | Governance Policies and plans have specific measures to reach people living in poverty | Monitoring Progress to extend service provision to people living in poverty is tracked and reported | Finance Specific measures to direct financial resources people living in poverty are consistently applied |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|---|--|--|
| Sanitation | All responding countries | 103 | 85% | 54% | 33% |
| | Low income | 19 | 89% | 53% | 26% |
| | Lower-middle income | 36 | 94% | 58% | 22% |
| | Upper-middle income | 32 | 84% | 56% | 44% |
| | High income | 16 | 63% | 44% | 44% |
| Drinking-water | All responding countries | 103 | 87% | 56% | 40% |
| | Low income | 19 | 95% | 53% | 32% |
| | Lower-middle income | 36 | 94% | 64% | 36% |
| | Upper-middle income | 32 | 88% | 59% | 47% |
| | High income | 16 | 63% | 38% | 44% |
| Hand hygiene | All responding countries | 102 | 70% | 37% | 27% |
| | Low income | 19 | 79% | 47% | 26% |
| | Lower-middle income | 36 | 89% | 42% | 19% |
| | Upper-middle income | 32 | 59% | 31% | 41% |
| | High income | 15 | 33% | 27% | 20% |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Measures to reach women and girls

While the majority of low-, lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries have measures in policies and plans to improve and extend services to women and girls, fewer countries monitor progress on extending services and even fewer have specific financing measures to target resources to women and girls (Table 9.2).

Financing measures to target resources to women and girls are lacking across all country income groups.

Table 9.2 Measures to extend WASH services to women and girls, by World Bank income group

● 0–39% ● 40–59% ● 60–79% ● 80–100%

| | World Bank income group | Number of countries | Governance Policies and plans have specific measures to reach women and girls | Monitoring Progress to extend service provision to women and girls is tracked and reported | Finance Specific measures to direct financial resources to women and girls are consistently applied |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--|---|--|
| Sanitation | All responding countries | 103 | 78% | 50% | 24% |
| | Low income | 19 | 89% | 63% | 32% |
| | Lower-middle income | 36 | 89% | 61% | 17% |
| | Upper-middle income | 32 | 75% | 41% | 28% |
| | High income | 16 | 44% | 31% | 25% |
| Drinking-water | All responding countries | 103 | 76% | 49% | 27% |
| | Low income | 19 | 84% | 58% | 32% |
| | Lower-middle income | 36 | 89% | 56% | 25% |
| | Upper-middle income | 32 | 72% | 44% | 28% |
| | High income | 16 | 44% | 31% | 25% |
| Hand hygiene | All responding countries | 102 | 70% | 42% | 24% |
| | Low income | 19 | 84% | 58% | 26% |
| | Lower-middle income | 36 | 83% | 47% | 19% |
| | Upper-middle income | 32 | 63% | 34% | 28% |
| | High income | 15 | 33% | 27% | 20% |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Menstrual health and hygiene

Another key aspect related to gender and WASH is menstrual health and hygiene (menstrual hygiene management). Sixty-three per cent of countries (62 of 99) reported they include menstrual health and hygiene in their WASH policies and plans (Table 9.3). Menstrual health and hygiene is most often included in policies and plans for WASH in schools and WASH in health care facilities.



Table 9.3 Percentage of countries addressing menstrual health and hygiene in their WASH policies and plans (n = 99)

| Type of policy/plan | Percentage of countries (%) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Any WASH policy or plan | 63 |
| Urban sanitation | 32 |
| Rural sanitation | 31 |
| Urban drinking-water | 21 |
| Rural drinking-water | 19 |
| WASH in schools | 43 |
| WASH in health care facilities | 43 |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Fifty-eight per cent of countries (42 of 73) that conduct JSRs reported gender is included in JSRs, and 72% of countries (51 of 71) reported menstrual health and hygiene is included in JSRs.

