

# WATER QUICK FACTS



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## WHY WATER?

### WATER IS ESSENTIAL TO LIFE

Lack of access to safe water is a harsh reality for millions. Every day in countless communities around the world, millions of women and girls walk for miles on end, just to fetch and carry water. Combine this with daily food shortages, limited access to education, lack of sanitation facilities, unsafe hygiene habits and disabling illnesses, which often lead to death and it's easy to see how difficult it is to escape the cycle of inequality and poverty.

## ACCESS

### 663 MILLION PEOPLE

HAVE NO ACCESS TO SAFE WATER— THAT'S EQUAL TO THE COMBINED POPULATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, RUSSIA, JAPAN, FRANCE, ITALY AND CANADA.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.4 BILLION PEOPLE,

ROUGHLY 34% OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION, DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION.<sup>2</sup>

JUST TO COLLECT WATER, WOMEN IN ASIA AND AFRICA MUST

### WALK AN AVERAGE OF 3.7 MILES,

ROUGHLY EQUAL TO THE LENGTH OF 55 NFL FOOTBALL FIELDS.<sup>3</sup>

## SCARCITY

THE WORLD'S

### POPULATION HAS TRIPLED

OVER THE LAST CENTURY, WHILE

### WATER USE HAS MULTIPLIED BY 7.

IF ALL THE WATER ON EARTH COULD FIT IN A 5-LITER BUCKET,

### LESS THAN 1 TEASPOON WOULD BE ACCESSIBLE FRESH WATER.

### 1.8 BILLION PEOPLE

COULD BE LIVING IN ABSOLUTE SCARCITY BY 2025, WHILE **TWO-THIRDS OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION** COULD EXPERIENCE WATER STRESS.<sup>4</sup>

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## HEALTH

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### EVERY MINUTE, A CHILD DIES

FROM A DIARRHEAL DISEASE  
CAUSED BY CONTAMINATED WATER  
AND POOR SANITATION.<sup>5</sup>

THE IMPACT OF DIARRHEAL DISEASES  
ON CHILDREN IS GREATER THAN THAT OF

### HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND TUBERCULOSIS COMBINED.<sup>6</sup>

### 50% OF MALNUTRITION

IS RELATED TO REPEATED DIARRHOEA  
OR INTESTINAL NEMATODE INFECTIONS  
AS A RESULT OF UNCLEAN WATER,  
INADEQUATE SANITATION OR POOR  
HYGIENE.<sup>7</sup>

## ECONOMICS

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### \$1 SPENT ON SANITATION YIELDS A \$9 RETURN,

BY KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHIER  
AND MORE PRODUCTIVE.<sup>8</sup>

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WORLDWIDE, THERE ARE MORE  
PEOPLE WHO OWN CELL PHONES

### THAN HAVE ACCESS TO TOILETS.

WATER-RELATED ILLNESS HAS  
BEEN ESTIMATED TO CAUSE THE

### LOSS OF 443 MILLION SCHOOL DAYS EACH YEAR,

THE EQUIVALENT OF 615,000 KIDS  
MISSING ALL 4 YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL.<sup>9</sup>

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ALMOST 2 IN EVERY 3 PEOPLE  
WITHOUT ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

### SURVIVE ON LESS THAN \$2 A DAY.<sup>11</sup>

UNSAFE WATER AND SANITATION  
ARE ESTIMATED TO CAUSE

### GLOBAL ECONOMIC LOSSES OF AROUND \$260 BILLION ANNUALLY.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> JOINT MONITORING PROGRAM, (2015), *Progress on drinking water and sanitation – 2015 update*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> JOINT MONITORING PROGRAM, (2015), *Progress on drinking water and sanitation – 2015 update*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION “WATER FOR LIFE”, (2014), *Gender and Water*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> UN-WATER (2014), *Climate change*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> WHO (2014), *Global burden of diseases: impact of poor water, sanitation and hygiene*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION “WATER FOR LIFE”, (2014), *The human right to water*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> WORLD WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (2009), *World Water Development Report 3 – Facts and Figures*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> UN-WATER, (2014), *Sanitation generates economic benefits*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION “WATER FOR LIFE”, (2014), *Scarcity*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> WHO, (2012), *Global costs and benefits of drinking water and sanitation*, Web. May 21, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> WORLD WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM, (2009), *World Water Development Report 3 – Facts and Figures*, Web. May 21, 2015.