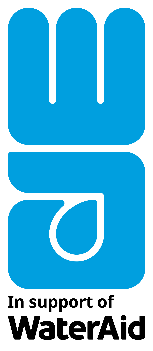
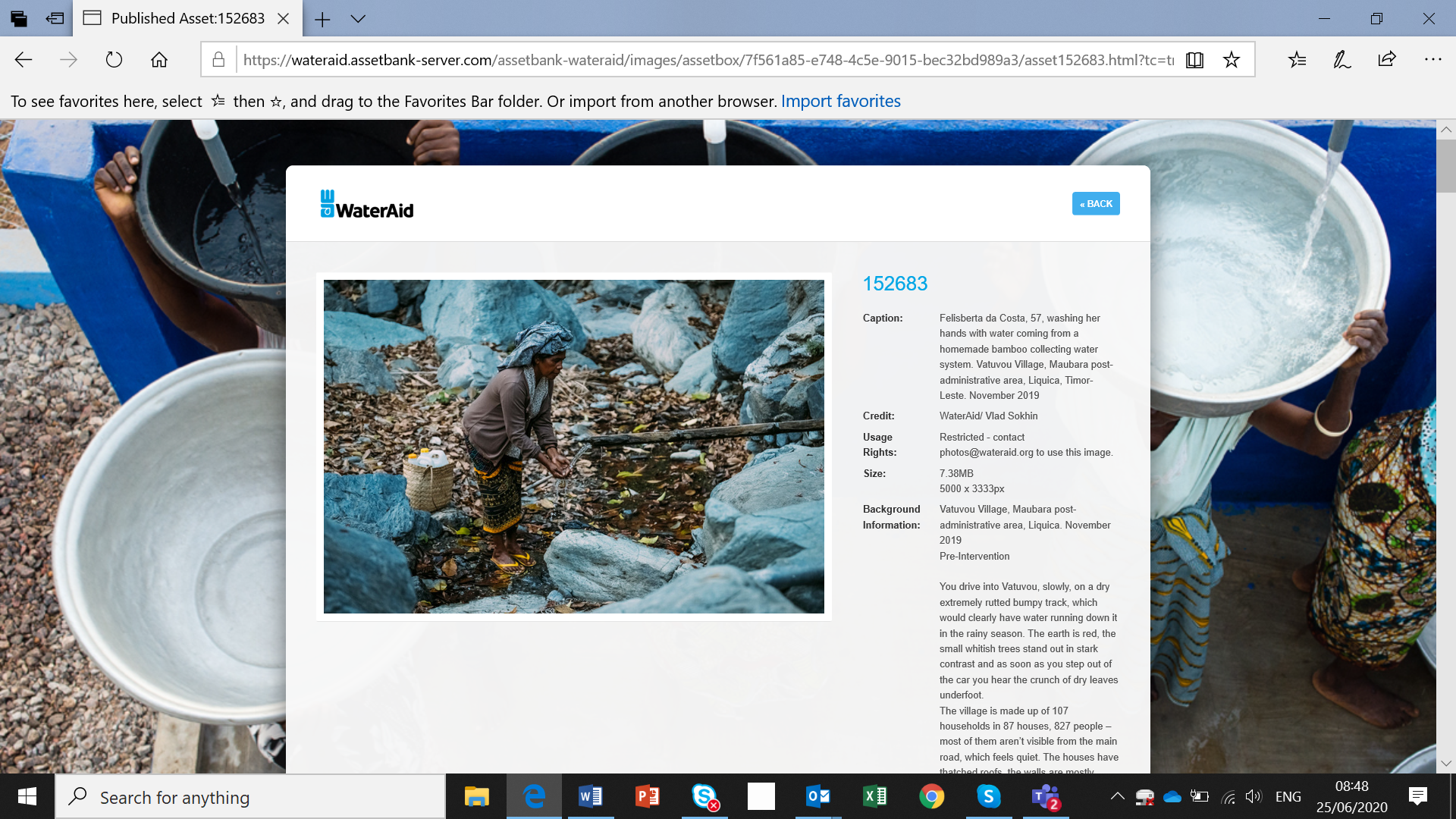
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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**xxxxx [name of group] help WaterAid bring clean water to vulnerable communities this harvest**