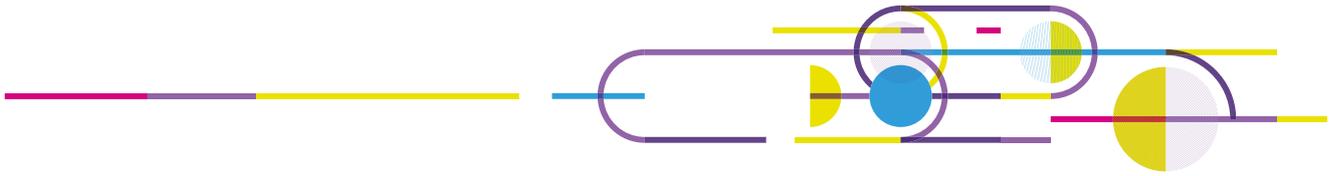
While menstrual health and hygiene is included in the majority of JSRs, only 25% of countries (24 of 97) reported having targets for it. Examples of menstrual health and hygiene targets reported in the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey include the following.

- **Benin** has a target of 100% of households adopting hygiene-friendly practices, which aims to break down taboos and transmit information and knowledge to all members of the community, with particular attention to women and girls.
- **Sierra Leone:** The target aims to ensure 70% of women and girls in Sierra Leone have access to adequate menstrual hygiene management by 2030, promoting health, dignity and gender equality.
- **United Republic of Tanzania:** Menstrual hygiene management is included in the definition of basic sanitation facilities in schools where the country has a target to reach 100% of schools with basic sanitation by 2026.

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²⁹ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.



10. Climate and WASH

Climate-related hazards, shocks and stresses present a growing threat to WASH services. Governments and development partners are responding to the risks of climate change by addressing climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation. This section focuses on how countries and development partners are defining climate-resilient WASH, how climate is included in WASH policies/plans (including reaching populations disproportionately affected by climate change), climate risk assessments, monitoring climate-resilient WASH, climate finance and development partner support to WASH and climate.

Defining climate-resilient WASH

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 cycle, countries and development partners were asked how they define climate-resilient WASH. Thirty-nine per cent of countries (37 of 96) reported having a national definition of climate-resilient WASH and below are some of the definitions.

- **Belize:** Climate-resilient WASH refers to WASH services and behaviours that continue to deliver benefits, or are appropriately restored, within a changing climate context and despite climate-induced hazards.
- **Cameroon:** The resilient WASH sector is defined as the set of measures that aim to build and/or develop water and sanitation infrastructure and superstructures that are adapted, sustainable and resilient to climate shocks.
- **Myanmar:** The ability of people and systems to anticipate, adapt to and recover from the negative effects of disasters and climate change in a manner that reduces vulnerability, protects livelihoods, accelerates and sustains recovery, and supports economic and social development while preserving cultural integrity.
- **United Republic of Tanzania:** Climate resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for and respond to hazardous events, trends or disturbances related to climate. This has been defined in the National Environment Policy of 2021.
- **Zimbabwe:** Climate-resilient WASH involves designing and implementing a WASH system that helps to ensure WASH infrastructure and services are sustainable and resilient to climate-related risks and that WASH contributes to building community resilience to climate change.

SWA has also worked to develop a global normative definition of climate-resilient WASH (Box 10.1).

Box 10.1 SWA's definition of climate-resilient WASH

The SWA Climate Action Task Team developed a definition of climate-resilient WASH through a consultative process to provide the WASH sector with a common definition to help standardize efforts: "Climate-Resilient Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services anticipate, respond to, cope with, recover from, adapt to or transform based on climate-related events, trends and disturbances, all while striving to achieve and maintain universal and equitable access to safely managed services, even in the face of an unstable and uncertain climate, where possible and appropriate, minimising emissions, and paying special attention to the most exposed vulnerable groups." (1)

About half of the development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey reported having a definition of climate-resilient WASH. Below are examples of how some development partners define climate-resilient WASH.

