

## Water

## WATER

Water, sanitation and hygiene are critical for a cleaner, healthier world. Several of our biggest and fastest-growing markets in Africa, the Middle East and India are in water-stressed areas. This can make it difficult for people to access hygiene and health services and in many regions climate change is making the problem worse. We're taking a number of steps to reduce our water footprint and advance global health and hygiene. Since 2012, we've focused on reducing water use in our operations. We're committed to safeguarding water resources now and in the future and driving better access to clean water and sanitation in communities around the world.



## Our commitment

Halving our water footprint by 2040<sup>1</sup> and helping people get better access to clean water and sanitation

## Our targets

Water positive in water-stressed locations where we operate by 2030	<span style="color: orange;">●</span> In progress
50% reduction in product water footprint by 2040 <sup>1</sup>	<span style="color: red;">●</span> Behind schedule



**Supporting SDG 6** – providing universal access to water and sanitation for all by 2030

## Advancing global health and hygiene

According to the latest UN-Water progress report, 'billions of people still live without safe water, sanitation and hygiene services'<sup>2</sup>. More than two billion<sup>3</sup> people live in countries that are water-stressed, where demand for accessible fresh water exceeds supply.

Poor access to water, due to water scarcity and poor-quality water, has an impact on people's health. This was a key finding from our research to understand how people are adapting their hygiene and health behaviours in response to the effects of climate change, particularly in water-stressed environments.



Reckitt joined the CEO Water Mandate and Water Resilience Coalition (WRC) in 2021, a global initiative by the UN Global Compact. Through this, we're committed to continuous improvement in water stewardship, supply chain and watershed management, public policy, community engagement and transparency.

We continue to tackle our own impact and work through our brands, our operations and in communities to improve access to water.

We have longstanding partnerships with WWF and Water.org, and with local NGOs like Agua Capital, to help us drive collective action across our value chain.

1. From a 2015 baseline

2. [unwater.org/news/un-water-sdg-6-progress-reports](https://unwater.org/news/un-water-sdg-6-progress-reports)

3. [unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/Goal-06/](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/Goal-06/)

## Water continued

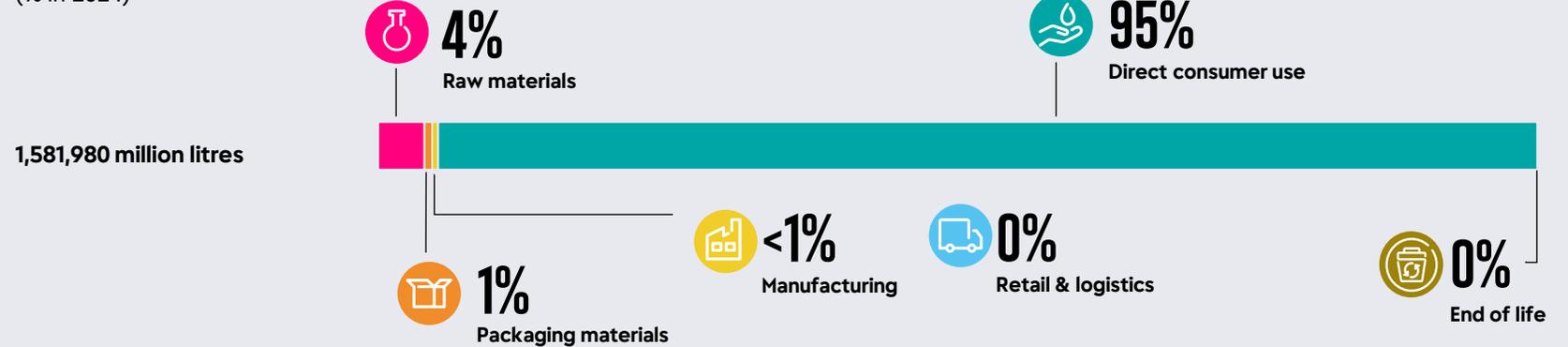
### Impacts, risks and dependencies

The water we use to make and manufacture our products makes up less than 1% of our overall water footprint. Most of our products' water use happens when consumers buy and use them. This means we need to address water use over the complete lifecycle of our products, a complex challenge given that many of these elements are outside of our direct control.

Water scarcity is a concern in many parts of the world and climate change means it's becoming more widespread. At the year end, we had 16 sites in regions where water scarcity is a risk, and 17% of our total water withdrawals occur in these locations.

▶ See our [CDP response](#) for water accounting metrics for our sites in water-stressed regions

#### Water use across our value chain\* (% in 2024)



\* Figures rounded for presentation purposes and may not equal 100. Manufacturing includes Reckitt operations and third-party manufacturers (co-packers). We include the direct consumer use phase for example, when consumers need to add water to infant formula. We don't include indirect use, for example, the water consumers use when running their dishwashers

## Our strategy

### 1. Action in our operations

Good water governance is fundamental to our approach. Within our operations, our focus is on water efficiency, sustainable water balance and quality. Our sites are certified to ISO 14001, and our Global Standards for Water and Wastewater Management specify minimum requirements for reducing, reusing and recycling water.

