

Report 2

The State of the World's Toilets 2007

This report examines the global crisis in sanitation and pays tribute to the humble yet vitally important toilet.

An orange, irregular splatter graphic with several smaller droplets extending from its right and bottom edges.

**Embargoed until
19 November,
World Toilet Day,
2007**



Foreword by Adam Hart-Davis

Monday 19 November is World Toilet Day. Some people find this embarrassing – a day dedicated to the lavatory. Who'd celebrate that? But think where we'd be without toilets – that *would* be embarrassing.

World Toilet Day celebrates medical technology's greatest breakthrough. Sanitation has saved more lives than anything else in history. A poll in the British Medical Journal agreed; the most important medical advance since 1840 was sanitation – beating antibiotics, vaccines, and anaesthesia.

Still think toilets aren't important? Imagine how life would be if there weren't any. Your whole day would revolve around searching for somewhere private to go, enduring stomach cramps, or waiting until nightfall and risking attack. Disease and death would be rife, the environment filthy. Illness would prevent you from working, and girls wouldn't go to school. Teachers are scarce anyway, as it's difficult to recruit staff to a school without toilets.

Today, in the 21st century, **2.6 billion** people live like this.

I visited Bangladesh with WaterAid and saw the reality

of living without an adequate sanitation system. Hanging latrines are cramped, disease ridden, dangerous structures, where waste drops directly into the water below – the same water used for washing cooking and cleaning. Cholera, typhoid, diarrhoea, and dysentery are commonplace.

This *has* to change – everyone deserves the dignity of having somewhere safe and hygienic to go to the toilet. That's why I support WaterAid and the End Water Poverty campaign. Last year alone, WaterAid provided 1.5 million people with sanitation.

The toilet is not just a way out of poverty, but a lifesaver, and 2.6 billion people need one.



Over 40% of the world's population do not have a safe, clean or private place to go to the toilet. Imagine life without a toilet; no private toilets in your home; no public toilets nearby; nothing. That is the daily reality for over two and a half billion people.

Water-related diseases (diarrhoeal diseases such as dysentery) caused by a lack of adequate sanitation and water are the second biggest killer of children in the world today, killing 5,000 children every single day; that's five times the number dying from HIV/Aids.

There is compelling evidence that sanitation brings the single greatest return on investment of any development intervention (roughly \$9 for every \$1 spent). Yet it remains the most neglected and most off-track of the Millennium Development Goal targets.

In the developing world, the costs of not investing in sanitation and water are huge – infant deaths, lost work days, and missed school are estimated to have an economic cost of around \$38 billion per year, with sanitation accounting for 92% of this value. And yet the potential returns are so great that sanitation, in effect, pays for itself. Faced with the evidence, governments must act now to tackle this crisis.

“Sanitation is more important than independence”

Mahatma Gandhi

The Worst sanitation

Table 1: The worst places in the world for sanitation provision as a percentage of population lacking access

Country	Ranking	Percentage lacking sanitation	Ranking change on two years
Afghanistan*	1	92	-1
Chad	2=	91	0
Eritrea	2=	91	-2
Burkina Faso	4=	87	-2
Ethiopia	4=	87	+3
Niger	4=	87	-2
Cambodia	7	83	-2
Ghana	8=	82	No old data
Guinea	8=	82	0
Namibia	10=	75	-20
Sao Tome and Principe	10=	75	-1
Somalia*	10=	75	-3

For the full table see Appendix 1

Many of the countries featured in this table are either involved in conflict or are recovering from conflict. These often have weak infrastructures and it can take time to make sustainable improvements in development.

The other countries represent some of the poorest countries in the world where the lack of sanitation helps perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

Flying toilets



Acute sanitation problems in many overcrowded, unplanned cities in the developing world mean that residents throw out their toilet waste in plastic bags. A resident of a slum area in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia describes these 'flying toilets'.

"We don't have a single toilet in our area. If there is one, it is blocked up to its roof. So the most suitable option for us is to do our business into plastic bags and throw them to the road sides when nobody is around."

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THE WORLD'S WORST TOILET

Hanging latrine: Perfect for Disease, Death, Danger and indignity.

