

# TREATMENT OF DRINKING WATER

Outcome indicator, Output indicator

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## Indicator Phrasing

**English:** % of households effectively treating their drinking water

**French:** % de ménages traitant efficacement leur eau potable

**Spanish:** % de hogares que tratan efectivamente su agua 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](#)