

The international effort on sanitation and water is in **disarray**. Make your voice heard.



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UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries

In May 2011, politicians gathered to develop an action plan to help the world's least developed countries. End Water Poverty lobbied them all the way...

The Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) was an excellent opportunity to ensure that water and sanitation was highlighted as a key driver of growth and development in the world's poorest countries.

Government representatives from the poorest countries attended alongside colleagues from the richest countries, the UN, civil society and multilaterals to devise the Istanbul Programme for Action - a plan that hopes to ensure the least developed countries will tackle poverty and enjoy growth.

We lobbied the participants of the conference to ensure water and sanitation delivery and prioritization was at the heart of their plans and we took the voices of the 350,000 people who joined the World Walks for Water to further strengthen our calls. Read below for what our members did in the run up to, as well as at, the conference.



Cheick Sidi Diarra led the conference for the UN

How we lobbied the conference




In the lead up to the conference, we've worked to raise awareness of our demands through public campaigning and advocacy.

- Over 350,000 people in over 70 countries joined our campaign, the *World Walks for Water* on World Water Day on March 22, helping us to raise awareness of the global water and sanitation crisis. They made their events political to ensure decision makers heard key messages. [We produced a video](#) for the conference and showed it in Istanbul to participants.
- We've produced a [civil society manifesto](#) (📄 546KB) with recommendations for the conference, and circulated it widely ahead of the conference to influence attendees, and gave it to high-profile attendees such as Nepal and Turkey's Foreign Ministers. Our members used the manifesto to lobby their country's delegation ahead of Istanbul.
- We've attended [preparatory meetings](#) in New York to ensure water and sanitation are being talked about, and also participated in civil society hearings.
- We've released a [press statement](#) at the beginning of the conference.
- We hosted a side event at the Civil Society Forum at the Conference itself, and you can [read the report here](#).
- We held a campaign stunt, [hosting a World Walk for Water event at the conference itself!](#)
- We [met with Mr Cheick Sidi Diarra](#), the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, who was tasked by Ban-Ki Moon to lead the conference and presented our manifesto.

http://www.endwaterpoverty.org/take_action/254.asp

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About this capture

Our successes

There were many successes of the lobbying of the UN conference.

- [We helped to ensure that the Istanbul Programme of Action was strong and ambitious in its water and sanitation targets.](#) The text reads:

'Significant portions of the populations in the least developed countries lack access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, which are fundamental to health, poverty eradication, environment protection, growth and development. Increasing access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation through prioritizing integrated water and sanitation strategies is of significant importance in this regard.

Policy measures on water and sanitation will be pursued in line with the following goals and targets: Halve by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation and strive to **provide sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation to all by 2020**' (emphasis added)

- We also fostered stronger relationships with national decision-makers, politicians, senior UN staff and wider civil society and ensured the message of water and sanitation for all was heard at many levels. This is a sustainable success and something we can build on as an international campaign.

What's next?

We need to, as civil society, now hold governments to account as they move forward to implement the Programme of Action. This document can be a useful reference point for us in our advocacy, and add to our lobbying around the [Sanitation and Water for All](#) partnership.