



# World Water Day 2023

## Accelerating Change

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World Water Day is held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March annually. The day raises awareness of the importance of global access to safe drinking water and promotes the responsible use of water - one of the planet's most precious resources.

In 2023, the theme for World Water Day is 'Accelerating Change'.




### B Accelerating Change

This year's theme, 'Accelerating Change', highlights the actions we can take to accelerate the progress needed to solve the water and sanitation crisis.

In 2015, the world committed to a promise that everyone would have access to safely managed water and **sanitation** by 2030. In 2023, this target is hugely behind schedule and billions of people, as well as many schools, businesses, healthcare centres, farms and factories, are being held back because their human right to water and sanitation is not being met.

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We are fortunate in our country that we can simply turn on a tap to get clean, fresh water. However, not everyone is able to do this. In other countries, people may have to walk several miles to fill buckets from rivers to collect water which is harmful to drink and millions of people without a toilet must **defecate** in the open, such as in street gutters or behind bushes.

Some alarming facts about the water and sanitation crisis:

-  1 in 4 people worldwide do not have access to **safe drinking water**;
-  1.4 million people die every year from diseases such as cholera and typhoid due to poor water, sanitation and hygiene;
-  Around half of the world's population do not have **safe sanitation**.

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It is essential that we do not waste the water we have. We can all make a difference by simply changing the way we use and manage water and by taking better care of our planet.

Here are some ways how we can help to make a difference:

- ❶ Avoiding wasting water, such as by having showers instead of baths, turning off the tap while brushing teeth and filling up the sink rather than leaving the water running while washing up;
- ❷ Raising awareness in communities about World Water Day and the water and sanitation crisis;
- ❸ Playing a part in combatting climate change and global warming, such as through recycling, turning off lights that are not needed and by walking instead of taking the car. Climate change is affecting weather patterns; this has led to extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, which drastically affect the quantity and quality of water that people have access to.



Collective action can make a big difference. Our smaller actions will contribute to the larger-scale commitments from governments and other organisations to help accelerate the change that is desperately needed to ensure safe water and sanitation for everyone.

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**safe drinking water:** Drinking water that is available when needed, on the same site where it is needed and is free from dangerous contamination.

**safe sanitation:** A toilet not shared with other households and where human waste is safely treated on site or is removed and treated off site.

**sanitation:** The safe collection, removal and treatment of human wastes, such as toilet waste.

**defecate:** To expel solid waste as poo.