



Philadelphia Global Water Initiative

August 2008 Newsletter

Hello PGWI!

I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer and are now gearing up for the start of fall! I had the pleasure of attending the Stockholm World Water Week Conference with nine University of Pennsylvania MES students and Professor Laskowski. It was a fantastic learning experience and we have a lot of up to date information, new inventions, programs, organizations, and possible future connections to share with PGWI! PGWI will have access to all the brochures and pamphlets we got at the conference, so feel free to look through them and make copies if you get a chance. If you're not in the area you could send me a list of topics you're interested in and I can send copies of available information! Other than the World Water Week materials, there are many excellent articles about water and sanitation for August.

PGWI has great potential to make huge strides this year, so let's be ready to give it our all!

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1. Be sure to look at the World Water Week website for information about the Conference which took place from August 17-23! The website has a final program which would be a good guide to look up news based on your interests. There was so much material presented at the Conference but for a quick day to day recap check out the five daily newsletters on the right-hand side. The best thing to read would be the final conclusion from SIWI and the final synthesis. One conclusion from the conference was that Millennium Development Goals will not be reached because of the slow progress on sanitation. The basic message from World Water Week is that we need involvement among various groups of people, adequate funding, access to appropriate resources, and action needs

to be taken now. There is no quick solution, but measures can and should be taken to at least mitigate and eventually solve the current issues. Award winners are also listed on the site.

<http://www.worldwaterweek.org/>

2. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development has a few great articles and resources on their website. If you look on the right-hand side of the main site, you will see a "Global Water Tool" which allows organizations and companies to figure out their own water use. There are some specific case studies, speeches, video clips, and international news articles available as well. It's worth exploring the many features of this website, but to highlight a few articles, check out, "Wasted Food Is Also Wasted Water," "Water fountains making comeback as bottles banned," and "Running dry: Business and water." The first article talks about how overconsumption and waste is exacerbating the food crisis. The amount of water that is put into the processing and cultivation of food is wasted as food is wasted. Virtual water is a concept developed by Professor John Anthony Allan of King's College, London and it measures the amount of water involved in the production and trade of consumer products and food. For example, approximately 2,400 liters of water were used for you to eat one hamburger. Many people are not aware of the great amount of water it takes to buy a single cotton shirt or drink one cup of coffee. Businesses and governments now have to find ways to decrease waste in every aspect of life, because this would mean a decrease in wasted water. The second article is about a city in Ontario Canada that stopped the sales of

bottled water in all municipal places. Not only will this save people money, but bottled water produces 150 times more greenhouse gases than tap water. Water fountains are being installed all over the city and similar bans may show up in other areas of the country. The third article claims that, "Water is the oil of the 21st century." Water is under massive strain and has no substitute unlike oil. Goldman Sachs has estimated that every twenty years, global water consumption is doubling. Businesses need to work to save water, and start realizing their own virtual water consumption.

<http://www.wbcscd.ch/templates/TemplateWBCSD5/layout.asp?type=p&MenuId=ODI&doOpen=1&ClickMenu=LeftMenu>

<http://www.wbcscd.ch/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?type=DocDet&ObjectId=MzExMzU>

<http://www.wbcscd.ch/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?type=DocDet&ObjectId=MzExMjk>

<http://www.wbcscd.ch/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?type=DocDet&ObjectId=MzExNDI>

3. The Water Partners International site has a multitude of articles from the entire month of August. One link to the left that would be worth checking out is the Global Water Supply School Curriculum. This is from World Water Day in 2008, but it's interesting to see what materials are being taught to children. The Headlines Digest has great articles. I suggest reading, "Too Good to Waste," and "Water Footprints Make a Splash." The first article

discusses the use of ‘sludge’ or ‘biosolids’ from sewage plants for fertilizing crops that humans eat. The author described various health problems associated with exposure to the biosolids. She also pointed out that this practice saves farmers a lot of money and according to the British government is a great environmental option. The use of biosolids is controversial, not only on crops consumed by humans, but also for the sake of the soil. The second article discusses the water footprint, which is, “The total volume of freshwater required to produce a nation’s goods and services.” Governments and consumers should start to appreciate the true cost of water by calculating their own water footprint. Virtual water and its implications for the future population boom is also discussed. This is a really great article and makes the concept of the water footprint and virtual water easy to understand. I think this is going to be the next big thing to really impact the future of our daily lives as well as businesses and governments.

