



Dr. Juliet Waterkeyn,
Africa AHEAD



Convenors from Africa AHEAD
and Stockholm Environment Institute



Caroline Ochieng,
Stockholm Environment Institute

A UNITED FRONT

HOW COMMUNITY HEALTH GROUPS ARE IMPROVING HYGIENE

TEXT | JONATHAN ANDREWS PHOTO | THOMAS HENRIKSON

Representatives from Africa AHEAD, a pioneer of the community-led approach to improving hygiene and disease prevention, revealed in yesterday's opening session how community health clubs are helping reduce transmission of diseases via water through promotion of better sanitation and hygiene. The organisation's health care clubs in Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Uganda encouraging achieve long-term behavioural change, particularly due to women's involvement.

"We take it for granted that a community is a formatted group but we found that we need to develop a common vision, a common unity, and not take it for granted," said Dr. Juliet Waterkeyn of Africa AHEAD.

Loosely inspired by the Boy Scouts organisation in terms of task completion, the health care clubs create a sense of belonging that foster value creation. Each community health club is made up of between 50 to 150 people, where they meet weekly for six months or more discussing a new health topic each week. A culture of hygiene is created which is reinforced by positive peer pressure, with each member of the club receiving a certificate on completion.

"Previously we have focussed on the behaviour without addressing the values," said Dr. Waterkeyn. "If you do the values first, the behaviour will come naturally."

Although aimed at all members of the community, including men and younger adults, Dr. Waterkeyn did admit that women made up the majority of the clubs.

"They are not mothers' unions or clubs, but hygiene is something that comes more naturally to women when bringing up their children," she said. "We need more men to become involved either through the village chief or by bringing in couples."

The key role of women was also recognised by Dr. Caroline Ochieng from the Stockholm Environment Institute, who presented a pilot project currently in development in Kenya, which uses financial incentives to improve hygiene and reduce the country's high maternal mortality rate.

The Afya Credit Intervention was developed in response to low attendance

rates of pregnant mothers in ante and postnatal care. Small payments will be made to women who make regular visits to their health care practitioner to help set in motion a long-term behavioural path for health care in general.

"Maternal care is a very good avenue for bringing in other interventions," said Dr. Ochieng. "Whether it's health,

education, or clean water and sanitation, it provides a very good opportunity for getting in contact with women to

"Maternal care is a very good avenue for bringing in other interventions"

offer these services."

The pilot project is awaiting a final ethics approval process after which it will be ready for launch. The idea of using Africa AHEAD's community health clubs was raised by Dr. Ochieng to function as a form of lottery within the club.

"If we offered this to everyone it would be very expensive," she said. "Maybe if we could link it with the community health clubs, a lottery could become a further reward for participating in the clubs." ●



WATER SAFETY NEEDS MONITORING

With nearly 2 billion people globally using a source of drinking water that has faecal contamination, attendees at yesterday's evening session *Post 2015: Target on "Universal Access to Drinking Water"* – *What Water Quality?* heard how there is an urgent need for a monitoring mechanism for the safety of drinking water.

"I have analysed the current MDG framework and in particular the issue of quality in relation to water and sanitation," said Catarina de Albuquerque, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation. "There has been one constant conclusion and obstacle that I have been faced with: the issue of quality. When governments tell you that they are MDG heroes because they have decreased the amount

of people without access to water and sanitation by 50 percent, I say 'that is not enough.'"

According to de Albuquerque the current target does not measure quality and refers to it as safe access to water or sanitation but this is not always the case.

"It justifies inaction, as if a government is of the opinion that they have finished by reaching the MDG target, then there is no further incentive to do more," added de Albuquerque.

Integrating universal access to drinking water and basic sanitation into the Post-2015 Agenda is a priority for the water sector community. At the same time, the current MDG monitoring does not fully capture whether water is really safe to drink.

