

WATER WARRIORS TALKING POINTS

Access to clean water and sanitation leads to healthier, longer and more productive lives, and breaks the cycle of poverty. Water and sanitation are not just human rights, they are human necessities.

What's the scale of the water and sanitation crisis?

- Close to 1 billion people lack access to clean water – that's 1 out of every 8.
- Close to 2.5 billion people lack access to sanitation – that's 1 out of every 3.
- Dirty water is the second biggest killer of children under the age of five.

Why is water and sanitation so important?

- Water is the source of life and without it, almost nothing is possible.
- Universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation are building blocks to development for health, education, economic productivity, and better gender equality. Access to clean water would prevent illness in millions of people. It would increase productivity of workers—people would not be home sick.
- On average, women and girls in developing countries walk 6 kilometers (approx. 3.5 miles) a day, carrying 20 liters (approx. 42 pounds/20 kgs) of water, greatly reducing the time they have for other productive work or for girls to attend school.
- Women and children spend 40 billion hours a year collecting water -- precious time taken away from school or a job.

What are some solutions?

The solutions that need to be implemented are well-known and fairly simple. Here's a few low-cost but high impact solutions:

- Rainwater harvesting pipes and tanks
- Household water filters
- Soap
- Clean toilets

The challenge lies in spurring investment in these solutions and establishing innovative community-based financing mechanisms, which is where Global Water Challenge comes in.

What is Global Water Challenge?

- GWC is a diverse coalition of leading NGOs, foundations, research institutions and corporations working in the water and sanitation sector.
- We work to provide creative and sustainable solutions to achieve universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
- No one organization can do it on their own – GWC wants to move the whole sector forward and create best practices so projects are sustainable.

What is Global Water Challenge's mission?

GWC's mission is to generate a global movement to meet the urgent need for safe water and sanitation by spurring collective awareness and investment in water supply/sanitation innovation by corporate, public, and nongovernmental actors.

What are your program areas?

1. We support schools by providing access to clean water, safe toilets, and hygiene.

- Like books and teachers, water and sanitation is a vital part of the education and health of children. Without access to clean water, safe sanitation, and hygiene, children are more likely to fall ill, miss school, and fall behind.

2. We support local entrepreneurs and communities with innovative financing models.

- Innovative community-based financing projects help to establish each village or city's self-sufficiency.
- It gives them the power to take care of their water and sanitation crisis in a way that is manageable for them.
- It also helps to produce other economic endeavors—when a woman has water available to her, she also has the option to become a small farmer, growing fruit or vegetables, which she can then sell for extra income.

How does my dollar help?

On average, every US dollar invested in water and sanitation provides an economic return of eight US dollars. \$16 can provide clean water to an entire school for a year as can be seen in the Regan example.

Investing in drinking water and sanitation leads to:

- 320 million productive days gained each year in the 15-59 year age group
- An extra 272 million school attendance days a year
- An added 1.5 billion healthy days for children under the age of 5

What does it mean to be a Water Warrior?

Water Warriors are people who have committed to tackling the global water and sanitation crisis by going out into their community and:

1. Educating friends, family and neighbors about the magnitude of the problem and proven solutions
2. Raising funds for simple, proven solutions, such as water filtration systems, soap and toilets
3. Encouraging elected officials to increase water and sanitation funding
4. Turning friends and family into Water Warriors to create a ripple effect

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