Features

- No seat, no flushing system, except in monsoon when it is liable to flooding
- well ventilated, open to flies, germs and disease
- Large open drop to water way below, which women (who wait until night to use the latrine) and small children can, and do, fall into
- No Privacy, screened with rags
- Potential to pollute drinking water supplies
- No washing facilities or soap
 - Shared with 500 other people
- Challenging access, only for those with good balance. Not suitable for elderly or the disabled
- In need of complete renovation



PreCariously Balanced over urban slum water-way in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

UNDP 2006 Human Development Report

The ill health associated with deficits in water and sanitation undermines productivity and economic growth, trapping vulnerable households in cycles of poverty.

The sources of the problem vary by country, but several themes emerge:

- Few countries treat water and sanitation as a political priority, as witnessed by limited budget allocations.
- The international community has failed to prioritise water and sanitation in the partnerships for development that have coalesced around the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Underlying each of these problems is the fact that the people suffering the most from the water and sanitation crisis – poor people in general and poor women in particular – often lack the political voice needed to assert their claims.

Economically, the cost of inadequate sanitation is huge, for

the individual, for the community and for the state.

In Africa it is estimated that 5% of GDP is lost to the illnesses and deaths caused by poor sanitation and water. The UN also estimates that for every \$1 spent on sanitation at least \$9 is saved in health, education and economic development. Appropriate investment in sanitation offers the greatest health returns on investment of any development intervention.

The biggest barrier in sanitation is the lack of national and international political will. Tackling the problem requires greater awareness of the real costs – not just to poor people, but to societies as a whole – of ‘no access to sanitation.’ Political leaders must put the growing sanitation crisis on the international development agenda.

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“The world’s greatest toilet”

plumbingworld.com



“This is currently the best toilet made by Toto (the largest toilet manufacturer in the world!)”
plumbingworld.com

Toto Model # MS990CE:
Perfect for those who have everything and understand technical toilet specifications.

Neorest 600 unique tankless one piece toilet with integrated washlet seat.

☀ Features ☀

Sleek, tankless, one-piece toilet with integrated washlet seat

Cyclone flushing system, no waiting for refill, no refill noise

Integrated washlet features front and rear warm water washing, automatic air dryer and deodorizer

SanaGloss: super smooth, ion barrier glazing cleans your toilet bowl with every flush

Automatic operation: air purifier, lid opens/ closes and toilet flushes when sensor is activated

Remote control: the Neorest comes with a wireless remote control: motorized seat (up, down, temperature), water temperature, cyclone flush, massage, oscillate, and change wand position

Sanitation – the Millennium Development Goal orphan

Sanitation is crucial to the achievement of all of the MDGs. Without it none of the MDG targets (listed right) can be achieved. If we are serious about reaching these and reducing poverty then sanitation must be given as high a priority as health and education.

MDG targets

- 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2 Achieve universal primary education
- 3 Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4 Reduce child mortality by two thirds for children under five
- 5 Improve maternal health
- 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- 7 Ensure environmental sustainability – including targets to halve the proportion of people living without water and sanitation
- 8 Develop a global partnership for development

“This slum is in a shocking state. Hanging latrines feed straight into a rubbish-filled ditch in the middle of the slum. 5,000 households live here with no clean water and no sanitation. Many people get very ill here and I think it all stems from the open latrines. Smell the stench, it’s disgusting. We get fevers, coughs and terrible diarrhoea and there are no healthcare facilities that we can use.”