<http://water.org/waterpartners.aspx?pgID=987>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/aug/29/waste.recycling>

<http://www.enn.com/ecosystems/article/37997>

4. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization has a complete list of water events worldwide. Check this out to see what events occurred in August and if you want to collect more information. The format changed a little, so now you can find events based on theme, geographical scope, date, type of

organizer, or type of event. You should also look at the upcoming events for September!

http://www.unesco.org/water/water_events/

5. Water for Life has a comprehensive website on the International Decade for Action. There is a list of basic background information, several videos, current news updates, a children’s section, and a section on issues which deals with everything from scarcity, to financing, to trans-boundary water issues. There are separate reports for each issue, and this is a great resource for students.

<http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/>

6. The Sanitation Updates website has entries and posts from people from a variety of backgrounds. There are brief summaries of each entry with links to the larger article below. There is a place where you can submit comments on articles, as well as a separate blog to see what people throughout the world are thinking and doing about the sanitation crisis. Blogs may not be the best source of reliable information, but it’s a good gauge to see how informed and concerned the world community is and learn from their perspectives. “India – Impressed with LSR girl’s report on public toilets, HC asks MCD to study paper,” was a good article to get a view into the daily struggles of Indian women. Women are forced to pay every time they need to use the community bathroom, shower, and wash clothes. What’s worse is that only four percent of public urinals have facilities for women, making women’s rights a distant hope. The woman who wrote the original

report developed recommendations which will be considered and hopefully ignite the spark for real change.

<http://sanitationupdates.wordpress.com/2008/08/>

7. The Women for Water Partnership is a site that focuses on the gender aspects of the water and sanitation crisis. The site is informative with news updates, a calendar of events, and partnership information. Click on the news tab, then 'of interest' and then explore from there! Under latest news, the article, "WECF seminar puts Europe's sanitation problem on agenda," stated that twenty to twenty-three million Europeans lack safe sanitary facilities. Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) have reported that forty percent of Romanians do not have access to safe sanitation, and plan to make sanitation a priority. I think the "Bottled Water news and publications" section has great news bits. The "First degradable 'bio-bottle'," describes a new natural plastic bottle made of a material called 'Ingeo' which uses fermented plants' sugar instead of petroleum. This new material uses sixty-seven percent less fossil fuels and decreases carbon dioxide emissions. Another bonus of this new bottle is that when it is properly disposed of, it will completely decompose in about eighty days! Hopefully we will see these new bottles on store shelves soon!

<http://womenforwater.org/openbaar/pagina.php?sitedeelID=1>

8. UNICEF's Water, Environment and Sanitation Newslines has a few new articles and a long list of archives. Two articles from August worth reading are, "Villagers tap the rain to improve health

and hygiene near quake-affected Yogyakarta," and "Campaign aims to promote hand-washing and save young lives in Malawi." The first article gives details about new methods people in Indonesia are implementing to harvest and store rainwater safely. UNICEF and other organizations are building latrines for children with disabilities and teaching residents around Yogyakarta about how to stay healthy using proper hygiene practices. The second article conveys the importance of teaching children about hygiene. Despite the fact that people in Malawi have more access to soap and safe water than most other Africans, diarrhea is still a major cause of death and sickness with young kids. To promote hygienic practices among children, a new campaign was developed using an animated character, named 'SOPO'. This character appears in newspapers, on the radio, and on billboards to promote hand washing after four critical times: before preparing food, before feeding a child, after defecation, and after cleaning a child. In the future, this campaign can hopefully be adopted and adapted to other countries throughout the world.

