

Sanitation in Kenya: Facts and Figures in the COVID-19 context

- According to a 2019 [joint study by the WHO and UNICEF](#), only 59% of Kenyans have access to basic water services, and only 29% have access to sanitation services.
- In [the same study](#), the WHO & UNICEF also estimate that 5 million Kenyans (~10%) practice open defecation, while only 14% have hand-washing facilities with soap and water at home.
- [According to the CDC](#), hand-washing can cut the risk of respiratory infection by 16%.
- [For AMREE](#), the simple act of hand-washing with soap is the single most effective way to stop childhood deaths. It can reduce the spread of pneumonia by 23% and diarrhea by up to 45%.
- According to [Sanergy](#) - a member of the Safe Hands Kenya coalition - loss of productivity due to illness costs the country 2% of its GDP every year (in normal circumstances).
- A [World Bank \(Water & Sanitation Program\) study](#) has found that awareness about the importance of hand-washing with soap is high in Kenya, especially after using the toilet. But awareness regarding the relationship between hand-washing with soap and diseases (including coronaviruses), and how this affects the day-to-day lives of children and the entire community, remains weak.
- [Several scientific studies](#) referred to in international media have found that surgical masks decrease the exhalation of large viral droplets 25-fold in a home setting, while wearing a surgical mask decreases a healthy person's risk of getting sick by 60% to 80%.