

World Water Day

Help make the difference

International World Water Day is held annually on 22 March as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

Every 20 seconds, a child dies as a result of the abysmal sanitation conditions endured by some 2.6 billion people globally. That adds up to an unconscionable 1.5 million young lives cut short by a cause we know well how to prevent.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) 4 billion cases of diarrhea each year in addition to millions of other cases of illness are associated with lack of access to water that is safe for human consumption. Per year 2,2 million people die as a result of diarrhea most of them are children under the age of five.

An international day to celebrate freshwater was recommended at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The United Nations General Assembly responded by designating 22 March 1993 as the first World Water Day.

Each year, World Water Day highlights a specific aspect of freshwater. On this page, we present a brief overview of the different themes that have been the focus of World Water Day celebrations.

In 2009, the theme for World Water Day was "Shared Water - Shared Opportunities". Special focus was placed on transboundary waters. Nurturing the opportunities for cooperation in transboundary water management can help build mutual respect, understanding and trust among countries and promote peace, security and sustainable economic growth.