charity: water

BRAND ——
BOOK

2015

CONTENTS

OUR BRAND

WELCOME!

Together, we're gonna make some amazing things.

charity: water is a nonprofit organization bringing clean and safe drinking water to people in developing countries. 100% of all public donations directly fund water project costs, and we prove every dollar using photos and GPS coordinates on Google Maps.

We believe a strong sense of brand can set us apart and amplify every message we send. This Brand Book should inspire creativity, while explaining the core attributes that make charity: water unique. If you have questions as you work with our brand, never hesitate to ask: creative@charitywater.org

OUR VISION ——————

REINVENT CHARITY

At charity: water, we're creating a new kind of charity. Through genuine transparency, an unshakable 100% model, and a brand built around hope instead of guilt, we're reinstilling confidence in nonprofits and building a community of generous world-changers.

OUR MISSION ———————

To bring clean and safe drinking water to people in developing countries.

OUR ESSENCE ———————

Water changes everything.

OUR VALUES ——————

Integrity, Respect, Excellence,
Innovation, Generosity, Passion

OUR PERSONALITY ——————

Helpful, Optimistic, Honest,
Adventurous, Generous, Grateful,
Creative, Respectful

Our Brand Tone

Above all, we want our brand to be inspirational. Whether we're talking to our biggest donors or a ten-year-old campaigner, our goal is that every interaction with charity: water feels exciting and filled with possibility.

We also want our brand to feel clear, in both message and design. We believe in transparency, and that applies to more than financials. It means we work hard to make sure language is understandable and visuals feel spacious. We love simplicity.

LOGO

Meet Jerry

For 663 million people on the planet, the Jerry Can is a way of life. Women and children in developing countries often spend several hours every day walking to collect water. Then, they bring it home in these cans, which weigh 40 pounds when full.

For us, the Jerry Can is a reminder of both hardship and hope. That's why we made the bright, iconic yellow symbol our logo: it's a constant reminder of what we're working toward—and how much more work we still have to do. We use this icon often, but we also use it with care. The following guidelines will show you how to use our logo.

Elements & Versions

Our logo is made up of two elements: our Jerry Can icon and our "charity: water" wordmark set in Baskerville regular at 140 tracking.

Our icon and wordmark can be set horizontally or vertically, whichever works best with your design. The wordmark can be black or white, whichever is most clear on your background color or design. The Jerry Can icon can be yellow, black, or white. Download our LOGO.

Watch the Details

1. Don't capitalize our name.

2. Don't remove the space after the colon.

3. Don't remove the colon.

4. Don't change the font.

5. Don't make the Jerry Can too small for our name.

6. Don't squish or skew our logo.

7. Don't place our logo on a cluttered background.

Charity: Water

charity:water

charity water

charity: water

charity: water

charity: water

🟡 charity: water —   SCREEN 145 pixels
PRINT 1.375 inches

MINIMUM
LOGO
WIDTHS

SCREEN 15 pixels
PRINT 0.15 inches

SCREEN 95 pixels
PRINT 0.9 inches

charity: water

Size & Space

We like our logo to be easy to read. Keep the size legible and always give it breathing room. How much space does the logo need, exactly? Half the height of the Jerry Can icon, on every side.

MINIMUM
CLEAR
SPACE

charity: water

charity: water
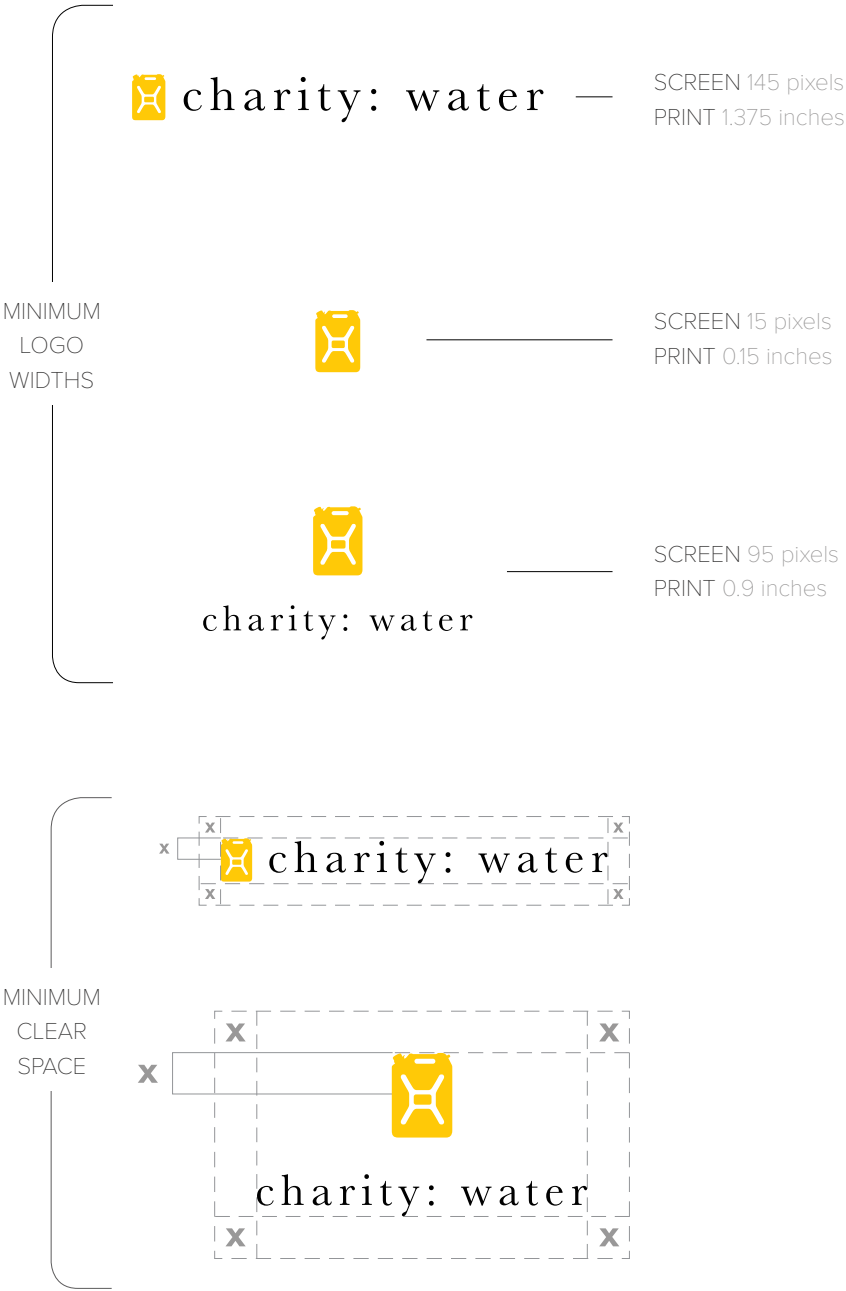
Just Jerry

You can also use the Jerry Can alone.
In fact, we do it all the time.

