



Water is the way

Reference guide for media
and speaking engagements

Updated February 2019

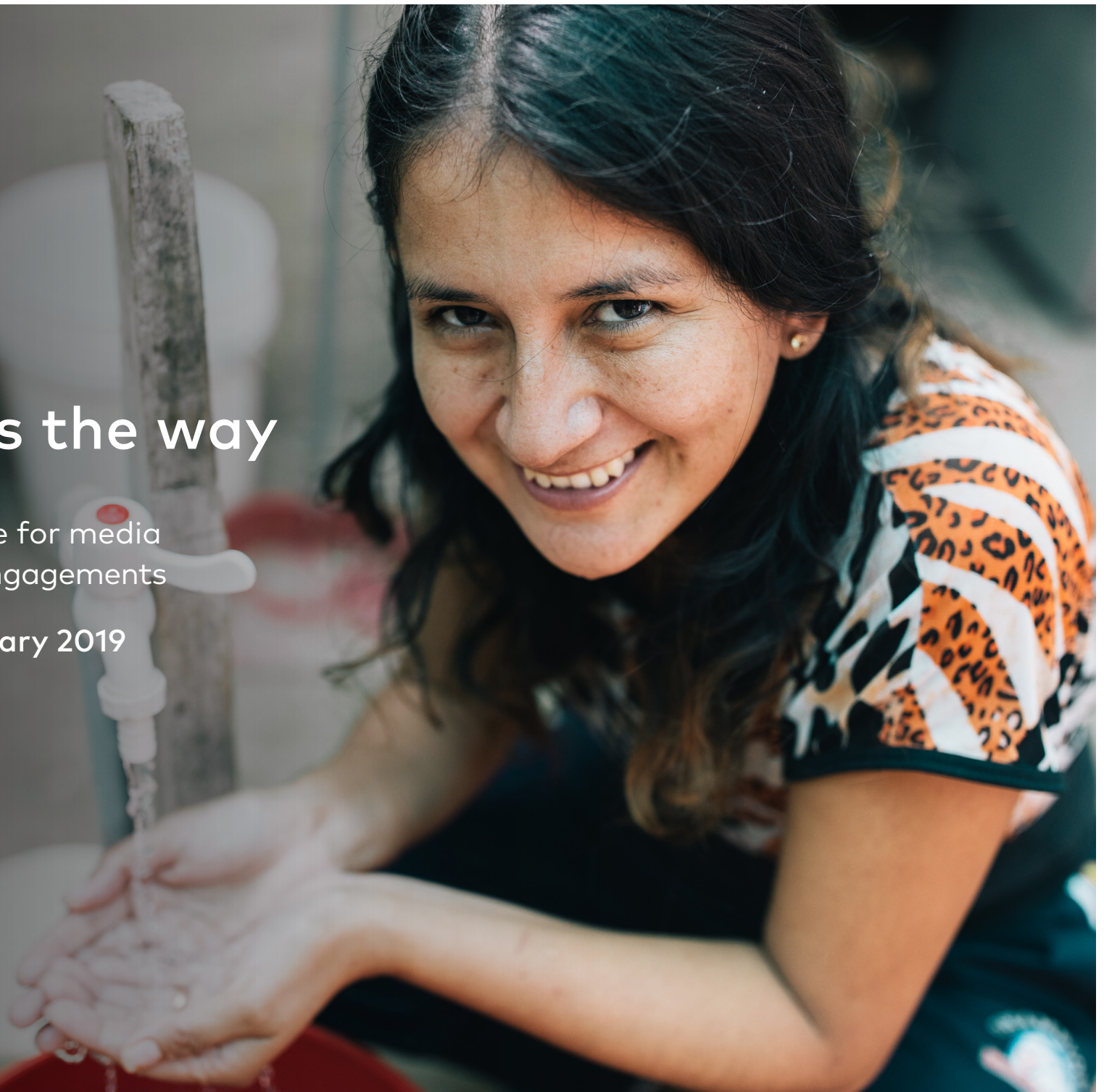


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Why water and sanitation?

To break the cycle of poverty.

To protect and save lives.

To make a bright future possible for all.

Access to safe water can protect and save lives, just because it is there. Access to safe water has the power to turn time spent into time saved, when it is close and not hours away. Access to safe water can turn problems into potential: unlocking education, economic prosperity, and improved health.

Every human being deserves to define their own future, and water makes that possible. We've transformed more than 17 million lives with access to safe water and sanitation.

Let's work together to make the power of water available to all.

