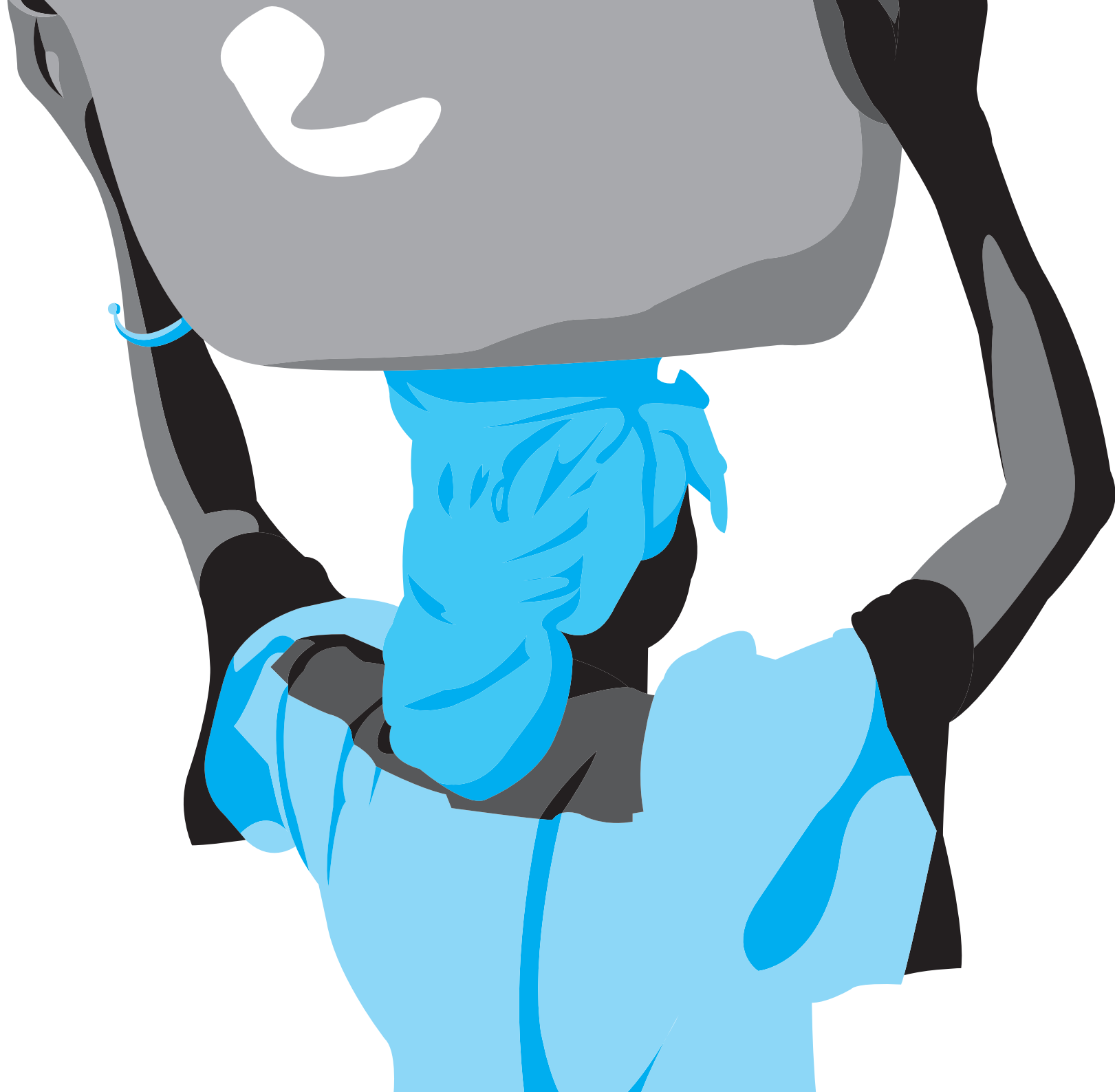


A programme for **action**





End Water Poverty: sanitation and water for all

The global crisis in sanitation and water requires an extraordinary effort to tackle it. End Water Poverty is an international campaign, driven by a growing coalition of like-minded organisations, calling for immediate action. The scale of the problem cannot be overstated. 1.1 billion people live without safe water and 2.6 billion people live without access to sanitation. In these circumstances around 5000 children die every day from water-related diseases – the equivalent of 20 airliners filled with children lost on a daily basis to an entirely preventable public health crisis.

