

The play involves five or more characters: A **Speaker**; a **Development and Peace member**; two women: **Madam Atuko** and **Elizabeth** from Ghana, Africa; and **Signer** who signs the declaration at the end.  
(\* ) Indicates that you can have as many people repeat this line as you wish.

Madam Atuko and Elizabeth describe real experiences that occurred on Ghana in 2003-2004. Their words should be spoken with dignity. The script tries to capture reality but is not meant to be written in stone. It can be adapted for your local circumstances (see *Additional Ideas on page 3*). As you rehearse, please make changes to help your presentation. Be creative!

We strongly encourage you to involve youth in this presentation.

## The World Bank Muddies the Water in Ghana

**Speaker** (*standing in front of the audience*): Good afternoon/evening. I am here to tell you about the excellent work being done by the World Bank in providing access to water to the world's poor. This year the World Bank will loan \$2 billion dollars to developing countries so that they can provide water to their citizens. The World Bank has very sound plans to put water services on the open market and invite multi-national companies to control and manage water in these countries. These companies, based mainly in Europe and the United States have a lot of experience in water management ....

**D&P member** (*raising hand, interrupting*): I've heard all about these plans.

**Speaker**: Excuse me, but I'm speaking.

**D&P member** (*approaching Speaker*): You're speaking of water privatization, and I know all about it. I'm a member of Development and Peace and we've learned all about what these private companies do.

**Speaker**: Well, then you know all about the wonderful work that has been done.

**D&P member**: Wonderful work? I don't think Madam Atuko would think it's so wonderful.

**Speaker**: Who is Madam Atuko?

**D&P member**: I'm glad you asked. Let me take you to Accra (*pronounced a-CRA*), the largest city in Ghana, where Madam Atuko has just walked over two kilometers to gather her water for the day.

*African music begins (optional). Madam Atuko enters carrying a bucket and proceeds to a well. At the well there is another bucket that is part of the well. She takes the well bucket and filters the water through her headscarf and into her own bucket. Another woman, Elizabeth, walks on stage with a bucket towards the well. She begins to collect water from the well bucket directly into her own bucket without filtering.*

**Madam Atuko**: Wait! You can't do that! You must be new ... (*the woman nods, Madam Atuko smiles*). This water is very dirty. It's right next to an open sewer (*she points*). Here, let me show you how to filter the water.

*Madam Atuko helps the woman filter the water through her headscarf. As they talk, they continue to filter water into each of their buckets.*

**Elizabeth**: Does this really clean the water?

**Madam Atuko**: Well it can't protect us from water-borne diseases, but it helps make it a little cleaner. What's your name, child?

**Elizabeth**: My name is Elizabeth ... I just moved to this region with my family.

**Madam Atuko**: I'm Madam Atuko and I've been here a long time. I remember back when there used to be community standpipes where poor people like us could get water. We only had to pay a token fee for maintenance. Now, water is piped into houses, but we can't afford that.

**Elizabeth:** Neither can we. Water costs 80 cents a litre. My family makes less than \$1.35 a day, which is what most families make here in Ghana.

**Madam Atuko:** I know. Our government doubled the price of water in 2001, so they could qualify for a loan from the World Bank. Now, all we have is water from this dirty well. It's not safe, but it's better than not having any water at all.

**Speaker:** Wait! Is this the same Ghana I've read about in my World Bank documents? How can they be struggling so much while the World Bank has said that they've made their lives better?

**D&P member:** Why don't you ask these women? Excuse me, Madam Atuko? How has the World Bank helped you to gain access to water?

**Madam Atuko:** Helped us? Hah! They've only made it worse.

**Elizabeth:** My family cannot afford to spend half our daily wage on a litre of water, and so I have to come here, to this well. Only the richer families can afford the piped water.

**D&P member:** And what are you doing about it?

**Madam Atuko:** We are resisting! Many women's groups, teachers, students and unions have joined a coalition to oppose the privatization of water. We believe it is our right to clean water ... we need it to survive! We need help to send this message to the World Bank and make them see that privatization is not the answer.

**Elizabeth:** Many people here and in other countries, like Canada, have said that they believe that clean water is a basic human right, and not a commodity!

**D&P member:** That's right. But what's happening is all about money, not about the people. The World Bank gives loans to struggling countries but there are strings attached to these loans...

**Madam Atuko:** Big strings!

**D&P member:** The World Bank insists that the country give control of its water systems to a private company.

**Elizabeth:** Our government has to adopt these unfair policies or our country cannot receive the money we so desperately need.

**Speaker:** I thought we were *helping* Ghana by encouraging a private water company to manage the water systems in these countries...

**D&P member:** The problem is, the people can no longer afford to buy the water.

**Speaker:** You've certainly given me lots to think about ...

**D&P member:** *(To audience)* What about all of you? What do you think? You can help by signing this card from Development and Peace *(holds up Action Card)*. Madam Atuko, Elizabeth and thousands of other people in Ghana and other countries need our solidarity. We would like everyone here to sign a card that will be sent to our government *(read the Action Card)*. Madam Atuko's story is real!

**Signer** (stands up from seat in the crowd): I'll sign it! (\*)

**D&P member, Madam Atuko and Elizabeth** *(in unison holding hands in solidarity)*: Water: Life Before Profit!