- **ADB** aligns with a widely accepted definition of climate-resilient WASH services. These are those that anticipate, respond to, cope with, recover from, adapt to, or transform in the face of climate-related events, trends and disturbances.
- **FCDO** uses the global definition developed for consideration by the Global Goal on Adaptation / United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- **Osprey Foundation** does not have a unique definition of climate-resilient WASH but aligns with the definitions developed by UNICEF and the SWA Climate Task Team.
- **WaterAid's** definition of climate-resilient WASH is WASH services and behaviours that continue to deliver benefits, or that are appropriately restored, within a changing climate context and despite climate-induced hazards. Robust, sustainable WASH systems can improve resilience to climate change. In addition to this internal definition, WaterAid also aligns with the SWA sector-wide definition of climate-resilient WASH, of which WaterAid was involved in the collaborative development process.
- **Water.org** has begun to apply the SWA climate-resilient WASH definition to its programming in fiscal year 2025. The organization is in the process of developing more specific indicators that align both with the framework and to its interventions and priorities.

Climate in WASH policies and plans/strategies

In national WASH policies and plans, countries reported they are more likely to address risks of climate variability and climate change than they are climate resilience of WASH technologies and management systems or climate mitigation. Additionally, climate issues are more frequently addressed in drinking-water and sanitation plans than in institutional WASH plans (Table 10.1).



Table 10.1 Percentage of countries addressing climate in WASH policies and plans

| Content of policy/plan | Type of WASH policy/plan | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Any WASH policy/plan (%) | Urban sanitation (%) | Rural sanitation (%) | Urban drinking-water (%) | Rural drinking-water (%) | WASH in schools (%) | WASH in health care facilities (%) |
| Risks of climate variability and climate change to WASH services (<i>n</i> = 99) | 80 | 52 | 45 | 48 | 47 | 35 | 35 |
| Climate resilience of WASH technologies and management systems (<i>n</i> = 100) | 73 | 42 | 42 | 43 | 42 | 32 | 34 |
| Climate change mitigation (<i>n</i> = 100) | 70 | 45 | 42 | 43 | 41 | 28 | 27 |

Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

The majority of countries also reported including measures to reach populations disproportionately affected by climate change³⁰ in their WASH policies and plans (Table 10.2). However, fewer countries are taking action to monitor progress or allocate resources towards the measures.



The majority of countries have measures in policies and plans to reach populations disproportionately affected by climate change; however, far fewer countries have measures to monitor or finance them.

Table 10.2 Measures to improve and extend services to populations disproportionately affected by climate change, by SDG region

● 0–39% ● 40–59% ● 60–79% ● 80–100%

| | SDG region | Number of countries | Governance Policies and plans have specific measures to reach populations disproportionately affected by climate change | Monitoring Progress in extending service provision to populations disproportionately affected by climate change is tracked and reported | Finance Specific measures in the financing plan to target resources to populations disproportionately affected by climate change are consistently applied |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Sanitation | All responding countries | 81 | 68% | 42% | 20% |
| | Central and Southern Asia | 5 | 80% | 20% | 20% |
| | Eastern and South-Eastern Asia | 12 | 75% | 25% | 33% |
| | Latin America and the Caribbean | 17 | 47% | 29% | 6% |
| | Sub-Saharan Africa | 27 | 89% | 52% | 19% |
| | Northern Africa and Western Asia | 12 | 58% | 58% | 33% |
| Drinking-water | All responding countries | 80 | 74% | 51% | 29% |
| | Central and Southern Asia | 5 | 80% | 60% | 40% |
| | Eastern and South-Eastern Asia | 11 | 82% | 45% | 45% |
| | Latin America and the Caribbean | 17 | 53% | 29% | 18% |
| | Sub-Saharan Africa | 27 | 96% | 59% | 26% |
| | Northern Africa and Western Asia | 12 | 67% | 67% | 42% |
| Hand hygiene | All responding countries | 79 | 65% | 39% | 23% |
| | Central and Southern Asia | 5 | 80% | 20% | 0% |
| | Eastern and South-Eastern Asia | 11 | 82% | 27% | 27% |
| | Latin America and the Caribbean | 17 | 29% | 24% | 12% |
| | Sub-Saharan Africa | 27 | 85% | 52% | 26% |
| | Northern Africa and Western Asia | 12 | 58% | 58% | 33% |

Note: This table shows only those regions for which data cover at least 50% of countries or at least 50% of the population in the region. Based on these criteria, the following regions were excluded: Australia and New Zealand, Europe and Northern America, and Oceania.

