

Autumn  
2024

# Oasis

Your WaterAid Magazine



20 YEARS OF  
Impact



WaterAid



WaterAid/Tariq Hawari

## About WaterAid

WaterAid is an international not-for-profit, determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation.

Find out more:  
[wateraid.org.au](http://wateraid.org.au)

## The Crisis

- **703 million people** in the world – almost one in ten – don't have clean water close to home
- **2.2 billion people** in the world – more than one in four – don't have safe water
- **411 million people** in the world – 1 in 20 – have no choice but to drink dirty water

**On the front cover:** Channan, 3, and Devit, 5, drinks cups of clean water in Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia, Feb 2023.

**Credit:** WaterAid/Tariq Hawari

This copy of Oasis was edited and written by Caity Hall and the WaterAid Australia team. For feedback or article suggestions, please email [info@wateraid.org.au](mailto:info@wateraid.org.au)

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# From our Chief Executive



2024 is a special year for us. It marks 20 years since WaterAid Australia joined the WaterAid Global Federation, and 20 years since we began working with supporters like you towards a world where everyone, everywhere can access clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene.

Since then, **we have reached 5.72 million people with our water, toilet and hygiene projects funded through WaterAid Australia supporters and partners.** I am incredibly proud of this number – and I hope you are too. But our work over the last 20 years is about so much more than a number. It's about the children who now have the time and energy to attend school, opening up a world of opportunities. It's about the pregnant women who can now deliver and care for their newborns in a safe environment. It's about the parents who can now protect their children from deadly diseases, and have time in their day to earn an income for their family.

The key to all these situations is clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. Having access to these three essentials is a powerful life-changer. Without all three, people can't live dignified, healthy lives. With all three, they can unlock their potential, break free from poverty, and change their lives for good.

Despite this progress, we know that the global effort to reach everyone, everywhere with safe and sustainable water, toilets and hygiene is too slow. And in the face of a changing climate, this goal has never been more critical.

The challenge ahead of us is significant, but the last 20 years have shown us what is possible when we work together.

This progress has only been made possible through the invaluable support of people like you. I hope you continue to stand with us, and help to ensure our next 20 years are just as impactful as the last.

Thank you.  
Tom Muller



# Celebrating 20 Years of Impact

Clean water, toilets and hygiene are something that many of us take for granted. But for the millions of people around the world who don't have these three essentials, every day is a struggle for health, for happiness, for livelihood, and even for survival.

In 2004, WaterAid Australia joined the WaterAid global federation in recognition of this enormous injustice. We had a vision of a world where everyone, everywhere had access to clean water, decent toilets, and good hygiene.

Since then, we have been working with supporters, governments and local partners to change lives through these three basic human rights.



Scan to visit  
the website



In the past 20 years, WaterAid Australia supporters and partners have helped us reach 5.72 million people through our water, sanitation and hygiene programs.

To achieve this, we have:

- Installed taps, toilets, tanks, and other systems to bring clean water, toilets and hygiene close to home for community members, reducing the need for people to travel long and grueling distances to collect water
- Worked with local and national governments to **achieve Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in 37 districts throughout our region**, creating sanitary environments and reducing the risk of deadly diseases throughout communities.
- Helped **provide access to WASH in 88 healthcare facilities around the world**, increasing access to safe health services, especially for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, newborn babies, people with disabilities, and the elderly.
- Helped to **install WASH facilities in 511 schools globally**, reducing barriers to education, particularly for girls, and opening more opportunities for this generation.
- Worked to build and promote sustainable water, toilets and hygiene systems designed to withstand the effects of climate change and extreme weather events.
- Dedicated ourselves to working with local partners and governments to find solutions that are most suited to the local environment and create long term change

# You're changing lives through:



## Water

Providing clean water close to home creates positive ripple effects throughout entire communities.

For her entire life, Ama Isabel from Timor-Leste spent hours everyday collecting water for her family's needs. Now, with your support, we've worked with her community to install a water system, so she has water close at hand. Ama Isabel has more strength, time and water to grow vegetables. It means nutritious food for her family, and an income to buy books and pens for her grandchildren's education.



## Toilets

Through programs that help to set up proper toilet infrastructure, communities like Paul's in Papua New Guinea now have somewhere safe and dignified to use the toilet. Decent toilets help to prevent the spread of deadly disease, by minimising the contamination of the surrounding environment, including local waterways that may be used as a drinking source.

