



GLOBAL WATERS



Photo Essay: World Water Day 2019: Leaving No One Behind

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Clean water and safe sanitation are key stepping stones on the journey to self-reliance. Throughout the year and around the globe, USAID partners with households, civic leaders, businesses, and governments to improve water and sanitation access for entire communities — laying the foundation for a healthier and more water-secure future. On March 22, travel around the world in celebration of World Water Day in this photo essay and see how USAID harnesses the transformative power of clean water to change lives, revitalize neighborhoods, and make sure no one is left behind. See for yourself how [#USAIDTransforms](#), one community at a time.



Photo credit: Zarela Estabridis

Peru – Empowering women to serve as water champions for their communities.

Did you know Peru is the first country in Latin America to officially incorporate gender into its climate action planning? Released in 2016, the country’s Gender and Climate Change Action Plan assigns responsibilities for mainstreaming gender equality into many sectors, especially water resources management. USAID/Peru’s [Natural Infrastructure for Water Security \(NIWS\) project](#) is helping elevate women’s leadership roles in the sector through professional forums and networking events. At one such meeting in November 2018, co-organized by NIWS and Peru’s National Water Authority, Norma Cáceres (pictured) shared her experience as one of 200 members of an all-woman agricultural users association in northern Peru’s Chancay-Lambayeque watershed. A planned gathering scheduled for June 2019 — the Gender Equality and Water Security Summit — will take place in Lima, convening water sector leaders from Peru and around the world for a public conversation on the need and opportunity to invest in gender equality. There, NIWS will launch a new leadership program to connect champions like Norma and create new opportunities for women in the water sector and in their local communities.



Photo credit: Bobby Neptune for Winrock International

MARA RIVER BASIN—Sharing waters, sharing goals.

“I grew up wanting to be a water engineer and solve the flooding,” recalls Gordon Mumbo. After many years working abroad as a water resources expert, Mr. Mumbo has come back home to Kenya’s Kisumu County to help residents achieve a more water-secure future. Not only for his countrymen in Kisumu County and elsewhere in Kenya, but for those living across the border in Tanzania as well, who also call the Mara River basin home. Straddling the Kenya and Tanzania border, the Mara River basin is home to 1.1 million people on both sides of the border. Reflecting on his childhood, Mumbo remembers the hardships that flooding inflicted on his village, so today he works with the USAID-supported [Sustainable Water Partnership](#).

The strategic partnership promotes deliberate cooperation between the two countries to safeguard the economically and ecologically important transboundary waters of the Mara River. Mr. Mumbo believes joint stewardship of the Mara’s waters can serve as a powerful driver of cross-border collaboration. “When you come to the Mara, it’s so critical, and the two countries can clearly see that they need to sustain this river,” Mumbo says. “So Kenya and Tanzania coming together to set out the framework on how to manage the basin, it’s really a good move....I think the work we are going to SYRIA—Providing clean drinking water to restore a degree of normalcy in displacement camps and war-torn communities.



Photo credit: USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

SYRIA—Providing clean drinking water to restore a degree of normalcy in displacement camps and war-torn communities.

Since the outbreak of civil war in Syria in 2011, displacement camps have been established to meet the humanitarian needs of internally displaced residents, which currently number 6.2 million people. Many of these displaced people arrive with waterborne illness because of a lack of safe drinking water on their journey. Crowded conditions in these camps pose dangers of their own and challenge authorities' ability to provide safe water and sanitation. To ensure no one is left behind, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and its partners provide water supply services to large camps, such as this one in northern Syria. Before the water is delivered, chlorine is added to sterilize the water tanks of every truck to ensure safe, high-quality drinking water for people in the camp.

Outside the camps, war has ravaged the country's water infrastructure, which has often been deliberately targeted in the fighting. Consequently, Syrians returning home to communities they once fled also face new threats in the form of waterborne disease, due to unsafe drinking water. To tackle that challenge, USAID and partners have rehabilitated wells and pumping stations, [restoring access to clean drinking water for more than 300,000 people in northeastern Syria](#). "You can't just turn the water on," says Gretchen Murphy, USAID's stabilization advisor for activities in Syria's northeast region. "You have to keep it running."



Photo credit: Tsilavo Rapiera/WADA

MADAGASCAR—Improved water distribution shortens walks and simplifies life.

In Antananarivo, Madagascar's capital, many residents do not have the means to afford water connections for their homes. To address this unmet need, the [Water and Development Alliance \(WADA\)](#) — a water security partnership between Coca-Cola and USAID — has teamed up with local partners to build water kiosks, such as the one shown above, that provide reliable and affordable water to low-income residents who can't afford household connections. WADA Madagascar is building upon a successful partnership between the Replenish Africa Initiative and Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor by expanding the construction of water kiosks, mitigating non-revenue water loss, and increasing the operational capacity of JIRAMA, Madagascar's national water and sanitation provider.



Photo: USAID KIWASH

KENYA — Strengthening water utilities from the ground up.

Pipes, wells, treatment facilities, and related infrastructure are all key pieces of any well-functioning water supply system. But good governance and sustainable financing are just as important to maintain high-quality water services. With the [Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene \(KIWASH\)](#) project, USAID supports local utilities to adopt best practices for efficient and effective water management, while also helping them build their credit worthiness to take advantage of commercial financing opportunities. In this photo, Christine Kanini, who checks water meters for the Wote Water and Sewerage Company, speaks with a water customer in Wote, the capital of Makueni County in south-central Kenya.



Photo credit: Victor Lugala, USAID/South Sudan

SOUTH SUDAN — Harnessing the power of the sun to improve local water access.

More than 4,000 residents of the Joppa neighborhood in Gudele West outside the capital of Juba are today [enjoying improved quality of life](#), thanks to a new community water system that has reduced the time and money needed to obtain safe water. “We used to buy water from tankers — which some families could not afford regularly,” remembers resident Lona Kani. But ever since USAID’s Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Response and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence project opened a solar-powered water distribution system in the neighborhood in December 2018, local water access has significantly improved the residents’ lives. “We are very grateful for the American people who brought us water distribution taps closer to our homes,” says Kani.

To ensure the sustainability of this new water distribution infrastructure, local residents have been trained on management and maintenance of the system. The project also included training on sanitation and hygiene to keep the water source clean — an essential factor in South Sudan, where only 10 percent of the population has access to safe sanitation, one of the world’s lowest rates. But the work is not done: Beyond Joppa, USAID plans to extend access to clean drinking water to half a million South Sudanese by 2021 through the construction or rehabilitation of additional water points and water distribution systems.

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