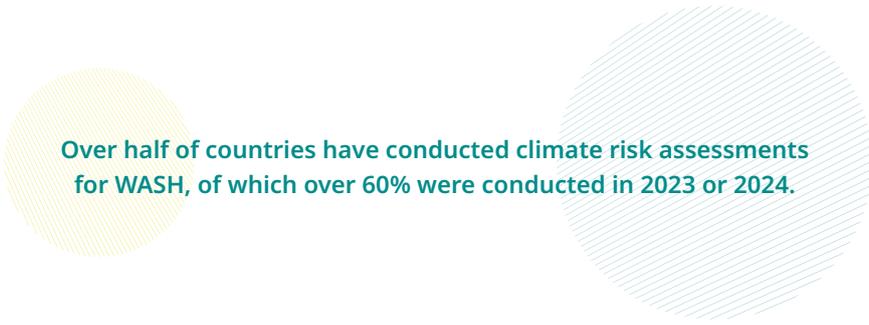
Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Risk assessments for climate-resilient WASH

A climate risk assessment aims to show which communities and WASH services are most at risk from current climate variability and projected climate change in the medium to long term, providing valuable evidence in making the case for effective action by governments and their WASH sector partners.

According to the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, 57% of countries (58 of 102) reported having performed a climate risk assessment. Of those that have performed a climate risk assessment, 88% (49 of 56) have conducted a risk assessment in the last 5 years (2020–2024) and 61% (34 of 56) in the last 2 years (2023 or 2024).

³⁰ “Populations disproportionately affected by climate change” is not defined in the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, as different countries have different definitions of these populations.



Over half of countries have conducted climate risk assessments for WASH, of which over 60% were conducted in 2023 or 2024.

For many of the countries, the need for the climate risk assessments was sometimes triggered during the process of formulating national adaptation programmes of action or during development and revision of WASH sector policies and strategies.

Countries reported multiple types of climate risk assessments undertaken at different levels: national, subnational, municipal and sector. Additional assessments were conducted for basins (water resources), coastal regions and WASH systems. The climate risk assessments have been used in the formulation of national climate policies and strategies, in disaster risk management policies, in mainstreaming climate resilience into WASH sector policies and strategies, and in climate-resilient budgeting. Below are examples of countries' climate risk assessments and how they have been used in national planning.

- A workshop to develop resilience solutions for WASH services in **Côte d'Ivoire** was held in December 2024. Climate risk was defined as the product of Hazard, Vulnerability and Exposure ($\text{Risk} = \text{Hazard} \times \text{Exposure} \times \text{Vulnerability}$). Assessment of exposure and vulnerability was carried out for each subsector: (a) rural drinking-water supply, (b) urban drinking-water supply, (c) rural sanitation and hygiene, (d) urban sanitation and hygiene and (e) WASH in institutions. An action plan was determined for each subsector detailing the specific activities and identifying the main organizations for their implementation. An estimated budget and a timetable have been determined.
- In **Italy**, climate risk is defined as the combination of three main elements: (a) hazard: extreme weather events and long-term climate changes (such as heat waves, sea-level rise, droughts and floods); (b) exposure: the degree to which natural features, infrastructure, population and economic systems are exposed to the effects of climate change; and (c) vulnerability: the degree of sensitivity or adaptive capacity of areas or sectors exposed to climate impacts. Risk assessment is based on the interaction of these factors to identify the areas and sectors most at risk. Specific climate risk assessments are undertaken during the implementation of WSPs.
- The climate risk assessment for **Nepal's** WASH sector evaluated the risks and vulnerabilities posed by climate change using a tailored framework based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fifth Assessment Report. It identified hazards, exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity across districts, provinces and physiographic regions. Data were collected through field consultations and expert feedback, and normalized for analysis. Vulnerability and risk indices were calculated for medium- (2030) and long- (2050) term time frames under different scenarios. The study highlighted significant impacts of rising temperatures, variable precipitation and drying water sources, with disparities in regional sensitivity and adaptive capacity. The results aim to guide investments in effective, efficient and impactful adaptation strategies. The climate risk assessment has been integrated into Nepal's national planning to enhance climate resilience in the WASH sector. Its findings informed the national adaptation plan, guiding strategies to address vulnerabilities and risks identified across districts and regions. The assessment provided evidence-based data to prioritize investments in adaptive infrastructure and services, ensuring efficient resource allocation. It also shaped climate-resilient

