Summer 2014 Action Guide

INTRODUCTION

Oxfam Water Week is a chance for you to:

- learn more about why water problems exist.
- think about what can be done to tackle those problems.



Photo: Eleanor Farmer/Oxfam

BACKGROUND

Think of all the things that we need water for: drinking, washing, cleaning, cooking, growing food and removing waste (sanitation). Water is recognised as a basic human right. However, this right is still denied to many people.

800 million people don't have access to safe, clean water.

That's **13 times** the number of people in the UK.

2.5 billion people live without acceptable sanitation*.

That's almost **40 times** the number of people in the UK.

Without clean water and sanitation, you are water-vulnerable. You don't have enough water to drink, are at risk at disease, may have to travel far to find water, aren't able to grow enough food. Causes of water vulnerability include poor infrastructure, conflict and natural disasters.

*sanitation: getting rid of dirty water/waste, e.g. sewers are needed to remove waste from toilets.

Data source: Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Communities work hard to overcome these problems themselves. However, sometimes they need some support. Oxfam works with water-vulnerable communities to try to overcome water problems. Some solutions are immediate, for example by providing boreholes, water trucks and wells. Others are longer term, helping people in the future, such as strengthening communities, providing hygiene education and talking to politicians.



Photo: Kieran Doherty/Oxfam

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Page 2: Think about possible actions.
- Pages 3 & 4: Plan your action and make it happen.
- Page 4: Review your action.

For support with taking action, contact the Education & Youth team by emailing **education@oxfam.org.uk.** Send in pictures and stories and we'll share the best ones on our website or social media.

For further information about Oxfam Water Week go to:

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/school-projects/water-week



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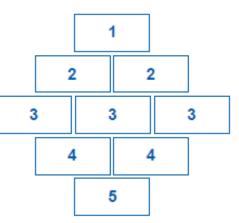
REVIEW

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THINKING ABOUT ACTION

Work in groups of three of four to think of up to nine possible actions you could take during Oxfam Water Week to help support water-vulnerable communities. Use what you have learned about water-vulnerability (see accompanying workshop plan) to help you. A few possible actions are listed below as a starting point. Write each action on a separate sticky note. Now rank your options in order of preference, in a diamond formation. The best action will be on the top, followed by a row of the next two, then a row of three and so on. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers – there will be advantages and disadvantages to every option, and you should rank them as you think best.

Share your ideas as a whole group. Explore the choices you have made and the reasons for them. Discuss the criteria you used to make your decisions, for example: feasibility, effectiveness or cost. Finally, decide what action your Youth Ambassadors group will do. Use a democratic approach to vote for your preferred option.



GET INSPIRED

There are loads of ideas at www.oxfam.org/waterstories



GCE Young Ambassadors Sam Whittingham and Millie Wells used Water Week resources in their citizenship day at Ringwood School to highlight the lack of water and sanitation facilities in the schools they visited in India.

Photo: John McLaverty/Oxfam

Ideas for action

There are lots of possible actions you could take. Here are a few ideas:

- 1. Organise and present a Water Week assembly.
- Write a message and send it to your local MP.
- 3. Hold a fundraiser at your school or college.
- 4. Design and display posters to raise awareness about water vulnerability.
- 5. Organise a stall at your school or community event to raise awareness.
- 6. Share what you have learned with friends and family.
- 7. Hold a debate about the importance of water.
- 8. Make a 'Water can Change Lives' video to share with others. This could include an explanation of how you would deal with water issues if you were in charge.

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PLANNING YOUR ACTION

After you have decided what action you want to take, you then need to plan how you'll go about it. Careful planning is essential for your activity to have maximum impact. Think about the following:

- Tasks: What individual tasks are needed to make this happen?
- Resources: What resources (money, collecting boxes, pens, etc.) are needed for this task?
- Responsibility: Who is responsible for making sure this task is completed?
- Support: What support does this person need and from who?
- Deadline: When will this task be completed by?
- **Evidence of success:** What will prove that the task has been completed? For example, photographs or completed forms.

SUPPORT AND IDEAS

Organise an assembly

- 1. Download the Water Week YA Introductory Slideshow. Read through it and make sure that you understand it clearly. Note that new information will appear on most slides when you click. The blue circle on the bottom left-hand corner indicates that the slide is complete. The notes pages have extra information and questions you might like to ask your audience. Ask for help if there are any points you don't understand.
- 2. Plan the assembly with your group. Think about what you want your audience to know, feel and do. Is there a way the audience can demonstrate their support for the issue and you could record this as evidence? Edit the script and the slides so they fit how you wish to present the assembly. Decide who in the group is going to present each slide and rehearse.
- 3. Plan with your teachers to set a date and time for your assembly. Make sure you have the PowerPoint properly loaded and all the technology is working. If you'd like to present your assembly at a neighbouring school write to the Headteacher asking for permission.
- 4. On the day, arrive in good time to set up and have a final rehearsal, take a photograph of the assembly and, most importantly, relax and enjoy a brilliant presentation!

Hold a fundraising event

All money raised will go towards Oxfam's water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH) projects, supporting water-vulnerable communities around the world, wherever the need is greatest.

There are lots of ideas and support for fundraising (including where to send any money raised) in the Water Week fundraising guide:

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water-week-act-resources

You might like to organise a sponsored water week or add a watery theme to your school sports day, raising money for Oxfam's WASH projects at the same time.

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SUPPORT AND IDEAS Get campaigning

Communicate what you have learned about the importance of a reliable water supply and explain what action you think should be taken to support water-vulnerable communities. You could write your own messages to the UK government and send them to your local MP.

Download the Water Week campaigning guide for more ideas and a watering can template for writing your message:

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water-week-act-resources

The more messages sent to the government, the more powerful a campaign is. See how many people you can get to write one – they could be completed in the classroom, on a stall at lunchtime, or would make a great activity to be completed at the finish line or along the route of a Water Walk.



Want to do something else?

Or you could organise other campaigning activities, such as writing a letter to your MP, putting on a colourful stunt, or holding a school debate.

REVIEWING YOUR ACTION

As you take action remember to collect information to help with your evaluation. This could include:

- Taking photos.
- Gathering quotes from fellow students, teachers or parents.
- Counting the people involved.
- Carrying out a survey.

After you have completed your action, use your evidence and information to evaluate your activities.

- What went well? Why?
- What didn't go so well? Why?
- Did you achieve what you set out to?
- If you did it again, what would you do differently?

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