

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



WHAT IS UNICEF?

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities. UNICEF's main goal is to enhance the protection of children's rights, ensuring that they are able to enjoy their full potential from childhood until adolescence. UNICEF works with several different partners in over 190 countries, aiming at promoting policies that guarantee and improve the security of children around the world.

UNICEF AND HUMAN RIGHTS

UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "States parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures: (c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, (...) the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water (...)"

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child underlined that under article 24 States have a responsibility to ensure access to clean drinking water and that such access is particularly essential for young children's health. (General comment No. 7 (2006), para. 27)

UNICEF AND WASH

Water

UNICEF's roadmap for safe and sustainable water services for all is laid out in the [Water Game Plan](#). To address key issues of accessibility, UNICEF works with supply chains as well as national and sub-national monitoring systems to identify those left behind.

Sanitation

UNICEF is on the ground in more than 100 countries to provide safe sanitation for the world's most vulnerable communities in rural and urban areas, and during emergencies. UNICEF mobilizes communities, build markets for sanitation goods and services, and partner with governments to plan and finance sanitation services.

Hygiene

Behaviour and social change are at the heart of UNICEF's hygiene programmes. We focus on four key behaviours that help children and their families maintain proper hygiene: handwashing with soap, safe disposal of child faeces, safe handling and storage of drinking water, and menstrual hygiene.

WHO and UNICEF, through the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), are custodian agencies for the SDG targets on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene:

- 6.1 By 2030, to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
- 6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

These targets are measured with three indicators:

- 6.1.1 Proportion of the population using safely managed drinking water services
- 6.2.1a Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services,
- 6.2.1b Proportion of population with handwashing facilities with soap and water at home



The Measurement and Monitoring of Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Affordability

Including a foreword by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation.

Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in schools: special focus on COVID-19

PUBLICATIONS

UNICEF launched the **Water Under Fire** campaign in March 2019 to draw global attention to three fundamental areas where changes are urgently needed to secure access to safe and sustainable water and sanitation in fragile contexts. As part of the campaign, it has launched three reports.

THE WAY FORWARD

UNICEF's engagement to monitor SDG 6.1 and 6.2, helps countries to have a clearer benchmark and information to promote and guarantee the human rights to water and sanitation and also empowers people in vulnerable situations without access to water and sanitation. In this regard, I look forward to working with UNICEF throughout my tenure to promote democratic water governance from a human rights approach in different contexts.



Pedro Arrojo-Agudo,
UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

*The Special Rapporteur held a meeting with UNICEF representatives on 20 January 2021