FAST FACTS

Big picture
- 1.8 billion people gained access to adequate sanitation since 1990.
- The number of people resorting to open defecation – the riskiest sanitation practice – has decreased by 271 million since 1990.
- 1.1 billion people, or 15 per cent of the global population, practice open defecation.
- 20 countries, mostly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, account for over 80 per cent of open defecation in the world.
- 2.5 billion people – roughly 37 per cent of the world’s population – still lack what many of us take for granted: access to adequate sanitation.

Human impact
- Open defecation is one of the main causes of diarrhoea, which results in the deaths of more than 750,000 children under age 5 every year.
- Each year, children lose 272 million school days due to diarrhoea.
- Each day about 3,000 children under age 5 die as a result of diarrhoea, most before their second birthday.

Economic impact
- Doing nothing is costly. Every US $1 spent on sanitation brings a $5.50 return by keeping people healthy and productive.
- The global economic gains from investing in sanitation and water are estimated at $260 billion per year.
- Poor sanitation, on the other hand, costs countries between 0.5 and 7.2 per cent of their GDP:
  - $448 million/7.2 per cent of GDP in Cambodia
  - $53.8 billion/6.4 per cent of GDP in India
  - $6.3 billion/2.3 per cent of GDP in Indonesia
  - $17.5 million/2.0 per cent of GDP in Liberia
  - $4.2 billion/6.3 per cent of GDP in Pakistan
  - $3 billion/1.3 per cent of GDP in Nigeria

Sources: Big picture and Human impact: WHO/UNICEF. Economic impact: World Bank. For more information, visit: www.sanitationdrive2015.org