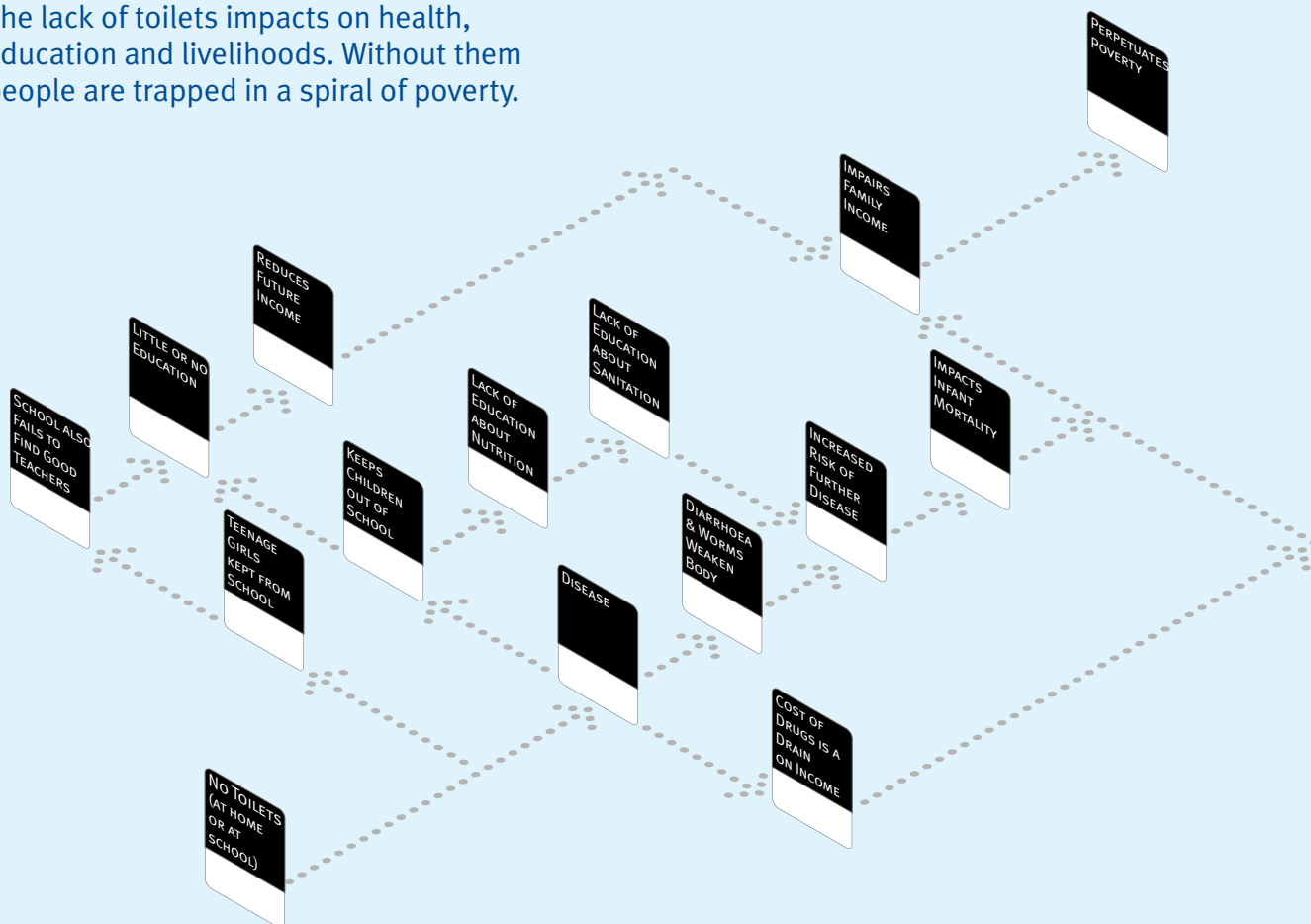
Ruby, Balar Math Slum, Dhaka, Bangladesh



WaterAid/Abir Abdullah

Toilet blockages

The lack of toilets impacts on health, education and livelihoods. Without them people are trapped in a spiral of poverty.



The history of the Great British toilet

1596 – Sir John Harington, (a relative of the Queen), is often credited with inventing the UK toilet, or at least the concept of the toilet, even though they were in use in England during Roman times.

200 years later in **1775**, Alexander Cummings, a watchmaker, patented his design for a flush toilet, which involved putting a water trap under a bowl. Toilets came to be known as “wash-out” water closets and were popular with London’s wealthy residents in the 1850s.

By the **1870s** several companies in England were selling toilets including Thomas Crapper who is often mistakenly credited with inventing them. His company just made them, and printed his name on them.

During the **19th century** the population in Britain increased greatly, whilst the number of toilets did not. Cess-pits overflowed into the homes of city’s poorer residents and sewage was poured into the Thames. People drank the same water which caused outbreaks of cholera, killing thousands of people in the **1830s** and **1850s**.

The government said in **1848** that every new house should have a water closet or ash-pit privy and that existing cess-pits should be connected to the city’s storm drains – further polluting the Thames.

