

Our impact

Once communities have access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation, they can escape the water and sanitation poverty trap. Freed up from hours of water collection and the misery of water-related disease, communities are better able to channel their time and energy into more productive activities and simple enjoyment of life.

Women have more time to work to earn money, grow food, cook and care for their children, which boosts households' income, nutrition and health. Children have more time to help with domestic tasks or dedicate to their schooling, which improves their long-term prospects. The privacy provided by latrines means that girls are less likely to drop out of school as they enter their teens, and the whole

family wastes less time in walking to find secluded places to go to the toilet.

The stress on household finances is lessened by the reduced need for medical care for water-related diseases. Where composting latrines are built, the compost produced by the latrines improves agricultural yields, which can further boost nutrition and/or income.

Families also report lower stress levels, better status and self-esteem and increased ability to observe religious rites and customs.

Influencing others

Due to the scale of the problem WaterAid recognises that we cannot meet the global demand for water and sanitation simply through implementing water and sanitation projects ourselves. We also use our experience, research and good practice to influence other organisations on adopting policies and practices that will enable poor people to gain sustainable access to safe water and sanitation.

A highly professional and integrated approach has given WaterAid an authoritative voice in the water sector. We use this voice to support campaigns, build networks and develop alliances with other international bodies dedicated to the interests of poor people. Through this work WaterAid is enabling citizens to hold their governments to account and make their demands for affordable and equitable water and sanitation services better heard and prioritised.



Latrines cut disease, save time and improve people's dignity.

WaterAid/Suzanne Porter



WaterAid/Marco Betti

Safe water means less disease, less time collecting water and more time for school.

Safe water and sanitation bring vital benefits at every age.

Infants escape fatal diseases

Safe water, sanitation and good hygiene are essential in reducing diarrhoeal diseases that kill 4,000 children a day, 90% of whom are under five.



"I used to get my water from the stream, but we were often sick and our little child died of diarrhoea. Now the water is good and my children are healthy." **Hansu from Adiwana, Ethiopia**

Children attend school more

Freed from hours of water collection, illness from water-related infections and the indignity of lacking a latrine, children stand a better chance of getting a decent education.



"Before the school had latrines it was really difficult during menstruation and when we had diarrhoea, so we used to stay at home. We feel happy we don't need to leave class any more." **Sabina Roka, 15, from Simle, Nepal**

Working aged adults are more productive

With improved health and more time available, adults can earn more money and grow more food, meaning a better quality of life for the whole family.



"With the time I save now that we have the pump close by, I weave baskets to sell. With the extra income I buy food and school uniforms." **Atoapoka Azuma, 24, from Bolgatanga, Ghana**

Older people enjoy better health

As people live longer, shorter times fetching water and reduced exposure to water-related diseases mean a healthier, more comfortable old age for this vulnerable group.

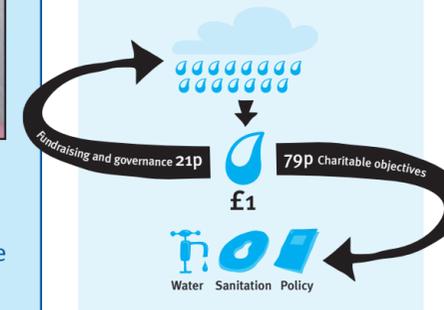


"I am old now so I can't do many heavy duties. I hope this new source will be maintained because I don't think I could manage to go to the old source any more." **Zena Mbwana, 70, from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

Photos: WaterAid/Caroline Irby, Marco Betti and Jon Spaul

Just £15 can enable one person to access safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation.

WaterAid's funds



Taken from WaterAid's Annual Report 2008/09.

WaterAid

WaterAid transforms lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world's poorest communities. We work with partners and influence decision-makers to maximise our impact.

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WaterAid information



Water for life



Charlie Bibby/T

Safe water and sanitation are fundamental to life and everyone has a right to these basic services. However, one in eight people do not have access to safe drinking water and two in five people do not have adequate sanitation. Compounded by a lack of good hygiene practices, the result is extreme poverty and ill health among millions of people.

We are working to change this. Through partnerships with local organisations we help communities to set up and manage practical and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene projects that meet their real needs. We also campaign locally and internationally to change policy and practice to ensure water and sanitation's vital role in reducing poverty is recognised.

The problem

One in eight people in the world do not have access to safe water. Many women and children in rural areas in developing countries spend hours each day walking miles to collect water from unprotected sources such as open wells, muddy dugouts or streams. In urban areas they collect it from polluted waterways or pay high prices to buy it from vendors who obtain it from dubious sources. In both cases the water is often dirty and unsafe, but they have no alternative.

Carrying the heavy water containers back home is an exhausting task, which takes up valuable time and energy. It often prevents women from doing vital domestic or income-generating work and stops children from going to school.

