

# ACCESS TO WATER

## SURVEY REPORT



MARCH 2020

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

In commemoration of World Water Day, which holds on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March every year, NOIPolls conducted a public opinion poll on access to clean water. The poll explored the accessibility of water to Nigerians, the quality and treatment of drinking water and challenges faced in accessing clean water.

The poll revealed that sachet water popularly known as pure water is the main source of drinking water for Nigerians while borehole is the main source of water for household use in the country. It is important to state that it is the responsibility of the government to provide water to all its citizenry through the Ministry of Water Resources<sup>1</sup>. However, the poll revealed that most Nigerians provide their own water. It is important to note that these sources of water, if not properly treated, can put Nigerians at risk of pathogens such as E-coli which cause diarrhoeal diseases and other water-borne diseases.

More findings showed that 64 percent of respondents (except for those whose only source of drinking water is sachet and bottled water) do not treat the water in any way before drinking irrespective of the source. However, 36 percent claimed that they treat their water mostly by boiling (40 percent) before drinking. With regards to access to clean water, 39 percent of Nigerians disclosed that they face challenges in accessing clean water in their respective households. According to the World Bank, accessing clean water is a major factor in reducing child mortality<sup>2</sup>. For instance, more than 70,000 children under five years die annually as a result water-borne disease<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, in order to meet the 6<sup>th</sup> Goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which is to ensure access to water and sanitation for all, government at all levels needs to urgently work towards the provision of improved quality of water and water sources to the citizenry. Finally, though the provision of water supply is capital intensive, it is still a necessity for the well-being of Nigerians. Therefore, Public-Private-Partnership programs should be encouraged to attract investors in order to ensure adequate production, distribution and sale of potable water to all.

## 2.0 Survey Background and Objectives

World Water Day is a day set aside by the United Nations to celebrate the gift of water to mankind and to also raise awareness regarding the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water for drinking and household use. It is also a day to inspire stakeholders and governments in various countries to take actions in order to tackle the global water crisis affecting the teeming populations of people around the world. A core focus of World Water Day however, is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.

World Water Day 2020 is about water and climate change and how the two are inextricably linked and the campaign shows how our use of water will help reduce floods, droughts, scarcity and pollution, and will help fight climate change itself. More so, by adapting to the water effects of climate change, we will protect health and save lives. And, by using water more efficiently, we will reduce greenhouse gases. However, the key messages for the water day 2020 are that people cannot afford to wait, climate policy makers must put water at the heart of action plans as water can help fight climate change<sup>4</sup>. There are sustainable, affordable and scalable water and sanitation solutions and everyone has a role to play.

<sup>1</sup> file:///C:/Users/j.akubue/Desktop/water%20sanitation%20nigeria%20national%20policy.pdf

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>

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

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

Statistics has shown that 1 in 3 people around the world live without safe drinking water and by 2050, up to 5.7 billion people could be living in areas where water is scarce for at least one month a year and climate-resilient water supply and sanitation could save the lives of more than 360,000 infants every year<sup>5</sup>. Also, if global warming is limited to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, it could cut climate-induced water stress by up to 50%. Extreme weather has caused more than 90% of major disasters over the last decade. In Nigeria however, statistics has shown that 55 million Nigerians do not have clean water and 60, 000 children under 5 years die every year from water related illnesses<sup>6</sup>. Against this backdrop and in commemoration of the day, NOIPolls conducted this survey in commemoration of World Water Day to gauge the perception of Nigerians regarding their access to water.

### 3.0 Methodology

The survey was conducted through telephone interviews in the week of **March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. A proportionate random nationwide selected sample of 1,000 phone-owning Nigerians, 18 years and above, were interviewed across the six geopolitical zones in the country using a well-structured questionnaire. This sample size provides a 95 percent confidence interval that the results obtained are within a range of plus or minus 4.65 percent of the opinions of population. The interviews were conducted in English, Pidgin, Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba. The use of several Nigerian languages reduces the likelihood of a non-response bias.

### 4.0 Demographic Distribution

The demographic distribution of the respondents was analysed by the following groups: gender, age-group, geo-political zones, and occupation as illustrated in Figure 1 below. The gender and the geo-political zone demographic distribution of the respondents were in the same proportion with the 2006 National Population Census.

**Gender:** The proportion of male and female respondents was almost equal with 51 percent and 49 percent respectively.

**Age-Group:** The age-group with the highest frequency in the survey was 36-60 (58 percent) and the lowest age-group represented was 60+ (5 percent).

**Geo-Political Zone:** All geo-political zones were adequately represented in the survey, the highest represented zone being the North-West zone (24 percent) and the lowest being the South-East zone (12 percent).