** ** 

[**Download images**](https://wateraid.assetbank-server.com/assetbank-wateraid/images/assetbox/7f561a85-e748-4c5e-9015-bec32bd989a3/assetbox.html)

**xxxxx [name of group] is holding a [name of event/online activity] to raise money for WaterAid so that villages like Vatuvou in the island nation of Timor Leste in Southeast Asia can get a reliable source of clean water.**

The group is joining many others across the country in supporting WaterAid’s Harvest Appeal, helping transform lives in some of the poorest communities around the world.

The funds raised will help WaterAid bring clean drinking water to communities like Vatuvou so that people can stay healthy and will be able to safeguard their harvests.

**Xxx [person’s name] from xx [name of group] said:**

*“During these uncertain times we appreciate what we have even more. Clean water is a basic human right yet in Timor Leste many people have to go without this precious resource which affects their health and ability to grow food. Through our fundraising we want to help change that so clean water can bring life to vulnerable communities not only now but in the years to come.”*

WaterAid’s Harvest Appeal will help people like 57-year-old grandmother, Felisberta, from the village of Vatuvou who has to make the long, dangerous trip along a rocky, dried up riverbed to the uphill water source to get water for her family. She often struggles with the journey in the tropical heat.

Felisberta’s community depends on farming to make a living but lack of access to water makes it hard to grow anything outside the rainy season. It’s also killing her family’s livestock – their biggest source of income.

**Felisberta says:**

*“Because we have less water, we try to manage it – we use it for drinking. That’s why sometimes the kids don’t take a shower or a bath. We also don’t really wash our clothes. I feel tired when I am doing the long round trip to collect water. But I have to because I am the one who collects the water and if I don’t do that then the kids are not going to eat.”*

One in five people in Timor Leste don’t have clean water close to home and almost half of the population do not have a decent toilet. Lack of access to clean water and handwashing facilities, poverty, hunger and climate extremes combined with fragile healthcare systems make communities like Felisberta’s extremely vulnerable to diseases and crisis, like Covid-19. Now more than ever, it is vital that the world’s poorest communities have access to clean water and good hygiene.

**Felicity de Ste Croix, Communities and Volunteering Manager at WaterAid, said:**

*“Faith groups, schools and community groups play a vital role in WaterAid’s work, bringing much-needed funds to transform lives with clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. By coming together this harvest, groups across the UK can help ensure communities around the world have enough to eat and drink and can be healthy and financially secure. The simple gift of clean water means others have harvests worth celebrating.”*

Last harvest, churches and community groups in the UK raised £130,000 for WaterAid, helping bring clean water and decent toilets to other communities around the world, like the village of Zabendella in Burkina Faso where Rasmata lives. WaterAid installed 12 compostable toilets that transform waste into fertiliser as well as two wells that provide water for the market garden. Rasmata and her community can now grow vegetables and earn an income in the dry season.

WaterAid has developed a range of free resources to inspire community groups, many of which can be done online or at home too. The pack includes a poster, youth group activities, fundraising ideas, resources for church leaders and a WaterAid quiz sheet.

To find out more and to order the free resource pack, visit: [www.wateraid.org/uk/harvest](http://www.wateraid.org/uk/harvest)

**ENDS**

[INSERT CONTACT DETAILS AT THE COMMUNITY GROUP]

For further information about WaterAid, please contact Anna France-Williams, Senior Media Officer, [AnnaFranceWilliams@wateraid.org](mailto:AnnaFranceWilliams@wateraid.org). Alternatively call our after-hours press line on +44 (0)7887 521 552 or email [pressoffice@wateraid.org](mailto:pressoffice@wateraid.org)

**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 26.4 million people with clean water and 26.3 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).

* 785 million people in the world – one in ten – do not have clean water close to home.[[1]](#footnote-2)
* 2 billion people in the world – almost one in four – do not have a decent toilet of their own.[[2]](#footnote-3)
* Around 310,000 children under five die every year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by poor water and sanitation. That's around 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)

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)