In **1858** a heat-wave caused the ‘Great Stink’. Within 18 days the Government commissioned Sir Joseph Bazalgette to develop a new sewer system, which was virtually finished in 1868. It meant toilet waste was carried away instead of going into the river or staying near houses. People stopped dying of cholera and typhoid.

The **1890s** saw the largest investment in sanitation and resulted in the sharpest decline in infant mortality seen in the UK.

Today, according to British standards, the minimum provision of sanitary appliances for a private dwelling is: **One toilet for up to four people, two toilets for five people or more, a washbasin in or adjacent to every toilet, one bath or shower for up to four people, one kitchen sink.**

TOILET FACTS

Most toilets flush in the key of E flat.

When it comes to toilet paper, women are more apt to be grabbers and wadders, while men tend to be folders.

In 2005 WaterAid campaigners delivered 18,314 messages on toilet rolls, to 10 Downing Street, calling for more and better aid for water and sanitation.

Toilet paper was first made for the Chinese emperor in 1391. The British Perforated Paper Company first produced toilet paper in Great Britain in 1880.

At any one time, half of the developing world’s hospital beds are occupied by patients suffering from water-related diseases.

The first toilet cubicle in a public washroom is the least likely to be used: it is also the cleanest.

Last year alone WaterAid, together with its partners, reached over one and a half million people with sanitation services.

In developing countries 443 million school days are lost each year due to water-related diseases.

The developing world's sanitation story

In **2000**, eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions, with the aim of halving extreme poverty by 2015.

Improving access to sanitation was **not** deemed important enough to be included in the list of goals at this time. After heavy lobbying, from organisations like WaterAid, 'halving the proportion of people without basic sanitation' was finally added to the MDGs at the **2002** World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. Since this announcement there has been nothing like sufficient progress on sanitation. Whilst aid spending on other areas of development has doubled, the share spent on water and sanitation has contracted.

2007 marks the mid-way point for reaching the goals but, owing to political neglect, the sanitation target is nowhere close to being met. In fact sanitation is one of, if not the, poorest performing of the goals. At the current rate of progress the sanitation goal will not be met in **2015** as promised; in Africa, more like **2076**.

Universal sanitation is achievable. Around the world successful sanitation programmes have been implemented by governments and civil society. The challenge now is to scale up these efforts to a level proportionate to the scale of the crisis and ensure that national governments provide sanitation services for their citizens.

An extraordinary effort is needed at every level to address the crisis; generating political will, agreeing a plan for action, and mobilising the resources required.



"Before everyone had to go to the toilet in nature. The flies used to go into the faeces and come into the houses. They brought dirtiness and illness. Now the latrines are so close to our houses. We feel better because our dignity is preserved. Our dignity is protected and we are protected from disease."

Sophie Zongo,
Burkina Faso

TOILET FACTS

The average person spends three years of their life going to the toilet.

The military used toilet paper to camouflage their tanks in Saudi Arabia, during the Desert Storm War.

One gram of human faeces can contain 10,000,000 viruses, 1,000,000 bacteria, 1,000 parasite cysts, 100 parasite eggs.

The technology for disposing of solid waste aboard a shuttle in space cost \$23.4 million dollars.

At any given time, almost half the population of the developing world is suffering from one or more of the main diseases associated with inadequate provision of water and sanitation.

Krapp is a Swedish brand of toilet paper.

The pentagon uses, on average, about 666 rolls of toilet paper every day.

In developing countries 11% more girls attend school when sanitation is available.

It would cost an extra \$10 billion each year until 2015 to reach the water and sanitation MDG targets.

WaterAid's work on sanitation

In the last year alone WaterAid reached over one and a half million people with sanitation services. WaterAid believes that safe water and sanitation are basic human rights and everyone should have access to them. Safe water and sanitation underpin health, education and livelihoods, forming the first, essential step in overcoming poverty.

WaterAid is a founding member of End Water Poverty, an international campaign calling for governments to provide sanitation and water for all.

End Water Poverty is currently demanding that the G8 must act. Sanitation, with safe water, is fundamental to all development efforts. Poverty will never be eradicated where people have nowhere to go to the toilet.

