The World Walks for Water and Sanitation 2015

Campaign toolkit for organising and walking for the realisation of the human right to water and sanitation, 16 – 23 March, 2015
World Walks for Water and Sanitation – 5 years of mobilising for change

An oil company contaminated water sources in Neuquén, Argentina. The Paynemil and Kaxipayiñ Mapuche indigenous people suffered adverse health impacts as a result. In March 1997, the communities received help from the ‘Public Defender of Minors’ (Defensora Oficial de la Primera Circunscripción) in filing an injunction against the government. The government was found to have failed in its obligation to safeguard public health and provide safe drinking water to the affected communities. Among other requirements, the government was ordered to immediately provide 250 litres of drinking water per person per day.

2011 The first World Walks for Water was held in 2011 – 350,000 people from more than 75 countries across the world mobilised to demand change in water and sanitation policies.

2012 In 2012, the World Walks for Water and Sanitation – more than 380,000 people walked for change.

2013 An amazing 490,000 people walked in person and online to call for leaders to keep their promises on water and sanitation.

2014 was by far the biggest World Walks mobilisation as an amazing 660,000 people mobilised around the world.

In 2015, thousands of people will once again walk and meet with decision makers to keep up the pressure on them to honour their commitments.

Every year since 2011, people from across the world have come together in their thousands to demand that an end to water and sanitation poverty. Activists, schoolchildren and communities from Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia have taken to the streets to demand their human right to water and sanitation is fulfilled so they can have safe, affordable running water and safe, acceptable sanitation. Let’s make this year’s World Walk for Water and Sanitation the biggest yet - join the global call for the realisation of the human right to water and sanitation!
Keep Your Promises – on the Human Right to Water and Sanitation

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly recognised the human right to water and sanitation as a right in and of itself, and fundamental to the realisation of all human rights. This right has been implicitly and explicitly recognised in treaties and conventions from 1948’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights through to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and the 2012 Rio+20 summit outcome document, The Future We Want.

But many countries around the world are failing to live up to their legal obligations. They are failing to take the steps necessary to ensure the human right to water and sanitation is realised.

If you need more information on the human right, check the Keep Your Promises website, the Rights2Water info website, or the End Water Poverty website. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Water and Sanitation, also has a website accessible here:


What is the human right to water and sanitation?

STANDARDS

• Availability: everyone is entitled to sufficient and continuous water for personal and domestic use, and a sufficient number of sanitation facilities.

• Affordability: services must be affordable to all – they must not compromise the ability to pay for other necessities guaranteed by human rights, e.g., food or housing.

• Quality: water has to be safe and present no threat to health. Sanitation must be hygienically and technically safe. Access to water for cleansing and hand washing is essential.

• Acceptability: sanitation facilities must be culturally acceptable, often meaning gender-specific and ensuring privacy and dignity.

• Accessibility: water and sanitation facilities must be accessible to everyone within – or in the immediate vicinity of – households, health and educational institutions, public institutions and places, and workplaces. Physical security must not be threatened.

PRINCIPLES

These are universality, indivisibility, inter-dependence, participation, accountability, transparency, access to information, non-discrimination, equality.
World Water Day is celebrated around the world every year on March 22. And for the last four years, hundreds of thousands of people across the world have mobilised with End Water Poverty members to Walk for Water and Sanitation.

In 2015, people around the world will again come together to join forces – this time to demand that their human right to water and sanitation is realised, so they can access water and sanitation which is affordable, safe and acceptable.

In cities and the countryside, in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe, people will walk in solidarity with the millions still forced to walk for water and defecate in the open; they will ask governments to keep the promises they have made realising people’s rights to water and sanitation; they will demand that they have the water and sanitation they need to live healthy and fulfilled lives, and which is theirs by right.

This year’s mobilisation is at the same time that UN member states have their final discussions on what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will shape what official development policy for the next 15 years will look like – and we can use the opportunity to put across our message that everyone’s human right to water and sanitation is fulfilled.

So whether you represent an NGO, a faith group, a trade union or a school, add your voice to ours and together we can make our collective demands heard. Join the World Walks for Water and Sanitation 2015!

What can we achieve with World Walks?

The whole point of the World Walks for Water and Sanitation campaign is to achieve change – change that ultimately leads to an end to the water and sanitation crisis.

Time and again, End Water Poverty members have shown on World Water Day that we can use World Walks mobilisations as a platform to make demands of decision makers – and in return, receive commitments from decision makers.

This should be the aim of Walks organisers: to secure advocacy meetings and gain commitments from politicians towards realising the human right to water and sanitation; commitments to ensure that everyone can access, safe, affordable, available and accessible water and sanitation.

Of course, gaining a commitment is only a first step, but it is what we can realistically achieve on the day. Ultimately, we must make sure these commitments are followed through. And that’s why World Walks doesn’t end straight after your mobilisation; it only ends when we have achieved the change we need to see.

For World Walks 2014, Right to Sanitation Campaign partners organised meetings with several political parties across 15 Indian states in which they called for a commitment to achieve the right to sanitation to be included in their election manifestos. For example, in Andhra Pradesh the campaign partners met eight major political parties. In response, leaders of at least four major political parties said that their parties are committed to achieve decent housing with toilet facilities for all the poorest and most marginalised groups of society.

What is World Walks? Walking for the right to water and sanitation
Useful information for your campaign messaging

For your campaign’s messaging, whether towards the public, the media or advocacy with decision-makers, always try to include evidence and facts. Below are some useful global statistics and sources of information; of course, try and find data that applies to your specific national and regional context.

### Water

- **748 million people** don’t have access to an improved source of water
  - 43% live in sub-Saharan Africa
  - 47% in Asia
  - 82% live in rural areas

- **1.8 billion people** use a source of drinking water which suffers from faecal contamination
  - Around 41% of drinking water which is contaminated with faecal matter occurs in rural areas, as opposed to 12% in urban areas.
  - 33% of contamination is in Africa
  - 55% of contamination is in South Asia
  - 10% of ‘improved’ water sources may be of ‘high’ risk (i.e., severe) contamination
  - Of these, 1.1 billion people drink water that is of at least moderate risk.

### Economy

- Estimated total economic losses from inadequate water and sanitation supply are $260 billion a year
- Lack of water, sanitation and hygiene costs sub-Saharan African countries more in lost GDP than the entire continent gets in development aid.
- 40 billion working hours are spent carrying water each year in Africa.

### Sanitation

- **1 in 3 (2.5 billion) people** in the world do not have access to improved sanitation
  - There are still 46 countries where less than half of the population has access to an improved sanitation facility.
  - 80% of people living in urban areas have access to improved sanitation facilities; only 47% living in rural areas have access.
  - 70% of those who live without access to an improved sanitation facility live in rural areas.
  - Of 74 countries surveyed in the 2014 GLAAS report, 67% recognise the human right to sanitation in law.

### Health

- **2 million people** die every year due to diarrhoeal diseases.
  - Over 500,000 children die of diarrhoeal diseases every year - that’s 1,400 every day.
  - In 2006, half the hospital beds in developing countries are filled with people suffering from diseases caused by poor water, sanitation and hygiene.
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### Women

- Women in the South spend 200 million hours per day collecting water, walking an average of more than 6km a day.
- On average, women carry 20KG of water on their heads.

### Children

- **125 million children** under 5 live in households without access to an improved water source.
- **280 million children** under 5 live in households without access to improved sanitation facilities.
- Every year, around 60 million children are born into homes without access to sanitation, that’s around 0.2% of all children born in a developing country.

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### Open Defecation

- **Some 1 billion people** practice open defecation globally - around 15% of the global population.
- Two-thirds of those practicing open defecation live in Asia, a quarter are in sub-Saharan Africa, 9 out of 10 live in rural areas.
- Some 597 million people in India practice open defecation.
- In sub-Saharan Africa the poorest 20% is around 16 times more likely to practice open defecation than the richest 20%.

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WASHWatch: http://www.washwatch.org/en/
Right to Water.info: http://www.righttowater.info/category/publications/
World Walks website resources: http://www.worldwalksforwater.org/eng/pages/resources
End Water Poverty website resources: http://www.endwaterpoverty.org/resources
Keep Your Promises website resources: http://www.keepyourpromises.org/resources/
Checklist for your walk

There are plenty of important things to remember when you plan your Walk – and they can all help in getting as many people to attend as possible, getting coverage of the event in the media, and, our ultimate aim, getting politicians to take decisive steps towards realising the human right to water and sanitation.

**Make it political**

Start planning your walk as soon as you can. Think about what you want to gain from your walk. For example, you may want to campaign to make water in your community more affordable, or of a higher quality. The planning for resources such as banners and posters should be based around these goals. This is also a good time to get in touch with other local groups including faith groups, schools, trade unions and other civil society organisations. The water and sanitation issues that affect you affect them as well, and they may have valuable ideas to share. Once you have your plan, make sure you share it with anyone that might be interested.

**Make it fun**

 Invite politicians to your walk – whether they walk with you, or meet you at the end of the walk. It’s a great opportunity for you to be able to put your demands across to them. Politicians will want to be seen to be responsive to a big group of people who are peacefully mobilising for a good cause. Talk about their responsibilities in regards to the human right and the best way that this might be achieved in your area.

**Make it small**

Try and get as many people as possible who face water and sanitation problems every day involved in coordinating your walk – these are the people who the campaign matters to most, and who know what needs to be done to make the changes that will improve their lives. Participation is a human rights principle!

**Make it diverse**

Make sure you let the authorities know about your walk as you may need permission for certain routes. You don’t want to do all the hard work of arranging your walk only for it to not be allowed!

**Make demands**

Invite the media to your walk. It’s so important that people hear about your walk and what you are demanding. Getting media coverage for what you want puts pressure on politicians to respond. It’s important to get in touch with journalists early so they can put it in their diaries. Journalists need interesting stories – they like interesting picture opportunities and to speak to real people who are affected by the problems you are campaigning about. You can ask them what would encourage them to cover your walk.

**Keep in touch**

Keep in touch with us and tell us all about your walk… and please remember to take pictures! The pictures we receive from members on World Water Day we use all year around in all our work – we’re especially keen to get pictures of members with campaign banners focused on the human right, in any language!
World Walks for Water and Sanitation has its own website (www.worldwalksforwater.org), here there will be a range of materials to help support you, including templates for press releases, tweets and blogs, as well as flyers and posters, and logos for using on t-shirts and banners.

Visit www.worldwalksforwater.org, sign up and let us know where your walk will be, what you will be demanding and how many people will take part.

Follow us on Twitter: @WalksforWater. Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/walksforwater Through both of these social media accounts you’ll be able to keep up-to-date with the latest information on the campaign.

Email us at info@worldwalksforwater.org and tell us as many details as possible about your walk. You can also get in touch with any questions you have or any advice or assistance you might need.

Let us know how it went! Send us any photos or blogs and we can help spread them so as many people as possible find out about your walk. And remember, if you need any advice or support, get in touch.