

**A programme for action:**  
**tackling the sanitation crisis**



# End Water Poverty: sanitation and water for all

The international effort on sanitation is in disarray. At the current rate of progress, the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target to halve the proportion of people living without access to sanitation by 2015 will not be met in sub-Saharan Africa until 2076. The cost of inaction is huge.

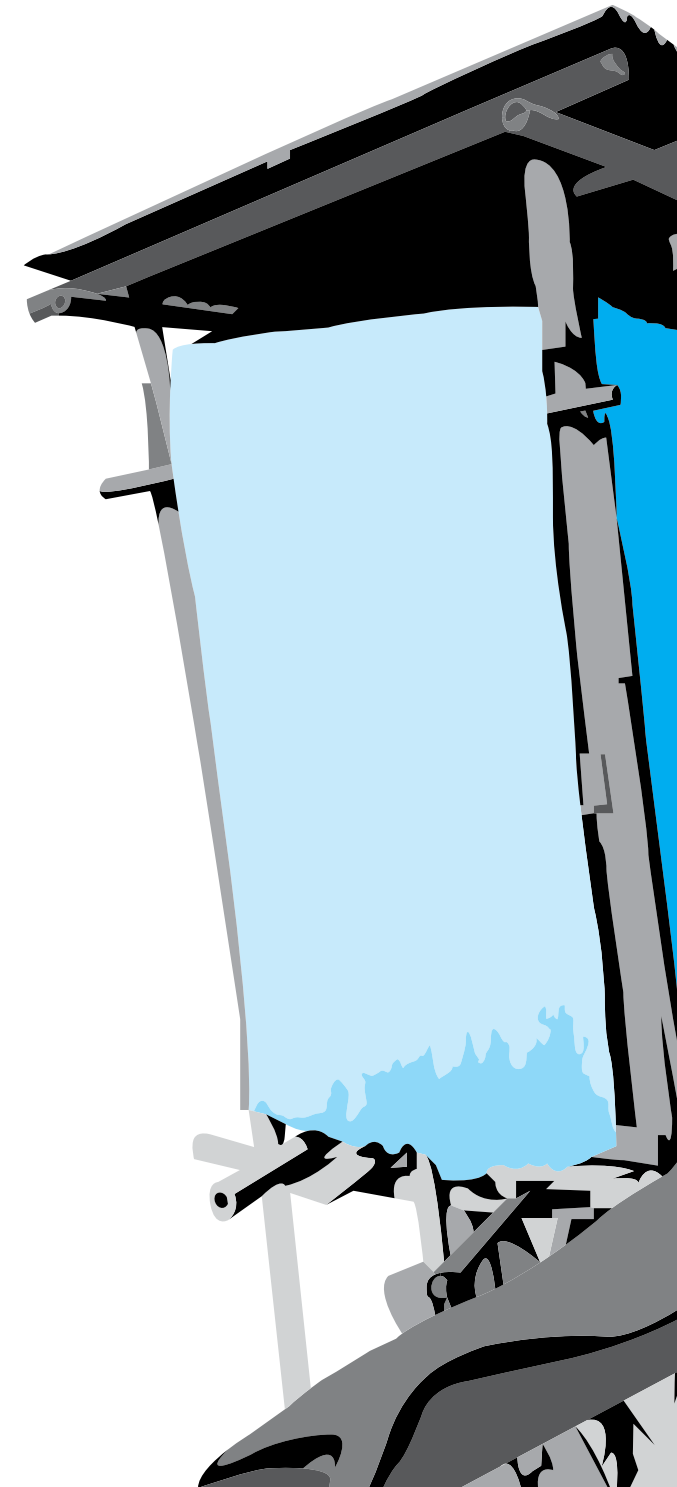
2008 has been declared the UN International Year of Sanitation because 2.6 billion people have nowhere to go to the toilet. The resulting diarrhoeal diseases kill 5,000 children every day, five times the number of deaths from HIV/AIDS. This global crisis is undermining all development efforts.

- Health: Over half of the hospital beds in developing countries are filled with people suffering from diarrhoeal diseases
- Education: 443 million school days are missed each year due to sickness from diarrhoeal diseases. The UN estimates that half of the girls who stop attending primary school in Africa do so because of the lack of toilets
- Economy: Globally, it is estimated that the cost of not meeting the MDG sanitation target is almost US\$35 billion a year
- Dignity: Lack of a safe, private place to go to the toilet leaves millions of women vulnerable to attack and abuse
- Environment: Disposal of vast amounts of untreated sewage into rivers and water bodies seriously threatens the environment

There is compelling evidence that sanitation improvement brings the greatest public health returns on investment of any development intervention. For every US\$1 spent on sanitation, up to US\$9 is returned in improved health, economic productivity and education.

Why then does sanitation remain so neglected? Put simply, it is because there is a lack of political will to push through changes that benefit the poorest and most vulnerable people.

**End Water Poverty is calling for an extraordinary, government-led effort to reverse this scandalous neglect and provide sanitation for all.**



An illustration of a woman wearing a blue headscarf and a blue shawl, looking slightly to the right with a neutral expression. The background is white with some dark grey shapes on the left side, possibly representing a building or structure.

# Providing sanitation for all: reversing inaction and failure

At the country level, sanitation does not feature in national development plans and is rarely the responsibility of a specific ministry.

Commitments on sanitation have been made to the world's poor and it is the duty of governments to honour them. Universal access is achievable, but only with an extraordinary effort to reverse the political neglect of this basic human right.

**End Water Poverty is calling for the following policy changes:**

## At the international level

1. A global action plan for sanitation and water with political endorsement at the highest level that recognises the integral role of sanitation in achieving the economic, health and education MDGs
2. A global taskforce mandated at the highest level to plan, implement and monitor the extraordinary effort that is needed on sanitation and water
3. A commitment that no credible country plan that is consistent with achieving the sanitation and water MDG target should fail for lack of finance

## At the national level

1. One national plan, one coordinating mechanism, and one transparent monitoring and evaluation framework for sanitation
2. Increased levels of investment delivered through a specific and transparent budget line open to public scrutiny
3. Broad participation by a wide range of sector stakeholders in the planning and monitoring of sanitation service delivery at the national and sub-national levels

**2.6 billion people live without sanitation.**

**End Water Poverty is calling for an extraordinary, government-led effort to reverse this scandalous neglect and provide sanitation for all.**

End Water Poverty is the international campaign calling for sanitation and water for all.

**End Water Poverty**  
47-49 Durham Street  
London SE11 5JD

Tel: +44 (0)20 7793 4500  
Email: [info@endwaterpoverty.org](mailto:info@endwaterpoverty.org)

[www.endwaterpoverty.org](http://www.endwaterpoverty.org)

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