"There is currently no global monitoring mechanism on drinking water safety and the number of people using unsafe water is underestimated by many," said Gérard Payen, Member of the United Nations Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB). "1.8 billion people globally use a source of drinking water that is faecally contaminated and so it is essential that the Sustainable Development Goal Target that is adopted is understood by all as targeting water that is really safe. UN-Water needs to communicate more visibly on the number of people using unsafe water."

FOUR COUNTRIES SIGN UP TO LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Four additional countries have ratified two UN water conventions that support transboundary water cooperation, delegates heard yesterday, at a seminar on progress since World Water Week last year.

Montenegro joined a total of 40 countries that have now ratified the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Water Convention with the United Kingdom, Vietnam and Montenegro ratifying the UN Watercourses Convention.

"Transboundary river basins cover 46 percent of the land surface of the world in which 40 percent of the world's population live," said Nicholas Bonvoisin from UNECE. "We cannot foresee secure water resources for all without transboundary water cooperation."

Representatives from both bodies have also pushed for the inclusion of transboundary water cooperation in the upcoming negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals in September.

"Of course we have to see whether that reference will survive the negotiations," added Bonvoisin. "But few believed that we would get this far. Our hopes are very much raised."



AGENDA UNVEILED FOR SEVENTH WORLD WATER FORUM

Yangjin Oh, Director for International Cooperation on the National Committee of the 2015 World Water Forum, revealed at yesterday's lunchtime side event that the seventh World Water Forum is now open to registrations ahead of next year's gathering in April 2015.

A second stakeholders' consultation meeting took place in Gyeongju, South Korea on 27 and 28 February attracting 725 participants from 54 countries with 16 themes selected for the programme. These will be discussed across seven regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Mediterranean and Arab region and an Economically Water Insecure region.

"Concluding session roadmaps will be carried out in the forum week and the implementation roadmaps will be assessed regularly and you will see the results at the 8th Forum in Brazil," said Oh.

NUMBER OF THE DAY

115

THE NUMBER OF LITRES OF IRRIGATION WATER NEEDED TO PRODUCE JUST ONE BANANA IN NICARAGUA (SOURCE: URS HEIERLI, SOPAS)



Malin Falkenmark,
Stockholm International Water Institute and Stockholm Resilience Centre

STEMMING THE TIDE

WATER LOSSES CRITICAL DUE TO URBANISATION

TEXT | NICK MICHELL PHOTO | THOMAS HENRIKSON

In a rapidly urbanising world the improvement of rainwater management is vital to eradicating hunger and poverty in dry climate regions, attendees heard yesterday at the Malin Falkenmark Seminar: *Managing Centres of Booming Water Expectations in Basins and Regions of Change*. “Food production in dryland regions is highly reliant on rain, which is limited, highly valuable, unreliable and unpredictable,” said Prof. Malin Falkenmark of Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and Stockholm Resilience Centre. “However the potential remains to drastically improve food production by preventing the large amount of water losses and improving sustainable rainwater management. There is far too big a gap between the current food production yield per hectare and the potential yield and there should be an adoption of sustainable watershed management practices.”

Most rapid population growth is occurring in the water short regions of the world, such as sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. There are frequent reports of urban water shortages, with problems caused by high per capita use, leakages, pollution, drought, climate change and untreated sewers. Falkenmark explained

that while cities may be engines of economic growth, the predicted urban population of 6.2 billion by 2050 will put huge demands on water. Its supply is key to socioeconomic development and inefficient water supply services will be a hindrance to economic growth.

“Just to meet the MDGs on this issue requires a 2,000 km³ increase per year of freshwater use and we know we need to increase food production by 50 to 60 percent to feed 9 billion people increasingly living in urban regions,” said Dr. Johan Rockström of the Stockholm Resilience Centre. “We must reconfigure water resource management towards building resilience of our water supply systems as they are increasingly vulnerable to the pressures of both land, water, ecosystem management and climate change.”

