



Bindu, 34

INDIA

Bindu lives in the highlands of Andhra Pradesh, in southeast India. Her village is on a mountain; some surface water collects nearby, but it is stagnant and full of bacteria. Bindu usually walks to the valley to get drinking water from a good well, which she carefully carries on her head back up the mountainside. Each trip takes her two hours.

Each day, Bindu must choose between having enough clean water to keep her family healthy and spending time with her children and husband. She would like to start a small vegetable business, but just doesn't have the time.

Globally, the time spent collecting water disempowers women, lowers income, and steals time from other activities like child care, rest or productive work.

Immanuel, 10

UGANDA

Immanuel has to get up in the early hours each morning so he can walk 3 miles to fetch water for his family before his trek to school. He is often late to class—getting water is more urgent.

The water hole is not safe to drink from, but it is all they have. Immanuel's parents and siblings are often sick, and he misses school fighting off water-related diseases like cholera and typhoid. He hopes to be one of the few in his village to finish high school. If he can stay healthy, he might just do it.

443 million school days are lost every year because kids don't have clean water close to their homes. 2006 UNDP HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Anna, 8

EL SALVADOR

Anna and her family live in El Salvador, half a mile from a river that is their sole source of water. Anna's daily chore is fetching water from the river so her family can drink, cook, and clean. It can be dangerous—last spring, when the rains made the river rise, a boy Anna's age was swept away and killed.

When Anna goes to school, she can't concentrate. She doesn't know it, but she has parasites from the contaminated river water; they keep her tired and unfocused, and prevent her body from getting nutrients from the food her mother prepares.

More than 150 million school-age children have severe problems with intestinal parasites that affect their memory, problem-solving skills, and attention spans, or keep them from attending school altogether. 2006 UNDP HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Kanduma, 13

SIERRA LEONE

Several times a day, Kanduma helps her mother fetch water from a seasonal river a mile from their home. They know the water is bad, but have no real alternatives. Two of Kanduma's siblings died before the age of five from drinking the contaminated water.

During the dry season, the river stops flowing. Kanduma and her mother walk 4 miles to a village that has a hand-pumped well, and stand in line for hours to pump water they can carry home. Kanduma goes to school when she can, but has fallen far behind and will have to drop out soon.

Every year, women and girls in Africa spend 40 billion hours fetching water.

2006 UNDP HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT