

# OPEN DEFECATION

## POLL RESULT RELEASE

in Partnership with



NIGERIA CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL



November 2019



# OPEN DEFECACTION POLL RESULT RELEASE

**76%** of Nigerians say that access to a good toilet is a challenge in Nigeria

NW=74% SW=67%  
NE=67% SE=84%  
NC=87% SS=79%



## What sanitation facility (toilet) do you use in your household?



**83%**

Private toilet connected to a private septic tank



**14%**

Pit latrine



**2%**

Open defecation



**1%**

Private toilet connected to a public septic tank



**63%**

of Nigerians say they have seen open defecation being practiced in their locality.

**52%**

of these respondents claim that they see open defecation being practiced in their locality **DAILY**

## Dangers associated with open defecation

**40%**

Diarrhoea

**22%**

Typhoid

**13%**

Cholera

**11%**

Rituals

**5%**

Air Pollution

**5%**

Disease spread

**4%**

Toilet disease

## What do you suggest the government should do to address the issue of open defecation?

More toilets should be provided in public spaces **40%**

Private home toilet should be made mandatory for every household **28%**

Enact laws against open defecation **13%**

Establish sanitation monitoring agency **11%**

Sensitize people on the dangers of open defecation **5%**

Government should provide toilets in rural areas **3%**

Source: NOIPolls - November 2019

## OPEN DEFECACTION POLL RESULT RELEASE

### In Commemoration of World Toilet Day; 6 in 10 Nigerians Still Practice Open Defecation – New Poll Reveals

**Abuja, Nigeria. November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019** – NOIPolls joins the world to commemorate the World Toilet Day (WTD) which was observed on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November, 2019. The aim of the annual event is to raise awareness of the crucial role that sanitation plays in reducing disease and creating healthier communities across the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), about 4.2 billion people live without safely managed sanitation, three billion lack basic handwashing facilities and 673 million still practice open defecation.<sup>1</sup> This sanitation crisis means that untreated human waste is spreading diseases into water supplies and the food chain for billions of people hence, estimated to cause 432,000 diarrhea deaths yearly.<sup>2</sup> Nigeria is not an exception as data report from UNICEF indicates that Nigeria has been ranked second among countries practicing open defecation globally.<sup>3</sup>

Against this background, **NOIPolls** in collaboration with **Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)** conducted a public opinion poll on access to sanitation facilities in Nigeria. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control is the country’s national public health institute, with the mandate to lead the preparedness, detection and response to infectious disease outbreaks and public health emergencies. The aim of NCDC is to protect the health of Nigerians through evidence-based prevention, integrated disease surveillance and response activities, using a one health approach, guided by research and led by a skilled workforce.

The poll highlighted the perceptions of Nigerians regarding access to sanitation facilities, prevalence and practice of open defecation as well as suggestions on how the issue can be addressed. The poll revealed that most Nigerians (76 percent) acknowledged that access to sanitation facility is a challenge. When asked of the sanitation facility respondents use, majority of the respondents (83 percent) mentioned private toilet connected to private septic tank, 14 percent said pit latrine and 2 percent stated open defecation amongst other facilities.

In terms of prevalence, 80 of Nigerians believe that the issue of open defecation is prevalent across the country. With regards to practice, sadly, 63 percent of Nigerians disclosed that they have seen people practicing open defecation in their respective locality and of this proportion, 52 percent stated that they always see people practicing open defecation in their locality. More findings showed that Nigerians are aware of the dangers associated with open defecation as mentioned by 82 percent of the respondents and the top three dangers cited are diarrhea (40 percent), typhoid (22 percent) and cholera (13 percent).

To effectively tackle this awful culture, there should be a concerted effort to provide toilets in public places as recommended by 40 percent of Nigerians so that people would not have recourse to relieving themselves in the open. Government agencies, town planners and other stakeholders responsible for the environment should ensure that toilets are mandated for every household when putting up a structure as suggested by 28 percent of Nigerians.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/publications/jmp-report-2019/en/](https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/jmp-report-2019/en/)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sanitation>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>

These are the key findings from the **Access to Sanitation Facility Poll** conducted by **NOIPolls** in collaboration with **Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)** in the week commencing November 4th, 2019.

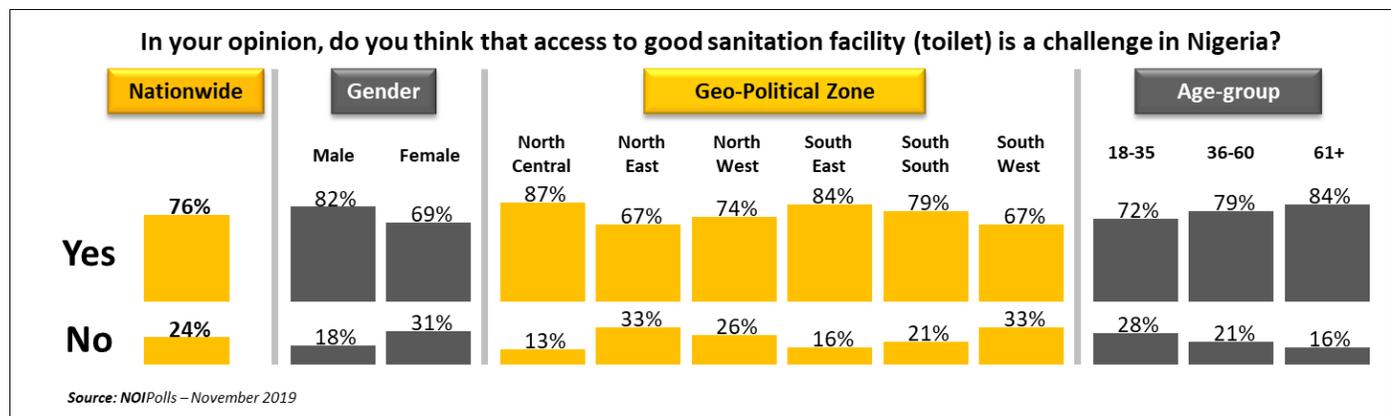
## Background

The World Toilet Day is an annual campaign that seeks to draw the attention of the world to the challenges of sanitation experienced by people globally. It is also a day which seeks to inspire the world to tackle the global sanitation crisis and to also help achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 which promises sanitation for all by the year 2030. The theme for this year is **Leaving no one behind** which is a deliberate step in the right direction to ensure that no one is left behind in the sanitation issues that affects a large proportion of the world’s population. More so, according to statistics, there is an estimated 4.2 billion people living without safely managed sanitation and about 673 million people around the world practise open defecation.<sup>4</sup>

In Nigeria, more than 70,000 children under five years die from diarrhoea disease as a result of unsafe drinking water and poor sanitation condition every year. Also, about 47 million Nigerians practise open defecation according to previous statistics obtained. With regards to these alarming figures, the federal government declared a state of emergency in water, sanitation and hygiene in November, 2018 in a bid to reverse the trend. This was swiftly followed by the launching of a national campaign – clean Nigeria: use the toilet, which was launched in April 2019.<sup>5</sup> In view of this escalating and mind-boggling statistics, and in commemoration of the day, NOIPolls in collaboration with **Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)** conducted a poll to gauge the opinion of Nigerians regarding access to sanitation facilities and open defecation in the country.

## Survey Findings

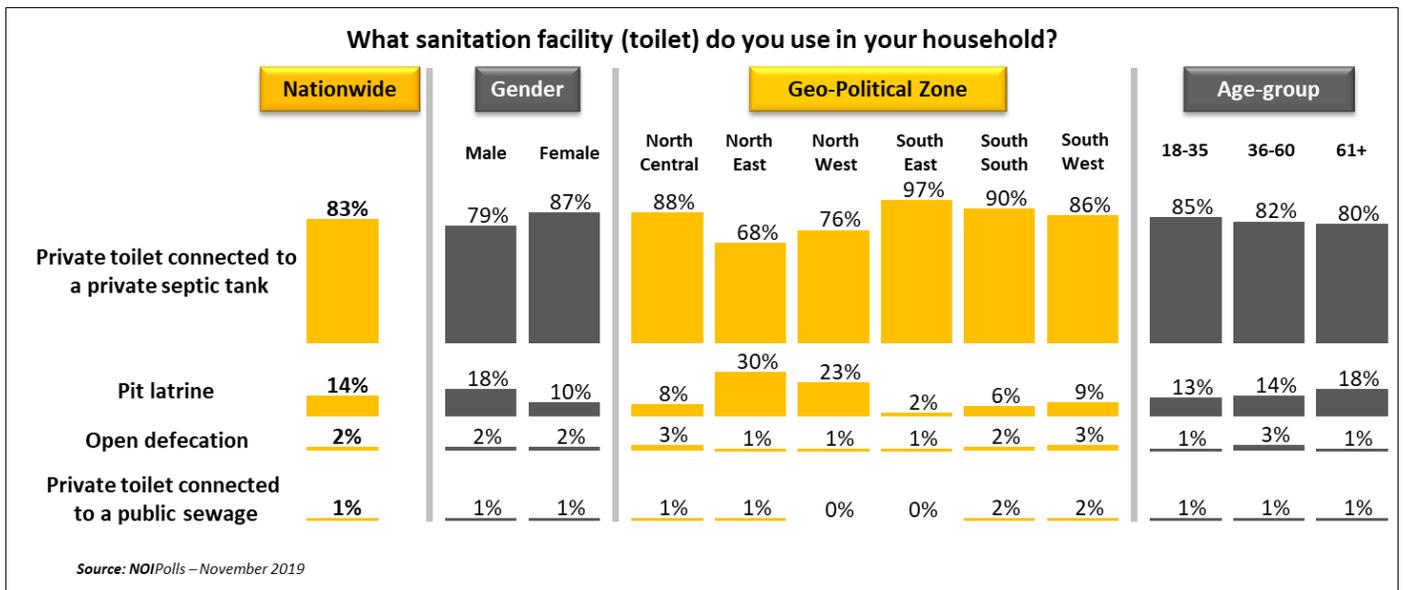
Access to sanitation facility is essential to the socio-economic wellbeing and sustainable development of every society. Given the above, when respondents were asked if access to sanitation facility is a challenge, 76 percent of Nigerians acknowledged that access to sanitation facility is a challenge in Nigeria while 24 percent think otherwise.



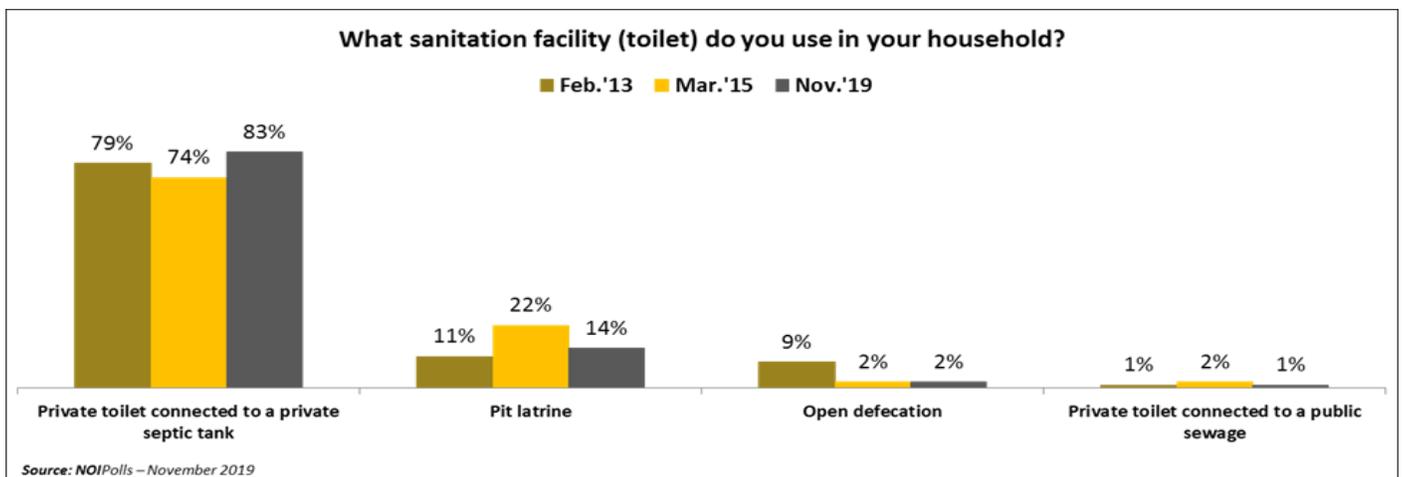
The poll also sought to ascertain the opinion of Nigerians on the type of sanitation facility they use in their household and the largest proportion (83 Percent) stated that they use private toilet connected to a private septic tank whereas 14 percent indicated that they use pit latrine, sadly, 2 percent of the respondents stated that they practice open defecation while 1 percent stated that they use private toilet connected to a public sewage.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/events/toiletday/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/jul/30/my-message-is-simple-use-the-toilet-tackling-open-defecation-in-nigeria>

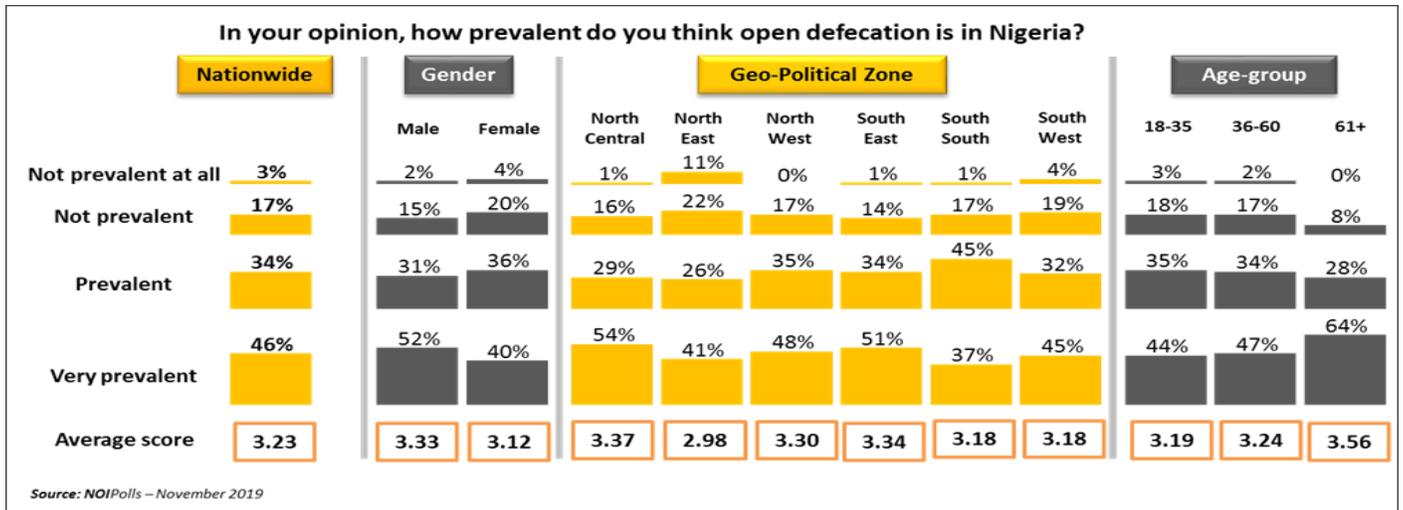


Trend analysis shows a 4% increase in the proportion of Nigerians who use private toilets connected to private septic tank when current result is compared to the result obtained in 2013.