Limited water resources in growing urban areas are having to meet basic, and often expanding water uses in the basin, such as for food and renewable energy, representing considerable challenges. Resilience building will be crucial to secure both long-term health, food, manufacturing, and energy security, and the economic development in urban regions.

“We do not truly understand the interconnectiveness between urban demands and the surrounding natural resource base,” said Rockström. ●



Dr. Juliet Waterkeyn,
Africa AHEAD

AFRICA AHEAD HAS SET UP COMMUNITY HEALTH CLUBS IN ZIMBABWE, RWANDA AND UGANDA TO IMPROVE HYGIENE THROUGH DISCUSSION OF HEALTH TOPICS

Do community health clubs also work in urban areas?

We have started over 400 community health clubs in former settlements in and around Cape Town. It's more of a challenge in urban areas but it's not impossible.

Do women face resistance from their husbands?

In the beginning some husbands might say, 'Oh you are just going to that talkfest and waste time'. This resistance then changes and the husbands actually encourage their wives to go to the meetings as they see the improvements at home and appreciate it.

What other barriers exist to forming the clubs?

In the community itself they take to it like ducks to water. It's with the middle management and districts that take time to advocate, sometimes up to six months. We need to factor more time in here for this.

MARKET SYSTEMS WILL HELP SCALE UP SOLUTIONS

TEXT | RICHARD FORSTER PHOTO | THOMAS HENRIKSON

In creating products and technology for the more efficient use of energy and water, Tim Prewitt of International Development Entreprises (iDE) revealed that first you must begin with a human centred design approach in terms of making the technology attractive to smallholder farmers.

Speaking at the session *Tackling Tradeoffs Between Water and Energy Across Sectors and Scales*, Prewitt said that treadle pumps, which had worked very well in Bangladesh, were not welcomed by farmers in Ghana.

“Farmers are just like everyone else and have aspirational purchases they want to make, so with the treadle pump

they didn’t want to pump water, they wanted to use diesel,” said Prewitt.

The second part of the challenge is to work on price and how you get the product to market and delivered to scale. He explained that he had just returned from Burkino Faso where commission only salesmen had boosted sales of irrigation kits to farmers.

“He is not an NGO guy but he only earns when someone buys the drip irrigation kit from him which is a pure private sector approach and we have already hit 4,000 farmers,” said Prewitt. “So while we have a lot of work to do, you can see the fundamental design of a system that can pull it through.” ●



TIM PREWITT, iDE

WORLD WATER WEEK VOICES

WHAT IS YOUR AIM IN ATTENDING WORLD WATER WEEK?



Alvaro Borges de Almeida
Motta, Petrobras, Brazil

“I came to better understand the relationship between energy and water as it is important to look at those two things as a whole. I was looking at a report on the Internet and I found out there would be a session here on the report.”



Leung Chung Lap,
Government of Hong Kong SAR

“I represent the Water Supplies Department of Hong Kong and I am here to see the up-to-date developments in this part of the world and how we can extend our network here in terms of the nexus between energy and water.”



Sudheer Gupta,
Simon Fraser University, Canada

“This is a unique event which brings all the experts in the field here so it is a very good way to get up to date on what is happening, what is new, what works and what doesn’t work.”



Rozwi Magoba,
University of Western Cape, South Africa

“Networking. It is a good place for a young water scientist for networking. I am here to look for research opportunities as I am starting my PhD next year so I need to know what is going on for my studies.”



Johanna Wikander,
Skanska, Sweden

“I am coming here to get some new perspectives as my responsibility is for climate change and water supporting strategy development within our green agenda.”



Rochi Khemka, 2030 Water Resources Group, India

“To understand what other organisations are doing in this space and to showcase WRG’s work around the globe. And in line with this year’s theme, the water-energy nexus, to see how we feed that back into the work we are doing.”

DIGITAL UPDATES

Don’t forget to check in with us for digital updates throughout the day, and engage with us on social media. The online programme is available on programme.worldwaterweek.org

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