



Autumn 2016

Your WaterAid magazine

Toilets ensure opportunity

Making inroads in
Cambodia



It's no joke on World Toilet Day

What did one toilet say to the other?

You look flushed!

With a stellar line up of some of Australia's best loved comedians including Dave Thornton, Tommy Little, Fiona O'Loughlin, Dave O'Neil, Lawrence Mooney and Anne Edmonds, WaterAid hosted a comedy gala on the eve of World Toilet day in November.

The event got everyone laughing and helped raise awareness about the lack of sanitation worldwide, as it's no joke 2.3 billion people don't have access to a safe toilet.

Across Australia, supporters hosted comedy events, shared jokes on social media

and paid to pee by donating a gold coin every time they visited the loo on World Toilet Day.

Having a day all about toilets may seem funny, but for millions of people around the world it's no laughing matter. A shocking one in three of the world's population do not have access to a safe and private toilet.

Many people have no choice but to face the indignity of going to the loo in the open, where they are exposed to disease and vulnerable to harassment and even attack.

Everyone loves a laugh, and what better way to acknowledge World Toilet Day than with humour.



Comedian Dave Thornton tells some jokes at WaterAid's World Toilet Day comedy gala.

Photo: WaterAid/James Grant

A sporting chance

Sport has an amazing ability to connect people and drive community involvement, empowerment and change. As sport is present in every country and culture in the world, WaterAid is harnessing sports' power to unite and appeal to mass audiences in an innovative way to achieve WaterAid's global strategy of reaching everyone, everywhere by 2030 with safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

This is why WaterAid is working with the netball community to use sport to improve gender equality, women's empowerment and access to services in Papua New Guinea.

I had the opportunity to take WaterAid Ambassador and Melbourne Vixen netballer Liz Watson to Papua New Guinea recently to meet the Papua New Guinean national netball team, and visit

communities to develop an understanding of the issues girls and women face in accessing water, sanitation and hygiene, finishing school, escaping poverty and being empowered.

WaterAid is undertaking a new and innovative 'Sports for Development' program in Papua New Guinea because the empowerment of women and girls, and sports participation can be used to improve conditions. WaterAid is working through local NGOs and sporting federations, at national, provincial, district and local levels, to pilot water, sanitation and hygiene, and gender projects which utilise sport as the primary interface with schools, communities and organisations.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Oasis. You can read about how toilets have provided opportunities for girls to continue their

education in Timor-Leste and see the incredible differences in what mothers pack in their hospital maternity bags around the world depending on the quality of healthcare facilities. This edition also looks at our work in one of our newest country programs, Cambodia.

As always thank you for your ongoing and essential support to help improve people's lives.



Paul Nichols

Paul Nichols
Chief Executive
WaterAid Australia

WaterAid transforms the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people by improving access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Thank you!

Healthy kids, productive community

Thanks to your and other WaterAid supporters' generous donations, Leonie, Stella, Joab and their family and community now have safe water, clean toilets and hygiene.

Their village has tanks for rain water harvesting, households have built hygienic toilets and community members have participated in hygiene education. Their children aren't sick any more from diseases which could have potentially claimed their lives. They can go to school.

Leonie and her children Stella and baby Joab now have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene in their village thanks to WaterAid supporters' generous donations.

Photo: WaterAid/Tom Greenwood

Leonie and her family are benefiting from lessons learnt in hygiene training. "I had never attended hygiene training before... I learnt about washing hands after using the toilet, that we have to cover food from flies, water collected from waterholes must be covered. I didn't do this before the training. It is important to do this to stop germs, that's why I should wash hands.

I share what I have learnt and experiences I have seen."

Leonie is finding that, "The children aren't sick any more...what I am practising is helping with the family."

Now that she doesn't have to fetch water from a dirty creek or look after sick children she has extra time for productive activities such as gardening. "I clean the garden, plant the garden, make sure it's clean.

I grow banana, cucumber, taro, green vegetables. I grow it to sell at market and to feed the family."

Her husband and brother-in-law Emmanuel have built an improved toilet for the household. "When we go to the toilet in the bushes it is not safe, people can look at us, flies can come and the toilet is open. This toilet is safer, cleaner, people can't look at us," says Emmanuel.

Sports for development

Sport **connects** and **empowers**

"The health and wellbeing of young women around the world is something I am extremely passionate about. Sport is a vehicle that encourages self-esteem and leadership, while water, sanitation and hygiene are vital to improving health, reducing poverty and ensuring girls stay in school," says WaterAid Ambassador Liz Watson.

In December the Melbourne Vixens and Australian Diamonds netballer visited WaterAid projects in Papua New Guinea.

Travelling with WaterAid and Netball Victoria, Liz was hosted by Netball Papua New Guinea and their national team captain Lua Rikis to learn about the challenges facing young women in Papua New Guinea in accessing safe water, sanitation and hygiene, their difficulties completing school and the lack of gender equality.

WaterAid is using sport as a way to engage with communities in Papua New Guinea about the benefits of water, sanitation and hygiene and to empower communities to demand better access to these services from their governments. Sport has a universal ability to connect people and drive community involvement and empowerment.

Liz visited a WaterAid project at a school in Port Moresby to play netball with girls, and visited communities in East Sepik and maternal health facilities in Mt Hagen.

"It was fantastic to meet people in Papua New Guinea and see the difference having access to clean, safe water makes to the community," says Liz.

Photo: WaterAid/Tom Greenwood

WaterAid Ambassador Liz Watson with Roccu Primary School student Boio, a netball centre on her school team in Papua New Guinea.