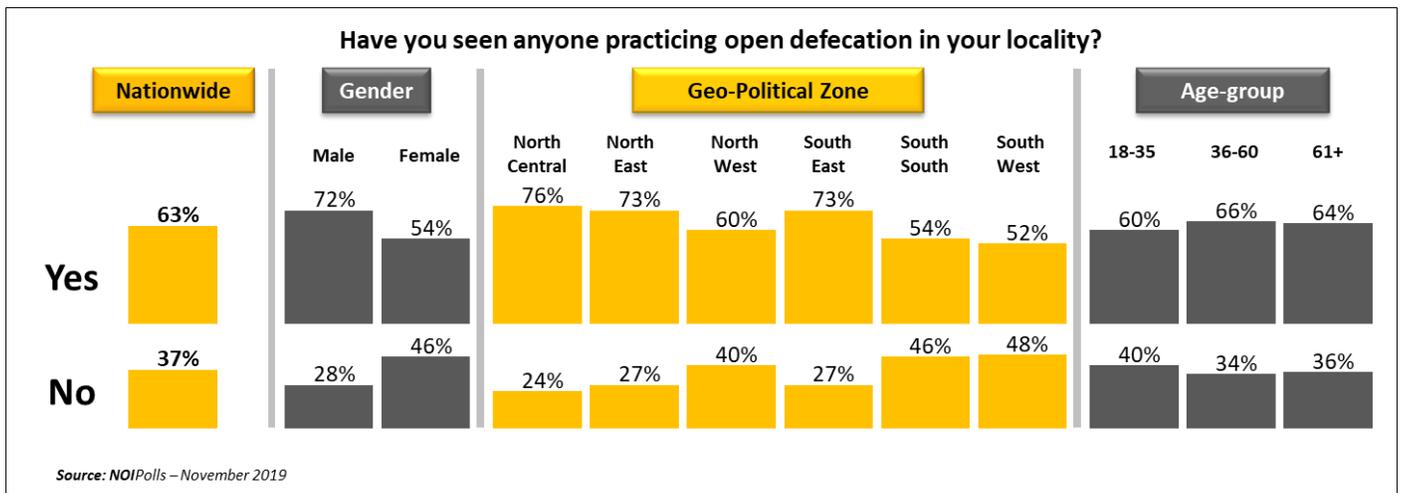


With regards to open defecation, majority of Nigerians stated that open defecation is prevalent in Nigeria. This finding corroborates premium times report that identified Nigeria as the second in the world among countries where open defecation is prevalent.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>