policies for WASH systems, incorporating adaptive measures into sectoral guidelines. Furthermore, the assessment supported capacity-building initiatives and cross-sectoral collaboration, fostering climate-informed decision-making to mitigate long-term impacts and enhance the sustainability of WASH services nationwide.

- In **Thailand**, the Ministry of Public Health has utilized risk information to formulate policies on climate change adaptation, resulting in the development of the Public Health Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (Phase 1) 2021-2030. This action plan considers the reduction of foodborne and waterborne diseases, the health impacts of climate change, and the guidelines for reducing risks and preventing health impacts in five major areas: (a) vector-borne and waterborne diseases, (b) heat-related diseases, (c) health hazards from extreme weather conditions (such as droughts and floods), (d) food security and (e) diseases related to air pollution, which have been linked to the national adaptation plan.

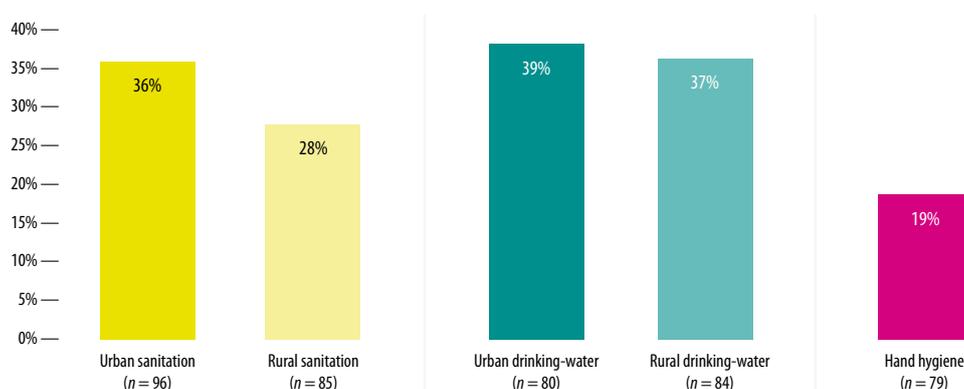
Monitoring climate-resilient WASH

The majority of countries do not yet have standardized indicators for routine monitoring of climate-resilient WASH. Climate-resilient indicators for urban drinking-water are most common, with 39% of countries (31 of 79) reporting having them. Only 28% of countries (24 of 85) reported having climate-resilient WASH indicators for rural sanitation (Fig. 10.1). Box 10.2 highlights the work that WHO and UNICEF have undertaken to identify global indicators to monitor climate-resilient WASH.



Most countries do not have standardized indicators for monitoring climate-resilient WASH.

Fig. 10.1 Percentage of countries with indicators to monitor climate-resilient WASH



Source: GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey.

Box 10.2 JMP/GLAAS review of indicators for global monitoring of climate-resilient WASH

WHO and UNICEF launched a review in 2024 to identify indicators for enhanced national and global monitoring of climate-resilient WASH. The results will inform future global monitoring by JMP and GLAAS.

