



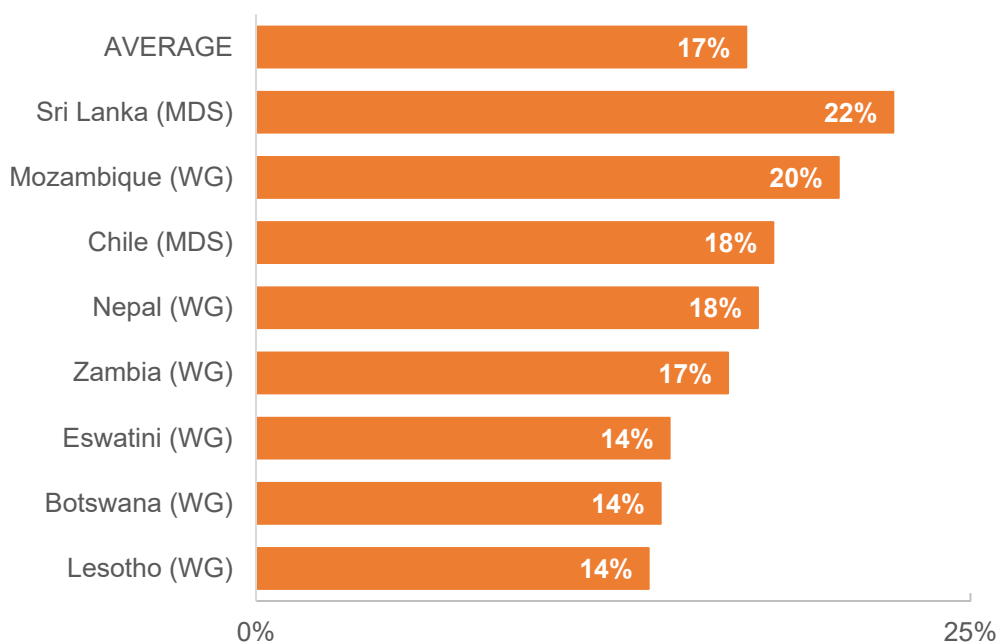
Ensuring the availability of water and sanitation for persons with disabilities (Goal 6)

Disability-inclusive development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs provide a powerful framework to guide local communities, countries and the international community toward the achievement of disability-inclusive development. The 2030 Agenda pledges to leave no one behind, including persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups, and recognizes disability as a cross-cutting issue to be considered in the implementation of all of its goals. The Agenda also includes seven targets and 11 indicators explicitly referencing persons with disabilities, covering access to education and employment, availability of schools that are sensitive to students with disabilities, inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities, accessible transport, accessible public and green spaces, and building the capacity of countries to disaggregate data by disability.

Persons with disabilities, especially those living in developing countries, encounter challenges in access to water, sanitation and hygiene, including physical, institutional, social and attitudinal barriers. This is particularly true for persons with severe disabilities. Furthermore, in many countries persons with disabilities are less likely to live in households with access to improved water and sanitation, and less likely to live in a dwelling with hygiene and sanitation facilities on the premises. This can create difficulties for persons with disabilities who experience difficulties in mobility, in locating the bathroom and in waiting in line. Moreover, **evidence from a limited number of developing countries indicates that more than one in seven persons with disabilities finds the toilet at home hindering or not accessible (Figure 1).**

Figure 1: Percentage of persons with disabilities who report that their toilet¹ at home is hindering or not accessible, in 8 countries, around 2013.

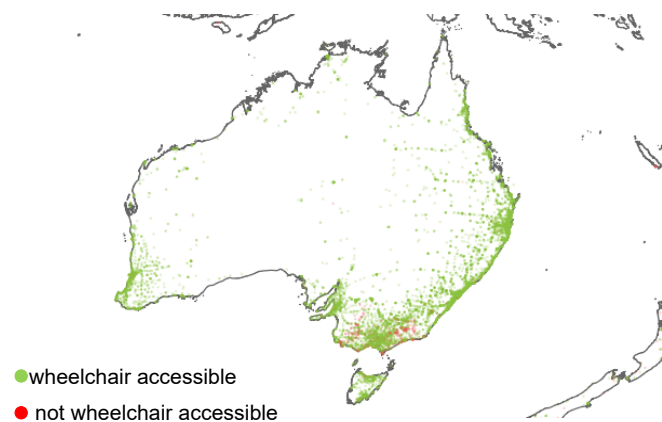


Note: (WG) identifies countries with data collected with the Washington Group Short Set of Questions. (MDS) identifies countries with data collected with the Model Disability Survey.

Source: UNDESA² (on the basis of data from SINTEF³) and WHO.⁴

Lack of accessibility of toilets outside the home is also a challenge and prevents persons with disabilities from participating in society. **Crowdsourced data, mostly from developed countries, indicates that only 69 per cent of public toilets are accessible for wheelchair users.** In Australia, for instance, many public toilets have been assessed as accessible for wheelchair users (Figure 2). Crowdsourced data in developing countries is scarce, but the available data suggest that most public toilets are not accessible for wheelchair users, as illustrated in Figure 3 in the south region of Malawi. Evidence also suggests that many primary schools do not have sanitation facilities that are accessible by persons with reduced mobility.

Figure 2: Accessibility of public toilets for wheelchair users, in Australia, in 2017 (crowdsourced data).



Note: The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Source: UNDESA² (on the basis of data from Sozialhelden⁵).

Figure 3: Accessibility of public toilets for wheelchair users, in the south region of Malawi, in 2017



Note: The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Source: UNDESA² (on the basis of data from Sozialhelden⁵).

Assistive technologies, such as specially designed handles for water pumps or toilets, ramps and handrails, and wider doors that are designed for persons with disabilities, have been used to overcome such challenges and make water, sanitation and hygiene accessible. Some countries have also made communal wells safe and physically accessible for persons with disabilities and have provided moveable toilet seats to households with latrines, which have helped persons with disabilities and leg and/or back problems by reducing the need to sit or crawl on a wet latrine floor.

Actions to ensure the availability of water and sanitation for persons with disabilities

- Involve all stakeholders, especially persons with disabilities.
- Invest and allocate financial resources to make water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in households and in settings outside the home accessible, prioritizing schools, workplaces, health facilities and communal facilities.
- Adopt a twin-track approach: mainstream disability in water and sanitation policies and programmes while at the same time developing disability-specific programmes.
- Share information and build capacity about low-cost inclusive interventions to scale them up.
- Raise awareness and end discrimination and stigma.
- Explore crowdsourcing applications to obtain bottom-up information on the accessibility of water and sanitation facilities.
- Collect, analyse and disseminate census and survey data on water, sanitation and hygiene access for persons with disabilities and disaggregate these data by type of disability, age and sex.

¹ In Chile, the question refers not only to the toilet, but to the dwelling including the toilet.

² Country estimates calculated or commissioned by UNDESA.

³ Stiftelsen for industriell og teknisk forskning, Living conditions among persons with disabilities, various datasets from 2006 to 2017.

⁴ Model disability surveys in Cameroon, Chile and Sri Lanka, 2015–2016. Data provided by the World Health Organization in April 2018.

⁵ Sozialhelden, accessibility.cloud. Available at www.accessibility.cloud (accessed in December 2017).