**Occupation:** The highest proportion of respondents surveyed were self-employed traders (32 percent) followed by government worker/civil servant (21 percent). The lowest represented occupation in the survey are religious leaders/missionary and youth corpsers each with 1 percent.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/observances>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/observances>

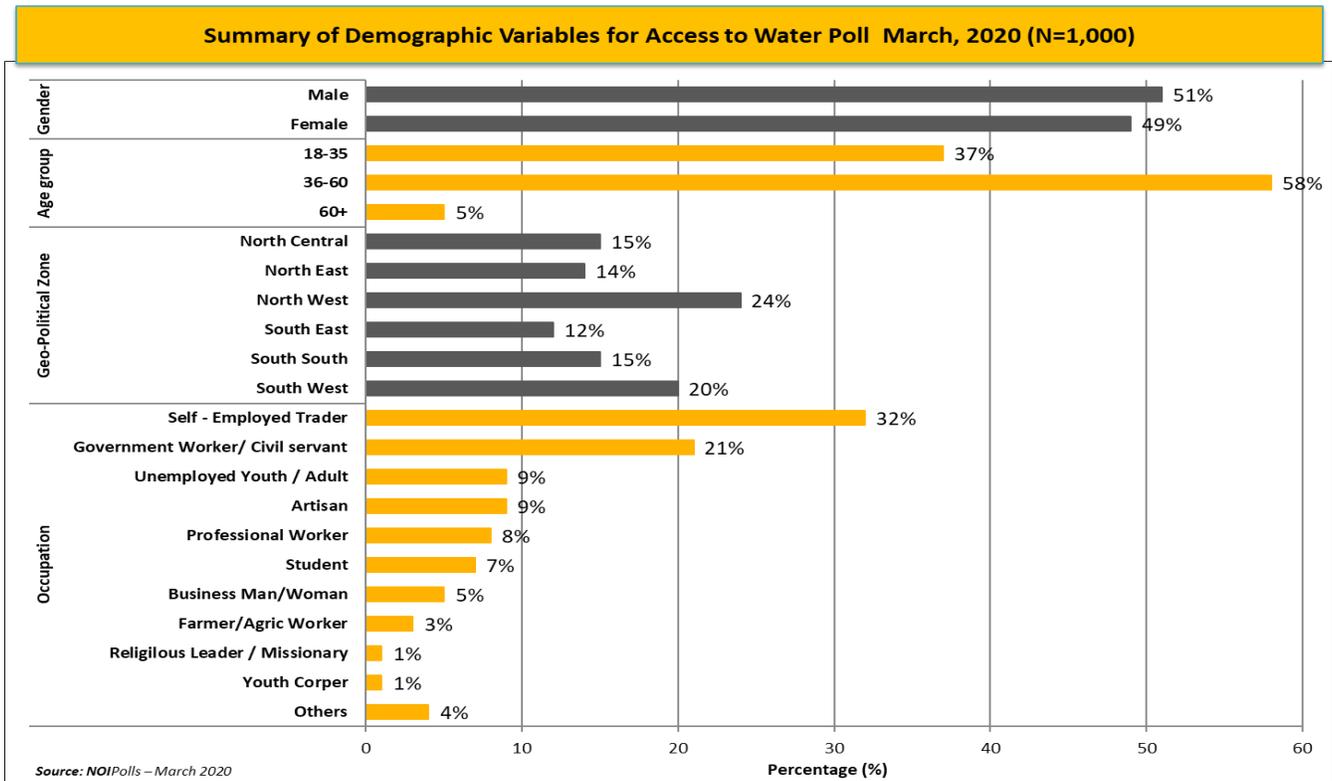


Figure 1: Demographic distribution

## 5.0 Survey Results

Respondents to the poll were asked twelve specific questions. This section of the report presents findings from each question.

### 5.1 Primary Source Of Water

The first question gauged the primary source of water for household use and the poll result revealed that 35 percent stated that their main source of water for household use is from a private borehole. Private borehole includes having your own private borehole or having easy access to a neighbour’s private borehole. The South South zone had more respondents (74 percent) who disclosed that they use private borehole as their main source of water for their household use. 20 percent of the respondents mentioned that their primary source of water supply is from a private well. Other primary sources of water cited include; public borehole (16 percent), tap (14 percent), Public well (6 percent) and water cart vendors (5 percent) amongst other sources.

