

**Water Issues Assignment 1**  
**Meteorology 1010**  
**Dr. Dastrup**  
**June 2012**

I really enjoyed the 10 minute We are WaterAid video. The video highlighted the need to bring education and sustainable practices to people in the world who have limited clean water supplies. The first people who were shown were people from the Kamdaoto Village in Africa who had children dying due to unhealthy water and unsanitary water practices. One of the most important devices that was introduced to these people was the simple rope pump. This inexpensive, simple to use pump provides access to a deeper, clean water supply. Also, by educating these African people, they were able to make policies and decisions concerning their water use and distribution. These guidelines will assure healthy clean water for their villages and families for years to come. The second people, in Nepal, were taught about healthy hygiene practices; how to make and use soap, how to wash their hands before they eat, how to keep their bodies, clothes and dishes clean. Several interviews with the women of the villages document that they have had less health issues and this means less money is spent on medicine and they people have more time and money to devote to a higher standard of living. Much of the education is provided by hands on building of outhouses and pumps that provide a healthy, sustainable way of life for these people. Education at the local level through simple drawings teaches everyone in the villages about sanitary practices and safe water collection and use so that all the people are aware of how to avoid sickness and how to be healthy. WaterAid is an advocacy group working at local and national levels to promote clean water, hygiene and public awareness about water issues to fight water born disease and bring about health and dignity to some of the world's poorest peoples.

Health is Wealth –I learned that Nigeria is the most densely populated county in Africa and that most of these people live without proper sanitation. WaterAid has been successful in educating Nigerian people to build latrines, proper water infrastructure, and the dangers of drinking of contaminated water. The video explained how discussions of proper toilet use and sanitation was the first step in educating the Nigerians about how excrement gets into their food and water. Most people did not realize why they were getting sick. It is an effort to educate the whole community; a total sanitation approach. Everyone must participate for total success. When every member of the community had their own toilet, the disease and sickness stopped. This brought about economic development because the people are able to work and produce. I thought this video really targeted some of the foundational problems that a community can have if they don't have access to clean water.

Liquid Gold – Access to safe water brings about local community prosperity. People have money to spend beyond the essentials when a community has safe drinking water. Ten years ago safe water pumps were built and this film documents the economic developments when people have safe access to clean water. This video documents people in Tanzania. Most of the people have to make long and tiring trips to get water for their families. When people don't have access to safe water, they also must spend much of their money on medicine because of sickness. Close, local water has a profound effect on the lives of the people. There are many benefits. One example is a woman who has opened a café because she now has time. There are lasting economic benefits for the whole community. A lack of water also affects the people's education. This video explicitly showed that school attendance is linked to clean water and proper sanitation. With proper education, people can improve their situations. It all starts with clean, local water. This one thing, clean, accessible water, changes everything for the Tanzanian people. The economic and health benefits of clean, accessible water cannot be understated.

Mapping in Malawi - Malawi is one of the poorest countries in Africa. Water related diseases are common here. One in eight children will die of water related diseases. Adults only live to about 40 years old. WaterAid relief was started in 1999. The first problems were that no one had information about where the water points were located. Using GPS WaterAid was able to map the water points and relate it to the populations and calculate where new water points were most needed. Once these communities are

found, then the villages can be educated and proper wells installed. Hygiene education is another important factor to help keep the water clean. Ecologic latrines are built and used. The compost that is made can be used to fertilize the crops. There have been many advances from the WaterAid efforts. The transformation on many of the communities has been great. The stench of fecal matter alone was lowering their quality of life. The fertilizers help their crops and the clean accessible water has helped the communities to lead healthier, longer and more productive lives. This video made me more aware of how many different technologies can be employed to help people. The use of GPS and ecologic toilets is changing the ways that we can help people to plan for where to put wells and how to manage their human waste products to benefit their communities.

Simple Solutions – Safe water and basic sanitation are human rights. Lack of water causes disease, conflict, poverty and death. WaterAid's mission is to enable people to gain access to safe water and hygiene education. The goal is to help people overcome poverty and lead healthy and productive lives. Our world will be a better place if clean, healthy water is available to all people!

Kyle,

I like how you contrast your experience of living in a country where clean water and sanitation are taken for granted as a basic human right here in the United States and how the people living in the poorest countries in the world aren't even aware that their practices are causing the diseases that are killing them. Also, you mention that you don't even have to leave your own home to access clean water whereas some people walk several kilometers to get water that may or may not be clean. You then point out that some of the water problems can be fixed fairly simply and cheaply. A good example is the rope pump. With the simple and inexpensive rope pump, people are able to access clean water, close to home. This simple solution has revolutionized many villages and saved many lives. People have more time because they aren't sick all of the time and they don't have to travel so far to get the water. They inherently have more money because they don't have to get expensive medicines. Their children live past five years old so they are able to carry some of the family responsibilities and make families more productive.

You pointed out that WaterAid is educating people to work smarter instead of harder to find solutions to their water and sanitation problems. One solution is to use technologies like GPS to map the water sources and thereby provide villages with vital information about resource availability. You also mention that WaterAid first makes observations and then provides information and education. Not all water problems can be fixed in the same ways and it seems like WaterAid is trying to provide the best solutions to fit the most pressing needs.

Ashlynn,

You bring up several important points in your essay. I really like how you stressed the fact that WaterAid is not a handout, but that it is a tool that is being used to empower the local people. The people are educated by WaterAid and then the local people raise and donate money to help further education, build appropriate infrastructure, and implement the programs that need to get started. The true beauty of this program is that the people are then able to take care of themselves and hopefully teach their neighbors and future generations. It is the same philosophy that is behind the idea that you can feed people or you can teach them how to grow their own food. The later has lasting and life changing value. I think you have hit on the true importance of the WaterAid program and that is that the people will ultimately be able to carry on by themselves and their world will be changed for the better without further intervention. That is true help.

I really like how you tie in our water use, or misuse, here in the state of Utah. We live in a nation that takes almost everything for granted. Water is a basic human need and you are right to point out that here in Utah, the second driest state (second to Nevada), we make almost no effort to conserve water. Your observation that in the future we will have to conserve water here in the desert will surely happen. As each person and student learns more about our natural resources and the need to conserve them, hopefully people will make better decisions that will ultimately help to make the world a better place for everyone. Dr. Seuss was a man ahead of his time. In the book *The Lorax*, the Lorax states, "Unless someone cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to change it's not."