Without sanitation and water there can be no sustainable development. If this crisis is not tackled decisively it will prevent and undermine progress made in reducing poverty, achieving universal primary education and improving people's health.

Economic growth and income generation are being severely hampered. In Africa, an estimated 5% of GDP is lost to illnesses and deaths caused by dirty water and the absence of sanitation.

This is a crisis driven by inequality and poverty, where the burden falls most heavily on women. It is girls who are denied an education because they are tasked with fetching water or drop out of school in adolescence because of inadequate sanitation facilities. And as adults, women continue to waste hours each day in the search for water and inevitably look after the children that are ill or dying from diarrhoeal diseases.

In the coming years, climate change is expected to put increased pressure on water resources. Where they are poorly managed, the effects of climate change are going to make matters much worse. Unless water resources are protected and shared equitably, poor and marginalised communities will suffer most.

Poor people almost always put water and sanitation services in their top three priorities. However, the international development community and developing country governments treat them predominantly as marginal issues. The volume of spending on the sector has remained largely stagnant over the last ten years, and it has actually fallen in terms of the relative increases in overall aid spending and spending on health and education.

Put simply, the water and sanitation sector is in crisis because there is a lack of political will to push through changes that benefit the poorest and most vulnerable people.

Governments have a duty to ensure universal access to sanitation and water through fully funded country plans, delivered and owned locally. They must recognise that access to affordable services is a fundamental right. They must work according to the key principles of poverty reduction, sustainability of services, accountability of governments to their citizens and equity of distribution. Water and sanitation services must reach the poorest and most marginalised groups in society – disabled people, older people and women.

End Water Poverty is calling for policy changes that must be delivered by donors and both national and local governments. These parties must immediately reverse the declines in spending and the political neglect of these most fundamental services. This document sets out a programme of action.

If decision makers are genuinely committed to the eradication of poverty, then sanitation and water must be provided for all. It is time to End Water Poverty

International level policy changes to End Water Poverty

Governments and donors must immediately reverse the decline in spending on the water and sanitation sector. They must prioritise these fundamental services in an internationally recognised global action plan.

A global action plan for sanitation and water

The global action plan would be signed up to by the international development community and would constitute a framework of policy actions. This would confer obligations upon both donors and governments to produce and implement coordinated water and sanitation sector plans.

The global action plan must ensure that no credible country plan consistent with achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets on water and sanitation will fail for lack of finance. The required increases in the volume of aid should not be at the expense of spending on other essential sectors.

Developing countries should commit to spending up to 1% of their GDP on sanitation and water. Funding gaps in meeting agreed sanitation and water goals¹ should be filled by the donor community from official development resources.

A global task force for sanitation and water

This global task force of senior policy makers must be the single authoritative focal point within the international aid system. It would monitor country level and global progress in delivering the MDG targets on water and sanitation.

It would meet annually to review global progress in the sector, diagnosing key bottlenecks, promoting remedial actions and paying particular attention to off-track countries and regions.

70% of aid for sanitation and water to be targeted at the lowest-income countries²

Improving the quality and effectiveness of aid requires the global action plan to shift the major share of aid for water and sanitation to the poorest countries. The plan must also ensure that the financing of the sanitation and water sector must be delivered in a predictable manner. Donors must publicise accessible information that sets out the volume, terms and conditions attached to their finance for the sector, including benchmarks for the speed of funding flows.

Also, donors must not use aid as a vehicle for imposing conditions on private sector participation or to override the influence of the intended beneficiaries in national and local planning processes.

Water resources to be protected, managed effectively and shared equitably

Wise water management can help mitigate the impacts of climate change and is fundamental to the provision of safe water and sanitation services.

Countries should be given assistance to develop integrated water resource management plans and effective service delivery mechanisms to ensure lasting water provision and the long-term sustainability of water resources. Governments need to strengthen community based organisations and other institutions to manage water resources better and enforce laws and regulations on water abstraction, allocation, conservation and protection.

Where countries share transboundary watercourses and groundwater their governments must be encouraged and assisted to cooperate.

