



The Water Warrior
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 The Asia Foundation



Nesa and her family recently moved to the village of Palindi Tanabara in East Sumba. Here, during the dry season, water is scarce.



One day, Nesa finds her mother laying sick in bed.

She hurries to the kitchen to boil some water.



But there is almost none left.
How will we eat and drink?

Mother usually collects fresh water.



“I am going to collect some water, Mother.”

Nesa hesitates. They have not lived in that village for long. She doesn't know where the water source is. But, if she doesn't go



Just then, Nesa hears her neighbor, Ambu calls out, “Mama, I’m going to go fetch some water.”

Nesa darted out. “May I go collect water with you?” she asked Ambu.

“Can you handle the long walk up the hills?” Ambu is not so sure.

“Yes, I can. I really can!”



Nesa hurriedly looks for a jerrycan.
Huh...where's the cap of this jerrycan?

“Are you sure you are going? Do you know where the water source is?” Mother asks.
“I am going with Ambu, Mother,” Nesa replies.



Soon, Nesa and her friends are on their way. They walk with hope that they will get clean water today.



The path is rocky and hard. Nesa and her friends walk for a long time. Up and down the hills they plod under the scorching heat.

Huh, it's hot!

Ah ... water, where are you?



Nesa feels very tired.
Yet, the water is so far away.

Ouch ... my sandal!



“Heh...wait for me!” Nesa shouts.
She never thought they needed to walk so far
to collect water.



“Ambu, is the water still far away?”

“We’re almost there.”

“Oh, how much longer do we have to walk?”

“There has been no rain for a while. Just a little further. Hang on in there,” says Ambu.



Nesa begins to lag behind. Before she knows it, Ambu is already way ahead. She quickens her steps to keep up with her friends.



Soon, everyone shouts in excitement.

“Hurray! There’s water!”

Where? Oh No! We still have to go down these sharp and steep rocks.

Ooops! Nesa almost slips.



Finally, clean water!

After all the heat and sweat, the water feels cool and fresh.



“Let’s all fill up our jerrycans,” Ambu calls out.

Nesa fills up her jerrycan.

This will last until tomorrow.

Uh ... It’s heavy!



Time to go home.

Up, up the steep rocks again.

Ah ... why is it so hard to get water?



Suddenly, Nesa trips over a rock. Oh no! Her jerrycan falls and her water spills out. Nesa cries out in pain.



There's not much water left in Nesa's jerrycan. How is this water going to help Mother? "Do you want some of my water?" Ambu offers.



“There are so many people in your house. You need all your water, Ambu.”

Nesa looks at her friends. If they all can collect water, she can do it too.

“Sister, I will go down again to collect water,” Nesa tells Ambu.



I have to try again. I have to help Mother. I can do it!



Nesa is way behind her friends. But, that's okay. She knows her way home now.



Before the sun sets, Nesa arrives home.

“Mother, Mother, Look! I have water!”

“I am so happy I can collect water today. I am a water warrior, Mother.”



This story is about the children of Sumba. Sumba is an island in East Indonesia. It is well known as the land of a thousand hills. It is often hard to get clean water there. The children have to walk very far to collect clean water. Nesa and Ambu are among those children. They have to walk along a steep, rocky path, up and down the hills under the scorching heat, to collect clean water for the family's daily use.



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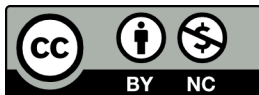
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Original Story

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