One in five people in the world still lack access to safe, clean drinking water. In sub-Saharan Africa, this is true for nearly half of the people.

Over the course of the 1990s more people gained access to basic sanitation in urban areas—a fact that will be key to improving the lives of slum dwellers.

Overall, the world is on track to meet the water target for Goal 7 but country variations are stark. In sub-Saharan Africa, progress toward bringing clean water and basic sanitation to a greater proportion of people stalled in the 1990s.
People with access to improved water sources (percent of the population)

Regional distribution of people without access to improved water sources, 2000
Global total: 1,160 million in 2000

- Sub-Saharan Africa 23%
- South Asia 19%
- Latin America & the Caribbean 6%
- Arab States 3%
- East Asia & the Pacific 38%
- Central & Eastern Europe & the CIS 3%

Number of people without access to improved water sources, 2000 (millions)
- Sub-Saharan Africa 264.5
- South Asia 215.8
- East Asia & the Pacific 440.3
- Arab States 39.6
- Latin America & the Caribbean 69.4
- Central & Eastern Europe & the CIS 29.6

Country ranking by 1990 value

Data as of 15 May 2003