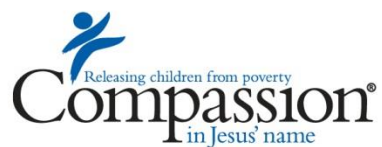




WATER OF LIFE

THE PHILIPPINES



GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT VIEW

Universal access to safe water is a fundamental human right yet in 2015, 663 million people still lacked access to improved drinking water sources.ⁱ Urban populations tend to have access to improved water supply and sanitation when compared to rural populations. However, there are significant disparities for those living in informal urban settlements.ⁱⁱ

Over 760,000 children die every year from diarrhoea caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation. That's over 2,000 children a day, nearly one every minute.ⁱⁱⁱ According to the World Health Organisation, a reduction of 45 percent of diarrhoea morbidity could be obtained by filtering and safe storage of water in the household.^{iv}



This initiative supports Sustainable Development Goal 6, Clean Water and Sanitation, which has a specific target to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030.

BACKGROUND

Compassion's work in the Philippines began in 1972. Currently more than 70,700 children participate in 340 child development centres. Compassion is working in partnership with 6,979 church partners in 26 countries, to provide 1.7 million children with the opportunity to rise above their circumstances and become all God has created them to be, through our holistic child development programmes.

Although children who are registered in Compassion's programmes worldwide have access to safe and reliable water at project sites, many do not have access to safe water when they go home. Children are becoming sick - meaning they can't attend school or the vital health and developmental teaching given during Compassion project lessons. In order to address these difficulties, 125,822 of Compassion's Water of Life in-home water filtration units, which contain a technologically-advanced system that can filter more than 1 million gallons of water, have been distributed to children and families most in need since 2010. The filters have been proven and tested by doctors, the United Nations and other NGOs to remove 99.9 percent of deadly bacterial contaminants in water.

Compassion Philippines has been addressing the pressing concern of limited or no access to safe drinking water in typhoon-ravaged regions since October 2014. To date, 12,163 individuals and 31 projects that were affected by Typhoon Haiyan have received Water of Life units, can now access safe drinking water and incidences of waterborne illnesses have been significantly reduced.

This RESPOND Initiative aims to extend the distribution Water of Life units to a further 62,907 beneficiaries in the Visayan region and provide training on the assembly, features, usage and maintenance of the filters.



THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines consists of more than 7,100 islands, but the majority of the population lives on just 11 of them. The Philippine Islands became a Spanish colony during the 16th Century, before surrendering to the United States in 1898 following the Spanish-American war. In 1935, the Philippines became self-governing with Manuel Quezon elected president and tasked with preparing the country for independence after a 10-year transition. During World War II, the islands fell under Japanese occupation and Filipino forces fought together with the United States to regain control.

On 4 July 1946, the Philippines attained independence and the task of rebuilding a war-ravaged nation began. More than three-quarters of its schools and universities lay in ruins and the cost of rebuilding forced the government to accept high interest loans which subsequently crippled the economy. In 1986, the 20-year rule of Ferdinand Marcos ended after widespread popular rebellion forced him into exile. Today, the country faces increased tension with China over disputed territorial and maritime claims in the South China Sea.

The Philippines is recovering from a history of political corruption, social unrest and a series of natural disasters that have contributed to widespread poverty and unemployment. Since 2001, poverty has worsened due to a high population growth rate and the inequitable distribution of income. The country is saddled with a large national debt, and 19.2 percent of the population or about 18.4 million people, live under the international poverty line of \$1.25 per day.^v The economy is heavily dependent on the billions of dollars sent home each year by overseas Filipino workers, with many parents forced to seek employment outside the country to support their families.

It is estimated that there are 2.1 million child labourers in the Philippines aged 5-17 years old and about 95 percent of them are in hazardous work. The children work in farms and plantations, in dangerous mines, on streets, in factories and in private homes as child domestic workers.^{vi}



Child mortality rates have steadily declined: standing at 61 under five deaths for every 1,000 live births in 1990 and decreasing to 25 under five deaths for every 1,000 live births in 2011. However, child mortality disparities exist across regions and are higher in rural areas.

Malnutrition is another major issue in the Philippines and is attributed to the overreliance on rice, low levels of breastfeeding and recurring natural hazards. The country has some of the worst rates in the world, with around 22 percent of all children under five underweight and 32 percent stunted.^{vii}

The Philippines, traditionally plagued with poor water sources, has been slowly improving its water services in the last decade through several government initiatives. Although water sources are plentiful, ground water in the Philippines is contaminated due to untreated domestic and industrial waste seepage into major waterways. It is estimated that one out of five Filipinos do not get water from formal sources.^{viii}

In October 2013, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit the Philippines and severely impacted Bohol province. Major waterways were damaged and the cost of safe drinking water increased. This was further aggravated when Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) ravaged the Visayas region in November 2013. Water contamination increased and there was a surge of hygiene-related issues.

PLANNED INITIATIVE

LOCATION	Compassion child development centres across the Visayas region in the Philippines
INITIATIVE	Philippines Water of Life
RESPOND NUMBER	PH-020107
BENEFICIARIES	5,617 Compassion-assisted children, 33,702 siblings and 23,588 caregivers
FUNDING	£239,870
START DATE	August 2016

OBJECTIVES

This RESPOND Initiative will provide:

- ④ a safe in-home water filter system that provides a lifetime of safe water for 62,907 beneficiaries
- ④ training and resources needed to clean and maintain the system to ensure lasting use
- ④ knowledge about hygiene and safety through training and education

Compassion's Water of Life units are based on technology developed for kidney dialysis. Each filter is made up of tiny micro tubes with pores hundreds of times smaller than the diameter of a human hair. These pores remove deadly bacteria and allow only safe water to pass through for drinking. After pouring dirty water into the bucket from piped sources or lakes, rivers, ponds or puddles, the water flows through the filter and comes out completely safe to drink.



WHY COMPASSION WATER OF LIFE?

- ④ The unit provides safe water for life. With occasional rinsing, Compassion Water of Life lasts a lifetime - each filter is capable of filtering 1 million gallons of water and a child is expected to need 14,600 gallons in their lifetime.
- ④ The Compassion Water of Life units have been proven and tested by doctors, the United Nations and other NGOs to effectively eliminate 99.9 percent of cholera, typhoid, E. coli, amoebic dysentery, botulism, streptococcus, salmonella, and many other bacterial contaminants in water.
- ④ Compassion Water of Life units are easy to set-up and maintain. A new system can be installed and ready to use in five minutes and with simple maintenance, Compassion Water of Life never needs replacing. When the water stops flowing the filter only needs to be rinsed - a process that takes less than a minute.

LONG-TERM IMPACT

The life-long effectiveness of Compassion Water of Life means that the units have huge health, educational and economic benefits for Compassion-assisted children and their families.

- ④ When children are healthy, they can go to school and receive the skills required to secure stable employment.
- ④ By giving children sustained protection from diarrhoea, they will be less at risk from malnutrition and stunting.
- ④ Safe water will mean a family needs fewer resources to treat illness; over a lifetime this financial saving can be significant.



Priscilla Montecalvo and her family received a Water of Life filter



More than 170 families from PH-967: Victorias Assembly of God Church received Water of Life filters