



grandmothers
Advocacy Network



Mouvement de soutien des
grands-mères



Change starts with water

WaterAid Canada

January 2026

We Are WaterAid Canada

**Change starts with
water**

WaterAid
Global
Vision

A world where *everyone, everywhere* has sustainable and safe water, sanitation, and hygiene

WaterAid
Global
Strategic Aims



1. Achieve universal, sustainable, & safe WASH services
2. Prioritize WASH across the health sector
3. Strengthen climate resilience of WASH
4. Increased quantity & quality of financing

WaterAid
Canada
Levers to
Achieve
our Global
Strategy

INSPIRE

Mobilize the generosity of Canadians through increased public engagement and private sector partnerships.

ENABLE

Sustainable, Climate-Resilient WASH through innovative program design focused on climate-resilient solutions

EMPOWER

Women & girls through gender-responsive and gender-transformative programming that contributes to improved health, education and economic outcomes

INFLUENCE

Decision makers to recognize and prioritize WASH as a critical investment in human development and rights

Where WaterAid Works

WaterAid is active in 22 countries across Africa, Asia, South America and the Pacific Region, working together with governments, local organizations and communities.

Asia and Pacific

 Bangladesh

 Cambodia

 India 

 Nepal

 Pakistan 

 Papua New Guinea

 Timor-Leste

East Africa

 Ethiopia

 Rwanda 

 Tanzania 

 Uganda 

Southern Africa

 Madagascar

 Malawi

 Mozambique 

 Zambia 

West Africa

 Burkina Faso 

 Ghana 

 Liberia 

 Mali 

 Niger

 Nigeria 

 Senegal

 *Current or Recent WaterAid*

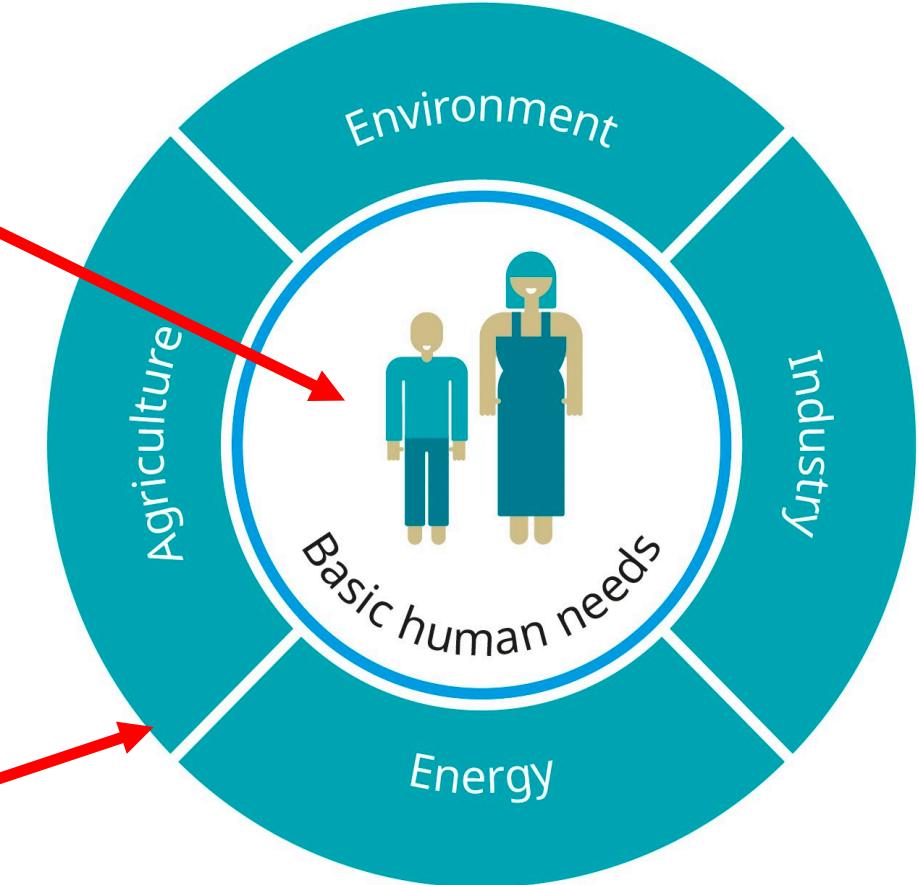
The Americas

•  Colombia

Defining WASH and Water Security

WASH – water, sanitation and hygiene for basic human needs and foundation of public health

Water Security – definitions will vary and include WASH, it means inclusive, reliable access to water of **sufficient quantity and quality** to meet basic human needs, small scale livelihoods, and local ecosystem services, coupled with well managed risk of water-related disasters, water resources, and water services.



