

# LESSON 3

## Water and Sanitation for All: Bringing the Issue Home

A Middle School Unit (Grades 6–8)

# YOU CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!

TOTAL TIME: 55 MINUTES

## Objectives

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Students will:

- Become familiar with ways they can take action to address the global water and sanitation crisis.
- Brainstorm and strategize the best way youth can take action in their communities.

## Materials Needed/Setup

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- Computer with Internet access set to the New York City water walk video *New Yorkers Walk a Mile on World Water Day*. To access the video visit the UNICEF YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/unicef#p/search/0/YgG-c2vvOnc>.
- Handout #5, “Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009”
- Handout #6, “Taking Action: A Planning Guide”

## Directions

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1. **(15 minutes)** Place students in groups and have them discuss what they read and the key action points they identified. The following questions might help facilitate group conversation:
  - What were the main activities that the students were engaged in? (Hygiene clubs, dramatic presentations, talking with their families, walkathons, cleaning up the school grounds, etc.)
  - Which of these seem easy to do and which seem more difficult?
  - What are some similarities and differences?

Explain to the students that they are going to be introduced to two ways they might be able to take action in their community and that they will be given.

Learn more about the U.S. Fund for UNICEF Tap Project, a program designed to raise awareness and funds for UNICEF water and sanitation programs, by visiting [www.taproject.org](http://www.taproject.org).

2. **(10 minutes)** Watch *New Yorkers Walk a Mile on World Water Day*. Then ask:
  - How did these New Yorkers decide to take action?
  - What kind of impact might this type of activity have?
  - What is the goal of World Water Week?
  - Is this activity something you could do in your community? Why or why not?
3. **(20 minutes)** Have the students read Handout #5, “Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009” and then answer the accompanying questions. As a class discuss the students’ responses.
4. **(10 minutes)** As a closing activity brainstorm with the students how they can take action in their community to address local or global water issues.
5. **Homework:** Ask students to choose one of the action ideas the class brainstormed and complete Handout #6, “Taking Action: A Planning Guide.” Students should be prepared to share their plan with their classmates making sure to explain why it is a feasible action opportunity.

**Writing Activity:** If time permits have the students write a letter to their elected officials explaining why they support the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009 or sign an online petition as a class at <http://volunteers.unicefusa.org/activities/advocate/>.

**Visit the U.S. Fund for UNICEF Advocacy Center to learn more about the World Water Act and other pieces of legislation at <http://volunteers.unicefusa.org/activities/advocate/support-the-water-for-the.html>.**

## Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read about the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009 and then answer the questions below.



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Water is life. Yet **one billion people do not have access to safe water**, and 2.6 billion people live without proper sanitation. Diarrheal diseases related to poor water and sanitation constitute the second-highest cause of child death in the world.

**UNICEF is committed to providing safe water and sanitation to the millions of affected children and their families.** Access to clean water does more than just save lives, it can turn lives around. When children no

longer struggle with recurring illness, they can go to school and get an education. Their parents can tend to their fields and earn an income. Girls, especially, often miss out on school because they spend hours every day fetching water from distant sources. And when schools lack appropriate sanitation facilities, girls are more likely to drop out.

It is important that individuals everywhere continue to support programs and initiatives that help to bring safe water and better hygiene to children every day. But governments need to play a stronger role as well.

In order to strengthen the U.S. Government's response, both the House and the Senate are considering the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009, bipartisan legislation to help the United States make clean water a reality for a hundred million people. The legislation (S. 624 and H.R. 2030) would help provide the leadership and resources to ratchet up interventions such as building latrines, promoting hand-washing with soap, constructing water wells, and providing point of use water treatment.

1. What is the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009?
2. If passed, what would this legislation help do?
3. List 3 to 5 reasons a U.S. government elected officials should or should not support this legislation.

# Taking Action: A Planning Guide

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Choose one of the action ideas that were discussed in class or share another idea and then use this template to explain how you might implement this idea in your community.

## I. Action Idea

- What is your action idea?
- What specific issue do you want to address?
- Why do you think this is an important issue?
- Why do you think this is the best way to address this issue?

## II. Logistical Information

- Ideally, how many people do you need to implement this idea?
- Do the people who help you with this idea need to have any specific skills?
- Are there any costs associated with this action idea? Explain.
- How much time do you need to plan and then implement this idea?

## III. Other

- Are there any disadvantages to this idea?