

TREATMENT OF DRINKING WATER

Outcome indicator, Output indicator

Indicator Phrasing

English: % of households effectively treating their drinking water

French: % de ménages traitant efficacement leur eau potable

Portuguese: % de agregados familiares que tratam a sua água para beber de forma eficaz

Czech: % domácností efektivně ošetřujících svoji pitnou vodu

What is its purpose?

Unsafe water is among the main sources of life-threatening, waterborne diseases. This indicator therefore assesses the prevalence of households using effective methods for treating drinking water.

How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

Collect the following data by conducting individual interviews with a [representative sample](#) of the target households (their representatives) that are **not using** safe sources of drinking water. Guidance on how to assess the source of drinking water a household use is provided at [this site](#).

RECOMMENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS (Q) AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS (A)

Q1: *Do you or other family member somehow treat the water which you and your family drink?*

A1: yes / no

(ask the following question only if the previous answer is YES)

Q2: *How do you treat the water?*

A2:

- 1) let it stand and settle
- 2) pour it through a cloth
- 3) boil it
- 4) use ceramic/ sand/ other water filter

- 5) add bleach/ chlorine
- 6) use disinfectant powder
- 7) use solar disinfection
- 8) other:

(ask the following question only if the previous answer was answer 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7)

Q3: *Can you please show me how you treat the water and what materials you use?*

A3:

- 1) the respondent has the required water treatment materials and is able to use them correctly
- 2) the respondent does not have the required water treatment materials and/or is not able to use them correctly
- 3) the respondent refused to demonstrate water treatment method(s)

NOTES: 1) more answers possible; 2) adjust the pre-set answers according to the local context; 3) do not read the answers; 4) only answers 3-7 (or possibly other pre-approved methods) can be counted as "effective water treatment methods" - others do not count.

To **calculate the indicator's value**, divide the number of households effectively treating their drinking water (i.e. report using options 3-7 + have the required materials + are able to use them correctly) by the total number of respondents. Multiply the result by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Disaggregate by

[Disaggregate](#) the data by [wealth](#).

Important Comments

- 1) Ensure that the **data is collected only from households that are NOT using safe sources of water** - collecting it from all target group members is likely to provide misleading data.
- 2) "Let it stand and settle" and "pour it through a cloth" are very common practices which help to reduce the number of physical particles in the drinking water. However, they **do not make the water safer to drink** and therefore in your data analysis cannot be considered as "effective water treatment methods".
- 3) In some countries, data collectors do not correctly distinguish answers "pour it through a cloth" and "use water filter" - make sure these options are clearly defined and data collectors **understand the difference**.

4) In some contexts, ensuring that people treat drinking water might be hard to achieve (due to ingrained habits; scarcity of firewood or disinfectants). In such case, focus the indicator (and related project activity) on water drunk by **children aged 6-59 months only** (as they are most at risk of life-threatening waterborne diseases).

5) WHO's "**Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage Programmes**" proposes a range of related indicators you might want to take advantage of, such as:

- > knowledge of correct water treatment
- > demonstration of correct water treatment
- > household's access to water treatment products

E-Questionnaire

- [XLS form for electronic data collection - indicator Treatment of Drinking Water](#)

Access Additional Guidance

- WHO (2012) [Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage Programmes](#)

- [Sphere Water supply standard 2.2: Water quality](#)