http://www.unicef.org/wes/index_newsline.html

9. All Africa.com compiles more than 125 African news organizations and over 200 other sources to make it easy to search for top news stories. It's an easy site to use and conveniently separates stories by date and country. There is a separate section on Sustainable Development News and the calendar lists upcoming African events. One article that displays the struggles women sanitation workers have to suffer from is, "Sanitation Workers Repeatedly Start

Work After Deadly Blast.” This article describes how a bomb killed more than twenty people while women were cleaning the streets and the problems they encountered trying to receive medical attention. How can countries make progress when the people who are trying to clean and make a difference are caught in the middle of government battles? The second article, “Govt Conducts Arsenic Test On Potable Water,” concluded that the drinking water sources are indeed free of arsenic contamination in all tested local government areas. The Ogun State Government wanted to test the presence of arsenic in water sources and determine the number of people exposed to this dangerous substance. Proactive measures like this need to be encouraged.

<http://allafrica.com/water/>

10. The Water Information Program is a resource that provides water information to Southwest Colorado. It’s nice to see such a complete site for people in these communities and to know that water is on the minds of Americans! I’d recommend reading, “Rainwater collectors work to ease shortages,” and “Indians’ water rights give hope for better health.” The first article explains how some people, especially those living in states where water is scarce, are turning to rainwater harvesting for simple needs like watering flowers, washing cars, etc. San Francisco is now trying to give incentives to those who conserve water by collecting rain. Workshops, rebates, and discounts on water catchment tanks are all lures to get people to collect rain water. Even buildings are being designed to catch rain water! This is a great start for some,

and it’s good to see more and more people becoming aware of their water usage and true water needs. The second article tells the story of the Gila River and the Native American community who used to depend on its water. The Gila River was depleted by farmers upstream and the Native Americans suffered the consequences. They were given food rations by the Federal Government which only triggered a high rate of obesity and diabetes. Finally, the Native Americans are getting at least some of their water back after years of legal action. The Gila River is still mostly dry, but the Native Americans will receive water from canals and culverts. They even have the option of leasing some of the water to cities. Now the problem is trying to teach a generation of fast food the traditional ways of farming and combating current diseases.

<http://waterinfo.org/in-the-news>

11. The Integrated Regional Information Network has a few noteworthy articles. “Benin: Recurrent cholera still not a priority,” reveals that at least fifty cholera cases have been recorded in the capital of Benin since July 24th. These cases are mostly found in neighborhoods with no indoor plumbing, waste disposal services, or clean drinking water. The government set up a treatment center but as the World Health Organization stated, health officials are not the only ones responsible for this epidemic. People in these communities need to fight the disease by practicing basic hygiene. Education is key to combating the current problems and preventing them in the future. The second article, “Uganda: Poor hygiene fuelling Hepatitis in north,” reports a lack of sanitation and

bad hygiene caused the spread of Hepatitis E in several districts. The Health Minister said that the biggest problems are poor personal and domestic hygiene, improper disposal of feces, and lack of access to clean water. Women, especially those who are pregnant, are much more likely to die from this disease. The main aspect of the plan to overcome this disease is to educate the people about hygiene, monitor those infected, and construct more latrines. The third article, "Yemen: Alarm bells over water," discusses how the government has no idea how to deal with the deteriorating water availability problem. A lack of public awareness, high fertility rate, cultivation of 'qat', and rapid urbanization intensify the water shortage which affects eighty percent of the country. Yemen needs to take immediate action and develop a strategy to manage water use.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79807>

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79682>

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79819>

12. The World Water Council highlights the World Water Week in Stockholm with some video clips. On the left-hand column there are different topics listed, such as, programs, the upcoming and past world water forums, water at a glance, and news. In particular, under News, and then Blue News, read the, "Manila Declaration on Women, Water and Waste," and under Programs, read, "Virtual Water." The first article was from the International Symposium on Women, Water and Waste. The Manila

