

# THE GIFT OF WATER

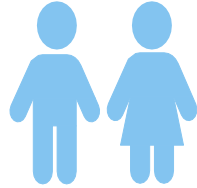
Source: [UN Sustainable Development Water and Sanitation](#)

Clean water, adequate sanitation facilities and better hygiene practices can prevent the spread of disease and even improve nutrition, as people are able to grow more crops when water is readily available.



**663 million**

people worldwide do not have access to fresh drinking water.



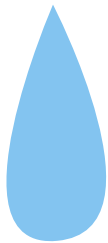
**1,000** children die each day due to preventable water and sanitation related diarrhoeal diseases.



**97.5%** of the earth's water is saltwater. If the world's water fitted into a bucket, only one teaspoonful would be drinkable.



**10%** of the world's population is thought to consume food irrigated by wastewater.



Water scarcity affects **over 40%** of the global population and is projected to rise.



**2.3 billion**

people lack access to basic sanitation such as a toilet or latrine. Of this

**892 million**

people continue to practice open defecation.



In **80%** of water-deprived households women and girls carry the burden of water collection. This time can pull girls out of school and leave women with fewer options to earn and income.



Between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of the global population using an improved drinking water source has increased from **76% to 90%**.



**1 in 3** schools lack access to water and basic sanitation.



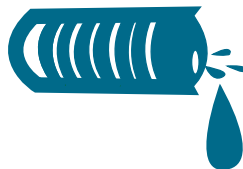
**1.8 billion**

people globally use a source of drinking water that is fecally contaminated.

*"Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases..."*  
Pope Francis



The weight of water that women in Africa and Asia carry on their heads is commonly **20kg**.



**80%** of wastewater resulting from human activities is discharged into rivers or seas without any pollution removal.



Hand-washing with soap at critical times can reduce the incidence of diarrhoea by up to **47%**.

# CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSE

Over the past century, unclean water, poor sanitation and unsafe hygiene practices have claimed more lives than anything else. Caritas Australia works with communities to develop access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities, as well as implement better hygiene practices. Caritas Australia recognises that access to water and adequate sanitation is a human right, and is a necessity for improvements in many other living standards. Therefore, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities are frequently integrated into our holistic community development programs.

Our water, sanitation and hygiene activities include:

- Drilling boreholes and supporting communities to install water pumps so that they have access to clean water.
- Developing other alternative safe water sources, such as ring wells and deep tube wells, rainwater harvesting tanks and sand filter systems.
- Building covered toilets, pot racks and sanitation facilities, such as simple Tippy Taps for hygienic hand washing.
- Providing education on improved hygiene practices.
- Supporting training on food production and agriculture, including introducing systems which use minimum quantities of water.



A young boy using the tippy tap hand washing facility he learnt to use through a Caritas supported program in Malawi. Photo credit: Andrew Garrick and Andrew McClymont



Agatha collecting water from the borehole close to her village. Photo credit: William Mponda

Across the world, Caritas Australia is working to improve access to clean water for people like Agatha, a mother-of-two from Namkumba village, Malawi.

For all their lives, Agatha and her family were forced to share drinking water with livestock from shallow wells. The water was unclean, and life-threatening water-borne diseases were common.

Thanks to your support, this is now a thing of the past. Agatha and her community can now access safe and fresh drinking water from a new borehole that was drilled close to her village.

Agatha now knows that her children will be able to drink fresh, safe drinking water. It has also improved the health of her whole community!

For more water resources to use in your classroom visit: [www.caritas.org.au/schools](http://www.caritas.org.au/schools)