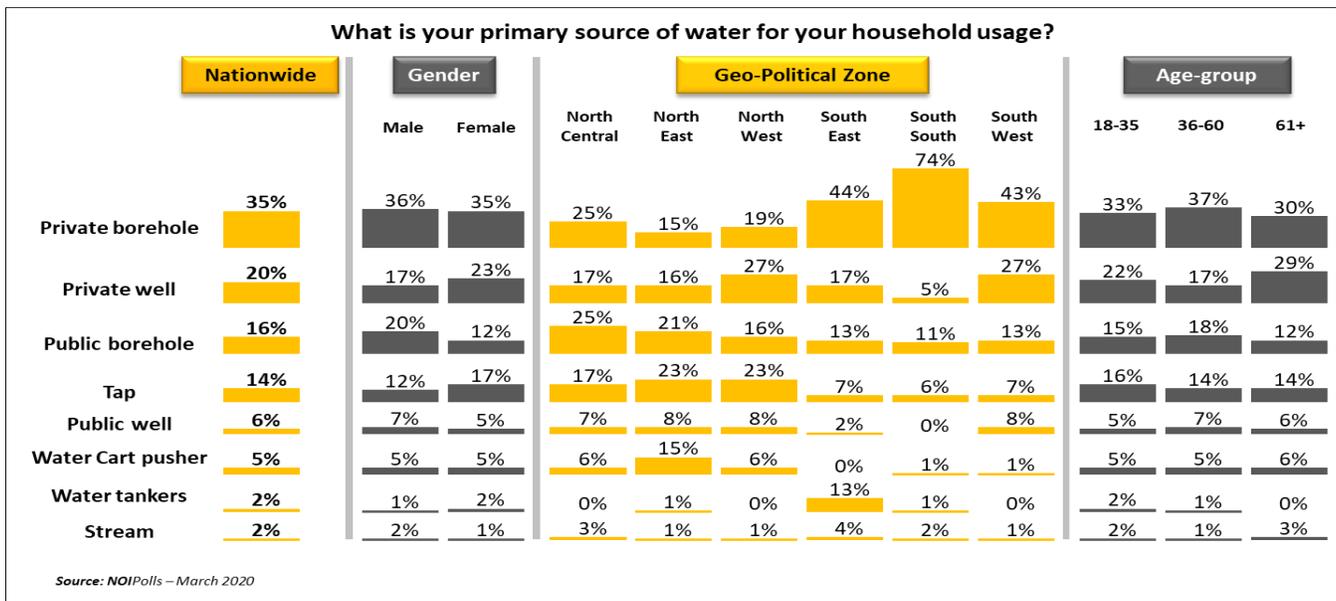


Figure 2: Primary source of water

### 5.2 Availability Of Main Source of Water

When respondents were asked if their respective main source of water is readily available, 69 percent stated that it is always available while 28 percent said it is sometimes available. However, 3 percent mentioned that their main source of water supply is rarely available.

Analysis by geographical locations showed that the South-East and South-South zones (78 percent each) had more Nigerians who claimed that their main source of water supply is always available for them to use while the North-Central zone had more respondents who said that it is sometimes available.

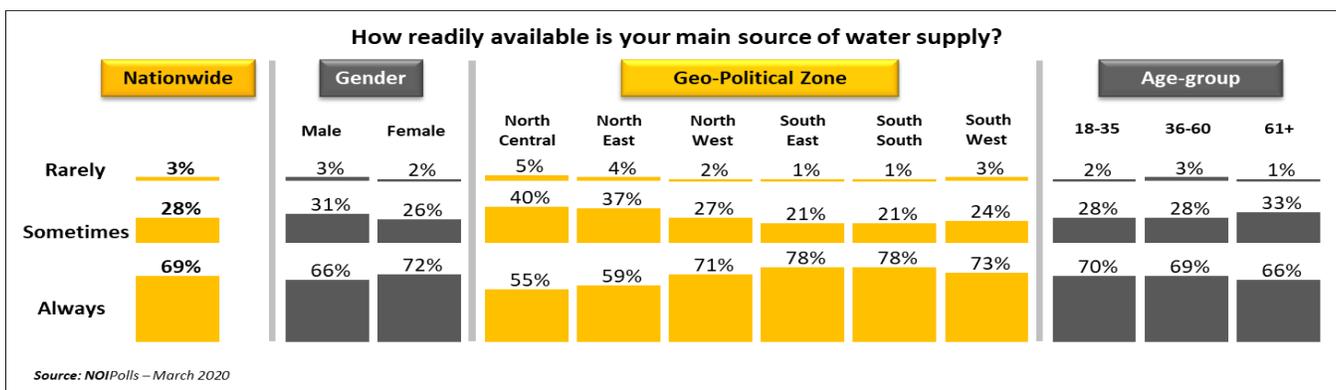


Figure 3: Availability of main source of water

### 5.3 Location Of Main Source Of Water

The poll also sought to measure the proportion of Nigerians who have their main source of water either within or outside their place of residents. Analysis revealed that almost 7 in 10 Nigerians (65 percent) have their source of water within their residence. Having water source within respondent’s residence means that the person does not leave his or her resident to get water. It is important to note that people who water was delivered to the residence for example through water tanker were considered as having water within their residence. The South-East and

South-South zones (73 percent each) accounted for the zones with the highest number of respondents who stated that their source of water is within their residence.

On the other hand, 35 percent of Nigerians mentioned that their main source of water supply is outside their place of residence. The North-East zone (44 percent) had the highest number of respondents who has their main source of water outside their place of residence.