¹ World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) targets for the production of integrated water resource management and water efficiency plans

² There are two sources of analysis on which this call is based. Data from OECD (2004) indicated that 50% of total bilateral water supply and sanitation (WSS) aid went to 10 recipient countries, only three of these are least developed countries (LDCs) in most need, 53% of combined bilateral and multilateral WSS aid went to only 10 countries, two of which are LDCs in most need. The second source is Tearfund's 2004 analysis which identified 15 LDCs where WSS coverage is worst. None of these countries were top recipients of WSS aid. Also, countries in most need received on average US\$16.37 per unserved person, while those doing best from aid received US\$446.68 per unserved person.





National level policy changes to End Water Poverty

Within developing countries, national governments working with domestic stakeholders should own the policy design, implementation and monitoring process for all improvements to sanitation and water services. The donor community must support the building of country-led reform and coordination efforts.

National frameworks to plan, coordinate and monitor the delivery of services

Sanitation and water service delivery should be pro-poor, responsive to people's needs and equitably distributed so that the poorest and most marginalised groups have access. In planning and implementing services governments should be accountable and transparent to the people they exist to serve.

Governments receiving aid should develop a framework of 'three ones' that allocates responsibilities for financing, coordination and monitoring and evaluation:

- One country plan: to establish the targets, costs and financing gaps
- One coordinating mechanism: to design and coordinate the delivery of services. The government should work with civil society organisations, sector practitioners, service providers, domestic stakeholders and donors
- One monitoring and evaluation framework: to assess progress, diagnose bottlenecks and promote remedial actions. Governments and donors should convene annual sector review and planning meetings to keep Parliament and the relevant domestic stakeholders informed of progress

A government led extraordinary effort on sanitation

Governments must lead the enormous effort necessary to end the marginalisation and neglect of sanitation. There should be a publicly agreed plan and strategy, sufficient budgets and clearly identified lead agencies that act as a focal point of accountability for delivery of the country's sanitation services.

The planning process should be country owned and the outcome of widespread participation in the policy design, implementation and monitoring process.

Donors should support learning and knowledge sharing among local agencies on effective delivery of sanitation services.

Donor technical assistance to build and strengthen policy communities in-country

In order to build the human resources and policy delivery capacity of the sector, donors should draw primarily on the intellectual resources and technical knowledge from within in-country institutions. Donors' procurement of technical assistance should, in the first instance, aim to support and strengthen domestic policy communities in the sector.

Local level policy changes to End Water Poverty

National governments within developing countries need to make a serious commitment to addressing weak sector governance at the local level. They should urgently address the weaknesses of agencies that are responsible for delivering sanitation and water services.

Strong local government agencies must be responsible for ensuring accountable, accessible and responsive services

The operating principle in targeting services must be to ensure that sanitation and water reach the poor and most marginalised groups. National governments and donors should focus on addressing the capacity weaknesses of local level delivery systems, particularly chronic skills shortages. Finance must be delivered in sufficient quantities and in a predictable and stable way.

Local governments should open up to civil society participation in their planning and budgeting process and respond to community led initiatives.