COLORS

CMYK 0, 22, 100, 0
RGB 255, 201, 7
HEX #FFC907
Pantone 114 U

Our **Favorite**
Colors

Yellow is the color of our
Jerry Can icon. Blue represents
water. We use these colors a lot.

CMYK 69, 29, 0, 0
RGB 46, 157, 237
HEX #2E9DF7
Pantone 2925 U

Secondary Colors

Our secondary brand colors are bright,
just like our optimistic attitude.

CMYK 44, 0, 24, 0
RGB 138, 211, 204
HEX #8BD1CB

CMYK 65, 0, 91, 0
RGB 79, 203, 83
HEX #4FCB53

CMYK 84, 14, 100, 2
RGB 23, 155, 73
HEX #159A48

CMYK 0, 53, 91, 0
RGB 255, 144, 42
HEX #FF902A

CMYK 0, 90, 92, 0
RGB 245, 64, 44
HEX #F5402C

CMYK 0, 78, 57, 0
RGB 254, 95, 94
HEX #F16061

TYPOGRAPHY

19   Brand Fonts

Our Favorite Fonts

Our primary brand font is Proxima Nova. We use it in print and on the web. When Proxima Nova isn't available, we use Avenir. We don't use serif fonts often, but sometimes we use Georgia for body copy, especially on the web.

Use the font that works best with your design, and always be consistent throughout whatever you're working on.

PROXIMA NOVA

Proxima Nova Thin
Proxima Nova Thin Italic
Proxima Nova Light
Proxima Nova Light Italic
Proxima Nova Regular
Proxima Nova Regular Italic
Proxima Nova Semibold
Proxima Nova Semibold Italic
Proxima Nova Bold
Proxima Nova Bold Italic
Proxima Nova Extra Bold
Proxima Nova Black

AVENIR

Avenir Light
Avenir Light Oblique
Avenir Book
Avenir Book Oblique
Avenir Roman
Avenir Oblique
Avenir Medium
Avenir Medium Oblique
Avenir Heavy
Avenir Heavy Oblique
Avenir Black
Avenir Black Oblique

GEORGIA

Georgia Regular
Georgia Italic
Georgia Bold
Georgia Bold Italic

PHOTOS & VIDEO

Our Photo Approach

Focus on hope, not guilt.

Photography is an enormous part of the charity: water brand. You'll see beautiful photos of smiling people in just about everything we do. We like it that way. Our photographic style is built on one simple thing: possibility.

We never guilt people into giving. Instead, we portray the people we help with dignity. And anytime we show photos of harsh reality, we pair it with explanations of what you can do to help. We want everyone who interacts with our brand to feel inspired, hopeful, and motivated to take action. Our imagery is about opportunity.

ILLUSTRATION

Our Illustration Approach

For the most part, we keep our icons and illustrations flat, without gradients or shadows to add a false sense of depth.

Make sure your illustration matches your audience. When talking about campaigners, we use playful, imperfect illustrations. When talking about the water crisis, we lean toward simple icons in solid colors instead. Whether simple, fun, or elegant, our icons should always be easy to identify at a glance.

To help bring ideas to life and add visual appeal, see the following page or download our ICON LIBRARY.

Sample Illustrations

LANGUAGE & COPY

Copy Tone

How do you write for charity: water? Our brand voice
is friendly, smart, and simple. Instead of thinking like a
company, think like a person. Everything we write is written
by a person, for a person. It's good when it feels that way.

At the same time, we keep things professional.
If charity: water was a person, we'd be a knowledgable,
friendly one. When talking about the water crisis,
we're downright experts. So though we like to keep
things casual, we steer clear of LOLs and emojis.

Writing Tips & Tricks

As you write in the charity: water voice, here are a few simple ground rules to help you start off strong.

1. Be casual, but not too casual.
Do we use words like "totally" and "super"? Absolutely. Do we like exclamation marks and short, personal emails? Yes. Do we refer to our campaigners as "Bro" or drop an LOL at the end of a sentence? No. We're a pretty chill organization, but a smart, professional one.

2. Be accurate.
Being casual doesn't mean we're careless. We proofread everything. Check stats. Then check them again. We're a recognized authority on the water crisis, so especially when talking about the water crisis, or finances, or our programs, or reporting, triple check everything.

3. Be friendly.
We generally treat everyone like friends. Anytime you write something, think: "How would I phrase this if this were going to my best friend?" We love it when communications feel personal and real (while still being clear that we're a reputable organization).

4. Be positive.
The water crisis is tragic. Talking about it can really put a damper on things. But we never want our supporters or audience to feel unhappy after interacting with us, so we always try to end communications on a positive note. While being honest about harsh realities, we also talk about what we can do to change things and how much better life is once people get clean water.

5. Be inspirational.
We ask a lot of our supporters. So whenever possible, try to inspire people. Think about how you'd describe what we do to your mom or dad—then write that down. Our goal is that every little interaction with charity: water will make people feel happy and hopeful.

6. Be clear.
Transparency is a big part of our brand. Of course, it refers to our reporting and our promise to prove every project we build. But it's bigger than that, too. Always make your language simple and easy to understand. Never send people somewhere else for information when you can just give it to them. Don't complicate things unnecessarily. Just be as clear as possible.