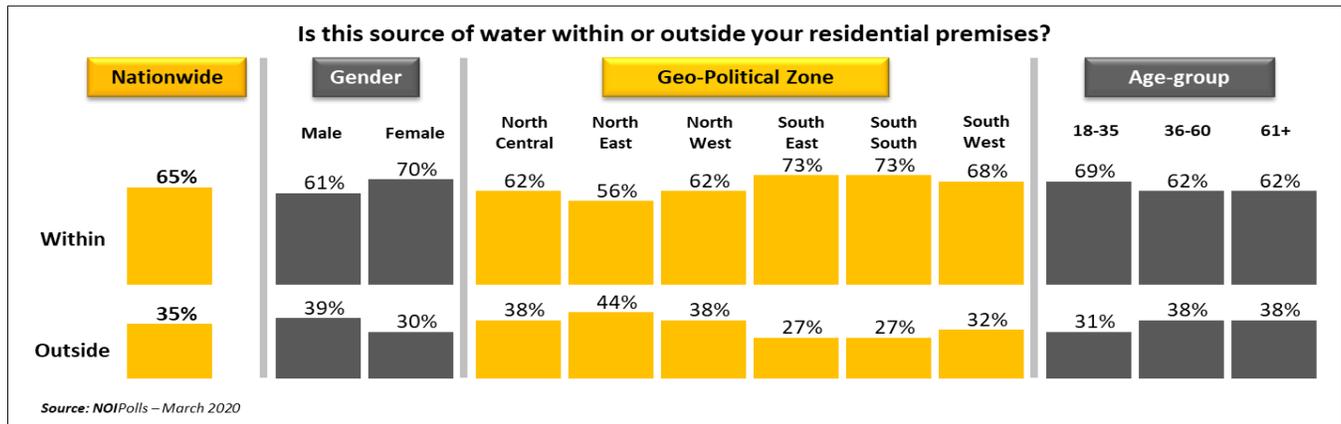


Figure 4: Location of main source of water

#### 5.4 Proximity Of Main Source Of Water

Subsequently, respondents whose water source were outside their residential premises were asked of the duration it takes to get water and the poll revealed that majority (88 percent) of the respondents indicated that it takes them less than 30 minutes to get to their main source of water supply. However, 12 percent or respondents have limited water service as classified by WHO/UNICEF as it takes them more than 30 minutes to get water<sup>7</sup>.

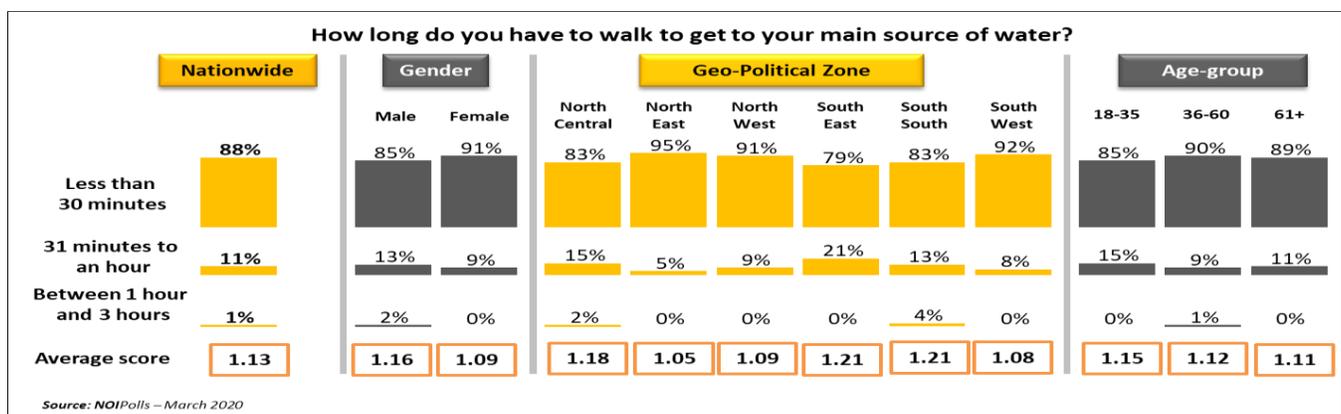


Figure 5: Proximity Of main source of water

#### 5.5 Perception On cleanliness of Water

Furthermore, 55 percent of Nigerians disclosed that they consider their main source of water for household use to be very clean while 33 percent stated that it is relatively clean. On the contrary, 9 percent mentioned that the water is not clean however, it is shocking to note that 3 percent of the respondents specified that their main

<sup>7</sup> <https://washdata.org/monitoring/drinking-water>

source of water supply for household use is not clean at all with majority of these respondents in the North East and North West.

