

Worldwide, 26 March 2011 - Over 350,000 people in 60 different countries have today taken part in The World Walks for Water to demand political action on the water and sanitation crisis. People around the world walked a symbolic 6km in solidarity with the millions of people who have to walk 6km everyday just to collect water for their basic needs. This is part of the annual UN World Water Day.

Walks took place across the world from Kampala to Katmandu, from Lagos to Las Vegas. In London over 40 Members of the British parliament joined walkers in Westminster including the Secretary of State for International Development Andrew Mitchell and members of the shadow cabinet Harriet Harman and Douglas Alexander. MPs were lobbied by campaigners whilst each walking 100m to collectively cover the 6km distance.

In Delhi, 1750 people took part in a walk organized by Forum for Organised Resource Conservation and Enhancement (FORCE). Minister of Water Resources, Salman Khurshid attended and was lobbied by campaigners on water provision. Thousands walked in Bangladesh including some intrepid campaigners who walked 40kms over two days. In Nairobi, national celebrity Patricia Amira from the Patricia Show joined Walkers. An incredible 50,000 walked in Uganda and 1000 through Monrovia, the capital of Liberia.

“Today people have walked alongside those blighted by the water and sanitation crisis. The task of gathering water to use for basic needs remains a daily struggle for millions across the world. This is a wholly preventable crisis which claims thousands of children’s lives every day” said Serena O’Sullivan, one of the organizers of the event.

Lack of access to clean water and sanitation affects 2.6 billion people worldwide. More children are killed by preventable diseases connected to this crisis than by malaria, measles and HIV/AIDS combined. Many more are prevented from gaining an education because their time and energy is spent collecting water for their basic needs. This crisis burdens the economies and health systems of countries in the global south. An estimated 5% of developing countries’ GDP is lost to illnesses and deaths caused by dirty water and a lack of sanitation. Over half the hospital beds in developing countries are occupied by people suffering diarrhoeal diseases.

This action comes less than two months before leaders attend a crucial United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul in May 2011.

“So many people, in so many countries have taken part in this global event that it sends a clear message to leaders meeting at the LDC conference that water and sanitation should be top of their political and funding priorities” said Serena O’ Sullivan, “We want leaders to commit to delivering water and sanitation to all people in LDCs by 2020”

Source: [End Water Poverty](#)