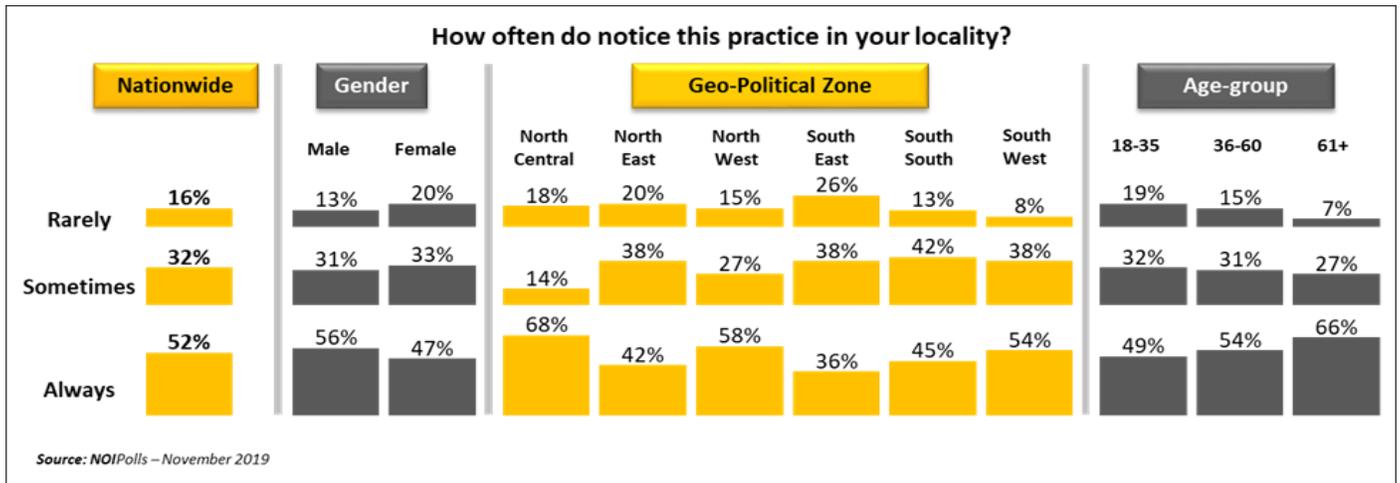


With respect to knowledge, 63 percent of Nigerians confirmed that they have seen people carrying out this act within their locality and there are more Nigerians residing in the North Central zone who made this assertion.

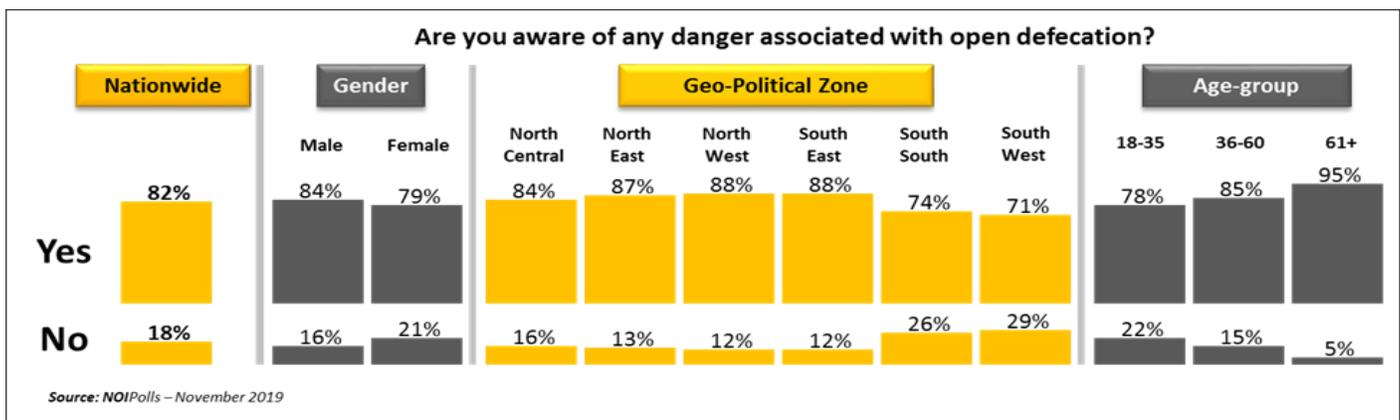


Of the above proportion, slightly more than half of the respondents (52 percent) disclosed that they always noticed this practice and this is followed by 32 percent who said sometimes. This infers that open defecation is a challenge across the country especially in the North central zone as 68 percent said they always see people practice open defecation. This result further corroborates the findings from UNICEF which revealed that Kogi state, a state in North Central zone, practise open defecation more than any other state in the country.<sup>7</sup>