We're continuing initiatives to reduce water use within our operations by reusing and recycling water where appropriate, optimising our processes and advancing on-site water stewardship programmes. We've also made the most of the expertise that our WWF partnership offers to help develop best-practice in water stewardship across our manufacturing sites.

### 2. Innovating to improve our products

As a large consumer goods company, our portfolio includes more than 45,000 individual product lines and we're constantly innovating to improve the environmental impact of our products.

Our Sustainable Innovation Calculator encourages the design of products that reduce water consumption across the value chain and informs our innovation process. We assess the water footprint of each new product during its development and explore product reformulations that require less water to be effective. There can be trade-offs, for example, moving to bio-based and renewable resources may cause our water footprint to increase, especially in raw materials and packaging. We consider these as part of our calculations.

▶ See our [Sustainable Innovation Calculator](#)

### 3. Driving behaviour change

Our market-leading brands have the power to influence behaviour change at scale.

We're continuing our efforts to help consumers cut their water use and save water when using our products. For example, Finish promotes water conservation through its ongoing 'Skip The Rinse' campaign.

We're also focused on improving hygiene behaviours. Our global school programmes, including our flagship Dettol Hygiene Quest, have brought high-quality hygiene education to 24.5 million children in more than 15 countries and have made measurable improvements to health and school attendance.

▶ See more in our [Social Impact Report](#)

### 4. Improving access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Our social impact programmes focus on creating lasting impact to help people live cleaner, healthier lives. We focus on areas with the greatest need, investing in access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene for local communities.

Our longstanding partnership with water.org has enabled lasting access to WASH for more than 2.4 million people in India, Indonesia and Kenya. We have also closed our second investment of \$5 million into WaterEquity, supporting climate resilient infrastructure projects around the world.

Finally, we scale innovative solutions for water and sanitation through our support of social entrepreneurs.

## Water continued

### Performance against our targets

# 2

#### water positive sites in water-stressed locations where we operate

We've now achieved water positivity at two of our sites in India – Hosur and Mysore. For 2024, Mysore was independently verified as water positive by ERM CVS. Projects included digging sunken ponds, restoring tanks, and building small check dams to improve groundwater filtration, rainwater retention and prevent soil erosion. We are advancing similar projects at key sites in Mexico, Pakistan, India and South Africa, partnering with local NGOs and governments to support communities and our sites there.

We follow the principles of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) Standard; engaging with local stakeholders in key catchment areas to understand shared water challenges and working collaboratively for sustainable water management.

We try to optimise both social and environmental benefits through targeted interventions. For example, from rainwater harvesting in schools and increasing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, to forest restoration projects.

Through the WRC, we're also monitoring the evolution of Net Positive Water Impact guidance and considering examples of good practice within our approach.

# 15%

#### increase in water footprint (Target: 50% reduction by 2040)

Our near-term focus has been on reducing the impact of plastic and carbon in our product portfolio. This focus was essential but meant that actions to reduce our overall water footprint were not given the same priority. As a result, our water footprint increased by 15% versus our 2015 baseline.

Much of the total footprint arises when our brands are used in the home, for example washing hands using Dettol soap. We model this use within our footprint however it is difficult to both model and control. As such, we are also considering other ways to target reductions in our water footprint. We remain committed to driving down this footprint, in line with our goal for 2040, through the formulation of our products and the development of concentrates, and with consumers.

Our ongoing sustainable innovation programme has continued to deliver improvements across our portfolio. For example, product reformulations to remove or replace high impact ingredients have improved the water footprint of our Durex HA Basic Condoms in China, and our Replex mosquito repellent and Vanish Oxi Action Powders in Brazil. Concentrated formats and formulas have delivered higher dosing in smaller packs and improved the water footprint of products, for example our Vanish Oxi Action PLUS super concentrated powder. Packaging improvements have also delivered results, for example in our self-adhesive Harpic Hygienic & Fresh Sticker toilet block.

### Water use

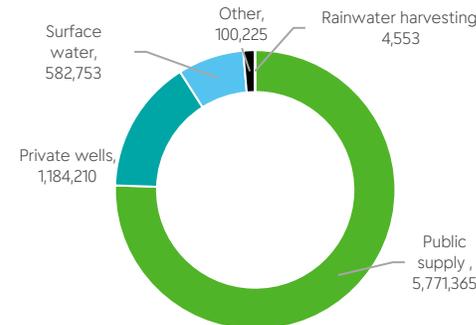
We've improved water efficiency in our operations since 2012 through site specific projects and initiatives. Within water-stressed locations, water-saving projects remain a key part of our strategy for long-term resilience, alongside our catchment area work.