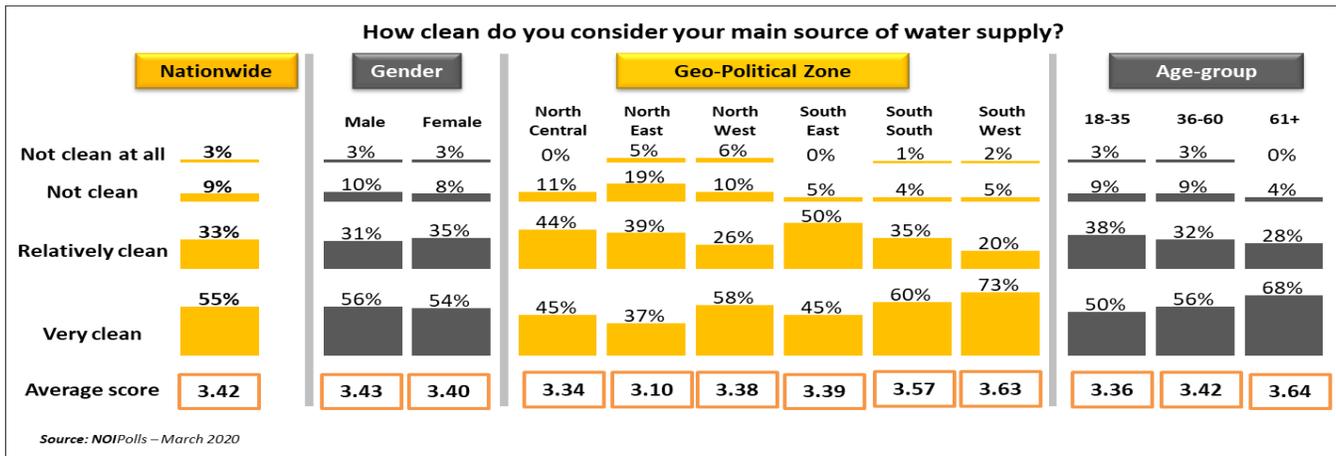


Figure 6: Perception on cleanliness of water

### 5.6 Access To Drinking Water

With regards to opinion on current sources of drinking water, the poll revealed that sachet water popularly known as pure water is presently the main source of drinking water for Nigerian households as disclosed by 46 percent of the respondent interviewed. This is even more popular in the South-East zone with 71 percent of respondents stating that sachet water is currently their main source of drinking water. This is followed by 37 percent of the respondents who admitted that their main source of drinking water is from a borehole. In addition, 13 percent revealed that they currently get their drinking water from tap water (water corporation) amongst other sources.

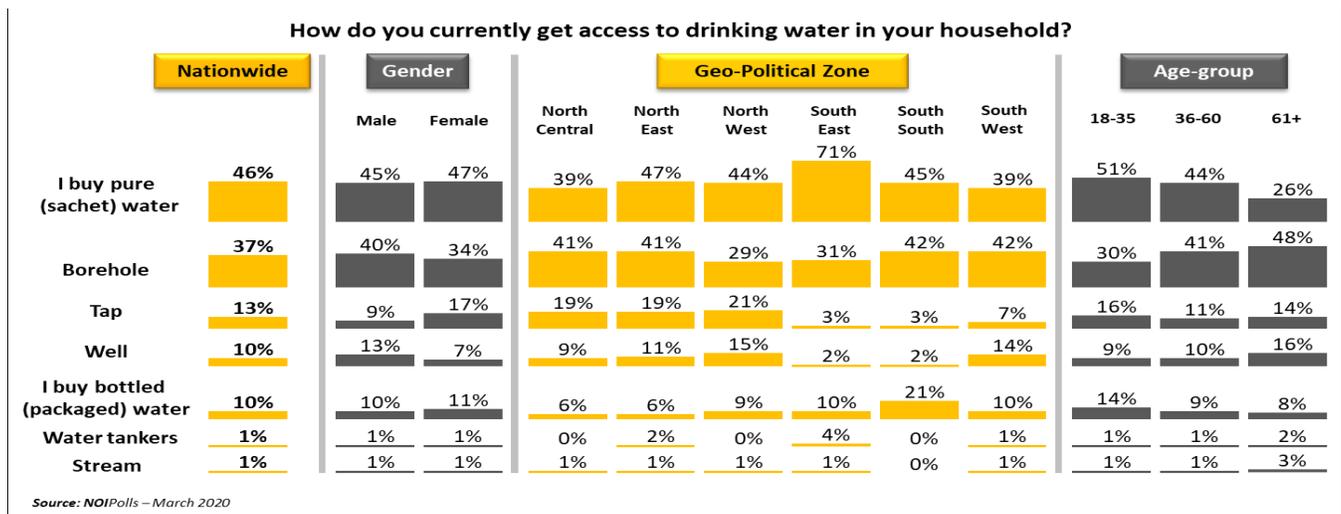


Figure 7: Access to drinking water

### 5.7 Water Treatment

64 percent of respondents (except for those whose only source of drinking water is sachet and bottled water) do not treat the water in any way before drinking irrespective of the source. This report cuts across genders and age-groups and a further analysis by geo-political zones showed that the South-East zone had the highest (71 percent) number of respondents who do not treat their water prior to drinking.

However, 36 percent of the respondents claimed that they treat their water to make it suitable for drinking. The South-South zone had the higher percentage (45 percent) of respondents who admitted this.