During 2024 and 2025, JMP and GLAAS collaborated with the University of Leeds, University of Technology Sydney, University of Bristol and Oxford University, and convened a technical working group to: (a) review emerging frameworks, tools and indicators and (b) recommend a shortlist of priority indicators for progressive integration into national monitoring systems.

The university partners developed a long list of indicators based on the review of evidence. The technical working group discussed the long list, and public consultations were held in 2025. A shortlist of potential indicators has been identified in consultation with the technical working group and will be piloted in 2026.

In addition to reporting the existence of indicators for monitoring climate-resilient WASH, countries were also asked to report their indicators, examples of which are included below.

- **Cambodia:** Number of districts with entrepreneurs providing sanitation products and services for sanitation in challenging environments; percentage of households in challenging environments with access to basic water supply services that are available all year round and are climate resilient; number of communes implementing climate-resilient WSPs based on the National Guideline for Rural WSPs.
- **Costa Rica:** Percentage of sanitation systems in associations managing community aqueduct and sewage systems with formulated sanitation safety plans, integrating criteria for adaptation to climate change.
- **Ethiopia:** Number of urban and rural water utilities that develop and implement climate-resilient WSPs.
- **Guinea:** Number of flood-resilient latrines built; level of investment in climate-resilient infrastructure.
- **Italy:** Number of water outages, users and hours subject to scheduled/unscheduled service interruptions (lasting greater than or equal to 1 hour) due to water emergencies related to water scarcity and water quality; number of days and users involved in emergency replacement services such as water tanker trucks and jerry can distribution.
- **Malawi:** Proportion of the urban population with access to safely managed sanitation facilities that are flood resistant; proportion of rural households using climate-resilient sanitation facilities such as improved pit latrines with proper drainage.
- **Peru:** Number of service providers with a climate change mitigation and adaptation plan approved and included in the Optimized Master Plan and Tariff Study implemented in areas vulnerable to climate change.
- **Serbia:** Number of capital projects where climate change was considered during planning, construction and maintenance.
- **Sri Lanka:** Number of climate-resilient WSPs.
- **Uganda:** Number of key stakeholders trained on appropriate climate-resilient designs and standards for WASH services and infrastructure in urban areas; number of public awareness events aimed to increase household resilience to the impacts of climate change on WASH.

In addition to having indicators to monitor climate-resilient WASH, it is also a topic that can be discussed during JSRs. Eighty-one per cent of countries (58 of 72) that conduct JSRs reported that climate resilience is included in the JSR.

In the GLAAS 2024/2025 country survey, countries shared good practices and lessons learned from monitoring climate-resilient WASH. Below are some examples.

- Monitoring the climate-resilient WASH sector in **Chad** is based on several key good practices. First, the integration of local climate data into planning makes it possible to anticipate impacts on WASH

systems. In addition, engaging local communities in the monitoring and evaluation process ensures interventions meet their specific needs. Capacity-building for local agents and the adoption of innovative technologies such as geographic information systems are also crucial to improve the management of WASH resources. At the same time, cross-sectoral collaboration among water, health, agriculture and the environment promotes an integrated approach to climate resilience. Lessons learned from these practices underscore the importance of long-term planning to ensure the sustainability of interventions. Programmes must also be flexible and adaptable to new information and climatic conditions. Continual monitoring and evaluation are needed to measure the impact of interventions and adjust strategies accordingly. Raising awareness among communities about issues related to water management and climate change is essential to encourage sustainable behaviour. It is also crucial to ensure equitable access to WASH services, taking into account the needs of vulnerable populations.