Toilets ensure opportunity

The widespread lack of access to toilets and water in the world has a devastating impact on girls and women. The lack of hygiene facilities in schools is a major reason for girls dropping out of school when they reach puberty. This curtails their education and the opportunity to take the first essential steps out of poverty.

In the Manufahi district of Timor-Leste, Ailuli Pre-Secondary School's toilet block had been abandoned and unused for several years because it was in total

disrepair, dysfunctional and unhygienic. Students had to go to the toilet in nearby bushes.

WaterAid renovated the toilets and provided menstrual hygiene management training for students and staff to help students manage their periods effectively and to dispel myths.

The students decorated the rehabilitated toilets by painting pictures on the walls.

Now that they no longer miss school when they have

their periods, students like Madelena can focus on their education and future.

Madelena, 15 says, "Toilets are small things but they can help us realise our dreams because with a toilet we don't miss school and with a toilet we can focus on our study. My dream in the future is to be a doctor because doctors can help others and can save people's lives."

"Not only did we get a toilet but we got information from WaterAid about periods... before we got instruction from WaterAid my mother told me things like I can't eat chilli when I have my period, but when I got information from WaterAid I learnt I can do anything when I get my period."



Madelena (second from left) with fellow students outside the new toilet block at Ailuli Pre-Secondary School in Manufahi district, Timor-Leste.

Photo: WaterAid/Tom Greenwood



Making inroads in Cambodia

Children in Cambodia will benefit from WaterAid's work to support the government's goal for universal water and sanitation coverage.

Photo: WaterAid/Rhannon King

Cambodia is one of the newest countries where WaterAid is working.

Gender equity, disability and citizen action have been the focus of our initial work in Cambodia to support the government's ambitious goal for universal water and sanitation coverage by 2025.

We have been working with the government on national guidelines for inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene, to ensure these services are available to all irrespective of disability, gender and status.

We are now educating community members throughout Cambodia about the guidelines through creative video and drama performances.

We have been working with underprivileged people in urban communities in Siem Reap to trial the effectiveness of citizen action techniques to encourage community lobbying of local governments for better water and sanitation services.

The 100,000 people living on Tonle Sap Lake's floating villages go to the toilet in the lake that is the same water used for fishing, washing and cooking. WaterAid is looking at new solutions to

the sanitation problem faced by Cambodia's floating villages and is partnering with a social enterprise to test floating toilets containing man-made wetlands of water hyacinths to process waste.

Many healthcare facilities in Cambodia have ageing and dilapidated water and sanitation services. We are supporting a baseline assessment of water, sanitation and hygiene services in healthcare facilities in three provinces and will provide technical support and training to government to integrate water, sanitation and hygiene into health facilities.

HandyPods

Building safe and sustainable sanitation systems is a huge challenge for any poor community, but where homes are built over water the technical obstacles are even greater.

- 1 A private squat toilet on the back of a house connects to a drum where the raw sewage goes through anaerobic (oxygen-less) processes.
- 2 Waste then passes to the HandyPod floating nearby.
- 3 Microbes around the plants' roots further break down harmful substances.



In Cambodia, over a quarter of the population lives in challenging environments such as floating villages.

More than 100,000 people live on Tonle Sap Lake – Southeast Asia's largest body of fresh water. When they need to go to the toilet, they take a boat to a secluded spot, go into surrounding forest, or at night may squat off the side of their floating house. People use this same lake water to

wash dishes and clothes, and young children swim in it.

A social enterprise called Wetlands Work has created a sanitation solution with lots of potential. With funding from Grand Challenges Canada, WaterAid is partnering with them to test the HandyPod with Tonle Sap's floating communities.

The HandyPod is a basic water-purifying system resembling a floating garden. This small man-made wetland of water hyacinths helps make toilet waste safe enough to pass into the lake without causing any harm.

For the HandyPod to succeed, people need to understand the benefits of buying their own toilet.

WaterAid and Wetlands Work are working with the communities to change unhealthy habits, and helping local businesses to sell the Pods.

If the Pods are successful, the next step will be to get the government and private sector to roll them out to challenging environments across the country.

What's in the maternity bag?

From plastic sheets, razor blades and torches, to toiletries, what women from around the globe pack in their maternity bags is unveiled.

Depending on where in the world they are giving birth, the items women choose to take to the hospital might be life-savers, or simple luxuries.

There are several key maternity bag items that women from around the world have in common, including blankets to wrap the baby in, clothes for the

baby, and a water bottle or flask.

Yet there are challenges women from developing nations face when giving birth, where shockingly the items packed by new mums are largely dictated by whether they can rely on the hospital having clean water, sanitation and hygienic conditions during their labour.

Ellen Malawi

Inside the maternity bag of 23-year-old Ellen, who lives in Malawi, there is a razor blade which midwives use to cut the umbilical cord. Ellen also has to pack her own plastic sheet for the delivery bed in order to help maintain personal hygiene, as there is no clean water at the health centre to clean the beds between births.



Katy Australia

Katy Shaw lives in Melbourne, and says she can't comprehend giving birth in a place where there is no clean water for the midwives to wash their hands, or to sterilise operating equipment. "I never question how hygienic a place is because I know everywhere in Australia has hygienic facilities, and the hospital is a very clean and sterile environment," says Katy.



Photos: WaterAid/Chileshe Chanda

Photos: WaterAid/James Grant

Hazel Zambia

It's a similar story for 27-year-old Hazel at a health centre in Zambia. She explains she too has to take a plastic sheet for the bed, and says: "We have a borehole at the clinic but there is no running water in the maternity ward."



In countries like Malawi and Zambia, newborn babies regularly die from infection caused by a lack of safe water and an unclean environment. WaterAid wants to ensure all healthcare facilities have access to clean water, have adequate toilets and are committed to good hygiene practice and promotion.

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