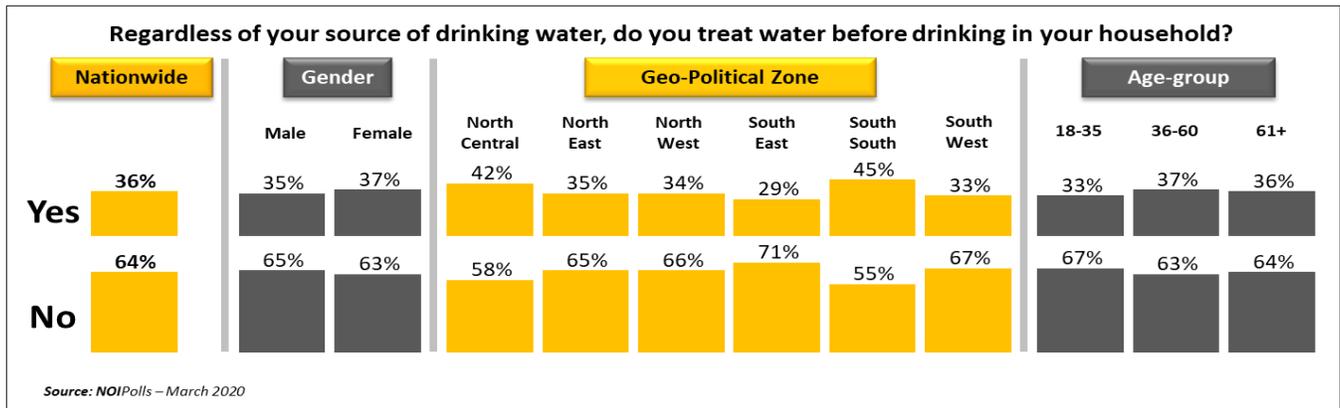


Figure 8: Perception on treating water

### 5.8 Mode of Treating Water

Consequently, the 36 percent who admitted that they treat their water before drinking were further probed to ascertain the methods, they employ in treating their water. The poll showed that 40 disclosed that they boil before drinking. This method is particularly perceived by many as the most efficient method of purification because a lot of organisms may not survive when water reaches its boiling point of 100° C<sup>8</sup>. Similarly, 26 percent stated that they use Water Guard to make their drinking water safe. Other methods of treatment employed by the respondents include 'use of alum' (20 percent), 'using water filter' (10 percent) and 'using chemicals' (4 percent)

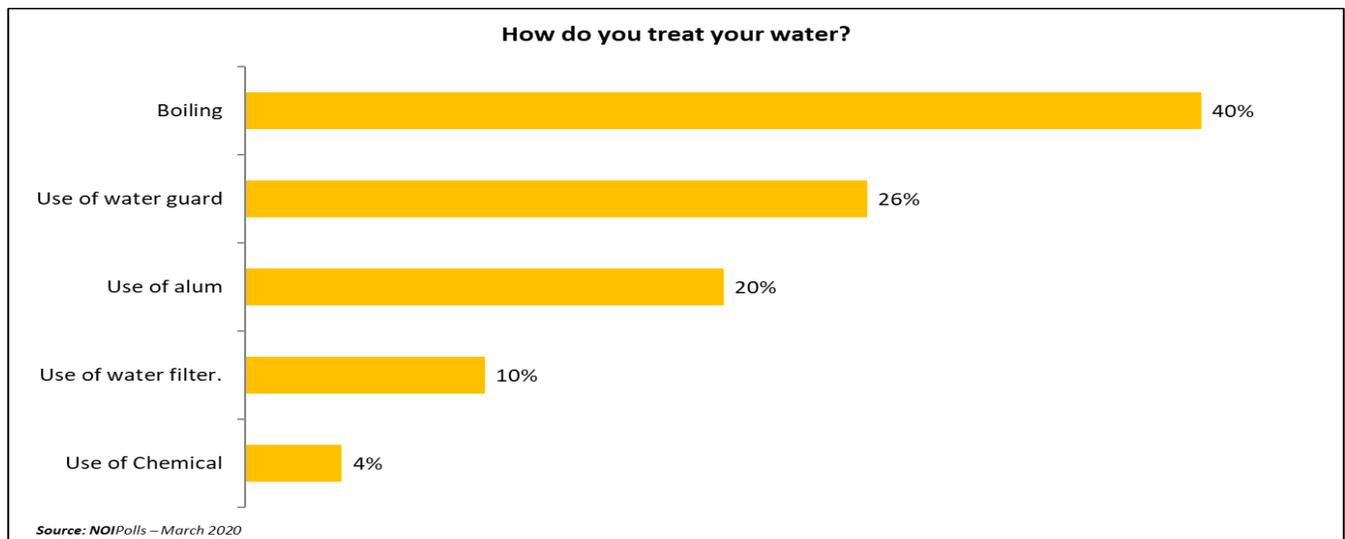


Figure 9: Mode of treating water

### 5.9 Challenges In Accessing Clean Water

Opinions on challenges in accessing clean water revealed that 39 percent of Nigerian households currently have challenges accessing clean water and the North-Central zone had more respondents who mentioned this (45 percent). On the hand, 61 percent of Nigerians do not see access to clean water as a challenge to their households and the South-South zone had the most respondents who admitted this (79 percent).