7. Be brief.
People are busy. Respect their time. Say what you need to say, then stop writing. A great resource on brevity can be found HERE—it provides ideal lengths for just about anything you'll ever write: Tweets, emails, subject lines, blog posts, etc.

Writing Tips & Tricks continued

8. Use 100% carefully.

Whenever you talk about our 100% model, always use 100% (not "one hundred percent," or "every dollar," or "everything"). Whenever you're talking about something else, don't use 100%. For example, in discussing a match, use "double" or "dollar for dollar" or "every dollar," instead of "matched 100%."

9. Use can, not will.

When talking about the water crisis, and the impact a donation to clean water can make, never guarantee results. We don't know in advance exactly how many people a given project can help, or how much life will change once clean water arrives. Instead, talk about the amazing things clean water *can* achieve.

10. Talk about real people.

We like to connect our donors with the real people they help. We tell stories about real people, with names and families. We tie dollars to real communities clean water has helped. When you're talking about a community, talk about them as "people in Ethiopia" not "Ethiopians"—that will help your audience feel connected to the people they're helping, even when they're strangers.

11. Use Pipeline, not the Pipeline.

Our monthly giving program, Pipeline, is a proper noun. Don't refer to it as The Pipeline. Think of it like Starbucks, which isn't called The Starbucks. Or Trevor, not The Trevor.

12. Use The Well, not the Well.

When talking about The Well, on the other hand, always capitalize The.

13. They're not our Well members.

The members of The Well are not ours. They're a separate group of people. Though of course we wouldn't exist without them, we treat them with respect and autonomy. In print, refer to The Well members as "members of The Well" or "The Well members" instead of "our Well members."

14. Clean comes before safe.

When using the phrase "clean, safe drinking water" always put clean before safe. To help you remember, it's in alphabetical order. This helps our mission statement stay consistent.

15. Be careful with the word crazy.

"The craziest thing we can do is nothing" is a phrase you'll hear around here a lot. But use it judiciously. We love talking about the crazy, inspiring things our campaigners have done, but we never use the word crazy to describe our work, our partners in the field, or the people we help.

16. You are a who.

When talking about the water crisis, it's helpful to remember that people should always be refered to with "who" not "that." As in, "There are 663 million people in the world *who* don't have access to clean water."

17. Don't call us a company.

When talking about our organization, talk about us like you'd talk about your family. Don't refer to us as "the company," just use "we." If you do need to talk about our organization as a whole, use "charity: water," or occasionally "our organization."

Copy Style Samples

STYLE TIPS	BAD	GOOD
Avoid big words.	❌ It can be overwhelming to comprehend the magnitude that 663 million people represents.	✅ It can be hard to imagine what 663 million people looks like.
Keep sentences simple.	❌ The field teams of our local partners are chosen on the basis that their organizations have years of experience and acquired knowledge.	✅ Our local partners have years of experience and lots of knowledge.
Stay positive.	❌ Make your birthday actually mean something. You don't really need presents, so tell people to give money to charity: water instead.	✅ Birthdays can change the world. Pledge your next birthday for clean water and make this your best birthday yet.
Don't be too casual.	❌ Drinking dirty water and not having toilets totally sucks. It kills tons of people—more than guns or stabbings or crime or war.	✅ Diseases from unsafe water and lack of basic sanitation kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war.
Focus on real people.	❌ There are many Ethiopians without clean water. In fact, more than half the population lacks access to clean, safe drinking water.	✅ In Ethiopia, millions of people don't have clean water. Millions of mothers like Helen can't give their children clean, safe drinking water.

PIPELINE

PIPELINE

Pipeline is a system of local leaders, innovative technology, and trained mechanics all working together to keep water flowing at water projects around the world.

Pipeline is about the real work happening on the ground, so the Pipeline brand is fast-paced, genuine, personal, and a little more raw than the rest of the charity: water brand.

Tagline & Tone

TAGLINE

KEEP WATER FLOWING

We use this phrase often when talking about Pipeline.

COPY TONE

Copy for Pipeline should feel relevant, recent, and personal. Our Pipeline monthly members are some of our most loyal, long-standing supporters. Anytime we communicate with them, it should feel like one good friend talking to another.

Pipeline is a proper noun (like Starbucks, or Scott), and should not be referred to as "the Pipeline."

Emails should always come from real people at charity: water (not "the charity: water staff").

Stories should feel like they're coming straight from the field.

PHOTO TONE

Images for Pipeline should feel real, relevant, and raw.

To get updates out rapidly, Pipeline photos and videos don't always need to be edited before being shared.

Logo

Pipeline has two logomarks: the primary logo and the supporting mark.

PRIMARY

The main Pipeline logo can be used for just about anything.

SUPPORTING

The supporting mark works when you need something smaller, but remember to mention the full Pipeline name, too.

Colors

Our Pipeline colors are bright
and inviting, to match the upbeat,
forward-looking brand.

CMYK 0, 84, 54, 0
RGB 249, 79, 94
HEX #F94F5E

CMYK 1, 12, 83, 0
RGB 255, 218, 72
HEX #FFDA48

CMYK 67, 0, 32, 0
RGB 63, 191, 187
HEX #3FBFBB

CMYK 33, 0, 12, 0
RGB 165, 220, 224
HEX #A5DCE0

CMYK 80, 56, 62, 49
RGB 40, 64, 63
HEX #28403F

CMYK 3, 20, 44, 0
RGB 243, 204, 152
HEX #F3CC98

Illustration

We use three key icons to
represent what Pipeline supports:
training & tools, innovation,
and local repair teams.
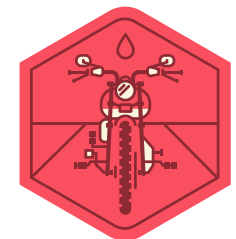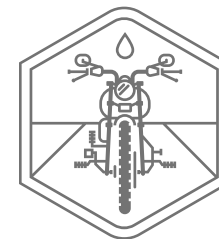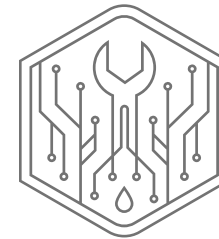
THE WELL

The
WELL
EST. ⬦W⬦ 2009

The Well is a membership program that supports the staff and operating costs of charity: water. By covering the necessary expenses of running our organization, The Well members power our 100% model and allow public donations to go entirely to the field.

