



GLOBAL WATER CRISIS FACT SHEET

Water is essential to human life.

It is the center of economic and social development and vital to maintain health, grow food, generate energy, manage the environment, and create jobs.¹ Clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of all human rights. When people do not have access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, the impact on the population is devastating, leading to a global crisis.

According to the World Economic Forum's 2015 global risk report, the Global Water Crisis is now the number one global risk based on its impact on society.²

CHILDREN ARE MOST AFFECTED

- 17% of death in children is due to diarrheal illness.³
- An estimated **760,000 children under the age of five** die each year from diarrheal diseases globally.⁴
- Reductions in time spent to collect water have been found to increase school attendance. A study in Ghana found that a 15 minute reduction in water collection time increases the proportion of girls attending school by 8-12%. Another study found a one hour reduction in water collection time increases school attendance by approximately 8% in Yemen, 18% in Pakistan, and 11% in Morocco.⁵
- 90% of all disease resulting from inadequate WASH occurs in children.⁶

KEY STATISTICS

- Roughly 663 million people lack access to improved drinking water, and **1.8 billion people drink microbiologically unsafe water**⁷ every day.⁸
- **80%** of those who lack access to improved water live in rural areas.⁸
- An estimated **2.4 billion people live without adequate sanitation**, accounting for 35% of the global population.⁸
- On average, **every \$1 invested in water and sanitation provides a \$4-\$34 economic return.**⁹

1. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/overview>

2. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_2015_Report15.pdf

3. Pruss, A., D. Kay, L. Fewtrell and J. Bartram (2002). Estimating the Burden of Disease from Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at a Global Level. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 110(5):537-542.

4. World Health Organization (2013). Walker CL, Rudan I, Liu L et al. (2013) Global burden of childhood pneumonia and diarrhoea. *Lancet* 381, 1405-1416.

5. The World Bank Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network Gender and Development Unit. (2010). Access to Water, Women's Work and Child Outcomes.

6. Pruss, A., D. Kay, L. Fewtrell and J. Bartram (2002). Estimating the Burden of Disease from Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at a Global Level. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 110(5):537-542.

7. Onda, K., J. LaBuglio and J. Bartram (2012.) Global Access to Safe Water: Accounting for Water Quality and the Resulting Impact on MDG Progress. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*. 9: 880-940.

8. World Health Organization and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP), 2015. Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation, 2015 Update and MDG Assessment.

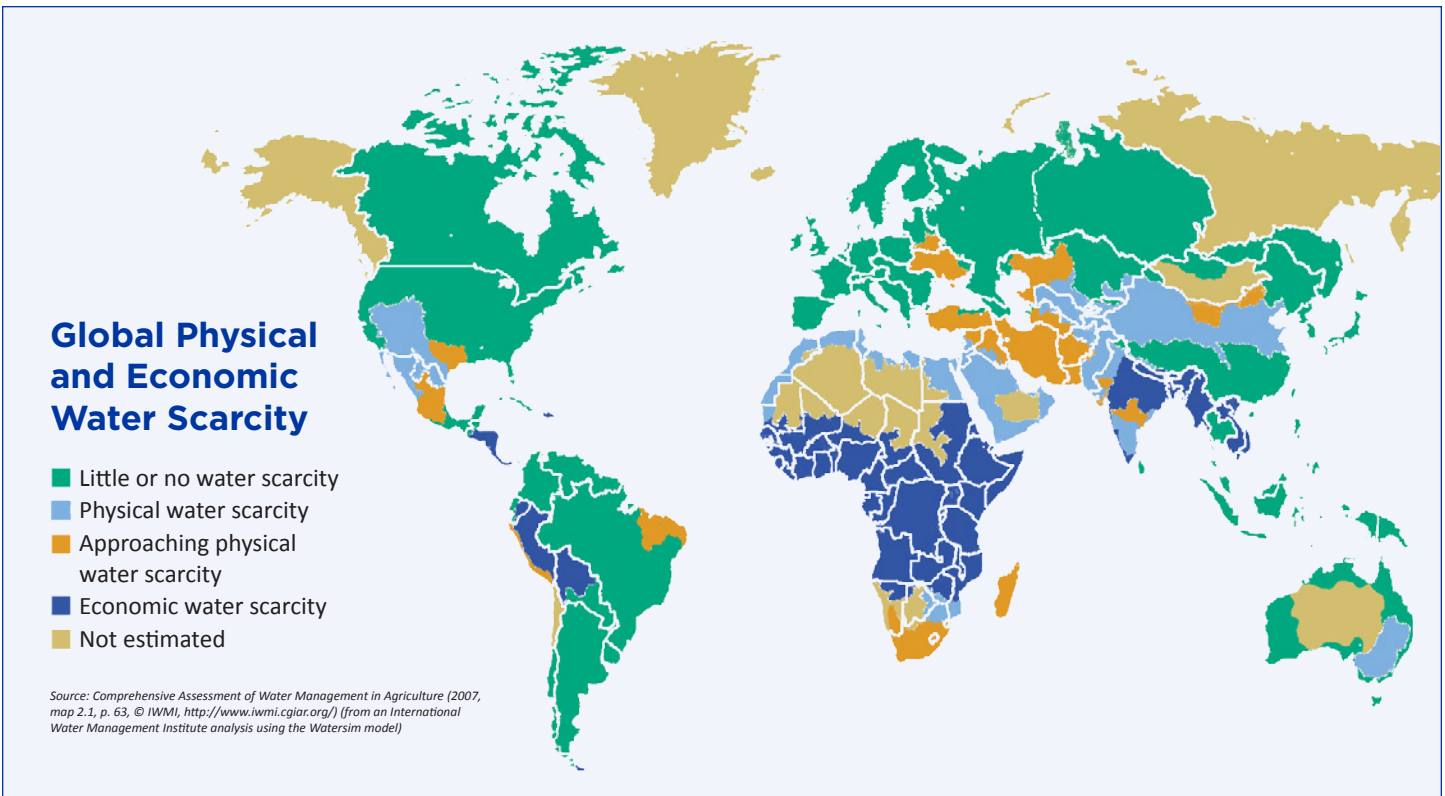
9. World Health Organization. (2012). Global costs and benefits of drinking-water supply and sanitation interventions to reach the MDG target and universal coverage.



THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- Diarrhea caused by inadequate drinking water, sanitation, and hand hygiene **kills an estimated 842,000 people every year** globally, or approximately 2,300 people per day.¹
- A 45-85% reduction in diarrheal illness is possible with interventions that increase water quantity and improve water quality.²
- The introduction of handwashing with soap alone has been shown to lead to a 42-47% reduction in diarrheal illness.³

1. Prüss-Ustün, Annette, et al. "Burden of Disease from Inadequate Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Low- and Middle-income Settings: A Retrospective Analysis of Data from 145 Countries." *Tropical Medicine and International Health* 19.8 (2014): 894-905. Web.
 2. Pruss, A., D. Kay, L. Fewtrell and J. Bartram (2002). Estimating the Burden of Disease from Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at a Global Level. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 110(5):537-542.
 3. Curtis V., Cairncross S. (2003) Effect of washing hands with soap and diarrhea risk in the community: a systematic review. *Lancet Infect. Dis.* 3(5): 275-281.



WATER MISSION is a non-profit Christian engineering organization that designs, builds, and implements safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) solutions for people in developing countries and disaster areas. Since 2001, Water Mission has used innovative technology and engineering expertise to provide access to safe water for more than 3 million people in 52 countries. Water Mission has over 200 staff members working around the world in permanent country programs located in Africa, Asia, North, South, and Central America, and the Caribbean.

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