(examples: [WaterAid](#) and [UN-Water](#))

Defining Sustainability & Resilience for WASH



Climate Resilient (CR) WASH: services can anticipate, respond to, cope with, recover from, adapt to, or transform based on climate-related events, trends and disturbances. CR-WASH strives to achieve and maintain universal and equitable access to safely managed services, even with unstable or uncertain climate and exposure of vulnerable groups. (Sanitation and Water for All)



Sustainable Development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (UN, Our Common Future)

Aida Muluneh *Water is Life* Gallery at Adaptation Futures
2022 (Montreal)

SDG 6 and Human Rights to Water and Sanitation

UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation:

- **Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo** is the current Special Rapporteur
- Focuses on human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation (***yes, he has visited Canada***), thematic research, country missions, good practices, works with practitioners on implementation of the rights to water and sanitation.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6

- “**Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**” and threads across all 17 goals of Agenda 2030
- **Targets** cover WASH, water security, and integrated management of water with *dedicated targets for sanitation, hygiene and wastewater*
- **Status:** significantly off track, especially for sanitation



Madagascar



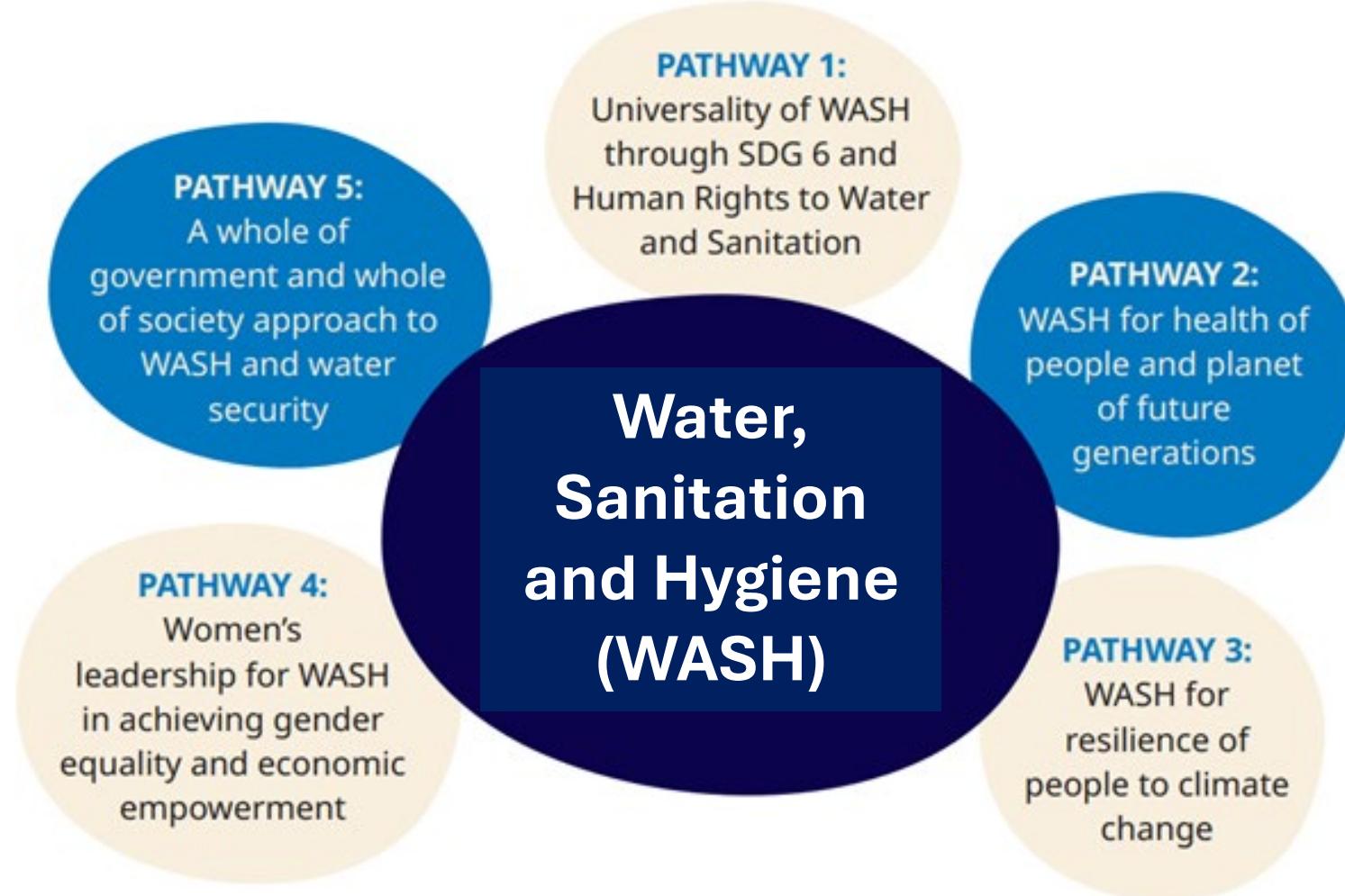
Tsalova with her grandchildren in Ankilimiary, Madagascar, July 2025