The Well brand speaks to generous, essential individuals who keep our organization running. The tone is refined, yet familiar. We treat members of The Well like family, but like our most respected family members. In short, The Well brand is the most mature version of the charity: water brand.

The bigger your heart, the smaller the world.

Well members come from many locations, industries, and backgrounds. They live in the U.S. and abroad. We have members working in tech,

business, finance, law, hospitality, publishing, entertainment, and major league sports. We like our diversity. It means we have friends all over the place.

The Well Brand Tone

The brand tone for The Well is friendly, welcoming, and intelligent. The Well is a private membership club, so the look and feel is upscale and exclusive. But the copy isn't snobby. It's genuine. It's inspiring. It's heartfelt.

Since the members of The Well make all our work possible, we always speak to and about them with gratitude, affection, and respect.

Logo

The Well has two logomarks:
the primary logo and the
supporting mark.

WELL

EST. **W** 2009

SUPPORTING
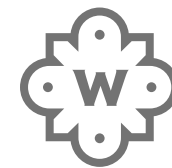
Colors

CMYK 0, 21, 99, 0
RGB 255 201, 10
HEX #FFC907

CMYK 30, 36, 76, 3
RGB 181, 153, 89
HEX #B49859

CMYK 16, 26, 46, 0
RGB 215, 185, 145
HEX #D7B992

CMYK 2, 1, 13, 0
RGB 250, 248, 224
HEX #F8F6DF

CMYK 17, 9, 22, 0
RGB 212, 216, 199
HEX #D4D6C5

CMYK 33, 0, 15, 0
RGB 166, 219, 218
HEX #A6DBDA

CMYK 28, 0, 38, 0
RGB 187, 221, 177
HEX #BBDEB2

CMYK 79, 44, 53, 21
RGB 57, 103, 103
HEX #3A6766

Typography

BRAND MOMENTS

SNAG BOLD

HEADLINES

Domaine Display Bold Italic

SUBHEADS

Domaine Text Regular Italic

SUPPORTING

UNITED SANS CONDENSED

TEXT

PROXIMA NOVA

Illustration

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Our Editorial Guidelines

A crash course in writing for charity: water.

These guidelines are designed to help you write in the charity: water voice. The info here will help you understand the basics of our work and the language and tone we use when talking about what we do. This guide also has some great boilerplate language that you're welcome to use and share.

PLEASE NOTE: Especially when talking about the water crisis, numbers change often. Always check with our Programs Team before sending numbers to print.

About the Water Crisis

If you already have clean water, it can be a little hard to understand just how dire the water crisis really is. Think about how often you use water in a typical day. A morning shower. A cool drink. Washing the dishes. Even making coffee requires water.

Now, imagine turning on the tap and rather than clean, cool water, mud comes out. Or worse yet, nothing at all. Imagine how difficult and time-consuming each daily task would become.

This is a daily reality for 663 million people around the world. Except they don't even have taps, they have to walk—sometimes three or four hours a day—to gather dirty water and bring it home in heavy Jerry Cans. Then they have to carefully choose the most essential uses for the little water they have.

In 2006, we started charity: water to change this. We believe clean water is a basic human right, so we set out to solve the water crisis.

Waterborne Diseases

The most common waterborne diseases are arsenicosis, cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, fluorosis, intestinal worms (worm), schistosomiasis and typhoid. Malaria, E. coli, trachoma and HIV/AIDS are also affected by lack of safe water sources.

Common diseases can usually be lowercase: arthritis, leukemia, bilharzia, diarrhea. When the disease is known by the name of a person identified with it, capitalize only that individual's name: Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease. To be sure about a particular disease, look it up in THIS GUIDE.

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bilharzia
A parasitic (worm) waterborne disease, also known as schistosomiasis, usually contracted from bathing, washing, or swimming in contaminated water.

arsenicosis
Disease caused by long-term exposure to low concentrations of arsenic in drinking water. Causes skin lesions and can result in cancer. Avoid using this unless you're writing specifically about the illness.

cholera
A waterborne disease that affects the lower intestine, usually contracted by drinking water or eating food contaminated with human feces containing the bacteria. Cholera is very contagious and a danger for post-disaster areas.

diarrhea
The most significant health problem that results from unsafe water and sanitation. Diarrhea can be caused from a variety of microorganisms (viruses or bacteria). Technically, diarrhea is a symptom of other illnesses; when appropriate, use "diarrheal disease" or list diarrhea as a symptom of water-related illnesses.

dysentery
Bloody diarrhea.

E. coli
Contagious bacterial infection commonly contracted from contaminated food or water.

flourosis
A bone disease caused by high concentrations of fluoride occurring naturally in groundwater. It's not a disease we commonly refer to by name when writing about waterborne diseases, but it does exist in areas where we work.

Waterborne Diseases continued

Guinea worm
A parasitic disease that causes debilitating ulcers. It's usually contracted through dirty water. Guinea worm has almost been completely eradicated—it is no longer a threat or major health focus in developing countries.

intestinal worms, worms
There are hundreds of varying intestinal worms that can be contracted through contaminated drinking water or food; the most prevalent are roundworm, whipworm, and hookworms, but any of them are referred to commonly as just "worms." About 10% of people in developing countries suffer from intestinal worms at any given time; worms cause malnutrition, anemia and stunt growth. Use simply "worms" for informal copy but identify the particular worm if your writing is formal or focused on a specific infection.

HIV, HIV-positive, HIV/AIDS
Always abbreviate to HIV, without periods. Preferably use HIV/AIDS or HIV rather than just AIDS (more are infected with the HIV virus than are inflicted with full-blown AIDS).

malaria
A parasitic disease contracted through infected mosquitoes. Standing water (in uncovered water tanks, poor drainage areas, swamps, etc.) is a huge factor in malaria prevention, since that's where mosquitoes lay eggs.

schistosomiasis
A parasitic (worm) waterborne disease, also known as bilharzia, usually caused by bathing, washing, or swimming in contaminated water.

trachoma
An eye infection spread mainly through poor hygiene (often due to lack of safe water). Much more common in women than men.

typhoid
A bacterial infection that causes a fever, contracted through contaminated water sources.

About Our Work

We are on a mission to bring clean, safe drinking water to every single person on the planet. As a fundraising organization, we raise money for lots of types of water projects, from wells, to rainwater harvestings, to piped water systems, to BioSand Filters. Then we work with local partners to build sustainable water projects in developing countries.

All the while, we're also taking an entirely new approach to charity. We believe charity should be exciting. We work to inspire our supporters through stories of global change that get hearts racing. Then, we use the latest technology to create authentic, innovative giving experiences that inspire people to action.

Where We Work

We've worked in 24 developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

Bangladesh	Liberia
Bolivia	Malawi
Burkina Faso	Mali
Cambodia	Mozambique
Central African Republic (C.A.R.)*	Nepal
Cote d'Ivoire (the Ivory Coast)**	Niger
Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R.C.)†	Pakistan
Ethiopia	Rwanda
Guatemala	Sierra Leone
Haiti	Tanzania
Honduras	Uganda
India	
Kenya	

*Use full name with C.A.R. in parentheses on first reference; use just C.A.R. thereafter. Don't use "the" at the beginning.
**Use Cote d'Ivoire. May follow with (the Ivory Coast) to clarify, but don't use the Ivory Coast alone.
†Use Democratic Republic of the Congo on first reference, D.R.C. thereafter.

Our Partners

We fund water projects. To do the dirty work of actually *building* projects, we depend on incredible, local implementing partners around the world. We call these wonderful teams "our partners," "local partners," or "partners on the ground."

A Glimmer of Hope
Ethiopia
Always use full name. Based in Austin, Texas, they oversee one of our leading local partners, the Relief Society of Tigray (REST).

Action Against Hunger
Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan
Use full name on first reference, may shorten to ACF after that (they shorten their French name). Committed to ending world hunger; charity: water funds water projects that complement their nutrition programs.

BRAC
Bangladesh
Always in all caps. The world's largest NGO with 100,000 people working to mobilize the most impoverished people to start their own businesses.

Clear Cambodia
Cambodia
Implementing partner for Samaritan's Purse; runs our BioSand Filter program. Previously known as Hagar International.

Concern Worldwide
Bangladesh, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda
Use Concern Worldwide on first reference, shorten to just Concern in informal copy. An Irish NGO that works to improve the lives of the world's poorest people.

Goal
Uganda
Always use full name. An Irish NGO focusing on emergency response, health, child protection and livelihoods.

Gram Vikas
India
Always use full name. Provides clean water to households in Orissa, regardless of social caste.

The International Rescue Committee (the IRC)
Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone
Always include "the" and spell out on first reference; use "the IRC" thereafter. A global humanitarian aid, relief and development organization working in 40 countries.

Jal Bhagirathi Foundation
India
Optimizes the management of water resources in Rajasthan's desert communities. charity: water funds their household rainwater harvestings called "tankas".

Our Partners continued

Nepal Water for Health
Nepal
Use full name on first reference, shorten to NEWAH thereafter. Implements large-scale piped systems fed by gravity.

Relief Society of Tigray (REST)
Ethiopia
Overseen by A Glimmer of Hope. Use full name on first reference with REST in parentheses; use REST thereafter. In informal or internal copy, just use REST. Our biggest partner by investment, projects and people served. Vision to provide full coverage to the people of Tigray

Splash
Nepal
Always use full name. Previously known as A Child's Right. Provides complex, electrical water filters to schools in Kathmandu.

Water for Good
Central African Republic
Always use full name. Previously known as Integrated Community Development Internationa (ICDI).

Water For People
Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Malawi, Rwanda
Always use full name in external documents. Internally, may be shortened to WFP. Note that "For" in Water For People is capitalized. Mission: 'Water for Everyone, Forever' via co-financing with local communities and governments.

World Vision
Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger
Use full name at first mention. Internally, may be shortened to WV or WVI thereafter. Runs on a child sponsorship model to provide children and communities with water access, sanitation, nutrition and more.

Types of Water Projects

We fund many different types of water projects. Our solutions vary depending on geography, climate, and local economy.

BioSand Filter
This water project filters dirty water through a microorganism-eating layer, then through a layer of sand, and finally dispenses it into a clean container. Each BioSand Filter usually provides clean water for a family, and families often help build their own filters.

drilled well
This is a well drilled when the water table can't be reached by a hand-dug well. They're more expensive, take 3-4 days to drill and require a professional drill team. The term "borehole" is another technical term for this type of well, but we generally just use the term "drilled well."

hand-dug well
This type of well is possible in areas with a high water table. Local communities usually contribute the labor. Refer to any shallow wells dug by hand as simply "hand-dug wells."

improved sanitation, sanitation
Improved sanitation promotes proper disposal of human waste and prevents open defecation; clean toilets that are safe and comfortable for the user. Where possible, specify that we invest in "improved sanitation" since it's possible to have sanitation that isn't healthy or safe to use (i.e. old, dirty latrines).

latrines, double block latrines
When referring to sanitation projects we've funded, use the term "latrines." Use "toilet" when telling a specific story or captioning a photo of one toilet. To avoid redundancy, you may use "latrines" and "toilets" interchangeably. "Double block latrines" are toilets with separate areas for boys and girls.

manually-drilled well
This is a type of well that is drilled by human-powered low-tech equipment like hand augering. They're quick and cheap to sink, require minimal maintenance, and can only be constructed in areas with soft ground, such as tubewells in India and Bangladesh.

piped system
This is a network of pipes that supplies water from a clean source (well, spring protection, etc.) to a varitey of community tap stands. This includes gravity-fed systems, where the force of gravity feeds water into a community from an elevated source. This type of system is often considered more than just one water project.

rainwater harvesting
Gutters on rooftops direct the flow of rainfall into a sanitary holding tank. This water project collects rainwater and safely stores it for drinking.

spring protection
This water project captures and safely stores freshwater from natural springs before its contaminated, then pipes the water to communities for use.

water purification systems
Installed treatment systems that remove contaminants from existing water supplies. This includes UF/UV filtration systems and filters, which remove bacteria, viruses and pathogens from groundwater.

Brand Terminology

From our colon-punctuated name to our approach to charity,
we refuse to be strictly conventional. Before you write in our voice,
get to know some of the terms we use frequently.

100% model
Our fundraising model that allows 100% of public funds to go directly to the field. When describing our 100% model, always use "100%" (not "a hundred percent" or "every dollar").

501(c)(3)
Our tax-exempt status. charity: water is a 501(c)(3) organization; therefore, all donations made straight to charity: water within the US are tax-deductible.

charity: ball
Never capitalize, always put a space after colon, add yyyy for date: charity: ball 2009.

charity: water
Never capitalize, always put a space after the colon. Don't be shy about telling people how to format our name.

Charity Global, Inc.
Our official corporate name, filed with the IRS. If someone asks how to look up our information, give them that, but we're charity: water everywhere else.

completion report
The final report on water projects that includes details of each water project funded by charity: water from a particular grant. We use this info to generate a donor completion report (either for individual donors who gave $10,000 or through Dollars to Projects).

Dollars to Projects
A *my*charity: water feature that ties every dollar raised to the project it funded in the field. May be referred to internally as D2P.

Jerry Can
Jerry Cans were first brought to Africa during WWII as containers for gasoline; they're now used all over the continent for collecting and carrying water. The Jerry Can is our icon and it's a major part of our brand. For more info, see LOGO GUIDELINES.

grants
For internal use only. "Grant" refers to the pool of funds granted at one particular time to a partner in the field.

Live Auction
Refers to the one at charity: ball.

money terms
"water" = amount raised for water projects
"operations" or "ops" = amount raised for operational costs
"gross" = total raised for water and operations

mid-term report
A report sent to donors halfway through the water project implementation process. Midterm is usually used for academic or political terms; mid-term refers to specified arbitrary or indeterminate terms (like ours).

***my*charity: water**
Italicize "my" and put a space after the colon.

Brand Terminology continued

mycharitywater.org
When referring to the URL, don't use italics or a colon.

My Projects Page
The D2P page for *my*charity: water fundraisers and donors. This is an overview of all the projects they've funded.

Pipeline
Pipeline is a monthly giving program that supports the long-term sustainability of charity: water projects around the globe. Pipeline is a proper noun (like Starbucks, or Scott), and should not be referred to as "the Pipeline." For more information, see PIPELINE GUIDELINES.

Project Detail Page
A D2P page for the *my*charity: water donors and fundraisers of a completed water project. Basically, a completion report published online as a part of D2P. Includes the photos, GPS coordinates, population and other details about the community and water source.

Project ID
Used to identify the specific water project funded by charity: water donors; shown on the completion report.

September Campaign
The original birthday campaign used to start charity: water, which runs every year for charity: water's anniversary in September. Capitalize both words. If you're including a year, put it at the end: September Campaign 2010. When referring to fundraisers for September, do not capitalize "campaigners": September Campaign is our biggest effort of the year. We're hoping to get 2,000 new September campaigners on board. Always capitalize "September," since it's a month.

sponsor, water project sponsor
Someone who donates or raises at least $10,000 for a water project. They receive virtual recognized on a water project and receive a completion report.

water projects
This is the safe umbrella term for all the water technologies and systems we fund. charity: water funds BioSand filters, drilled wells, hand-dug wells, manually drilled wells, piped water systems, rainwater harvestings, spring protections and water purification systems. For more information, see TYPES OF WATER PROJECTS.

Waterwalk
A charity: water fundraiser that asks people to carry Jerry Cans a specified distance to simulate the long walk many people in developing countries make each day to collect drinking water.

well, wells, hand-dug well, drilled well
We rarely refer to anything as simply "a well." Instead, specify either a hand-dug or drilled well. When referring to more than one type of well, use "water projects" instead.

The Well
A private group of donors that fund the operating costs of charity: water. For more information, see THE WELL GUIDELINES.

wristband
Our event wristbands are not bracelets.

Words *Not* to Use

Word choice is important. To respect the people we serve, we're careful to use appropriate terms when we talk about them. Here's a quick list of words *not* to use and some options to use instead.

aim
Avoid. Use "hope" or "plan" instead.

bush, the bush
Acceptable only occasionally. Generally use "rural" or "remote" instead.

coup d'etat
Use just "coup" and make sure it's accurate for your use by checking country background on UNICEF's WEBSITE.

fetch
Never use when talking about water collection. Say "collect" or "gather" water instead.

the Ivory Coast
Use Cote d'Ivoire instead. If you're writing to a broad audience unfamiliar with international issues, you can use "also known as the Ivory Coast" in parentheses after Cote d'Ivoire on first reference.

mankind
Use "humanity" or "people" instead.

Third World, third-world countries
Use "developing nations" or "developing countries" instead.

villagers
Use "locals" or "people" instead.

Some Boilerplate Language

We're a nonprofit on a mission to bring clean, safe drinking water to every single person on the planet.

Here at charity: water, there are a few things that make us different: 100% of public donations fund clean water projects, we prove every project we build, and we work with strong local partners to build and maintain projects.

100% of every public donation goes straight to the field.

When someone makes a donation to build water projects, we don't take a single penny for overhead. Generous private donors fund our operating costs. With the help of the members of The Well, we even pay back credit card fees, which are inevitably incurred when donors support us online. When we say 100%, we really mean 100%.

We prove every project we build.

We believe in showing people exactly where their money goes. Every time we complete a water project, we post GPS coordinates, photos, and a brief description of the project on Google Maps. It's just one of the ways we're changing charity—holding ourselves accountable to the highest level of transparency.

Right now, 663 million people on the planet don't have access clean and safe drinking water. That's one in ten of us.

Water changes everything.

When you take a good look at all the challenges facing the global poor, one thing stands out. There's one basic human need that, when met, sparks prosperity and productivity faster than any other single fix: access to clean, safe water.

Clean water can prevent unnecessary deaths, save time, and improve health. It enables people to be energetic members of society and to escape the cycle of poverty.