## Hygiene

Through our hygiene programs, children like Sory in Cambodia are better protected against diseases, and are able to live happier, healthier lives. Something as simple as handwashing significantly reduces cases of diarrhoea, which can be especially dangerous for children. With your support, we've been working to provide the taps and soap necessary to protect children like Sory, but also to provide training and awareness on the importance of good hygiene.



# Opening doors for people living with disabilities



This is Selina. Selina is a 15-year-old student from Zambia. She shares many of the same interests as the other children at her school, and dreams of being a nurse when she grows up.

Unlike her peers, Selina has a disability that requires the use of a wheelchair, and in the past this made life at school quite challenging for her. The school toilets weren't wide enough to accommodate her wheelchair, which meant she was often faced with a terrible choice.

**"I do not manage to go inside the toilet because it is impossible with a wheelchair. I drop off the wheelchair, crawl and hide behind the nearby bush behind the toilet structures to relieve myself. I find it very hard to crawl inside a dirty toilet because it is impossible not to touch urine and other faecal matter left on the floor by other users."**

The taps at the school were also too difficult for Selina reach, so she would have to rely on the help of other students to wash her hands or drink water during the day.

Thankfully, life is very different for Selina now. With the generous support of people like you, WaterAid was able to install accessible taps and toilets at Selina's school. With toilets and taps that are easy for her access, Selina can

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**Using the old toilets was a challenge for me. I only used the toilets at home, but with the new toilets I manage to go in and out by myself, and return to class.**

feel safe and confident going to school, and focus on her dream of becoming a nurse.

To help us reach even more people with taps and toilets at school, you can make a donation using the form at the back of this edition of Oasis.





## Foundations for the Future

A remote mountain community in Nepal is getting clean water, staying healthy and building a base for a brighter tomorrow – with your support.



**The children in the village used to get sick. Diarrhoea, flu, fever and cough occurred frequently.**

- Pabi Maya

The steep peaks of Dolakha take your breath away – but they also mean that people here are especially vulnerable to a changing climate. The region is home to one of Nepal’s most marginalised ethnic groups, the Thami hill tribe, who are often overlooked by development projects. Natural disasters such as earthquakes and more extreme rainfall are making life even harder for the community. Two years ago, after heavy rains, they were hit by a devastating mudslide that washed away water pipes, tanks and taps. They had to walk for miles along dangerous, steep mountain paths to collect water – leaving no time to earn a living or go to school. A reliable supply of clean water close to home – one that can withstand extreme weather – is critical for the next generation. With the help of people like you, WaterAid worked alongside communities and local partners, and used the dramatic landscape to create solutions that will last. Communities in Dolakha now have 17 ‘gravity-flow’ water supply systems, a low-cost technique that uses the pressure of gravity to pipe clean water from reliable but far-away mountain springs to 160 homes and two schools, reaching more than 8,000 people.

People here have also placed water tanks, pipes and toilets away from areas vulnerable

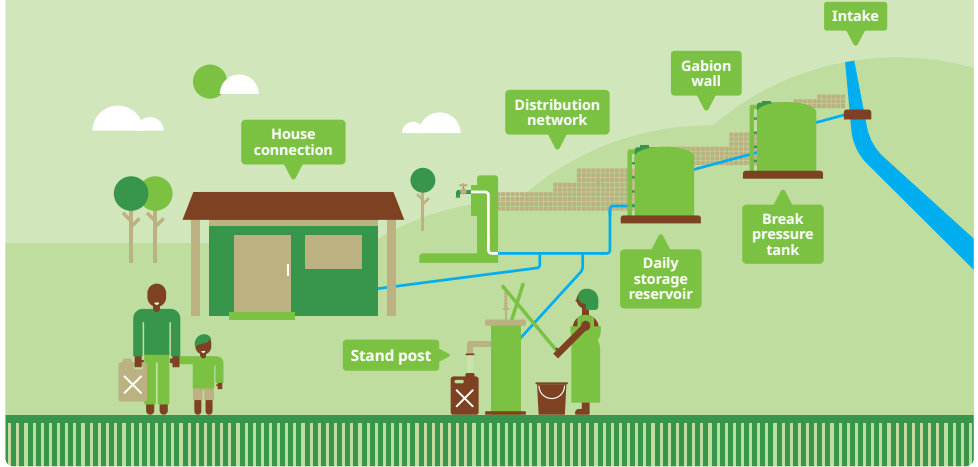
Photos: WaterAid/ Mani Karmacharya



to landslides, and have further protected their supply with gabion walls, which are stacks of wire mesh baskets filled with rocks. These walls are designed to withstand strong forces and heavy rainfall, protecting the water supply from future earthquakes and landslides.