[WaterAid Canada](#)

[Instagram](#)

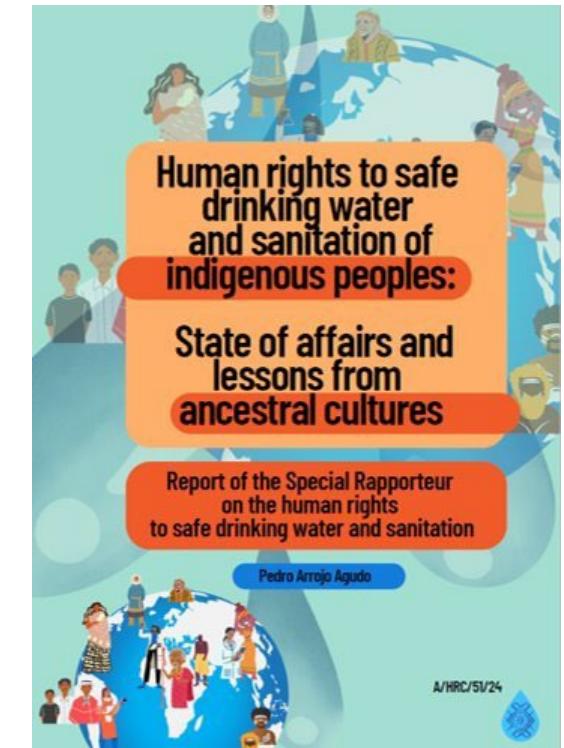
WaterAid Canada (WAC) Centrality of WASH Pathways

The Case for Action – the Centrality of WASH



Pathway 1 – Universality of WASH through SDG 6 and Human Rights

- WASH is a “no regrets” intervention for people everywhere
- 696 million people in the world (almost 1 in 10) lack even a basic water service, this jumps to 2.1 billion when measured as “safely managed water”
- 1.5 billion people in the world (almost 1 in 5) lack even basic sanitation including a decent toilet
- Human rights to water and sanitation and targets of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 are universal and apply for *everyone, everywhere* including WASH inequalities in Canada as part of Truth and Reconciliation
- “Leave no one behind” means addressing stark inequalities in access to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services



WATER
ACTION DECADE
2018-2028

Pathway 2 – Health of People and Planet

- Almost 1 in 10 healthcare facilities globally have poor toilets or none at all...and don't have a working **place to wash hands** – 16.6 million women in Least Developed Countries give birth in healthcare facilities with inadequate WASH.
- On average it **costs \$0. 82 (CAD) per person per year** in the world's Least Developed Countries to **provide universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene in healthcare facilities.** (WHO/UNICEF)
- Water is central to sustainable food systems, including nature -based solutions for agriculture** to improve water quality in field runoff and helping to manage availability of good quality and quantity of water for WASH services
- Inadequate access to water reduces food security** for households through
 - time spent gathering water
 - money spent on buying water and less on food
 - needs for washing, boiling and steaming food safely
 - emergency food supplies requiring safe water to be added

Linkages between WASH, climate change, food security and ecosystems / nature-based solutions



Pathway 3 – WASH for Resilience of People to Climate Change

- The climate crisis is a water crisis.
- Impacts of droughts, floods, heat and contamination are **experienced first through water, sanitation and hygiene**
- Where WASH fails, climate change impacts escalate into health emergencies, displacement, economic loss and insecurity – **where WASH is resilient, communities adapt**
- A staggering **90% of all natural disasters are water-related** and massively impact people's daily lives
- Nearly half of the world's population faces severe water scarcity part of the year, intensified by climate change and **increasing pressure of drinking water systems**
- 1 in 3 children worldwide already live in areas exposed to extreme water scarcity.**



