**PRESS RELEASE**

**[Name of church] organises / raises [insert activity or money raised] to help WaterAid get clean water to health centres around the world**

[**Download WaterAid images**](https://wateraid.assetbank-server.com/assetbank-wateraid/images/assetbox/7676a2dc-bba5-4c98-ab0a-3791f0743f09/assetbox.html)

**This Christmas, the congregation of [name of church] is [insert activity and / or money raised] to support WaterAid’s campaign, The Water Effect, helping the international charity to bring clean water and good sanitation to health centres around the world.**

In the world’s poorest communities, more than one in three hospitals and clinics do not have clean water, and almost one in five do not have decent toilets.

Without these basic facilities, staff cannot keep their environment, equipment or even their hands clean and so cannot deliver quality care, putting the lives of patients in danger – especially vulnerable mothers and babies.

Globally, every minute, a newborn baby tragically dies from an infection caused by dirty water and an unclean environment, while 800 children die every day from related diarrhoeal diseases.

**[name of spokesperson] of [name of church] said:**

“Christmas is a time of year when many of us are reminded of what we are thankful for. Clean water is something we simply take for granted in the UK and yet for so many people globally, it is out of reach. By fundraising for WaterAid we hope our congregation will be able to make a difference so that babies survive, children thrive, and everyone lives healthier, happier, more fulfilling lives. We all need clean water, no matter where we live.”

The money raised will help bring life-saving clean water and good sanitation to places like Talo Health Centre in Mali, which currently has no clean water or decent toilets. The three staff members at Talo currently make around five trips a day to collect water from a pump 300m away that only works for a few hours a day. When it runs out, they rely on traditional hand dug wells where the water isn’t safe.

By supporting WaterAid, **[name of church]** will help transform the lives of people like Kotimi, a mother from Mali who brought her three-month-old baby, Drissa, to Talo Health Centre when he got very sick with skin abscesses caused by poor hygiene.

**Kotimi, Drissa’s mother, said:**

*“Every time [I come here] there has been a water problem. When I delivered Drissa, the water pump was broken. We were obliged to go and find water somewhere else. I was really afraid because I knew the water they used to help me clean my child and me wasn’t clean water, so I was afraid we could get sick.*

*“If it is possible to have running water in our health centre here, we would celebrate our happiness. It would help the doctor to do things very easily, and it would also help us women to be clean and to clean our children during deliveries.”*

WaterAid’s appeal will help protect the health of thousands of people and show governments that quality healthcare and clean water, toilets and hygiene go hand in hand, transforming many more lives.

**Marcus Missen, Director of Fundraising and Communications at WaterAid said:**

*“It’s hard to imagine needing medical help and ending up somewhere that doesn’t have clean water or decent toilets.* *No midwife should have to deliver babies without clean water to keep their hands and space clean, and no parent should have to take their child to the hospital because the water they drink has made them sick. Yet, this is the reality faced by millions of people and healthcare professionals in the world’s poorest places.*

*“Clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene can change everything for a community, and this is what WaterAid is committed to providing through The Water Effect. We invite churches to get involved so together, we can transform the lives of people around the world who still do not have access to clean water close to home.”*

WaterAid has produced a range of resources for churches, including a poster, Sunday School resource and fundraising ideas. To access these resources and to find out more, visit: [**www.wateraid.org/uk/christmas**](http://www.wateraid.org/uk/christmas)

**ENDS**

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**Notes to Editors:**

**WaterAid**

WaterAid is working to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation. The international not-for-profit organisation works in 28 countries to change the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people. Since 1981, WaterAid has reached 25.8 million people with clean water and 25.1 million people with decent toilets. For more information, visit [www.wateraid.org](http://www.wateraid.org), follow @WaterAidUK or @WaterAidPress on Twitter, or find WaterAid UK on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/wateraid](http://www.facebook.com/wateraid).

* 844 million people in the world – one in nine – do not have clean water close to home.[[1]](#footnote-2)
* 2.3 billion people in the world – almost one in three – do not have a decent toilet of their own.[[2]](#footnote-3)
* Around 289,000 children under five die every year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by poor water and sanitation. That's almost 800 children a day, or one child every two minutes.[[3]](#footnote-4)
* Every £1 invested in water and toilets returns an average of £4 in increased productivity.[[4]](#footnote-5)
* Just £15 can provide one person with clean water.[[5]](#footnote-6)

To find out if countries are keeping their promises on water and sanitation, see the online database [www.WASHwatch.org](http://www.WASHwatch.org)

1. [WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) *Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene: 2017 update and SDG Baselines*](https://washdata.org/reports) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) *Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene: 2017 update and SDG Baselines*](https://washdata.org/reports) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. washwatch.org [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. World Health organization (2012) Global costs and benefits of drinking-water supply and sanitation interventions to reach the MDG target and universal coverage [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. www.wateraid.org [↑](#footnote-ref-6)