

Indonesia women face daily swim for clean water

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Mama Hasria swims with hundreds of jerry cans to collect clean drinking water for her village

Indonesian villager Mama Hasria swims upstream with about 200 empty jerry cans tied to her back, a daily trip she and other local women make

to get clean water for their community on Sulawesi island.

As a scorching sun beats down, Hasria makes the four kilometre (2.5 mile), hour-long trip along the murky Mandar river to clean [water wells](#) built along the riverbank.

There, the 46-year-old fills up her cans with clean [water](#) made drinkable by the surrounding soil which acts as a natural filter and purifier.

The work of Hasria and her fellow water collectors, who get paid about 500 rupiah (3.5 US cents) for each can, or \$7 for the whole load, is vital for some 5,800 families in Tinambung district.

Thursday is World Water Day, a UN initiative which this year focuses on "nature-based" solutions for sourcing [potable water](#) globally.

It is a challenge in Tinambung where residents have complained for years about limited access to [clean water](#) in the remote fishing village.

"We have to collect water from upstream for drinking and cooking," Hasria said.

"Water in the village can only be used for bathing and doing laundry."

Other communities struggle with similar challenges in Indonesia, which has myriad environmental problems and the dubious distinction of hosting the filthy Citarum river, which empties into the sea near Jakarta.



The work of water collectors like Rohana is vital for the families in her remote village where residents have long complained about limited access to clean water

A decade ago, the World Bank declared it the most-polluted river in the world.

Faced with a health emergency after decades of failed clean-up efforts, the government is stepping in with the seemingly impossible goal of making the Citarum's water drinkable by 2025.



Hasria earns about \$7 selling the 200 jerry cans of clean water she collects every day

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