With your support, the community has installed a mountain-side water tank, protected from landslides by a gabion wall.



## Hopes for the future

For the people of Dolakha, the impact of clean water will be passed on from one generation to the next, helping these communities to change their own lives forever in the face of climate change. Nowhere is this clearer than for this group of students (pictured in front of their new handwashing station) who now have clean water at their school. This means they can keep free of disease, stay in school, and look to their future. What are their hopes? We'll let them have the last word:



**Lalmaya:** "I want to study hotel management."

**Sristi:** "I am thinking of staff nurse."

**Ganga:** "I want to become a science teacher."

**Roshan:** "My dream is to be an engineer."



WaterAid/ Ernest Randriarimalala

# Is your school ready to Walk for Water?

Join schools around the country taking steps to bring clean water to everyone, everywhere!

Create a team at your school and ask your classmates to walk every day for one week. It's a great way to build teamwork and some healthy competition, while also raising funds and awareness for WaterAid's vital work.

Hills Grammar Year 9 class raised over \$1500 for WaterAid by taking part in Walk for Water in November. Students Eddie and Vedhika explained how they did so and why it is so important.

"Each year, during the last week of school, every grade participates in an interdisciplinary week, where we link subjects and focus on one of the 21st Century learning skills. In Year 9, we participated in a citizenship program, STEM Week, where we explored the struggles of water scarcity worldwide and participated

in the Walk For Water to fundraise for WaterAid Australia. For one hour, we walked laps of the school oval through hot, muggy, and rainy weather, which made us empathize with those who embark daily on a dangerous journey for clean water. This experience taught us to be grateful that we have access to clean and safe drinking water, and also allowed us to put ourselves in the shoes of the less fortunate."

To create your team and access our wide variety of school resources, visit [wateraid.org/au/walkforwaterschools](http://wateraid.org/au/walkforwaterschools)

# A powerful partnership with the Australia water industry



It was 20 years ago that our founders, Grant Hill and Tony Kelly, rallied together the Australian water industry and the international development sector to start WaterAid Australia.

Since then, the Australian water industry has been a constant and pivotal supporter of WaterAid Australia, without which the progress of the last 20 years would simply not have been possible.

Through corporate memberships, employee development programs, supporter trips, and many social and networking events including Gala Balls and golf days, the water industry helps to provide critical funds and expertise, allowing us to strategically plan for and action programs that reach more people around the world with safe and sustainable water, toilets, and hygiene.

Our state fundraising committees, made up of volunteers predominantly from the water industry, play a key role in organising many of these events and raising awareness of WaterAid's work, as well as global water, sanitation and hygiene crisis more broadly.

Of the many organisations that span across the Australian water sector, two have maintained an impressively high level of support since the very beginning. Yarra Valley Water, and SA Water have both been involved with the highest level of membership since 2004.



**One of the many reasons why we've continued to support WaterAid over the past two decades is because of our shared commitment to creating a world where everyone has access to safe and sustainable water sources. By supporting WaterAid, we're**

**contributing to a positive, lasting change and helping build resilient communities for the future",**

- says Pat McAfferty, Managing Director at Yarra Valley Water.

While together we have seen impressive progress made on access to WASH in the region, we still have a long way to go to reach everyone, everywhere with access to safe and sustainable water, toilets, and hygiene. Looking to the future, we are incredibly grateful for the continued opportunity to have this critical impact with the support of the sector.



**A changing climate is bringing new challenges for water utilities and organisations, with no city or town around the world untouched by the impacts. The need for sustainability, resilience and innovation is crucial to securing long-term water security in particular. We see WaterAid embracing this opportunity from source to tap, and look forward to continue supporting their resolve,**

- David Ryan concludes.

# Your support makes a difference

You can help provide clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to the world's poorest communities. Simply complete this form. **Thank you.**

**Please return to:**  
WaterAid Australia  
Reply Paid 93092  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000  
Or call **1300 858 022** or visit [www.wateraid.org/au](http://www.wateraid.org/au)

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**Cheque/Money Order** (enclosed) payable to WaterAid Australia.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible.

Please send me information about including a gift for WaterAid in my Will.

Please send me information about Workplace Giving.

Please note that all donations are used to support programs including, but not restricted to, the ones described in this mailing.



WaterAid Australia (ABN 99 700 687 141) uses your information to process donations and communicate with you about your support and our work. We will only disclose this information with service providers to fulfil activities relating to our fundraising or if required by the law. To update your information or subscription, please call 1300 858 022 or to view our privacy policy visit our website at [wateraid.org.au](http://wateraid.org.au)

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