Our goal at charity: water is simple. We want everyone to have access to clean, safe water in our lifetime.

Why did we chose to focus on water? Because we're on a mission to change everything. And we believe, now more than ever, that changing everything starts with clean water.

You can do just about anything to raise money for clean water.

The craziest thing we can do is nothing.

When we first started charity: water, some people called us crazy. It was crazy to believe that we could solve the water crisis in our lifetime. It was crazy to give 100% of public donations to the field. And it was crazy to show people where every single donated dollar went.

But we've met real people living without clean water. And we think standing by and letting them live without this basic need would be the craziest thing of all.

Style Guide

We believe in good grammar. We proofread everything.
If you're not confident in your grammar, check with our
Creative Department (or the *Chicago Manual of Style*).
You might also take a look at THIS ARTICLE for some great
basic writing guidance.

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addresses
Always write out Road, Drive, Court, Square,
Lane, Alley and Terrace. Abbreviate Boulevard
(Blvd.), Avenue (Ave.) and Street (St.) only
with exact numbered address: She lives
at 101 Maple St. She lives on Maple Street.
Abbreviate directions on exact numbered
address: She lives at 101 N. Maple St. Always
use numbers in address, even if it's less than
10: She lives at 1 Maple St.

amounts / comparisons
Use "more than" when referring to amounts;
never use "over" unless something is
physically located above something else or to
avoid redundancy.

ampersands (&)
Don't use them. Always write "and." Sometimes
we use ampersands to conserve space
(especially online). but they should not be used
in body copy.

apostrophe (')
Used in contractions or to show possession.

For plural nouns ending in s, add only an
apostrophe at end (not an extra s): *the
residents' well.*

For singular common nouns ending in s, add 's:
that glass's water is dirty.

For singular proper names ending in s, add
only apostrophe at end: *Chris' website.*

For singular proper names ending in s sounds
(x, ce, z), use 's: *Max's well.*

For plurals of a single letter, add 's: *Village A's
water point.*

Don't use 's for plurals of numbers or multiple
letter combos: *1980s, IMs.*

area
Use square inches, square feet, square yards
and square miles if possible;
spell out terms.

1 square inch = 6.452 square centimeters
1 square foot = 929 square centimeters
1 square yard = about .8361 square meters
1 square mile = about 2.590
    square kilometers

capitalization
Capitalize staff titles and department names,
unless otherwise advised: *Vik, our VP of
Creative, oversees our Creative Department.*

coed
Don't hyphenate.

co-finance
Hyphenate.

Style Guide continued

colon (:)
Used after a phrase that can stand by itself for a list or explanation.

Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it's a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *We promise this: We will send you GPS coordinates of your well after it has been built.*

Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quoted material: *It's the "issue of our generation": the water crisis.*

comma (,)
Use varies. Err on the side of using less commas as long as your sentence makes sense without them.

At charity: water, we do not use the Oxford Comma (also called a serial comma). Format lists as follows: *red, white and blue.*

complete, completed
Use either "has been completed" or "is complete," never "is completed." We report back to you when the project is complete.

contaminate, is contaminated, contaminant
Use "contaminate" as a verb, "contaminant" as a noun.

contractions
Use them often.

dashes
When describing length of time, use a dash instead of "to": *You'll receive information about your well in the next 12-18 months. The event is from 7-9 p.m.*

dates
Always use numerals without st, nd, rd or th: *January 4, 2010*

When a month is used with a specific date, you may abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.: *Jan. 4, 2010*

When a month is used only with a year, don't use a comma: *January 2010*

If a date includes year and is in a sentence, use a comma after the year: *Jan. 4, 2010, was a productive day at charity: water.*

directions
Lowercase, unless referring to a specific global region such as West Africa or the Caribbean.

distance
Use inches, feet, yards and miles when possible; spell out terms.

1 inch = 2.54 centimeters
1 foot = 30.48 centimeters
1 yard = 3 feet = .9144 meters
1 mile = 1,760 yards = 5,280 feet

Doctor, Dr.
Always use "Dr." instead of Mr./Mrs./Ms. if the person is a doctor. Don't include titles at the end of the name such as M.D. or Ph.D.

dollar amounts
Use $ and numerals (instead of writing out "dollars"): *$30 can provide clean, safe water for one person.* For millions or billions, write out "million" or "billions" and use up to two decimal places: *We raised $3.63 billion in one night.*

drilling rig
Not "drill rig." In informal copy, use "drilling rig" on first reference and just "rig" thereafter.

Earth, earth
Capitalize when referring to our planet, don't capitalize when using as synonym for "ground."

Style Guide continued

email
Don't hyphenate.

em dash (—)
Used to break in with an abrupt thought, show an example or set off a series of comma-separated items within a comma. Create using option+shift+hyphen.

Note: In print, use an em dash without spaces on either side: *We fund many types of water projects—drilled wells, hand-dug wells, BioSand Filters, spring protections, etc.* For emails and the web, use an en dash (see below).

en dash (–)
Used to separate numbers: *From 7–9 pm.* Create using option+hyphen.

Note: For emails and web, use an en dash with a space on either side to set apart lists or to break in with an abrupt thought: *We fund many types of water projects – drilled wells, hand-dug wells, BioSand Filters, spring protections, etc.* For print, use an em dash (see above).

Fahrenheit (F)
Even though many countries we work in use Celsius, convert temperatures to Fahrenheit when writing for donors and supporters, since they're mostly US-based. F = ((9/5) x C) + 32

for-profit
As in businesses, corporations. Avoid using as an adjective for businesses or corporations because it's redundant (most businesses and corporations are for-profit), but use alone to reference the business sector: *We're a nonprofit that markets like a for-profit.*

fractions
Spell them out with a hyphen: One-third of Haitians did not have access to clean, safe drinking water before the earthquake.

fresh water
Use when describing water.

freshwater well
Use when describing a freshwater well.

handheld, hand-held
Use "handheld" (without a hyphen) for the noun and "hand-held" for the adjective.

handwashing
Don't hyphenate.

hyphen (-)
Used to combine compound adjectives before a noun: *well-known community, 10-year partnership*

Don't use a hyphen when the compound adjectives come after the verb: *The community was well known. It was a partnership of 10 years.*

info, information
In general, use "info" (especially online): *For more info, email creative@charitywater.org.*

Kolkata
Not Calcutta.