Pathway 4 – Women’s Leadership, Gender Equality & Economic Empowerment

- 1.2 million women from 114 countries listed clean water, sanitation and hygiene among their top priorities for maternal healthcare according to a survey by partners at the [White Ribbon Alliance](#)
- Women and girls spend 250 million hours every day collecting water ([World Vision](#))
- Worldwide, women and adolescent girls are primarily responsible for water collection in 7 of 10 households using water sources outside of the home. (WHO/UNICEF [Joint Monitoring Program](#))
- Women’s voices are not being heard – women are formally involved in planning and managing rural drinking water supplies in less than one third of countries worldwide. (WHO/UNICEF [Joint Monitoring Program](#))



More on Pathway 4 for Gender Equality

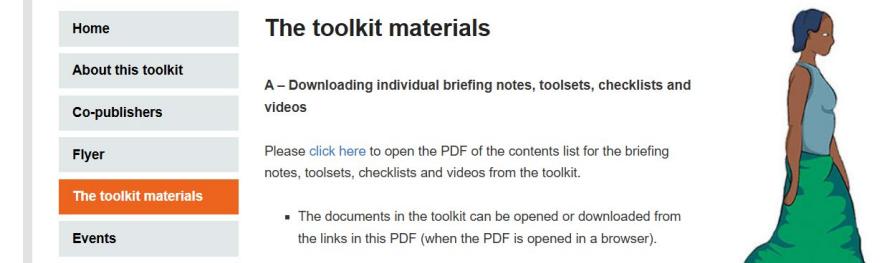
- WaterAid's equality, inclusion and rights framework, and our quality program standards, are based on a fundamental principle of **DO NO HARM**
- Women, girls and boys walking long distances to find and collect water for households or schools puts them at **risk of harassment and sexual assault**.
- WASH seeks to improve gender equality and empower women** to take on what may be considered non-traditional gender roles – leader of a WASH committee or a pump mechanic. **Shifting power dynamics can increase risk of backlash** in communities and at home, potentially exacerbating risk of domestic violence.
- Menstruation and defecation are still taboos** yet lack of privacy in absence of safe WASH services can lead women and girls to wait until after dark to use a toilet or visit bathing areas.



**VIOLENCE
GENDER
& WASH**

A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services



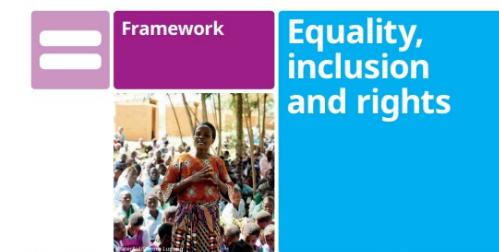
The toolkit materials

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Events

A – Downloading individual briefing notes, toolsets, checklists and videos

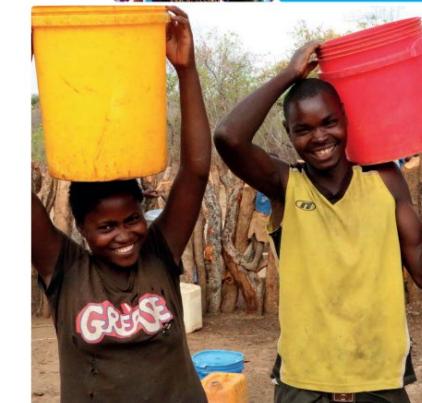
Please [click here](#) to open the PDF of the contents list for the briefing notes, toolsets, checklists and videos from the toolkit.

The documents in the toolkit can be opened or downloaded from the links in this PDF (when the PDF is opened in a browser).



Framework

Equality, inclusion and rights



Pathway 5 – Whole of Government and Society for WASH and Water Security

- **Canada Water Agency (CWA):** mandate to improve freshwater management in Canada through leadership, effective collaboration, improved coordination federally, with provinces, territories, and Indigenous peoples.
- **National Water Security Strategy or Modernizing the Canada Water Act:** yet to be determined what these priorities look like for the Canada Water Agency and Government of Canada
- **Bill C-61 The Act Respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nations lands:** did not pass before parliament prorogued in 2025, current calls to reintroduce...what next?
- **Local to Global:** What Canada does at home, reflects on its leadership globally for water – including **hosting the G7 Water Coalition meetings in 2025** and commitment to a related high-level technical workshop in 2026.



[Home](#) > [News and media](#) > [News](#)

STATEMENTS G7 Water Coalition Workplan

October 31, 2025

From: [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)

Under Italy's 2024 G7 Presidency, we agreed to the establishment of the G7 Water Coalition, which aims to identify common goals and strategies, to catalyze shared ambitions and priorities to tackle the global water crisis, and to mainstream water and its cross-sectoral relevance in an impactful way.

Edmonton

Despite provincial opposition, federal minister planning to table First Nations water bill

Alberta, Ontario call for Bill C-61 to be scrapped altogether

Alessia Passafiume - The Canadian Press - Posted: Jul 04, 2025 1:23 PM EDT | Last Updated: July 4, 2025

Listen to this article Estimated 2 minutes



Canadian WASH Advocacy

Signatories:



- No formal WASH network or coalition
- We **come together** at key moments for WASH and water security, including the UN 2026 Water Conference coming up in December
- WaterAid belongs to Canadian and global climate, food security and health coalitions to **integrate WASH**
- These are the signatories to the G7 Water Coalition **joint statement** last year – available in English and French
[Water Cannot Wait: Civil Society Urges Canada to Lead on Global Water Security at G7 | WaterAid Canada](#)

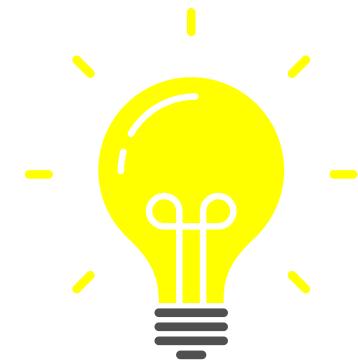
2026: An Important Year for WASH Advocacy

- ✓ **March 22nd World Water Day** – Global theme of gender equality
- ✓ **July – SDG 6** to be assessed in Agenda 2030
- ✓ **November 19th World Toilet Day** – Theme yet to come
- ✓ December 2nd **UN 2026 Water Conference** – Global trajectory towards this event, including for Canada!

Call for Prime Minister Carney to bring Canada's leadership for water to the UN Conference!



What GRANs can do for WASH in 2026!



Women's Health Global Campaign

- March 22nd World Water Day – global theme of gender & WASH
- Campaign launches with The Global Week of Action (March 16 – 23)

Planned activities in at least **8 countries** where **WaterAid operates**
Malawi, Ghana, Liberia, Nepal, Uganda, UK, Sweden, Japan

Strategic partners participating to amplify this moment

Launch of the Women's Voices report & global media coverage

Launch of a global hand raiser action social media, petition, waterdrop postcards

Women champions supported to take part & their voices heard

Support from global influencers, films, & select corporate partners



Our Campaign Mission

To make healthcare safer for every woman and girl, by calling on governments to provide clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to health centres everywhere.

We'll start with championing clean, safe births for every woman and girl as our way to get there.

Our Vision

By 2028, a powerful movement led by women and allies will have made the lack of WASH in healthcare facilities impossible to ignore

leading to tangible policy changes & funding that transform lives



A portrait of Elizabeth in Kazungula District, Zambia, 2022.

“If I met our president, I would tell him about the trouble we have of lack of water at a healthcare facility. I will tell him of how much women are suffering, how they walk a distance to access water and how they sleep on the cold floor.”

- Elizabeth

Campaign name: Time to Deliver!

- WaterAid have been working with Ravel, a creative agency, on the campaign name and creative concept. There has been extensive consultation on this with WaterAid country offices, members and other stakeholders.
- 'Time to Deliver' has been tested in the UK, Ghana and Malawi and has tested very well with target audiences** including women across all age groups, men and healthcare workers.
- While we are agreed on the name, **the visuals are not yet final** (e.g. the branding and symbol) and will be worked up and agreed in January.



