

WeThirst

Helping isolated villages tap a precious resource

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In the pre-dawn light, a Ju'hoansi Bushman leaves the confines of his village in a remote region of the Kalahari Desert somewhere in Namibia—or is it Botswana? To him, it doesn't really matter. His is a life removed from the workings of the world. His focus is survival.

He scans the dry, cracked desert floor. When he squints, his face crinkles, mirroring the desiccated earth. Still young—in his 30s—it would be difficult for most people to determine his age because of his leathery features.

As the sun breaks over the horizon, he reaches down to pluck a blade of grass. Bringing it to his mouth, he passes it across

his parched lips, savoring the precious dew. It's the first water he's had for many hours, and the last for many more.

Every day, he and his people survive on just 200 grams of water per person—less than eight ounces. Here, there is no such thing as a convenience store. Instead, the search for drinkable

water can take on epic proportions, requiring hours of trudging across the stingy Kalahari to collect a few ounces of what many of us take for granted.

For the Bushmen, the lack of water means they drink every drop they encounter. There is nothing available for bathing. Personal hygiene is non-existent. Health suffers. Medical care becomes difficult. Even cooking is a challenge.

As the sun breaks over the horizon, a Ju'hoansi Bushman reaches down to pluck a blade of grass. Bringing it to his mouth, he passes it across his parched lips, savoring the precious dew. It's the first water he's had for many hours, and the last for many more.