What is Access to Drinking Water?

The Access to Drinking Water indicator measures the percentage of the population with access to improved drinking water sources.

### Improved vs Unimproved Sources of Drinking Water

**Improved Sources**
- Piped Water
- Public Tap
- Protected Spring
- Protected Dog Well
- Protected Solar or Chlorinated

**Unimproved Sources**
- Cistern or Small Tank
- Barrel or Tote Cistern
- Bottled Water
- Unprotected Dog Well
- Unprotected Solar or Chlorinated

### The Dangers of Unimproved Drinking Water

- **Diarrheal Causes**
  - Unsafe drinking water, inadequate availability of water for hygiene, and poor handwashing practices together contribute to about 88% of deaths from diarrheal diseases.

- **0-5 Years Old Leading Cause of Death**
  - Diarrheal disease is leading cause of deaths among children under five years old.

### How is the World Doing?

#### Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for Access to Drinking Water

- **Goal Set in 1990**
  - 76%

- **MDG Goal by 2015**
  - 88%

- **Achieved in 2015**
  - 91%

- **The Remaining 9%**
  - Although we have reached the MDG goal for access by drinking water, we still have a long way to go. There is still 9% of the world’s population, about 663 million people, who do not have access to improved drinking water.

- **13%**
  - 2.6 billion

- **21 years**
  - Since 1990, 2.6 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water sources. In 2015, 91% of people had access to improved drinking water, which meant that the MDG drinking water target was met five years ahead of the target date.

### Drinking Water Quality

A limitation of the Access to Drinking Water measure is the lack of information regarding water quality. The chart provides new health exposure metrics that provide additional information about whether improved or unimproved water is untreated, filtered, or chlorinated - the highest level of treatment.

### References