

## PRESS RELEASE

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### WaterAid releases a 'Recipe for success' to help end the global malnutrition crisis

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A new report released today by international development charity WaterAid, together with Action Against Hunger and the SHARE Consortium, reveals how the world can help end malnutrition, by tackling dirty water, poor sanitation and hygiene (WASH) alongside more traditional nutritional interventions.

The '[Recipe for success](#)' report argues that the world's malnutrition crisis cannot be solved with food alone, because [half of all undernutrition](#) cases are linked to infections caused by a lack of access to clean water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene.

It includes a 'recipe' – or toolkit - to help national governments, nutrition and WASH policymakers, practitioners and donors to cross-integrate WASH and nutrition into action plans and programmes.

The report investigated how well countries are doing at integrating WASH and nutrition policies, and found that while Cambodia and Niger are leading the way in using water and sanitation to improve the health and nutrition of their citizens – many other countries across Asia and Africa still have a long way to go.

Globally 155 million children under the age of five are stunted – leaving them with often irreversible cognitive, emotional and physical damage, as a result of undernutrition in their first 1,000 days, from conception to two years old. Estimates suggest that poor sanitation is the [second leading](#) cause of stunting worldwide. Research published in the [Lancet](#) also says that traditional interventions like nutrient supplements can only reduce stunting by a fifth at most, even if 90% of the population in need are reached.

A third of the world's population (2.3 billion) live without access to decent sanitation and 844 million are without access to clean water.

**Megan Wilson-Jones, WaterAid's policy analyst on health and hygiene, and one of the report's authors said:**

"At current rates of progress, and with one in four children still suffering from stunted growth, the world will not meet the sustainable development goal target to end malnutrition by 2030."

"The truth is that food alone will never be enough to tackle the problem, we have to target its underlying causes too. Clean water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene are also vital ingredients for good health."

“We are calling on everyone working to end malnutrition – from Governments to policymakers, practitioners to donors -- to integrate water, sanitation and hygiene into nutritional policies and plans without delay.”

“And we encourage all those who strive, like us, to bring water, sanitation and hygiene to everyone, everywhere to ensure their work is maximising it’s impact on nutrition - so we can reach those people and areas that need our help the most”

**The ‘recipe’ for tackling malnutrition advises governments and donors to:**

- Integrate WASH and nutrition action plans
- Strengthen coordination between ministries, led from the top by Presidents/Prime Ministers
- Increase funding for nutrition-sensitive WASH
- Prioritise babies and mothers
- Target the same geographical areas with WASH and nutrition actions – those with high rates of undernutrition and low access to WASH
- Jointly promote good food and hand hygiene behaviours
- Ensure all health centres and schools have the water, sanitation and hygiene facilities they need to deliver nutrition and health services, and educate frontline health workers, teachers and caregivers in the intersection between health, nutrition, education and WASH
- Use human rights principles like freedom of information, non-discrimination and the prioritisation of the world’s most vulnerable to guide effective action.

The ‘Recipe for success’ report, which was produced jointly by WaterAid, Action Against Hunger and the SHARE Consortium, has been released to coincide with [World Water Week](#). It will be presented at a session called [Waste, Water and Undernutrition](#) on Thursday August 31.

World Water Week is an annual gathering of thousands of the world’s experts on water issues, where they can discuss new ways of tackling water challenges around the globe. Held in Stockholm and organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), this year it runs from 27 August to 1 September.

**ENDS**

For more information or to arrange interviews please contact:

**In London:**

Laura Crowley, senior media officer on [LauraCrowley@wateraid.org](mailto:LauraCrowley@wateraid.org)

Lucy Prioli, media officer on [LucyPrioli@wateraid.org](mailto:LucyPrioli@wateraid.org)

Carolynne Wheeler, media relations lead, on [CarolynneWheeler@wateraid.org](mailto:CarolynneWheeler@wateraid.org)

Or call our after-hours press line on +44 (0)7887 521 552 or email [pressoffice@wateraid.org](mailto:pressoffice@wateraid.org).

**In Stockholm:**

[Petter Gustafsson on petter.gustafsson@wateraid.se](mailto:petter.gustafsson@wateraid.se) or +46-(0)8-677 30 21, +46-(0)72-858 58 51.

**Notes to Editors:**

**WaterAid**

WaterAid's vision is of a world where everyone has access to clean water and sanitation. The international organisation works in 37 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific Region to transform lives by improving access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation in some of the world's poorest communities. Since 1981, WaterAid has reached 25 million people with clean water and, since 2004, 24 million people with sanitation. For more information, visit [www.wateraid.org](http://www.wateraid.org), follow @WaterAidUK on Twitter, or visit us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/wateraid](http://www.facebook.com/wateraid).

- Some 289,000 children die each year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by dirty water and poor sanitation. That's almost 800 children each day, or one child every two minutes.
- An estimated 844 million people (around one in ten) are without clean water
- Nearly 2.3 billion people (around one in three) live without a decent toilet
- For every £1 invested in water and sanitation, an average of £4 is returned in increased productivity.
- Just £15 can help provide one person with access to clean water.
- For details on how individual countries are keeping their promises on water and sanitation, please see our online database, WASHWatch.org.