During the year, we reduced water use in our operations by 6% per tonne of production versus our 2015 baseline. This was driven by production efficiencies, water treatment recovery, cleaning optimisation and water recycling. This is lower than we initially targeted, reflecting significant progress (37% reduction) up to 2020. While we continue to look for improvements, we are prioritising investments in carbon reduction.

We're increasingly recycling water and driving water circularity where possible within our factories. We recycled and reused 431,762m<sup>3</sup> of water (equivalent to more than 170 Olympic-sized swimming pools). By increasing the water we reuse and recycle for certain operations, we reduce the amount of water sourced locally.

#### Total water use (withdrawals) in our operations in 2024 (m<sup>3</sup>)

7,643,106m<sup>3</sup>



### Water quality and wastewater

As part of our drive for a cleaner and healthier world, we strive to ensure our processes do not adversely affect people or the environment.

Our global standards include our approach to reducing, reusing and recycling water. We manage effluent in line with local legislation and our Global Wastewater Management Standard, which defines our processes for managing wastewater quality at manufacturing sites. This includes discharges directly to a water body. Performance is managed through our site audit programme.

Water used in manufacturing has to meet high quality levels. Reusing and increasing the recirculation of treated wastewater requires us to ensure those quality requirements are achieved.

We also aim to minimise the adverse impacts of potential water pollutants. Pharmaceuticals in the water environment is a growing global environmental concern. As such we're evaluating the potential impact of active pharmaceutical ingredients in effluent and working on how we minimise and control this. We aim to prevent them entering wastewater in the first instance. For example, we're investing in zero effluent discharge at key sites in China, Thailand, Malaysia and India.

We're driving our incident investigation and corrective action process further and have enhanced our internal systems to increase transparency through reporting and shared learnings.

## Water continued

## SPOTLIGHT

## TOWARDS WATER POSITIVITY: DELIVERING ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT IN MEXICO

Mexico is one of Reckitt's top 5 markets in terms of net revenue and is a target for our social impact programmes to advance access to health and hygiene. Water stress is a growing concern. Four of Reckitt's sites are in water-stressed areas in Mexico and our goal is to make them water positive. The situation is becoming increasingly critical around Mexico City, where our Atizapan and Tlalpan sites are located.

Through our Global Access Fund, we're investing £3.6 million in social impact initiatives in Mexico over the next 3 years, including rainwater harvesting in schools, the Dettol Hygiene Quest, a WWF reforestation project to support water access, and our partnership with UNFPA on sexual education and the prevention of teenage pregnancy.

More detail in our [Social Impact Report](#)

# 43,500+

people from the school community positively benefiting from rainwater collection systems

### The impact of water stress on local communities

Limited groundwater, fluctuating and unpredictable rainfall, problems with water infrastructure and the demands of a growing population mean that water availability is a key focus in Mexico.

In particular, lack of water is a pressing problem for schools where an estimated 4 in 10 don't have water available every day. In areas with the highest water stress and a high concentration of people, access to water in schools can affect class hours, attendance, performance and overall learning achievement. The school next to our Atizapan site was severely impacted by water shortages, sometimes having to close for several days due to lack of sanitation.

### What we're doing

Access to clean water and sanitation is a global challenge Reckitt seeks to address through our partnerships and programmes. In the areas surrounding our Atizapan and Tlalpan sites, we're working with local communities and Agua Capital to increase water availability by, for example, installing rainwater harvesting



systems which capture rainwater for use in washrooms and for cleaning.

So far, Reckitt and Agua Capital have installed 29 rainwater harvesting systems benefiting over 43,500 people from the school communities, and we have plans to implement more in schools near our sites in the Mexico City area.

We've also carried out water-saving pipe upgrades and leak repairs, as well as local engagement and education to increase access and awareness. To ensure ongoing impact, we continue to fund maintenance of the systems for five years post-installation.

### Access to hygiene-health education

In 2024, we expanded the reach of this programme to more schools by partnering with Walmart on their 'Keep Kids in School' campaign. The campaign aims to install additional rainwater harvesting systems and provide education materials, particularly in the cocoa farming areas that support our Chocomilk brand.

In December, we took Dettol's educational Hygiene Quest campaign to children at schools in the Atizapan community.



### Recharging water through reforestation

Through our partnership with WWF, we're funding a reforestation project in San Pablo Malacatepec (west of Mexico City) which will commence in 2025. The aim of this project is to reforest 210 hectares of land (about 290 football pitches). Forests support watershed management by absorbing rainwater, preventing erosion and promoting groundwater recharge.

Reforesting the land will help to retain more water in the soil and increase the recharging of water connected to the Cutzamala system, one of the main sources of water supporting Mexico City.



**By improving infrastructure and providing access to education for children, we're helping to secure a more sustainable future for local communities, while promoting health and hygiene education for all."**

**Xochitl Morales**

External Affairs Associate Director