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/drinking/making-water-safe.html>

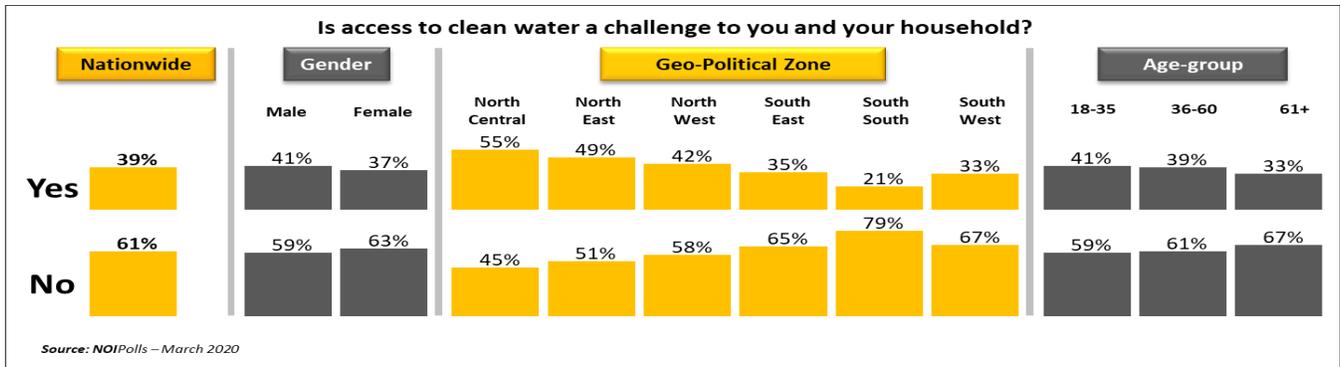


Figure 10: Perception on challenge in accessing clean water

### 5.10 Perception On degree Of Challenge in Accessing Clean Water

Respondents who stated that access to clean water is a challenge to them and their households (39 percent) were further asked: to what extent is the access to clean water a challenge to your household? Results showed that the majority (73 percent) said that access to clean water is a challenge to a large extent for them. However, 27 percent specifically mentioned that access to clean water is a challenge to a little extent for them.

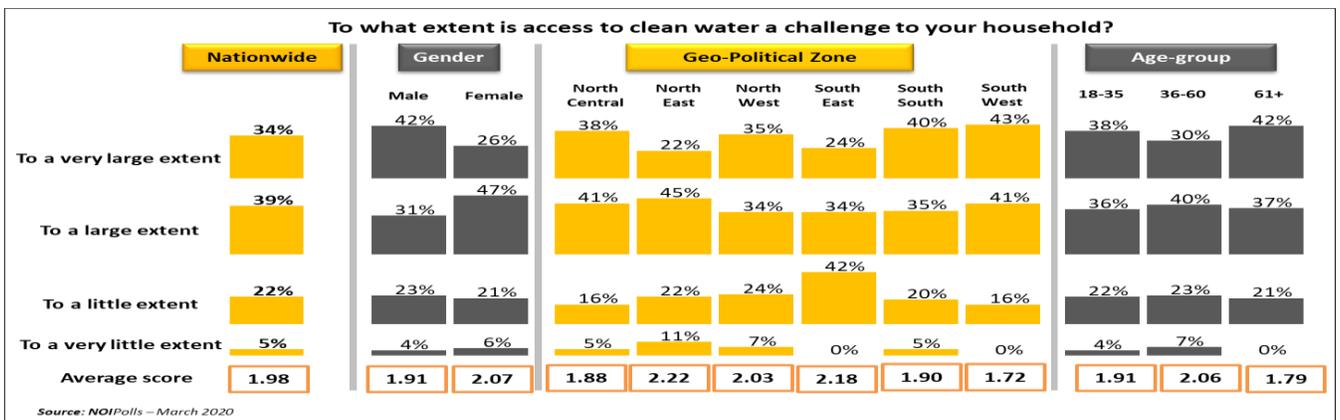


Figure 11: Perception on the degree of challenge in accessing clean water

### 5.11 Knowledge On Ongoing Water Project

To ascertain the existence of any on-going water project across the country, respondents were further probed and the result showed that majority of the respondents (89 percent) disclosed that they are not aware of any on-going water project in their respective localities. On the contrary, 11 percent acknowledged that they are aware of so on-going water relater projects in their locality.

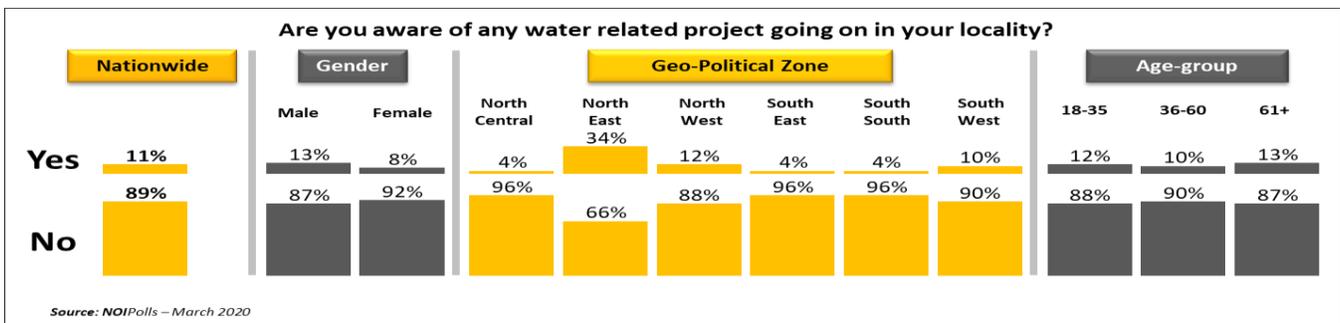


Figure 12: Knowledge on ongoing water project

### 5.12 Project Name

Lastly, of the 11 percent who mentioned that they aware of an on-going project, 45 percent mentioned that they are aware of a world bank project and borehole water projects (21 percent) amongst other projects.