- **Congo** has a six-step approach to climate-resilient WASH. (a) Assessment: assessment of climate-resilient WASH is informed by context-specific participatory assessments of hazards, vulnerabilities and barriers within WASH systems that affect water security, sanitation and hygiene. (b) Partnerships: there is collaboration with relevant partners to deliver a climate-resilient WASH agenda. Where risks and vulnerabilities exist outside the WASH sector's area of influence (such as watershed degradation), the government partners with relevant actors who are well placed to address these issues. (c) Design: interventions of the WASH programme focus on addressing inequalities in access to WASH and barriers in WASH systems, using evidence to improve water security and resilience to climate change. (d) Implementation: climate-resilient WASH interventions are implemented to the highest standards, ensuring sustainability, scale and equity. (e) Monitoring and adaptation: the results of the work are monitored and adaptation is conducted accordingly. (f) Learning and influencing: lessons learned from the work are used to fuel thought leadership and influence change.
- **Namibia** reported the following good practices: use of integrated climate data to inform planning and monitoring to ensure WASH systems are able to withstand climate variability; involving local communities in the monitoring process to enhance ownership and ensure local conditions are considered; and implementation of flexible monitoring frameworks that allow adjustments based on emerging climate trends and data. Lessons learned from Namibia include:
 - understanding the local environment and social and economic conditions is important for effective monitoring;
 - identifying and addressing gaps in data collection are important for assessing resilience; and
 - when a community is excluded from planning implementation and monitoring, it may feel left out and not take ownership of projects.
- Monitoring climate-resilient WASH in **Timor-Leste** has produced good practices and valuable lessons learned, including: (a) community involvement: engagement involving local communities in implementation; (b) capacity-building: training and education for young people and community groups aimed at enhancing awareness of water protection initiatives; and (c) dissemination of information on effective environmental stewardship practices, including the importance of tree preservation.

Climate finance and WASH

Sixty per cent of countries (56 of 94) reported they have applied for climate finance for WASH from an external source. Of the applications submitted, 63% (35 of 56) were successful and US\$ 2.3 billion has been received. Fifteen countries responded that their applications are still in progress.



Of the countries that have applied for climate finance for WASH, about two thirds of the applications were successful.

Countries reported that AFD, AfDB, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank have provided climate finance. Some of the challenges and barriers to accessing climate funds reported by countries include: the need to develop bankable project proposals, demanding approval conditions from some funding agencies, gaps in human capacity in key government agencies, long processing times, lack of climate data to support project development, high levels of co-financing requirements, low sector prioritization and lack of coordination among responsible sector ministries.

Development partner support for WASH and climate

Donors reporting to the OECD-CRS indicate how much of their ODA has been allocated and disbursed towards climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation. For each marker, donors indicate if the subject of the marker is the principal, a significant or not the objective of the aid being provided (2).

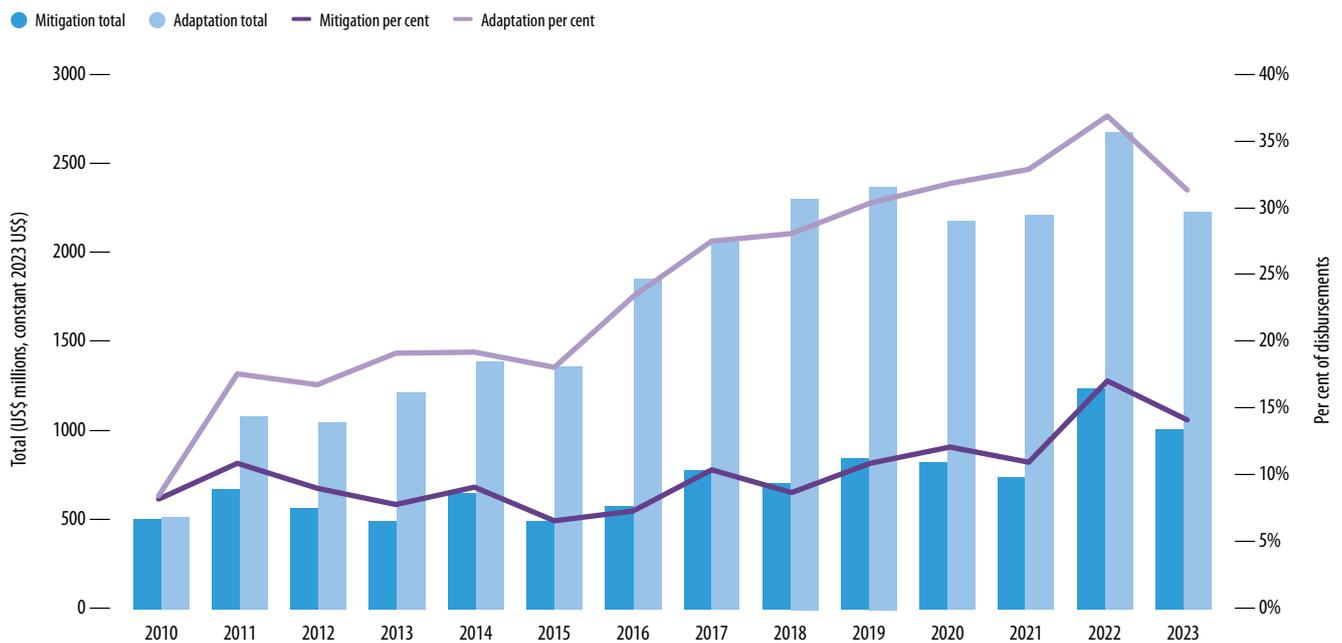
In 2023, OECD-CRS data revealed that 31% of water and sanitation ODA disbursements (US\$ 2.2 billion) was designated for climate change adaptation as the principal or a significant objective, while 14% (US\$ 995 million) was designated for climate change mitigation as the principal or a significant objective.