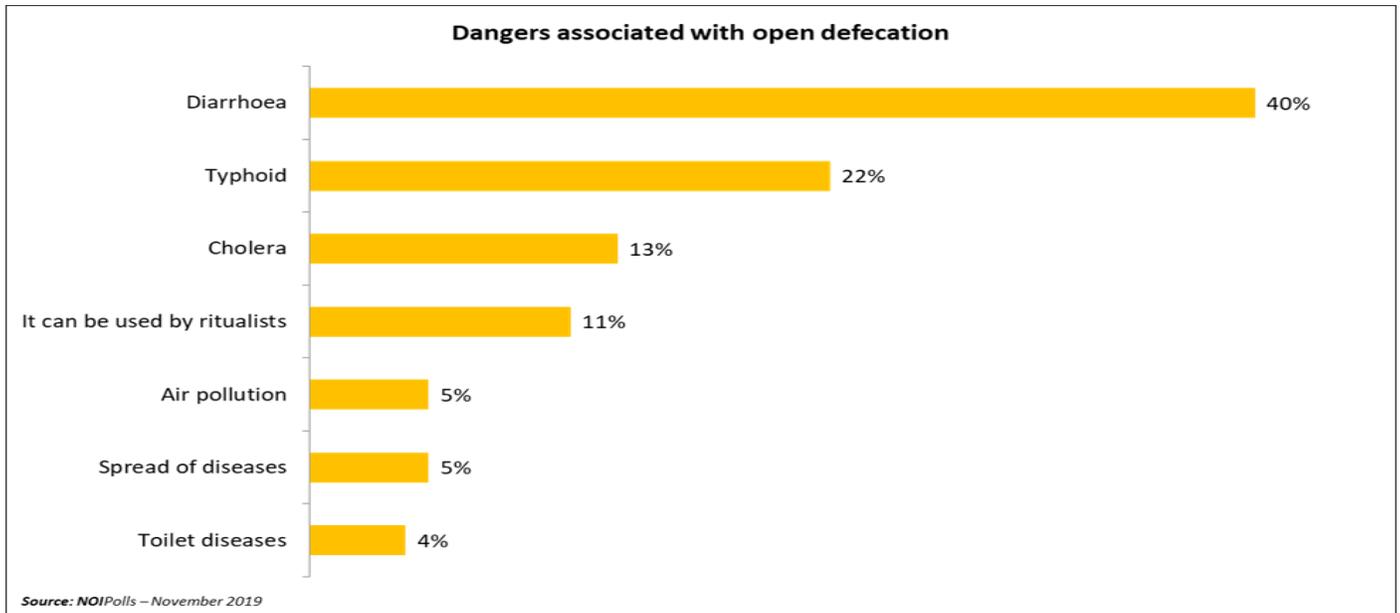
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thisdaylive.com>



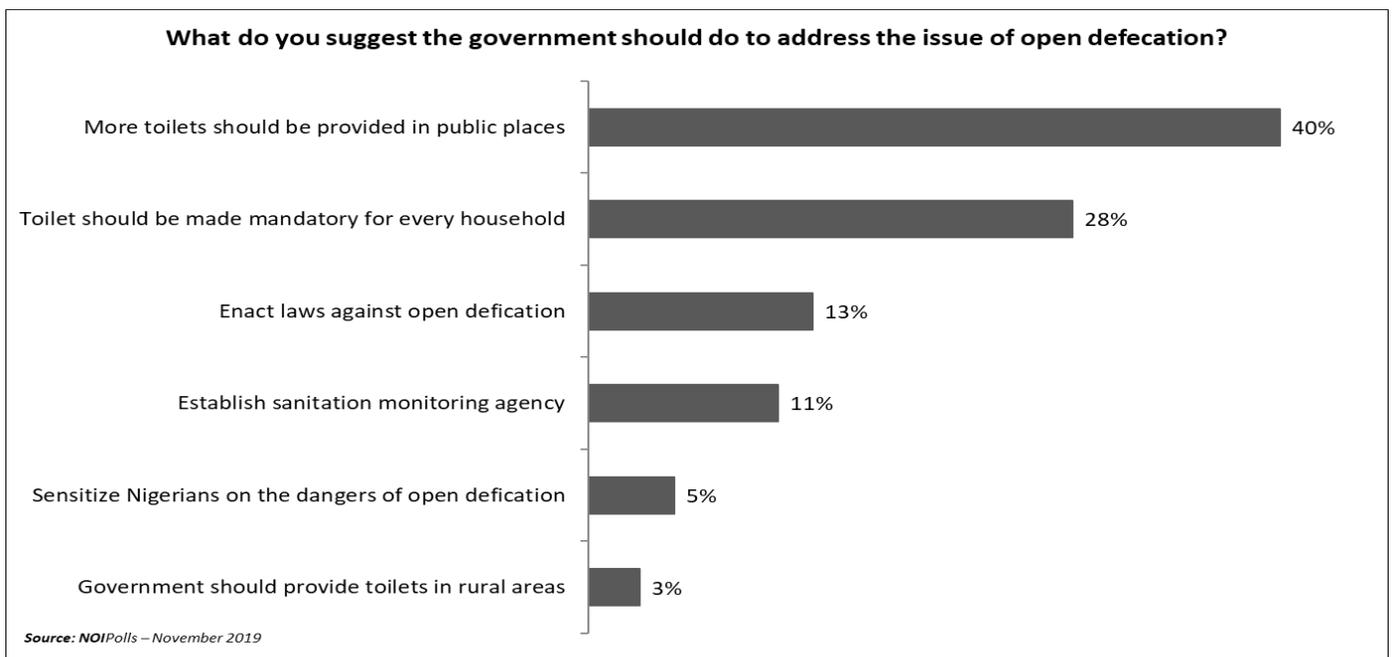
Respondents were asked if they are aware of the dangers of open defecation and the result revealed that 82 percent of the respondents say they are aware of the dangers associated with open defecation and this cuts across gender, geo-political zone and age-group with at least 71 percent representation.