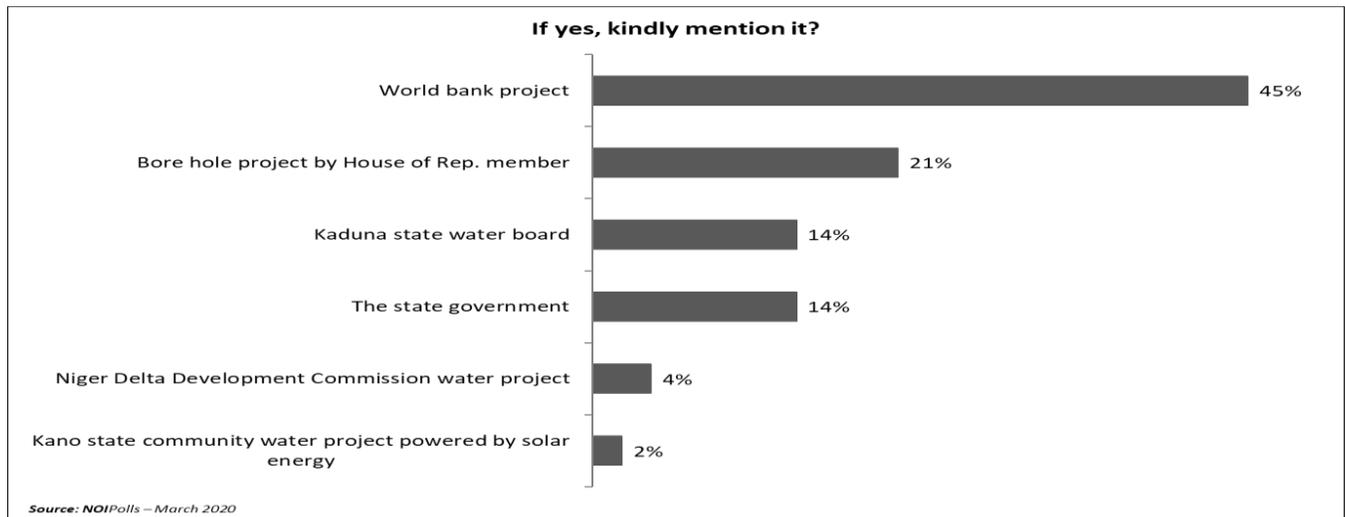


Figure 13: Name of Project

### 6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the poll has revealed that access to water both for domestic use and for drinking is still a challenge to Nigerian households given that borehole (35 percent) and sachet water (46 percent) are mostly used as the main source water. This implies that Nigerians are mostly responsible for providing water for themselves both for domestic use and for drinking. Therefore, it is utmost important that government and other stakeholders ensure that water is made available to Nigerians as 31 percent mentioned that their main source of water supply is not always readily available.

Poor access to improved water in Nigeria remains a major contributing factor to high morbidity and mortality rates among children under five. The poll report showed that 36 percent of Nigerians whose main source of drinking water are borehole, well, stream and water tankers do not treat their water to make it safe before drinking. Hence, it is essential to note that the use of contaminated drinking water result in increased vulnerability to water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>



# ACCESS TO WATER

## SURVEY REPORT

**NOIPolls**  
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# 39%

of Nigerians say they have challenges accessing clean water.

NW=42%	SW=33%
NE=49%	SE=35%
NC=55%	SS=21%

### Primary sources of Water in Nigerian Households

**35%**  
Private Borehole

**20%**  
Private well

**16%**  
Public Borehole

**14%**  
Tap

**6%**  
Public Well

### Sources of Drinking Water in Nigerian Households

**46%**  
Sachet Water

**37%**  
Borehole

**13%**  
Tap

**10%**  
Well

**10%**  
Bottle water



# 36%

of Nigerians say they have to treat their water before drinking

NW=34%	SW=33%
NE=35%	SE=29%
NC=42%	SS=45%

### Water treatment Methods in Nigerian Households

**40%**  
Boiling

**26%**  
Use of water guard

**20%**  
Use of Alum

**10%**  
Use of water Filter

**4%**  
Use of Chemicals



# 89%

of Nigerians say they are not aware of any ongoing water related project in their locality

NW=88%	SW=90%
NE=66%	SE=96%
NC=96%	SS=96%

NOIPolls is the **NO.1 for credible country-specific polling service in the west African region.** This poll was conducted by NOIPolls Limited, for more detailed information on the poll and methodology used, please visit [www.noi-polls.com](http://www.noi-polls.com)

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