ODA support to the water and sanitation has been more focused on strengthening the resilience of WASH systems to the effects of climate change (climate change adaptation) than on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) (Fig. 10.2).



The proportion of water and sanitation ODA designated for climate change adaptation as the principal or significant objective tripled as a percentage of disbursements from 2010 to 2022. However, there was a 5% decline in 2023.

Fig. 10.2 Proportion of water and sanitation ODA designated for climate change adaptation or mitigation as the principal or significant objective, 2010–2023



Source: OECD-CRS, 2025.

The majority of development partners participating in the GLAAS 2024/2025 development partner survey reported that they address climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation in their WASH aid/programming, with adaptation being the most popular topic. Additionally, IRC and UNICEF reported they also work on climate finance. Examples of development partners' climate work are listed below.

- As the WASH sector has been historically poor in mobilizing climate finance to ensure the provision of climate-resilient WASH services, **UNICEF** provides extensive support across the whole climate-resilient WASH programme design spectrum as outlined in UNICEF's Climate Shift document. This includes an analysis of key stakeholders, national climate/WASH policies (to see if WASH is recognized as a national climate priority), understanding the climate science and the impact of climate change on WASH services, identification and delivery of appropriate solutions, mobilization of climate finance and monitoring the effectiveness of the solutions. UNICEF designs and delivers capacity-building materials and sessions for staff, government partners and WASH stakeholders across these activities.
- Much of **WaterAid's** work focuses on building resilience to climate change and implementing climate-resilient WASH services. For example, work in Burkina Faso takes a systems-wide approach to connect across water users and create systems suitable for all climate scenarios. In Bangladesh, WaterAid works with women to lead and manage water treatment plants that can adjust to a changing climate. By specifically targeting women through this work, WaterAid is building its long-term resilience and access to resources for coping with climate change. A systems strengthening approach is applied across all climate resilience interventions.
- In December 2024, nine multilateral development banks, including the **World Bank**, issued a joint commitment to water security at the One Water Summit in Riyadh, to significantly increase their joint support for climate-resilient water systems between 2025 and 2030, particularly in water-stressed regions. This includes expanding access to safe drinking-water and sanitation, improving irrigation, enhancing flood management and advancing sustainable water resources management to benefit hundreds of millions more people. Multilateral development banks will scale up financing through

a mix of public, private and innovative funding sources, while supporting governance, policy and institutional reforms to ensure efficient, inclusive and sustainable water services. They also pledged to improve coordination, streamline implementation and share knowledge to maximize impact and deliver on the SDGs.

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³¹ All references were accessed on 21 November 2025.



Annex: Contributors

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