The global water crisis

Water is a fundamental human need, yet 844 million people lack access to safe water. 2.3 billion people lack access to a toilet.

1 in 9

people don't have access to safe water

200 M

women and children spend 200 million hours each day collecting water

1 in 3

people don't have access to a toilet

2 min

Every 2 minutes a child dies from a water-related disease





About Water.org

Smart solutions

Powered by the people who need them

Creating progress that lasts

We are breaking down the barriers between people and access to safe water and sanitation. We are an international nonprofit organization that has positively transformed more than 17 million lives around the world.

Founded by Gary White and Matt Damon, Water.org pioneers market-driven financial solutions to the global water crisis. For more than 25 years, we've been providing women hope, children health and families a future.

We think in terms of smart economic solutions.

One of the major barriers to safe water and sanitation is access to affordable financing. We address this barrier head-on by empowering people with small loans to finance long-term solutions for their water and sanitation needs.

We believe in the power and autonomy of the people we empower.

They are people with financial power, rights, and the capabilities to define their own futures. They know the specific needs of their own homes and communities and what will work; we have resources that can help make it happen.

We drive sustainable, long-term impact.

Our solution provides families with a sustainable water or sanitation solution for their home, rather than a temporary fix. It helps the people we empower solve their immediate need, and continues to enrich their lives long after the loan has been repaid.



Smart solutions in action

Small loans, big impact: WaterCredit

Using microfinancing in new ways to bring small, easily repayable loans to those who need access to affordable financing and expert resources to make household water and toilet solutions a reality.

Bringing leaders into the conversation: Global Engagement

We share lessons learned and best practices among local partners, government stakeholders, and international development organizations. We engage, learn and drive conversations that help strengthen the environment for strong water, sanitation and finance solutions.



WaterCredit

A proven, powerful solution

Water.org created WaterCredit to empower people with small, affordable loans to get access to safe water and sanitation at home. When given an opportunity to pay for water and sanitation improvements with loans, families opt to finance long-term solutions versus struggle day-to-day to find that next liter of water.

16M+

people have benefited
across twelve countries

3.7M

loans disbursed through
WaterCredit

99%

of WaterCredit cumulative
loans are paid back

47X

Every \$1 put into
WaterCredit = \$47 of impact

Here's how WaterCredit works:



We identify a region that is ready for a microfinance solution and then we partner with carefully selected institutions that provide affordable financing for water and sanitation to families in need.



These partners establish water and sanitation loans in their portfolio of offerings. We support them by providing technical assistance, connections and resources to get them started.

