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World Water Day 2009

World Water Day (March 22nd) was initiated by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in year 1992. It was done to create awareness about the critical lack of clean and safe drinking water worldwide, and that this condition is getting worse **[1]**.

There are a few organizations involved in promoting World Water Day including CARE, Ethos Water, International Medical Corps, Mercy Corps, Net Impact, Project Concern International, UNICEF, Water Aid and Starbucks Coffee Company **[2]**. Yes, it is the very same company that sells your favorite Starbucks coffee. One of the efforts of Starbucks Coffee Company is to encourage people to start a Walk for Water, also known as Starbucks V2V, in their communities **[3]**.

Attention will be focused on the importance of freshwater and management of freshwater resources. The theme of World Water Day this year is "Shared Water – Shared Opportunities", which focuses on transboundary water **[4]**. Transboundary water plays an important role in our daily life. The world's transboundary water covers almost half of the Earth's land surface **[8]**.

Today,

- 2.5 billion people are living without a toilet **[5]**.
- More than 2.2 million people in developing countries die from diseases due to the lack of access to safe and clean water.
- A child dies from a water-related disease every 15 seconds.
- 88% of all diseases are caused by unsafe and contaminated water.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, 40 billion hours are used to collect water (equivalent to the working hours of 19 million full time employees) **[6]**.
- 20% of the world's population cannot obtain safe drinking water **[7]**.

All these statements show that our basic requirement – water – is facing a serious crisis. Sadly, we are the main cause of this crisis. Small actions throughout our day may bring a huge negative impact leading to water contamination. For instance: Disposal of soaps or detergents wrongly. Therefore, always think of the importance of water, sanitation and

hygiene practices' whenever you use water. Never waste water and make sure to keep it clean to ensure our future generations are able to have a clean and safe water supply!

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