Koran
Not Qu'ran or Quran.

links
Embed links simply by linking out on "here" without including "go" or "click:" Learn more about our partners here. (Instead of *To learn more about our partners, click here.* or *To learn more about our partners, go here.*)

Style Guide continued

microbial
Not "microbacterial."

microfinance
Don't hyphenate.

microorganism
Don't hyphenate.

might vs. may
In informal copy, use "might."

miles per gallon (mpg)
Use "miles per gallon" on first reference, "mpg" thereafter.

miles per hour (mph)
Just use "mph."

names
In general, refer to people by their full name on first reference. Only use middle initials by request, or if someone commonly uses it. Use Mr./Ms. in formal writing, but first names are generally sufficient for charity: water materials.

nondenominational
Don't hyphenate.

non-governmental organization (NGO)
Use "NGO" (no periods) unless writing formally to someone unfamiliar with the term.

nonprofit
Don't hyphenate.

numbers
Write out numbers one through nine. Use numerals for 10 or more: *I stole four apples off Robin's desk. Lane stole 13 apples.*

When a number comes at the beginning of a sentence, always spell it out, even if it's more than 10: *Forty people helped at Volunteer Night.*

Spell out first through ninth. Use numerals with "nd," "rd," or "th" after that: *This is Mike's first year at charity: water, his 26th year of life.*

For millions and billions, write out numbers one through nine and use numerals for 10 or more: *We want to serve 10 million people. Let's start by serving three million.*

When describing length of time, use an en dash instead of "to."

When writing dates, don't use "nd," "rd," or "th"; just write the date.

offline
Refers to fundraising or communications that are not online. Use sparingly.

ok
Lowercase without periods, not "okay" or "O.K."

parentheses (())
Use sparingly, as they disrupt momentum and look clunky.

If the material is part of the sentence, put the period outside the parentheses: *We were there for the live drilling (which took place on Tuesday).*

If the material is its own sentence, put the period inside the parentheses: *We were there for the live drilling. (It took place on Tuesday.)*

political titles
Capitalize before a name, otherwise lowercase.

public-private partnership (PPP)
A service financed by both the government and private sector, usually to implement a new technology or service for an area that didn't have it before. Use public-private partnership on first reference, shorten to PPP thereafter.

Style Guide continued

quotation marks ("")
Start a new paragraph if quoting a new person:

"I hate coffee," said Bill.

"I love it," said Vik.

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks: *"Get out of here," said Erica. "Just go."*

Dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go inside quotation marks when they're a part of the quoted material, outside when they apply to the whole sentence: *Tyler asked me, "Have you tried the Waterwalk?" Tyler asked me, had I "walked for water"?*

Use single quote marks within quotes: *"Our partners said, 'We love working with you,'" Scott told us at the meeting.*

ranges
When describing length of time, use a dash instead of "to": *You'll receive information about your well in the next 12-18 months.*

rig
Use "drilling rig" on first reference and just "rig" thereafter.

RSVP, RSVP'd
Uppercase, no periods.

Saint (St.)
Use "St." in most cases (including country names: *St. Lucia*).

seasons
Lowercase spring, summer, fall, and winter unless part of a formal name.

socioeconomic
Don't hyphenate.

SoHo
Capitalize only the S and the H.

SOS
Distress call (literally means "save our ship"); use without periods.

staff positions
Generally capitalize staff titles: *Robin Jones, Senior Accountant*

states
Spell out names in text when they appear alone: *We love our donors in California.* Abbreviate with conjunction with a city, town, village, county or military base: *Buffalo, NY.; Mecosta County, Mich.*

Sudan
Not "the Sudan."

SUV
Never use "sport utility vehicle," just SUV.

tax-deductible
Hyphenate.

tax-exempt
Hyphenate.

tax receipt
Our 501(c)(3) certificate cannot be used by donors as a tax receipt; we send them a tax receipt after they donate directly to us. Offline donors receive a formal tax receipt within four weeks of making a donation. Online donors get a tax receipt within 12 hours of making a donation.

Style Guide continued

technologies
Another word for water projects. charity: water funds BioSand filters, drilled wells, hand-dug wells, manually drilled wells, piped water systems, rainwater harvestings, spring protections and water purification systems.

time
Use figures except for noon and midnight, always use a.m. or p.m. (not o'clock). Separate hours from minutes with a colon: *2:30 a.m.*

toward
Not "towards."

toilets
When talking about projects we've funded, use "latrines." Use "toilets" when telling a specific story or captioning a photo of a specific toilet.

URLs
Omit "http://www." when referring to a website in copy: *Visit charitywater.org for more information.* If a link is longer or more complicated than just charitywater.org/blah, use an embedded link instead of writing it out.

volumes
Use ounces, cups, quarts, and gallons when possible; abbreviate ounce to "oz." and spell out other terms.

1 fluid oz. = about 30 milliliters
1 cup = 8 fluid oz. = .2366 liters
1 quart = 4 cups = 29.57 milliliters
1 gallon = 16 cups = 4 quarts = 3.785 liters

water crisis
Use "the water crisis," "the world water crisis" or "the global water crisis"; not "the world's water crisis."

weights
use ounces, pounds, and tons if possible; abbreviate ounce to "oz." and spell out other terms.

1 oz. = about 28 grams
1 pound = 16 oz. = about .45 kilograms
1 ton = 2,000 pounds = about 907 kilograms = about .91 metric tons

which vs. that
Use "that" only where it's essential to the meaning of the sentence (essential clauses); use without commas: *I remember the time that Paull said "Hunky dorey," on national news.*

Use "which" where the pronoun is less necessary (nonessential clauses) and include commas: *The show, which was on a Thursday, was really awesome.*

TIP: if you can drop the clause and not lose the meaning of the sentence, you need to use "which;" otherwise, use "that."

If you ever have questions, just ask:

CREATIVE@CHARITYWATER.ORG

charity: water