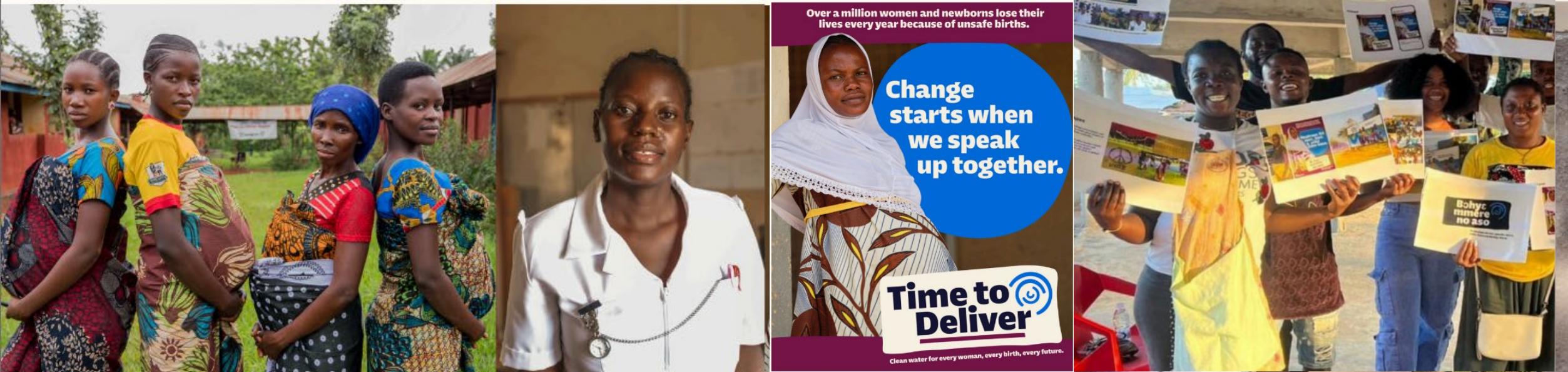
Our Big Ask

- Every health care facility should have clean, safe water.
- Yet every two seconds a woman gives birth in a facility without adequate water and sanitation.
- It's time to deliver.
- In 9 months time, world leaders will meet at the UN Water Conference. *We want every political leader to bring a plan that will ensure every healthcare centre has access to water by 2030.*



Campaign Timelines

- Launch the **Time to Deliver campaign** in March 2026, to coincide with UN World Water Day! (WWD's theme is gender & equality)
- We will launch by hosting a **Global Week of Action** (16-23 March) to visibly show demand from women & allies, with participation by WaterAid country programmes, and hopefully allies and partner organisations
- This will start a '**Big Push**' by WaterAid and allies towards the UN Water Conference in December 2026



Partnership opportunities

- **Global Week of Action March 16-23** – WaterAid may be hosting but we need partners like you around the table for action!
 - Join in with campaign activities across 8 countries...so far
 - Amplify the Time To Deliver messaging and report and GRANs advocacy messages
 - Explore and co-create opportunities with us during this week, for World Water Day March 22nd and throughout 2026!
- **Co-create other opportunities**
 - Such as events, roundtables, campaign activities through GRANs network
 - Campaign communications e.g. shared blogs, op-eds, social media, postcards, petition
 - Lobbying - meet your MPs, urge Prime Minister Carney to bring Canada's leadership to the issue of WASH in health facilities and the UN 2026 Water Conference!

Resources

UN-Water Water Security infographic <https://www.unwater.org/publications/what-water-security-infographic>

UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation | OHCHR <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-water-and-sanitation>

Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation of Indigenous Peoples
<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/water/2022-11-04/A-HRC-51-24-Friendly-version-EN.pdf>

WaterAid Canada and WASH Sector position paper (2018) relating to the Feminist International Assistance Policy, WASH: A Pathway to Realizing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls [WASH_A Pathway to Gender Equality and Empowerment_EN.pdf](https://www.washcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/WASH_A_Pathway_to_Gender_Equality_and_Empowerment_EN.pdf)

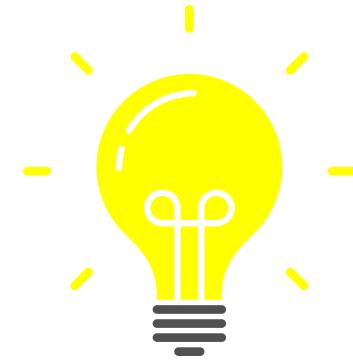
Violent, gender and WASH Toolkit [Violence, Gender & Wash](https://www.washcanada.ca/2018/08/28/violence-gender-wash/) and 4pg info sheet [Flyer-Violence-Gender-WASH-Toolkit1.pdf](https://www.washcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Flyer-Violence-Gender-WASH-Toolkit1.pdf)

WaterAid sustainability [Sustainability | WaterAid Canada](https://www.washcanada.ca/2018/08/28/violence-gender-wash/) including a 2min video

SDG 6 [Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation - The Global Goals](https://www.washcanada.ca/2018/08/28/violence-gender-wash/)

World Water Day 2026 Activation Kit [WWD2026_ActivationKit_English.pdf](https://www.washcanada.ca/2018/08/28/violence-gender-wash/)

Discussion



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