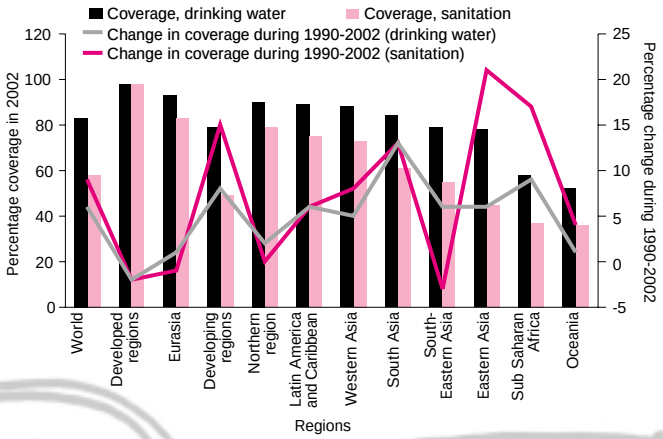
Flushpoint

Can access to safe drinking water be achieved without access to basic sanitation?

■ 83 per cent population (5.2 billion) are using improved sources of drinking water in 2002, up from 77 per cent in 1990: an annual increase of 90 million people. The absolute number without coverage decreased by only 10 million a year

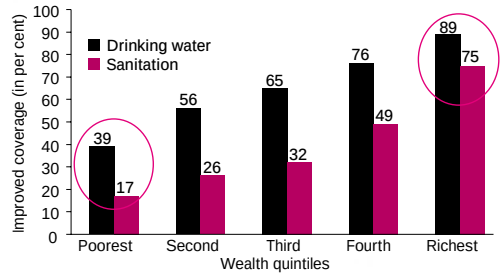


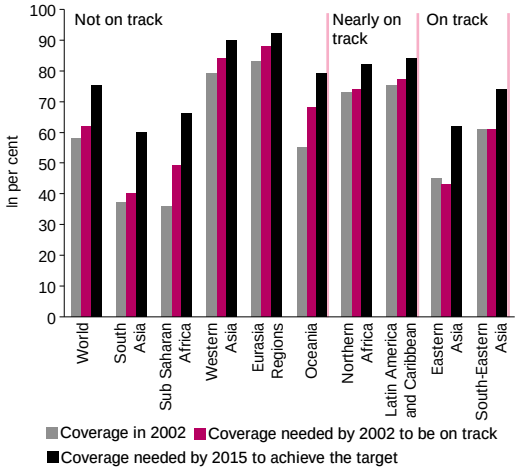
■ Meeting Millenium Development Goals on water and sanitation requires an additional US $11.3 billion a year. Every US $1 so invested would yield an economic return of US $3 to US $34, depending on region

■ Sanitation coverage rose from 49 per cent in 1990 to 58 per cent in 2002. Left out: 2.6 billion people, of which 1.5 billion live in China and India. The world will miss the target unless new sanitation services can be provided to nearly a billion people in urban areas and 900 million in rural areas

■ Sub-Saharan Africa is behind its target of providing access to safe drinking water. All regions, except East Asia and Southeast Asia, trail their sanitation target

■ The richest quintile of the world's population is twice as likely to use water from an improved source and four times more likely to use improved sanitation than the poorest quintile





■ Rural areas and urban slums are the most deprived. For every person without improved drinking water in urban centres, there are six people unserved in rural areas. In sub-Saharan Africa: a 37 per cent gap in sanitation coverage between urban and rural areas. In India: only 18 per cent of the rural areas is covered (national average: 30 per cent)

■ Out of every 10 persons with access to improved water supply globally, roughly 5 have piped water supply at home, 3 use alternate sources such as protected wells or public standpipes and 2 are unserved. These improved sources, however, do not guarantee the drinking water is safe. Lack of basic sanitation worsens this situation

Source: Anon 2004, Meeting the MDG Drinking Water and Sanitation Target: A Mid-term Assessment of Progress, WHO/UNICEF