*Every repaid loan
can empower
another family
with safe water.*

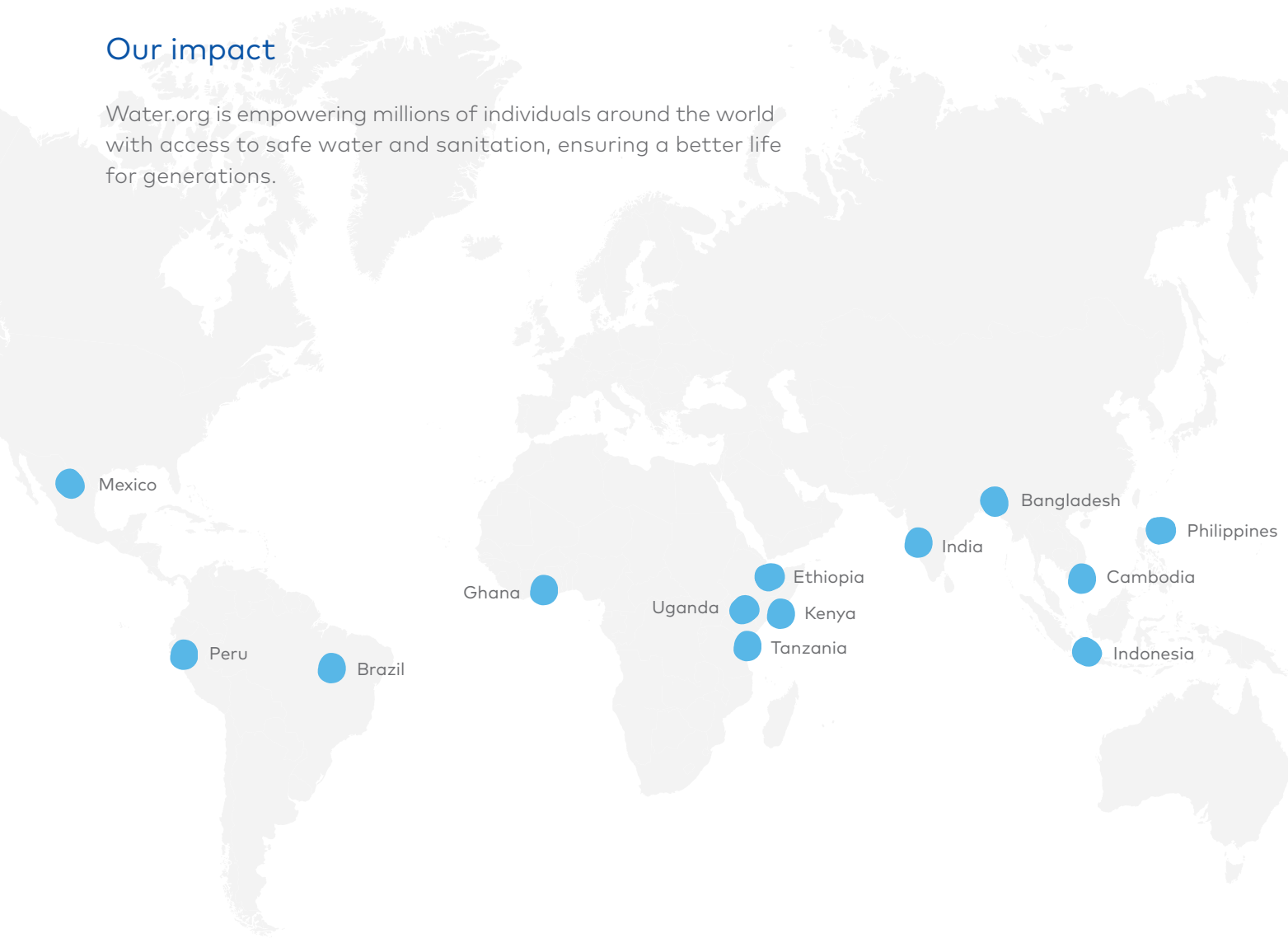


People in need use these small, affordable loans to put a tap or toilet in their homes and access local resources to do the work.

Water changes lives

Our impact

Water.org is empowering millions of individuals around the world with access to safe water and sanitation, ensuring a better life for generations.



17M+

people reached with
water and sanitation

\$1.25 B

value of loans disbursed

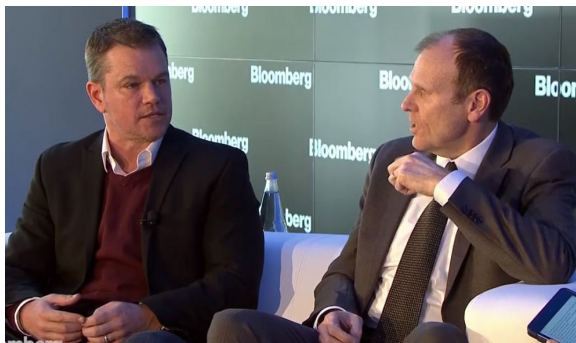
13

active countries

92

active partners

Media coverage



Bloomberg

Ending the World's Water Crisis

Matt Damon and Gary White speak to Bloomberg's Francine Lacqua at The Year Ahead luncheon in Davos, Switzerland, about utilizing both direct philanthropic efforts and micro-finance investments to provide access to water and sanitation.



CNBC

Water.org has helped 16 million people so far

"Our model is undeniable now." -Co-founder Matt Damon. Through access to affordable financing, we're changing more lives faster with safe water and sanitation.



Nobel Week Dialogue

Water Matters

"What we've done is allow more than 16 million people to become their own activists and get access to water and sanitation through small loans." Co-founder and CEO Gary White at this year's Nobel Week Dialogue discussion - Water Matters.

Media coverage



Stanford Social Innovation Review

[Taps and Toilets for All — by Gary White and Matt Damon](#)

"Microfinance was enabling poor people to generate income by creating their own micro-businesses. Could we add micro-finance to the tools we had available to provide the poor with access to safe water and sanitation? The answer was yes."



Daily Show

[Transforming Lives with Water.org and WaterEquity](#)

"We can never work our way out of this problem with straight charity. There's never going to be enough charity in the world to reach hundreds of millions of people," said Gary White. "So we took a more direct approach and said let's do it this way and use the markets and the leverage we can get to help people get water."



World Economic Forum

[An Insight, An Idea with Matt Damon and Gary White](#)

"This problem contains it's own solution. What if instead of accepting the conventional wisdom that we have to raise all charity in order to solve this global crisis, what if we could look more at providing capital, and getting affordable capital into the hands of the poor so that they can get the water and sanitation solutions that they need. And that's what we've done with WaterCredit," said White.