We are calling for the G8 member governments to make an extraordinary effort and agree to:

- A global action plan for sanitation and water with political endorsement at the highest level that also recognises the integral role of sanitation in achieving the health and education MDGs
- A global taskforce mandated at the highest level to plan, implement and monitor the extraordinary effort that is needed on sanitation and water
- Ensuring that no credible country plan consistent with achieving the sanitation and water MDGs targets should fail for lack of finance

End Water Poverty is looking to national governments to meet the needs and demands of their citizens, by calling for:

- One coordinating national agency, one national plan, and one transparent monitoring framework for sanitation.
- Increased levels of investment delivered through a specific and transparent budget line open to public scrutiny.
- Broad participation by a wide range of sector stakeholders in the planning and monitoring of sanitation service delivery at the national and sub-national levels.

The world's poor cannot wait. End Water Poverty calls on decision-makers at all levels to answer the demands of those people living without dignity, health and an opportunity to escape poverty for want of a toilet.

Everyone can take action by showing their support online at www.endwaterpoverty.org



“It was very important to me that the school had a well and latrines, because I know how much safe water and hygiene matter. I have five children and I would not want them going to a school without these facilities. I would not be willing to teach in such a school. I know how important education is, especially in rural communities, but I must put the health of my children first.”

Patience Dominic, Teacher at Warok Primary School, Nigeria



Appendices

Table 1 The worst places in the world for sanitation provision as a percentage of population lacking access.

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Guinea	8=	82	0
Namibia	10=	75	-20
Sao Tome and Principe	10=	75	-1
Somalia*	10=	75	-3
Liberia*	13	74	-1
Central African Republic	14=	73	-1
Congo	14=	73	+10
Democratic Republic of Congo	16=	70	-3
Haiti	16=	70	-12
Laos	16=	70	+5
Angola	19=	69	-1
Solomon Islands	19=	69	-5
Mozambique	21	68	+6
Benin	22=	67	-3
Cormoros	22=	67	+12
India	22=	67	+2

All figures based on the latest available data in WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme 2006 Mid-Term Assessment (data for 2004).

The table lists all countries where two thirds or more of the population lack access to adequate sanitation, a total of 30 countries.

*means no new data collected

Table 2 The worst places in the world for sanitation as a total number of people lacking access to sanitation (above 10 million).

Country	Ranking	Total population lacking sanitation	Change on 2 years
People's Republic of China	1	732,480,000	-4,420,000
India	2	728,357,000	-44,043,000
Indonesia	3	99,045,000	-7,845,000
Bangladesh	4	84,912,000	+11,212,000
Nigeria	5	72,072,000	-9,428,000
Ethiopia	6	65,772,000	-7,028,000
Pakistan	7	63,468,000	-9,232,000
Brazil	8	45,975,000	-625,000
Democratic Republic of Congo	9	39,130,000	-1,770,000
Vietnam	10	32,409,000	-17,291,000
Afghanistan	11	27,500,000	No new figures
Kenya	12	23,785,000	+5,985,000
Sudan	13	23,430,000	-470,000
Philippines	14	22,848,000	+448,000
Mexico	15	22,197,000	-2,403,000
Egypt	16	21,780,000	-1,920,000
Tanzania	17	19,928,000	-772,000
Russia	18	18,707,000	+107,000
Ghana	19	17,794,000	No old data
Nepal	20	17,290,000	-2,510,000
South Africa	21	16,520,000	+820,000
Uganda	22	15,846,000	-1,154,000
Yemen	23	13,601,000	-1,099,000
Mozambique	24	13,192,000	-1,208,000
Madagascar	25	11,946,000	-554,000
Niger	26	11,745,000	-555,000
Myanmar	27	11,500,000	-2,100,000
Cambodia	28	11,454,000	-346,000
Cote d'Ivoire	29	11,277,000	+377,000
Burkina Faso	30	11,136,000	-464,000
Angola	31	10,695,000	+710,000 new entry

Figures created by cross referencing table one with latest international population estimates for 2004 provided by UN Population Projections from United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (2006 revision)

Since WaterAid's 2005 report five countries have now moved out of the table of ten million or more without access to sanitation: Turkey, Morocco, Uzbekistan, Romania and Peru. Angola is the one new entry.

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Images, case studies and
interviews are available.



WaterAid's mission is to overcome poverty by enabling the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education.

Charity registration number 288701