Two and a half billion people lack adequate sanitation. Where there is nowhere safe and clean to go to

the toilet, people are exposed to disease, lack of privacy and indignity, problems which are particularly acute in overcrowded slum settlements in major cities.

Diarrhoeal diseases caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation, such as dysentery, cholera and typhoid are common across the developing world. People suffering from these diseases or caring for children who are ill from them are often unable to work to earn money, yet face large medical bills.

There is an urgent need for action, but all too often water and sanitation are overlooked in the global development agenda, despite being consistently cited as top priorities by poor communities themselves. Total global investments in water and sanitation would need to double for the Millennium Development Goal targets of halving the proportions of people living without water and sanitation by 2015 to be met.



WaterAid/Caroline Iby
One in eight people lack access to a safe water supply.

Water-related diseases are the second biggest killer of children worldwide, claiming 4,000 lives a day.

The solution

WaterAid addresses global water and sanitation problems by:

- Undertaking projects to enable communities to set up and manage water and sanitation programmes in 26 countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific region.
- Campaigning for others, such as governments, to adopt a more integrated approach to development that recognises how water and sanitation are vital to poverty reduction.

Where we work

WaterAid works in 26 of the world's poorest countries.



How we work

WaterAid works with partners to influence policy and deliver safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation services that are:

Appropriate

People living in poverty require effective, reliable and affordable water and sanitation services which meet their needs. We work with local organisations and learn

from global advances to ensure we promote the most appropriate solutions. We share our knowledge to maximise our impact.

Integrated

Safe, affordable domestic water, improved hygiene and effective sanitation are essential for people's health, livelihoods and opportunities. We work with communities, local partners, health programmes, academics and other specialists to promote behavioural change.

Sustainable

We strive for sustainability in all areas of our work, from local water security and community engagement to the technical and managerial capabilities of our partners; we are working for long-term change.

Informed

We endeavour to ensure everything we say is supported by strong evidence and by our practical experience.

Transferable

Governments have a responsibility to ensure the provision of safe water and sanitation for all their citizens. We use our practical experience to demonstrate how they and other practitioners can provide effective, appropriate and sustainable services to more people.



WaterAid/Marob Beht
WaterAid projects reach vulnerable groups such as women and older people.

Our practical work

Many WaterAid projects start with hygiene education sessions which help communities to understand how important good hygiene practices are in preventing disease. This knowledge adds to communities' motivation to improve their water and sanitation services. We then help them appoint water and sanitation committees and together plan and set up water and sanitation projects that are appropriate to the local environment, affordable and within the technical capacity of the community to manage and maintain themselves.

Communities contribute their time, labour, local materials and affordable sums of money to the construction of projects and their long term operation and maintenance. This keeps the costs of the project as low as possible and increases their sustainability by developing a true sense of community ownership and responsibility for them.

Our **water** projects help communities to gain access to uncontaminated water sources. In rural areas the most common technologies we use are hand-dug wells, tubewells or boreholes that reach groundwater resources.



WaterAid/Ahri Abdullah
Communities learn how to use wells and latrines safely in hygiene sessions.

Where possible we rehabilitate existing wells that have fallen into disrepair, as it is more cost effective than the construction of new wells. The wells are hygienically sealed and fitted with appropriate pumps that the communities are trained to maintain and service themselves, with help from engineers available for serious problems.

To date WaterAid has helped over 13 million people gain access to safe water.

Where groundwater is inaccessible or in short supply, rainwater harvesting can be a viable alternative or supplementary source. Rainwater is generally collected from roofs, from where it is filtered and stored in tanks. In mountainous areas, springs can be protected and gravity flow systems are used to pipe water downhill to a network of storage tanks and tapstands.

In urban areas where there are existing piped water supplies, WaterAid and partners often



WaterAid/Johny Mathew
The whole community gets involved in the construction of projects.

help communities to negotiate with the local government or water suppliers to extend the network into their areas and construct communal tapstands that they manage themselves.

Our **sanitation** projects enable communities to construct, or assist in the construction of, low-cost latrines. Designs include simple pit latrines, ventilated improved pit latrines, composting latrines and, in urban areas, communal latrine blocks connected to cesspits or to cities' sewerage systems. We are increasingly using the Community-led total sanitation approach where every single person in a community makes a commitment to stop open defecation in order to eliminate diseases related to poor sanitation.

Other elements of our sanitation projects vary from location to location but include the construction of adequate drainage, footpaths, dish drying racks and washing and laundry facilities. These measures help prevent the formation of unhygienic mud and pools of stagnant wastewater, and are particularly important in overcrowded urban settlements.

Hygiene education sessions and training in managing and maintaining the facilities ensure that the maximum health benefits are enjoyed by the whole community long into the future.

The water and sanitation poverty trap