Of the 82 percent of Nigerians who indicated that they are aware of the dangers associated with open defecation, 40 percent cited diarrhoea as one of the dangers while 22 percent mentioned typhoid amongst other diseases mentioned.



Respondents were asked to suggest what government should do to address the issue of open defecation in Nigeria. 40 percent suggested that more toilets should be provided in public spaces while 28 percent stated that toilets should be mandatory for every household, 13 percent advocated for the enactment of policies against open defecation amongst other recommendations.



### Conclusion

In conclusion, the poll result has revealed that access to good sanitation facility is a challenge in Nigeria as indicated by 76 percent of Nigerians. Also, majority of Nigerians (83 percent) attest to the fact that they use private toilet connected to private septic tank while 14 percent say they use pit latrine. It is interesting to note that 2 percent of the respondents disclosed that they practice open defecation.

In terms of prevalence of open defecation, the poll revealed a high prevalence as 80 percent of Nigerians acknowledged this. And of this proportion, 63 percent say they have seen other Nigerians practicing open defecation with the North Central (76 percent) having more people who say they have seen more people practicing open defecation on a regular basis.

To effectively tackle this awful culture, there should be a concerted effort to provide toilets in public places as recommended by 40 percent of the Nigerians so that people would not have recourse to relieving themselves in the open. Government agencies, town planners and other stakeholders responsible for the environment should ensure that toilets are mandated for every household when putting up a structure as suggested by 28 percent of Nigerians.

Finally, there is also the need for the government and relevant stakeholders to create more awareness regarding the dangers of open defecation and to build more public toilets in open places to encourage usage of toilets. This can also be achieved by providing mobile toilets in order to discourage open defecation in the country. These actions will go a long way in ensuring that open defecation is eradicated completely by 2030.

### **Survey Methods**

The opinion poll was conducted in the week commencing November 11th, 2019. It involved telephone interviews of a proportionate nationwide sample of 1,000 randomly selected phone-owning female Nigerians aged 18 years and above, representing the six geo-political regions and 36 states and the FCT of the country. Interviews were conducted in 5 languages – Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Pidgin English and English. Although we can say with 95% confidence that the results obtained were statistically precise – within a margin of error of plus or minus 4.65%; we recognize that the exclusive use of telephone polling has its limitation of excluding non-phone-owning Nigerians. Nonetheless, with the country's tele density put over 100 percent by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), we consider our telephone polling approach appropriate. Also, given the rigorous scientific process of randomization and stratification applied, we can confidently stand by the validity of our methodology and approach. NOIPolls Limited, No1 for country specific polling services in West Africa. We conduct periodic opinion polls and studies on various socio-economic and political issues in Nigeria. More information is available at [www.noi-polls.com](http://www.noi-polls.com).

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