Media coverage



Forbes 400 Summit

[How Matt Damon Plans To Get 500 Million People Access To Water - And Make A Buck For Investors](#)

Speaking at the 2017 Forbes 400 Summit on Philanthropy in Manhattan, Damon pitched access to clean water and sanitation as the lynchpin to achieving all of United Nations' sustainable development goals. "If we solve this problem, think of what it means across the board — for economic development, education, gender equality, global health," Damon said of his effort to tackle the water crisis. "This is the big bang."



NPR

[Matt Damon And Gary White On The World's Water Crisis](#)

"We know that 2.5 million people have been lifted out of poverty in the last two-and-a-half decades. And I think we do need to look more rigorously about how we deliver subsidies and philanthropic capital...the key is this isn't just all about charity anymore. This is about impacting investing," said White.

Resources

Photos

Water.org photos are available on Flickr. All photos are offered under a creative commons license and are free to use with proper attribution — "photo credit to Water.org."

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/waterdotorg>

Videos

Water.org videos are available on our YouTube channel for viewing, sharing and embedding. Please provide proper attribution when sharing — "video credit to Water.org."

<http://www.youtube.com/user/water>

Share graphics

Water.org uses share graphics to communicate with our social audiences. These can be made available for your use upon request.

Logo files

Download the Water.org logo files and usage guidelines here:

[Logo files and guidelines](#)





Resources

Stories from the field

We find the most compelling way to share our impact is through the stories of those we empower. Water.org has many stories from the field that show the impact that access to safe water and sanitation has in changing lives and creating bright futures.

Here are five stories available for immediate use:

[Aisyah \(Indonesia\)](#)

[Edita \(Peru\)](#)

[Elma \(Philippines\)](#)

[Nanda \(India\)](#)

[Sabina \(Kenya\)](#)



"You cannot solve poverty without solving water and sanitation."

Matt Damon, Co-founder Water.org

Resources

Quotes from our Co-founders

Gary White, CEO and Co-founder, Water.org

- "We think about people in need differently. At Water.org, we see the 844 million people who are living and dying for water access as individuals with financial power, rights, responsibilities, and the energy and ability to design their own futures."
- "No civilization, no society, no economy has ever developed without having a reliable source of water. It's the foundation. Yet so many people are living without it."
- "Families themselves are powerful agents of change, with rights and resources to bring to the table. If we are to achieve the ambitious targets of the SDGs, we need to think outside our typical boxes."

Matt Damon, Co-founder, Water.org

- "Access to water is access to education, access to work, access above all to the kind of future we want for our own families and all the members of our human family."
- "You cannot solve poverty without solving water and sanitation."

Available bookings

Gary White

CEO and Co-founder

White began Water Partners International in 1990 to address the global water crisis (which merged with H2O Africa in 2009 to become Water.org). He is a Skoll and Schwab Foundation Social Entrepreneurship Award winner and was named to the 2011 TIME 100 list of the world's most influential people.

Matt Damon

Co-founder

Damon founded H2O Africa, and in 2009 joined Gary White to launch Water.org. He has a strong commitment to solving the global water crisis through empowering those in need and providing access to affordable, sustainable solutions.

Jennifer Schorsch

President

Schorsch has more than 20 years of experience in strategic consulting, consumer marketing, and operational leadership. She is a strong voice and advocate for women and girls around the world focusing on how access to safe water and sanitation affects and improves their lives.

Vedika Bhandarkar

Managing Director, India

Bhandarkar serves as Water.org's senior leader in India, overseeing the organization's strategy, growth and water and sanitation program expansion in the country. She has more than 25 years of experience in international finance and building teams and businesses.

Rich Thorsten

Chief Programs Officer

Thorsten oversees the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Water.org's global programs. His expertise includes nonprofit management, advocacy, and international development, and he is passionate about improving the quality of life of current and future generations through sustainable water and sanitation solutions.

How to reach us

Contact us at media@water.org

Speaking requests:

<https://water.org/about-us/resources/speaker-request/>

Media requests:

<https://water.org/about-us/resources/media-request/>





Join us

Upcoming events

March 2019

- World Water Day (March 22)

April 2019

- Skoll World Forum (April 7-11, Oxford)
- World Bank Spring Meetings (April 12, Washington, DC)

Together, we will see the day when everyone in the world has access to safe water and sanitation. **Join us.**



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