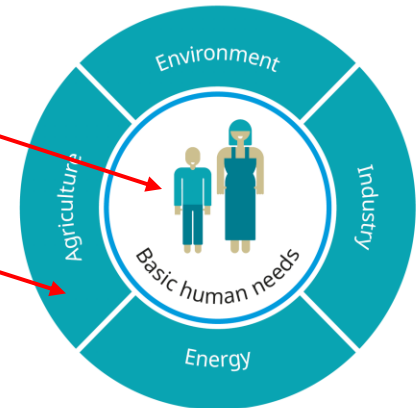




WASH 101 Information Sheet

What is WASH? **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene** necessary to meet basic human needs. Access to WASH is a human right.

What is Water Security? Definitions vary, yet all focus on **inclusive, reliable access to water of sufficient quality and quantity** to safeguard health, and well-being, sustain livelihoods, support socioeconomic development and preserve ecosystems.



Sustainable Development Goal 6

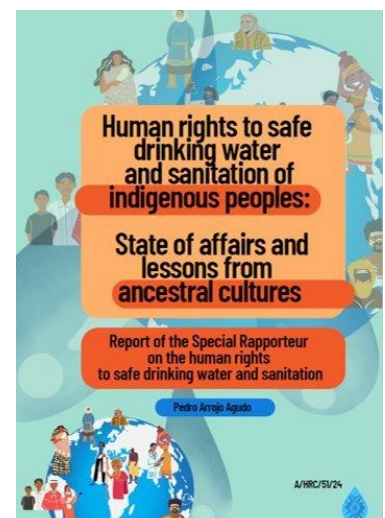
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 interconnected global goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda. **SDG 6 is to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” by 2030.**

Status: Significantly off track, especially for sanitation

Human Rights to Water and Sanitation -- Canada

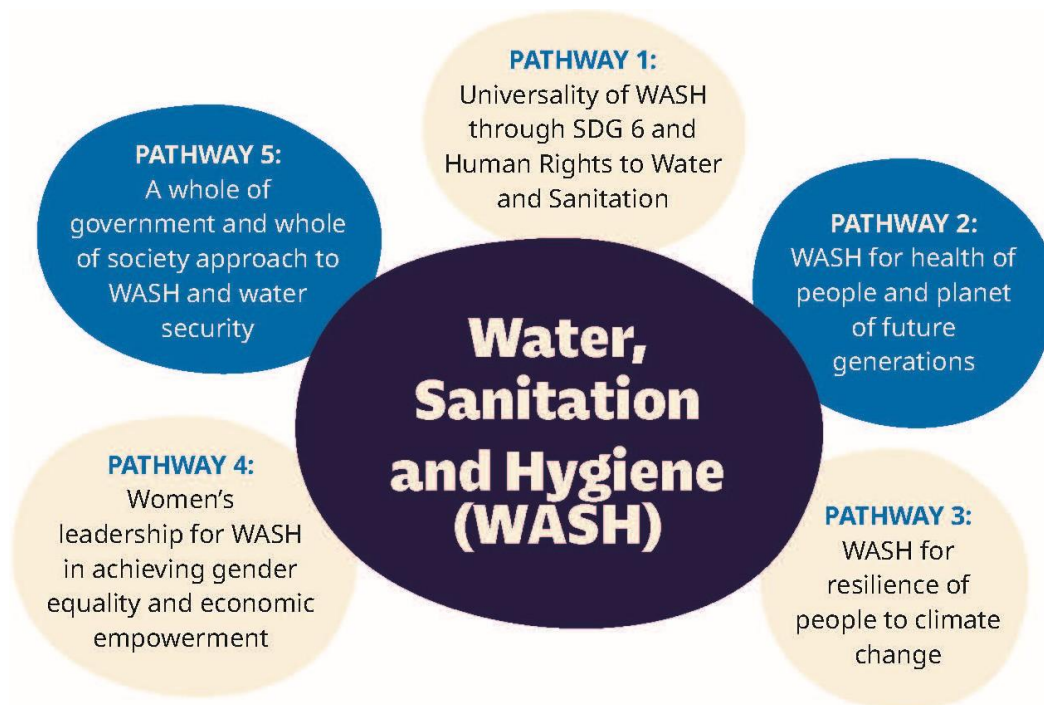
Bill C-61 *The Act Respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nations lands* remained stalled through 2025, with delays and risk of scrapping the bill entirely.

Canada's Prime Minister indicated the government will introduce clean drinking water legislation 'in the spring' of 2026 - delaying a promise for the fall of 2025, and long past the call of First Nations' leaders to enshrine drinking water legislation within the first 100 days of Parliament almost one year ago. It's time to deliver.



Change Starts with Water: WASH Pathways

WASH flows across the SDGs, through health, climate change, gender equality, economics, trade, human rights, agriculture and more. This creates many opportunities and challenges for managing water resources effectively, sustaining safe sanitation, and ensuring investments reach the people and places who are being left behind. The many actors and factors of WASH are grouped into five pathways by [WaterAid Canada](#), keeping WASH at the centre of priorities for people everywhere to thrive:



Essential WASH Facts

- **696 million people in the world (almost 1 in 10) lack even a basic water service**, this jumps to 2.1 billion when measured as “safely managed water.”
- **1.5 billion people in the world (almost 1 in 5) lack basic sanitation**, even a decent toilet.
- **Almost 1 in 10 healthcare facilities globally have poor toilets or none at all...and don't have a working place to wash hands – 16.6 million women in Least Developed Countries give birth in healthcare facilities with inadequate WASH.**
- **On average it costs just 82 cents (CAD) per person per year in the world's Least Developed Countries** to provide universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene in healthcare facilities.
- **A staggering 90% of all natural disasters are water-related** and massively impact people's daily lives.
- **Women and girls spend 250 million hours every day collecting water.**

2026 is a Critical Year for Water

The UN 2026 Water Conference (UNWC) will take place in December 2026, with the United Arab Emirates and Senegal as UN Member State co-hosts. The purpose is to catalyze political commitment, investment, and innovation to address the global water crisis and accelerate progress toward SDG 6.

It's time for a 'big push' for WASH from World Water Day, March 22 to the UNWC, December 2!

What can you do?

- **Write to, and meet with, your MP** on the importance of WASH. Also contact the Secretary of State for International Development, Randeep Sarai, randeep.sarai@international.gc.ca to urge greater priority and investment for WASH across all of Canada's international assistance priorities. Contact Canada's Minister of Indigenous Services, Mandy Gull-Masty ministresa-ministeris@sac-isc.gc.ca, asking her to urgently address the human right to clean water and sanitation in Indigenous communities in this country.
- **Show Canadians why WASH matters** for women's health, climate resilience, gender equality, education, and economic growth. Raise awareness in your communities. Target key opportunities such as World Water Day on March 22, Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28, and World Toilet Day on November 19.
- **Join the global movement: *It's Time to Deliver*** – Together we demand world leaders deliver clean water, decent toilets, and good hygiene for every woman, every birth, by signing and sharing this global petition <https://www.wateraid.org/global/campaigns/time-to-deliver>
- **Call for Canada's Action in 2026** – Urge Prime Minister Mark Carney to lead Canada's participation in the UN 2026 Water Conference and ensure Canada's voice is at the table.

Learn More:

Grandmothers Advocacy Network's WASH Resources:

<https://grandmothersadvocacy.org/issue/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>

WaterAid's "library" on all things WASH - Search on topics of your choice.

<https://washmatters.wateraid.org/>



Change starts with water

In partnership with
WaterAid