

Humanitarian Organisation Statement

Natural Waters

The Right to Water, the Essence of Life

Natural Waters is a humanitarian organisation aimed at providing substantial support to the most vulnerable and needy, and promoting the 'Right to Water' at local and international levels.

Introduction:

Natural Waters is a humanitarian organisation with two basic aims.

- To provide substantial water delivery, utilization and disposal support through projects to communities where there is the greatest need.
- To promote through lobbying and awareness campaigns the 'Right to Water' and associated Rights at the local and international.

Natural Waters is specifically directed to help those with the greatest need and where fundamental Rights enjoyed by some are denied. Natural Waters recognizes "*today's luxury is the standard of tomorrow,*" and all, regardless of situation deserve the basic right to water and supported rights of sanitation, and healthy housing conditions.

Natural Waters is an independent organisation relying on voluntary financial and administrative support.

Vision and Mission

Vision:

Natural Waters vision is of a world where the fundamental right to water protects access to wholesome water, good sanitation and adequate housing so that people can live with physical dignity.

Mission:

Dedicated to the provision and delivery of quality wholesome water, utilization and disposal in the most sanitary and cost effective methods available.

The right to water is a fundamental right as water is essential to life. Without good drinking water, sanitation and healthy housing conditions individuals, and communities continue to be trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty and disease.

Natural Waters is committed to supporting the vulnerable with the greatest

need, both on the local and international level. Promoting water and associated Rights through lobbying, and campaigns will raise awareness to the urgent and dire conditions of many.

Natural Waters endeavors to encourage responsible practice, to be honest, transparent, effective, innovative and inclusive in working with volunteers, partner organizations and donors.

Guiding beliefs and values

Natural Waters believes:

- Clean water and sanitation are fundamental human rights, essential to life and human dignity.
- Water, sanitation, and healthy housing conditions reduce illness and death, are crucial for poverty reduction, and allow more time for education and other economic and social development.
- The interests of vulnerable and marginalized groups are of a primary concern to provide them with the strongest protection and support.
- Local people are aware of the greatest need and are respected to make informed choices about the water and sanitation conditions that best suit their needs. Wherever appropriate should be involved in the development, and ongoing management of projects.
- Local organizations are in a better position to understand local needs and implement projects that will ensure long-term, sustainable change.
- National and local governments are ultimately responsibility for water, sanitation and housing requirements and must therefore be involved in decisions concerning their provision.
- Increased accountability and transparency by all organizations involved are essential to ensuring the needs of the most vulnerable and needy are met.
- All projects will aim to achieve long-term sustainable benefits.
- Within the reason of commercial bounds and international social responsibility, partners are asked to act dutifully, share innovation, technologies and learning.
- Natural Waters embraces staff diversity recognizing that the dedication and development of people are central to success.

Values:

"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little." Franklin Delano Roosevelt

"Access to safe water is a fundamental human need and, therefore, a basic human right. Contaminated water jeopardizes both the physical and social health of all people. It is an affront to human dignity."

Kofi Annan, United Nation Secretary-General

"The Human Right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use."

General Comment 15 on the Right to water

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the World Health Organization and numerous international, regional and domestic agreements recognize people have the right to the highest attainable standards of health. Central to good health is safe wholesome water, sanitation and healthy living conditions. In 1948 the UN General Assembly recognized these rights by stating;

'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of family, including food, clothing and housing.'

"The human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses. An adequate amount of safe water is necessary to prevent death from dehydration, reduce the risk of water-related disease and provide for consumption, cooking, personal and domestic hygienic requirements".

(General Comment 15, CESCR, 2002)

"By means of water we give life to everything." Koran 21:30

Water is the essence of life, is essential to sustain life and as a right is implicitly recognized by several international legal documents. It is enshrined in the right to life and dignity, as set forth in the International Bill of Human Rights and has been adopted as a human right by the United Nations in 2002. The adoption commits the 145 countries that have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to gradually ensure fair and non-discriminatory access to safe drinking water.

However, there are millions of people who do not have access to these basic rights.

Shocking statistics include:

- Every year over 4 million children under 5 years old die from water pollution. This is more than any other single cause in the world today.
- Over 1 billion children have no wholesome water near their homes and many share the water they use to drink, cook and wash with animals.
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO) an estimated 1.7 billion people lack access to clean water and over 2 billion suffer water-borne diseases each year.
- WHO estimates (WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2004) more than one out of six people lack access to wholesome, safe drinking water and more than two out of six lack adequate sanitation, namely 2.6 billion people.
- 3900 children, one every 10 seconds, die every day from water borne diseases ([WHO 2004](#)). These figures represent only people with very poor conditions, so in reality the numbers should be much higher.

"There is a water crisis today. But the crisis is not about having too little water to satisfy our needs. It is a crisis of managing water so badly that billions of people - and the environment - suffer badly." World Water Vision Report

While the world's population tripled in the 20th century, the use of renewable water resources has grown six-fold. Within the next fifty years, it is estimated that the world population will increase by another 40% to 50%. The estimated population growth, combined with industrialization and urbanization, will result in an increasing demand for water and will have continued serious consequences on the environment.

Water is becoming an increasingly valuable commodity and efforts from all sectors of society need to recognize, and work towards protecting this commodity. With water resources become scarce the globe is facing an additional agricultural and environmental crisis. As the domestic per capita use of water (10% of water use) increases due to urbanization, lifestyle changes and population growth so does the amount of water use increase. The result in the huge increase of water consumption means that the water for food production (66% of water use), industrial processes (20% of water use) is becoming more scarce, (4% water evaporation loss).

The negative impact on the environment is alarming and it is all the more critical that increased water use by people in agriculture and through industry does not further effect aquatic ecosystems and their dependent species. Water stress imbalance between use and resources creates environmental damage. Water stress causes deterioration of fresh water resources in terms of quantity wholesome water. As the resource is becoming scarce, tensions among

different users intensify, both at the national and international level. Strong institutions and agreements are needed for collaboration to reduce points of conflict heightening regional stability.

Whatever the use of freshwater (agriculture, industry, domestic use), huge saving of water and improving of water management is possible. Almost everywhere, water is wasted, and as long as people are not facing water scarcity, they believe access to water is obvious and natural.