



PRESS RELEASE

WaterAid Nigeria and the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta call for increased investment in sustainable WASH services and protection of precious water supply to ensure clean water for all

22 March 2019 – As the world commemorates this year’s World Water Day under the umbrella theme set by UN-Water, ‘leaving no one behind’, WaterAid Nigeria and the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) are calling for stronger protections against overuse and misuse of water supply and an acceleration in the provision of sustainable WASH services for all so as to reach everyone and ensure no one is left behind.

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in and should be normal for everyone, everywhere. Regrettably, the progress made since 2000 in delivering clean water to 1.5 billion people globally is now under threat.

In its 2019 State of the World's Water report, [‘Beneath the Surface’](#), WaterAid warns that the human right to water must take priority ahead of other competing demands otherwise we will be leaving unserved populations behind in the race to get clean water to everyone, everywhere by 2030. Unsustainable production of products for export, combined with consumers’ increasing desire for water-intensive products, may leave poor communities struggling to access clean water. While exports of food and goods are important sources of income, production must be made sustainable, and industrial and agricultural use of water should not be prioritised over people’s ability to get water for their basic needs.

Some 844 million people around the world are denied access to clean water simply because of who they are, how much money they have, or where they live. In Nigeria, nearly 60 million people do not have clean water close to home. Lacking access to this basic need means people are deprived of an equal chance to be healthy, educated, improve livelihoods and be financially secure. Women, girls, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups are especially at a higher risk of bearing the brunt of a lack of access to water, sanitation and hygiene and this World Water Day is a reminder that everyone must be carried along and included.

To keep advocating and contribute to delivering fair, inclusive and effective access to water across Nigeria, WaterAid and the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) hosted stakeholders from the government and private sector as well as development partners and civil society organisations to a roundtable on sustainable access to and management of inclusive safe water sources. Lessons learned as well as shared experiences and best practices drawn from water,

sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions across key stakeholders will form concrete recommendations into ongoing consultations around the recently launched National WASH Action Plan – a strategy document and guide that came out of the Federal Government’s formal declaration of a State of Emergency in Nigeria’s WASH sector.

The collaboration between PIND and WaterAid in bringing together these various key stakeholders further re-enforces the need for actors in WASH and related sectors, to work together towards improving access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene services.

Dr ChiChi Aniagolu-Okoye, Country Director, WaterAid Nigeria says:

“This year’s World Water Day theme **‘leaving no one behind’** could not have been more apt in recognising the reality that marginalised groups – women, children, refugees, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and the elderly – are often overlooked, and sometimes face discrimination in their quest to access and manage the clean water they need to live daily.

“Even more sad is that most of the people affected live in hard-to-reach communities – riverine, uphill and interior areas that account for a significant percentage of the country’s total population.

“Poor access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene simply means lost education, lost opportunities and hundreds of lost lives each year. We cannot let this happen as a country. We must act now and ensure that we protect our precious water supplies for the future, and that we reach everyone with these basic needs, leaving no one behind. This World Water Day, we are more determined than ever to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone everywhere, by 2030.”

Dr Dara Akala, Executive Director, Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) says:

“The severity of water, sanitation and hygiene needs in Nigeria’s Niger Delta cuts across communities and institutions in urban, peri-urban and rural settings, with largely dysfunctional and non-existent WASH facilities, and polluted water sources. This contributes very highly to WASH related disease burden with consequent health, economic and education impacts.

“Unequal access to water fuelled by a growing demand on water resources and the impact of climate and population changes, traps people in poverty and limits potential.

“The push for economic development must not imperil current and future generations’ access to water. Unless everyone has access to clean water, there can be no sustainable economic development.”

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

WaterAid Nigeria: Oluseyi Abdulmalik, Communications & Media Manager, on OluseyiAbdulmalik@wateraid.org or +234 803 431 2391

Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND): Chinwe Nnoham-Onyejekwe, Knowledge & Communications Manager on chichi@pindfoundation.org or +234 +234 (0) 817 206 4628

About WaterAid

WaterAid is working to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation. The international not-for-profit organisation works in 34 countries to change the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people. Since 1981, WaterAid has reached 25.8 million people with clean water and 25.1 million people with decent toilets. For more information, visit www.wateraid.org, www.wateraid.org/nigeria; follow @WaterAidNigeria, @WaterAid or @WaterAidPress on Twitter, or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wateraid, www.facebook.com/wateraidnigeria

About PIND

The Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND Foundation) is a Nigerian non-profit organization established in 2010 by Chevron Corporation to build partnerships for peace and equitable economic development in the Niger Delta, with a vision to achieve a legacy of sustainable peace and development among communities in the region. PIND is working in four interrelated program areas which include Economic Development. Its other programs of Capacity Building, Peace Building and Advocacy and Analysis created an enabling environment for its Economic Development interventions, including those for water, sanitation and hygiene, to flourish in the Niger Delta.

Globally

- 844 million people in the world – one in nine – do not have clean water close to home
- 2.3 billion people in the world – almost one in three – do not have a decent toilet of their own.
- Around 289,000 children under five die every year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by poor water and sanitation. That's almost 800 children a day, or one child every two minutes.
- Every £1 invested in water and toilets returns an average of £4 in increased productivity.
- Just £15 can provide one person with clean water.

In Nigeria:

- 67% of the population does not have basic sanitation.
- 26% practice open defecation.
- 33% of the population are without clean water.
- 87% do not have basic hygiene facilities
- Sub-Saharan Africa ranks lowest in the world for access to improved drinking water and sanitation. This is linked to the region's under-five mortality rate which is one of the highest in the world.
- Around 60,000 children under the age of five in Nigeria die from diseases caused by the nation's poor levels of access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

To find out if countries are keeping their promises on water and sanitation, see the online database www.WASHwatch.org