Declaration developed seven Principles with the goal of reaffirming the Millennium Development Goals #3, #7, and #8. The Principles recognize the vital role of gender issues in sustainable development and the environment. The second article is another summary of virtual water. Trading involves a virtual flow of water from exporting to importing countries. Importing goods that require a lot of water for production is one effective way to save water, especially for countries with a very limited water supply. Countries become dependent on one another and these exchanges can be the basis for peace or conflict. As the water crisis becomes more intense, virtual water will be an essential element in finding resolutions.

<http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=709>

13. BBC World Service travels throughout the world in the name of water. Read about groups of people who struggle to find water for daily survival. In particular, you can learn about Bangladesh, Calcutta, El Paso, Nairobi, Ethiopia, and Kenya. There are audio clips from the radio series that took place a few years ago, but are fascinating to listen to. These stories from all over the world encompass many of the issues water affects, including, gender, health, poverty, privatization, and daily struggles in getting water that may or may not be safe to drink. If you click on the two tabs at the top of the page, "Rural Solutions," and "Urban Solutions," you can see some techniques specific countries use to collect, store, treat, or research water. The BBC News article entitled, "Sanitation aid heads for Darfur," announced the British charity, Oxfam's delivery of sanitation and water

equipment to Darfur. The charity is working to build toilets since the heavy rains push disease borne human excrement around the refugee camps and could create a cholera epidemic. The water and sanitation equipment is helping save lives.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/1228_waterwalks/page7.shtml

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/3532704.stm

14. “Waste not, want not,” from the Economist examines wastewater irrigation and its use around the world. The International Water Management Institute looked at fifty-three cities in the developing world and found that more than two-thirds irrigated agricultural land with wastewater. Some cities do not treat sewage and use it directly on their crops which can easily spread disease. However, over one million farmers support themselves by growing crops using this method, which happens to be particularly beneficial to women, who make up more than seventy percent of farmers. In Ghana a tenth of the population buys vegetables grown with wastewater, which would be much more expensive if wastewater wasn’t used. There are obvious health problems that can be caused from using wastewater on crops, but it would be impossible to ban this use when so many communities now depend upon it. The best thing to do is minimize the risks of using wastewater and educate the consumers to thoroughly wash their produce.

http://www.economist.com/daily/columns/greenview/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11951255&fsrc=nwl

15. “Penn doesn’t end at graduation,” is an article from the Daily Pennsylvanian by a recent Penn grad who works with PGWI! Arushi Sharma related her struggle of what to do after graduation when she got an email from a Wharton student asking for assistance with a PGWI project. She gave PGWI some great compliments claiming we are, “A big deal, bigger than a typical extracurricular activity one would partake in over four years...” Arushi went on to describe the history of water in Philadelphia and also highlighted PGWI projects and accomplishments. She was pleased that even after graduating, Penn remained a strong part of her life and world through PGWI.

<http://media.www.dailypennsylvanian.com/media/storage/paper882/news/2008/08/28/Opinion/Arushi.Sharma.Penn.Doesnt.End.At.Graduation-3406087.shtml>

Highlight of the Month:

- Aldo Magazzeni, founder and director of Traveling Mercies recently visited Kenya and Afghanistan. He wrote several reports of his experience, work, and thoughts. Brandi and Stan Lippincott were kind enough to make the site, travelingmercies.org, available at no cost. Please visit this website and click on the stories tab, “Aldo’s Recollections” and then, “Arriving in Afghanistan” to learn about his efforts and journey. Explore the other sections of the site; there are great pictures and archives of past projects, as well as current endeavors! Aldo is beginning new work in Mexico, Kenya, and Afghanistan and will continue to

keep PGWI informed.
Congratulations Aldo on your successful trips, and keep up the inspiring work!

