



**17th-25th March 2012**

**[www.worldwalksforwater.org](http://www.worldwalksforwater.org)**

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# Why is the world walking for water and sanitation in March 2012?

One in eight people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water. One in three people don't have access to a private clean toilet.

- Women and children walk on average six kilometres every day to fetch water for their basic needs. They often walk to unprotected water sources, such as rivers or muddy dugouts, and the average weight of water they carry is 20kg.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.6 billion people still live without a clean and safe toilet.<sup>2</sup> Instead, they have only a roadside, bucket or plastic bag to use. This is humiliating and also often leads to water contamination and the spreading of diarrhoeal diseases such as dysentery and cholera.
- Women and girls are especially affected by poor sanitation access. They risk being sexually assaulted when using latrines in remote locations or walking to fields to defecate.
- 4,000 children die every day from diarrhoea caused by unclean water and unsafe sanitation.<sup>3</sup> Diarrhoeal diseases are the biggest killer of young children in Africa, killing more than HIV/AIDS, malaria and measles combined.
- This lack of access to clean water and sanitation impacts severely on health, education and income.

## IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE.

The World Walks for Water and Sanitation 2012 is a global event taking place around World Water Day, from 17-25 March 2012. Thousands of people across the world will walk together to demand an end to the water and sanitation crisis. The walks will build on the success of the World's Longest Toilet Queue in 2010 and the World Walks for Water campaign in 2011. Last year, over 350,000 people in more than 75 different countries walked together to demand that politicians keep their promises and step up their efforts to protect the right to sanitation and water for all.

Because of these global actions, governments are beginning to take notice, promises have been made, and there has been progress both internationally and within countries. This has encouraged hundreds of organisations and thousands of people to come together again in 2012 and keep up the pressure!

In April 2012, world leaders will attend the second High-Level Meeting (HLM) of the Sanitation and Water for All partnership in Washington D.C. It is really important that your Development or Finance Minister attends this meeting. You can take the opportunity of your walk to invite them to attend and demand that real progress and firm actions are delivered upon.

<sup>1</sup> UNDP, Human Development Report, 2006  
<sup>2</sup> UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Report, 2010  
<sup>3</sup> WHO, Safer Water, Better Health, 2008

# Why should YOU walk for water and sanitation?

Disease and death caused by lack of sanitation, unclean water and poor hygiene practices is **PREVENTABLE!** Our world leaders have the power to end the sanitation and water crisis and together we have the power to make them act!

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Follow us on Twitter and Facebook! Like us on facebook at [www.facebook.com/walksforwater](http://www.facebook.com/walksforwater) and follow us on twitter @WalksforWater for regular updates on the campaign.

### Organise your own walk

- Plan your route to or from a place of political significance or media interest, and gather friends, high-profile supporters and politicians to join your walk. Walks can be of any length and take place anywhere! Have fun and get as much attention as you can by singing, dancing, dressing as taps and toilets or inviting celebrities. For more ideas, download our campaign toolkit from [www.worldwalksforwater.org](http://www.worldwalksforwater.org)
- Register your walk on [www.worldwalksforwater.org](http://www.worldwalksforwater.org)
- Send a political message – remember this is about political action not fundraising. You can walk to your politicians' office to deliver a petition or invitation to the High-Level Meeting, or ask them to go a step further and walk alongside you.
- Spread the word through e-mail, letters, flyers, posters and local media. Explain why The World Walks for Water and Sanitation is happening and share your political demands.
- See [www.worldwalksforwater.org](http://www.worldwalksforwater.org) for inspiration and information about how to submit your photos and stories.

### Join a planned walk

We're working with a large number of national and local partners, and events are being organized in cities and villages around the world. Find an event near you at [www.worldwalksforwater.org](http://www.worldwalksforwater.org)



Young Campaigners in Uganda

## YOUR ACTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

A major campaign success has been the creation of the Sanitation and Water for All partnership. This alliance of national governments, donors, civil society organisations and other development partners was created in 2010. They are beginning to work together to increase political will and improve aid-effectiveness by mobilizing and better targeting resources for water supply and sanitation.

Following the World's Longest Toilet Queue in 2010, the Head of State in Burkina Faso launched an initiative in his country requiring every newly built home to have a toilet.

Following the World Walks for Water 2011 campaign, Nepal's sanitation budget was tripled and Germany joined the Sanitation and Water for All partnership.

## TAILOR YOUR DEMANDS

What you call for as part of your walk will depend on where you live and what issues you face, so do adapt your walk to meet your demands. The more you adapt your demands the more relevant they will be to your targets!



WaterAid/Caroline Joby

# Why are water and sanitation so important?

Lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation impacts severely on many areas of development and affects women and children especially:



WaterAid/ Suzanne Porter



WaterAid/Jake Lyell



WaterAid



WaterAid/Jon Spaul

## EDUCATION

"We have enough latrines, which has helped us girls especially. Now we are in a better position to learn our lessons and pass our exams. Our life is easier."

Harriet (student), Sudan.

Time spent helping collect water and frequent illnesses caused by unhygienic sanitary conditions mean children miss out on their education. Girls often stop attending school when menstruating because they do not have a clean and private toilet.

## HEALTH

"Before the well was installed I had to go to the river for water. Life here was difficult... Cholera was common. Virtually every month one of my children would get sick."

Adana Haruna (mother of 6), Nigeria.

Unclean water and inadequate sanitation cause illnesses which are preventable then carry on with the rest – 4,000 children die every day from diarrhoea caused by unclean water and sanitation.

## INCOME

"Before, we spent all day fetching water. Now Nafadji women can go out first thing in the morning to go to market and sell things."

Awa (Nafadji woman), Mali.

Women have less time to engage in economic activities due to the time required to walk to toilets and water points and the time lost to illness caused by dirty water and lack of toilets. Meeting the MDG target on water and sanitation would free up 20 billion working days each year.

## SAFETY

"I always underestimated the threat of violence when regularly using the latrine... this was until I almost became the victim of rape".

Amina (19), Kenya

Women and girls frequently risk being sexually assaulted when walking to fields to defecate or when using latrines in remote locations.

4 Sanitation: a wise investment for health, dignity and development, IYS Advocacy kit, UN Water, 2008  
 5 UNICEF, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Annual Report 2008  
 6 WSSCC, WASH Campaign 'GDP for GDP' 2011 7 WaterAid 8 WaterAid  
 9 WSSCC, WASH Campaign 'GDP for GDP' 2011 10 Amnesty International 2010

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WASH Advocacy Initiative  
high drinking water and basic sanitation for all