Prioritise the poor when improving urban sanitation and water services

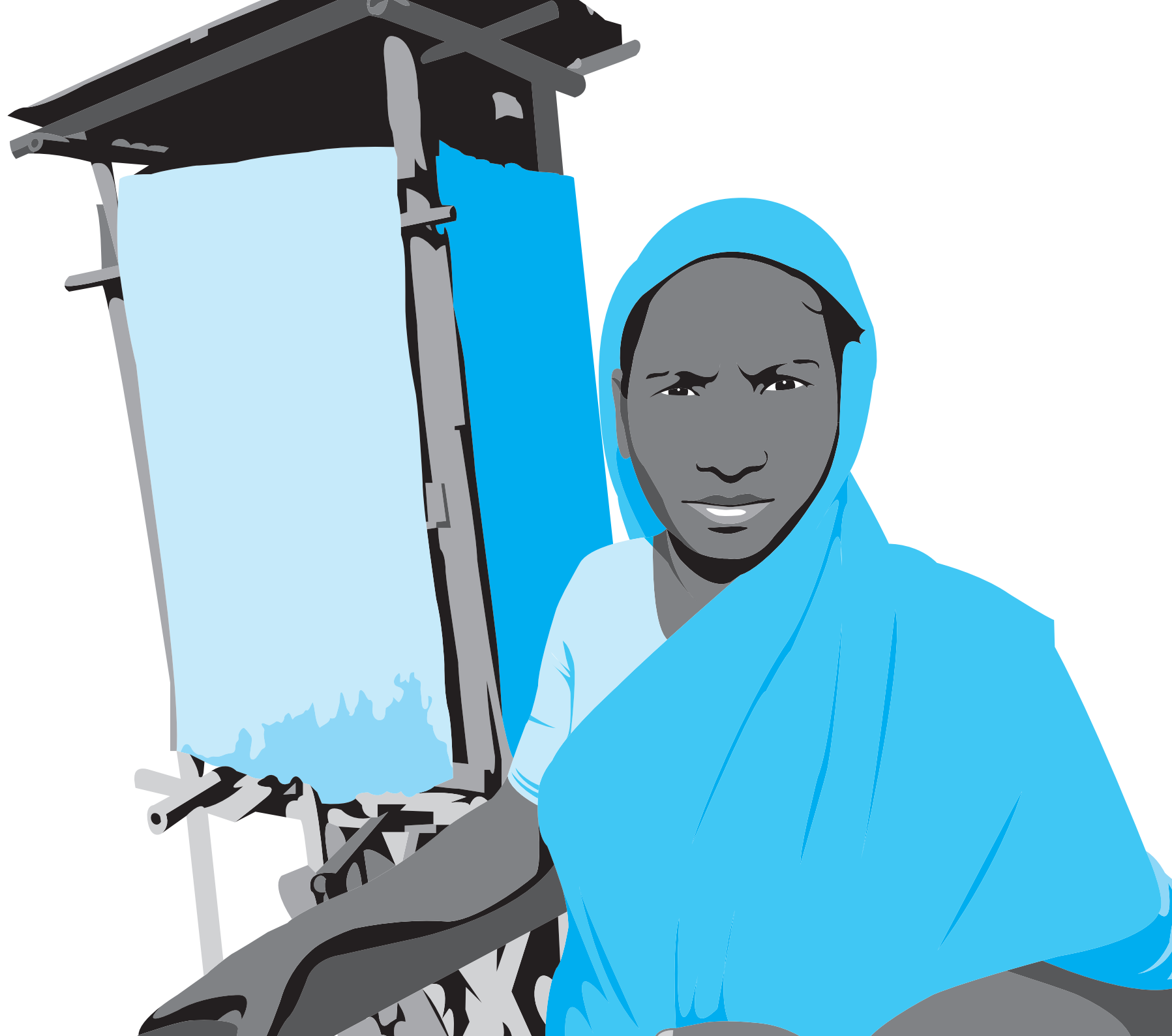
Legal barriers that particularly constrain the provision of these services to the urban poor should be removed. National governments should establish a robust regulatory framework for all service providers and enforce standards. Water and sanitation public utilities need to reform and improve their performance.

Non-state providers should be integrated effectively into the public service system where they will be subject to its mechanisms of accountability, consumer scrutiny and regulation. Local stakeholders must be involved in determining the direction of reform and the utilities must be open to consumer scrutiny.

Services must be targeted at the poorest and most marginalised groups

Services must be designed with the participation of poor and marginalised people. Their interests should be represented in the agencies, utilities and community managed schemes that design, manage, operate, regulate and monitor services.

Comprehensive surveys and mapping should be undertaken to identify areas in most need. Based on this information, services must then be targeted at and designed for the poor and most marginalised groups, including women, disabled people and older people.





END
WATER
POVERTY

Join the campaign to End Water Poverty

The essential aim of End Water Poverty is to get governments to act decisively and immediately to provide sanitation and water for all. As set out in this *Programme for action* the campaign will make demands at all levels towards the same goal. The efforts of all members of the End Water Poverty coalition are vital to the campaign's success.

By joining End Water Poverty and working towards its aims you and your organisation will be tackling the fundamental crisis affecting development. At present, the international effort on sanitation and water is in disarray. Governments must be told that it is morally and economically indefensible to preach poverty reduction but leave millions of people to live in squalor and disease. This campaign will make governments fulfil their basic responsibilities and become accountable to the people they exist to serve.

The eradication of poverty depends on the provision of sanitation and water for all. Only together, with one voice, can we End Water Poverty.

**Join the campaign and receive more
information and resources at
info@endwaterpoverty.org**

**or by visiting
www.endwaterpoverty.org**

End Water Poverty

c/o WaterAid
47-49 Durham Street
London SE11 5JD

Tel: +44 (0)20 7793 4500
Email: info@endwaterpoverty.org

www.endwaterpoverty.org

