



# UN-HABITAT

WATER & SANITATION IN THE WORLD'S CITIES



## Backgrounder

### Water & Sanitation Targets

- The targets set by the Millennium Development Goals are ambitious. Amongst other commitments, World Governments and the international community have agreed to reduce by half the proportion of people without access to sustainable, safe drinking water by 2015.
- So serious is the problem, that the former South African President, Nelson Mandela, raised the issue of water and sanitation for poor communities as the main theme of his keynote address at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
- The challenge is immense, especially if we take into account the rapidly growing urban population. Already, 50% of the world's population lives in cities and towns. Of this 3 billion people, an estimated one billion live in slums and squatter settlements without adequate shelter or basic services like clean water or decent sanitation. Concerned about the problems of rapid urbanization, the international community has also committed itself to achieving significant improvements in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.
- **Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities: Local Action for Global Goals** is a comprehensive and authoritative assessment of the problems of providing water and sanitation to the urban poor and how they can be addressed.
  - It sets out in detail the scale of inadequate provision of water and sanitation;
  - It describes the impacts on health and economic performance, showing the potential gains of remedial action;
  - It analyses the proximate and underlying causes of poor provision and identifies information gaps affecting resource allocation;
  - It outlines the consequences of further deterioration; and it explains how resources and institutional capacities - public, private and community can be used to deliver proper services through integrated water resource management.

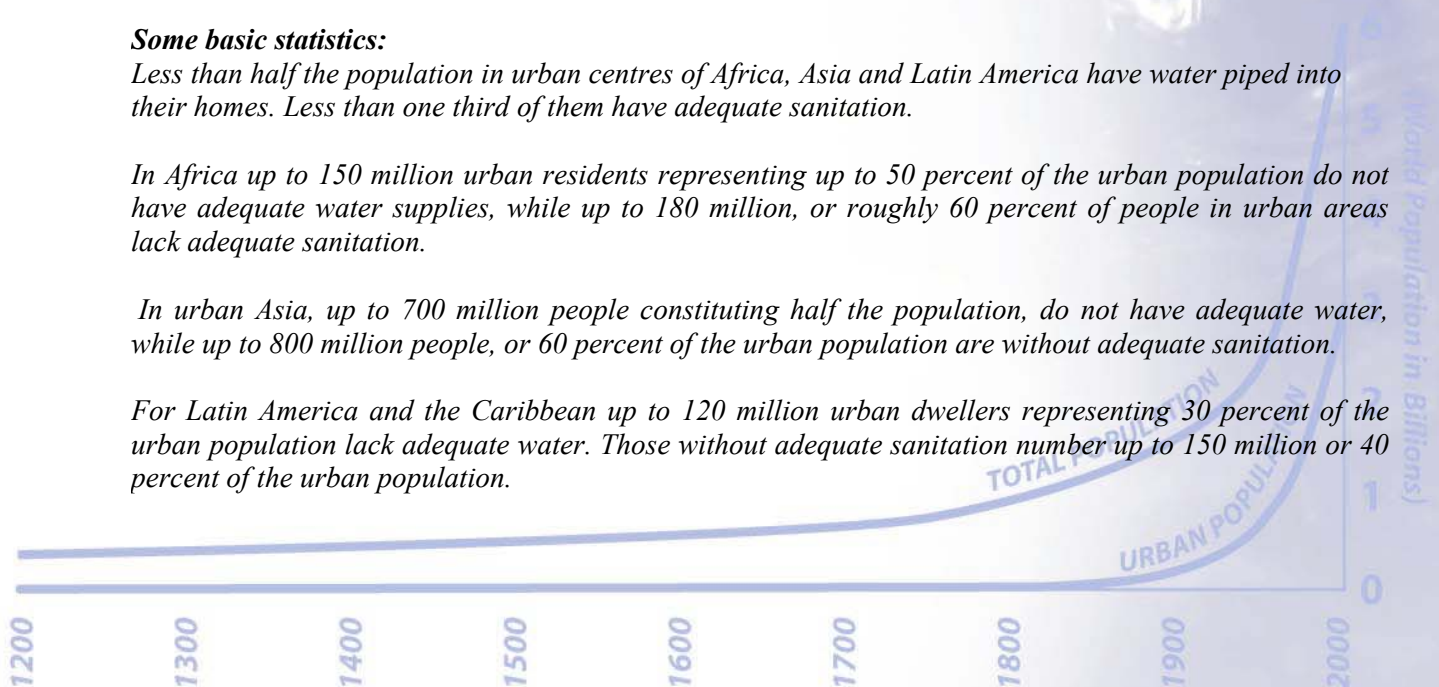
#### **Some basic statistics:**

*Less than half the population in urban centres of Africa, Asia and Latin America have water piped into their homes. Less than one third of them have adequate sanitation.*

*In Africa up to 150 million urban residents representing up to 50 percent of the urban population do not have adequate water supplies, while up to 180 million, or roughly 60 percent of people in urban areas lack adequate sanitation.*

*In urban Asia, up to 700 million people constituting half the population, do not have adequate water, while up to 800 million people, or 60 percent of the urban population are without adequate sanitation.*

*For Latin America and the Caribbean up to 120 million urban dwellers representing 30 percent of the urban population lack adequate water. Those without adequate sanitation number up to 150 million or 40 percent of the urban population.*





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## The distribution of the world's urban population by region, 1950-2010

Region	1950	1970	1990	2000*	Projection for 2010
Urban population (millions of inhabitants)					
World	751	1,357	2,286	2,862	3,514
Africa	32	82	197	295	426
Asia	244	501	1023	1376	1,784
Europe	287	424	521	534	536
Latin America and the Caribbean	70	164	313	391	470
Northern America	110	171	213	243	273
Oceania	8	14	19	23	26
Percentage of population living in urban areas					
World	29.8	36.8	43.5	47.2	51.5
Africa	14.7	23.1	31.8	37.2	42.7
Asia	17.4	23.4	32.2	37.5	43.0
Europe	52.4	64.6	72.1	73.4	75.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	41.9	57.6	71.1	75.4	79.0
Northern America	63.9	73.8	75.4	77.4	79.8
Oceania	61.6	71.2	70.8	74.1	75.7
Percentage of the world's urban population living in:					
World	100	100	100	100	100
Africa	4.3	6.1	8.6	10.3	12.1
Asia	32.5	37.0	44.8	48.1	50.8
Europe	38.3	31.3	22.8	18.7	15.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	9.3	12.1	13.7	13.7	13.4
Northern America	14.6	12.6	9.3	8.5	7.8
Oceania	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8

Many of the figures for 2000 draw on national censuses held in 1999, 2000 or 2001 – but some are based on estimates or projections from statistics drawn from censuses held around 1990. There is also a group of countries (mostly in Africa) for which there are no census data since the 1970s or early 1980s so all figures for their urban (and rural) populations are based on estimates and projections.

SOURCE: Statistics drawn or derived from United Nations (2002), *World Urbanization Prospects; The 2001 Revision; Data Tables and Highlights*, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, ESA/P/WP/173, New York, 181 pages.

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