<http://www.travelingmercies.org/>

Recent Developments:

- PGWI is now part of GoodSearch! This is a search engine powered by Yahoo! Search, which allows you to browse the web, and as a bonus, every search donates one cent to PGWI! GoodSearch donates fifty percent of its revenue from its advertisers to the charity you choose, without costing PGWI, or you anything! Please only use this site for legitimate searches, however, as any fraudulent searches will cause PGWI to be delisted from the site. If you go to: <http://www.goodsearch.com> you will come to their homepage and see a place to type in whatever you're searching for – whether you want to search the web, images, videos, or shopping, you can do it all on GoodSearch which is comparable to any other search engine! Before you complete your search, make sure to go to the drop-down box that says above it “Who do you GoodSearch for?” and scroll to find the Philadelphia Global Water Initiative – PGWI (Philadelphia, PA)! Now, you can search the web as usual, come up with the same great results as any other search engine, and each search you complete while using GoodSearch donates one cent to PGWI! There is even a little yellow button below the box where you choose what organization to GoodSearch for that permits you to see how much PGWI has raised! Think about it, if everyone involved

in PGWI uses GoodSearch two times a day, we could easily collect at least a few dollars a day, which will add up very quickly! This is a great and extremely simple way that PGWI can raise money on a daily basis, so join in and please use GoodSearch!

- The 5th World Water Forum being held in Istanbul, Turkey from March 16-22 2009 is considered to be the main event in the ‘water’ world. The goal is to decisively make water an international priority. It is, “A stepping stone towards global collaboration on water problems, the Forum offers the water community and policy-and-decision- makers from all over the world the unique opportunity to come together to create links, debate and attempts to find solutions to achieve water security.” Check out their website for more information, agendas, and details on how to get involved! <http://www.worldwaterforum5.org/>
- October 15, 2008 is “Global Hand-Washing Day!” As you know, a proper hand washing regime could reduce incidences of diarrhea by 40% or more in developing countries. Perhaps PGWI and the University of Pennsylvania could collaborate to use this day to raise awareness on campus! Check for future updates!

Reminders and Updates:

- Ten students and Professor Laskowski from the University of Pennsylvania’s Master of Environmental Studies Program traveled to Stockholm, Sweden to participate in the World Water Week. The experience itself was outstanding, but the people,

seminars, and information were invaluable. For more information and materials from the conference check out the World Water Week website.

<http://www.worldwaterweek.org>

- Use the Water Events Worldwide website from UNESCO to keep track of upcoming happenings! There are useful summaries of each event, as well as location, contact, and date information. There were a few interesting events in August you should be aware of, one being the World Water Week in Stockholm. September is packed with great things all over the world so browse their websites for more information and participation details!

http://www.unesco.org/water/water_events/Date/2008/

- If anyone has an article, website, photo, or anything PGWI would be interested in, please submit it to me by email! It may be included in the next newsletter!
- Do your part! Get your family and friends involved – spread the word and have them sign up for the PGWI Newsletter to promote awareness and engage in the efforts!
- Start using GoodSearch! Tell your family and friends about it to start raising funds for PGWI with a simple internet search – something most people do on a day to day basis!

Resources:

- Philadelphia Global Water Initiative
<http://www.pgwi.net>
- GoodSearch
<http://www.goodsearch.com>
- World Water Week: Stockholm 2008
<http://www.worldwaterweek.org>

- 5th World Water Forum: Istanbul 2009
<http://www.worldwaterforum5.org>

Interesting Fact:

- In 2006, the United Nations Human Development Report stated that at any given time, half of the world's hospital beds are occupied by patients suffering from a water-related disease.

Water Proverb of the Month:

- The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives. - American Indian Saying



Tearfund relief teams teach kids how to be healthy in Darfur.

- <http://www.tearfund.org/News/Darfur/Darfur+four+years+on.htm>

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