



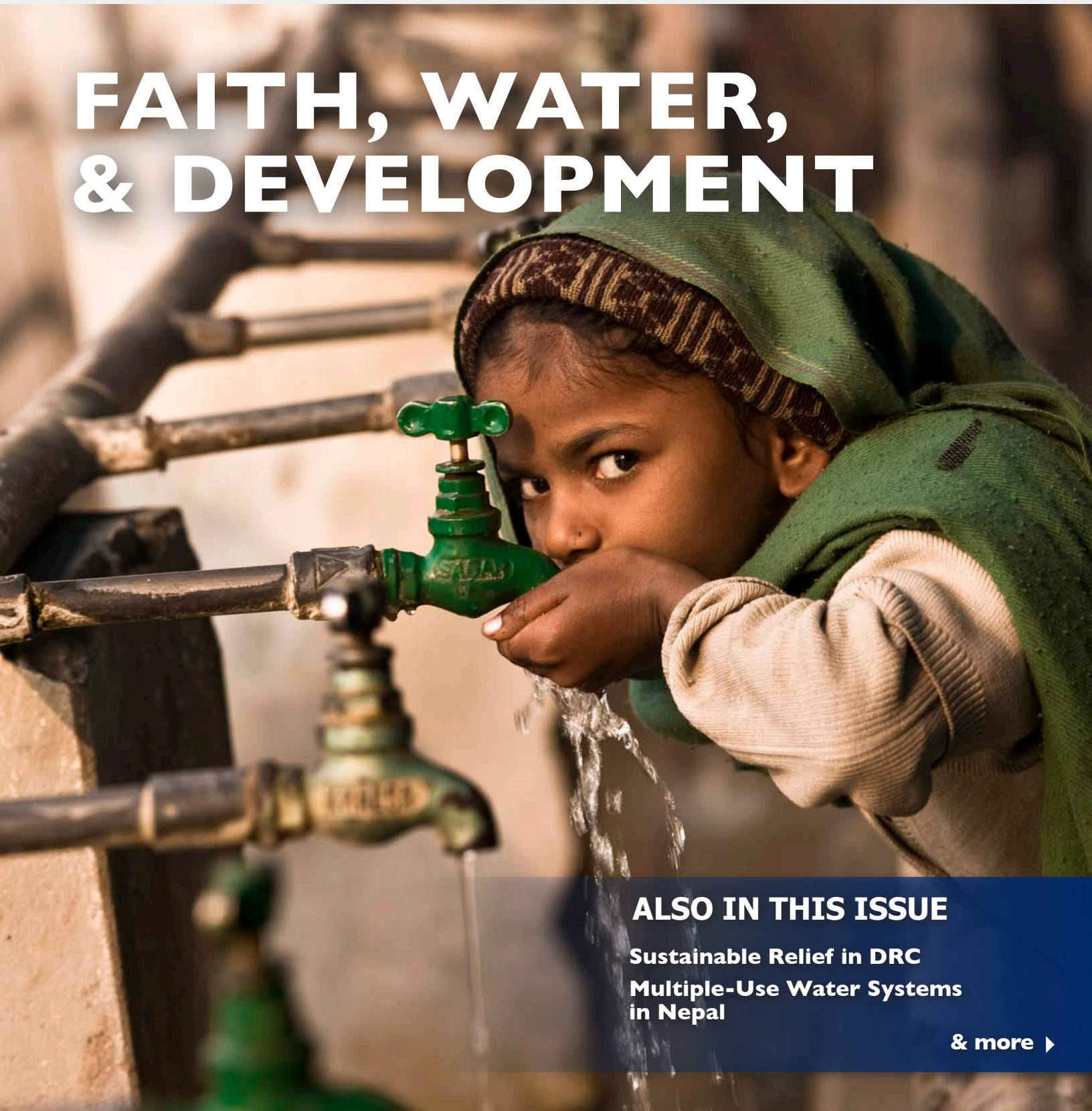
**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**  
[www.usaid.gov/global-waters](http://www.usaid.gov/global-waters)

# GLOBALWATERS

VOLUME IV ISSUE III SEPTEMBER 2013

## FAITH, WATER, & DEVELOPMENT



### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

**Sustainable Relief in DRC**  
**Multiple-Use Water Systems**  
**in Nepal**

& more ►





**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**W**orld Water Week 2013 is upon us, and the international water community will once again gather to cooperate on water issues for greater impact. Now is the ideal time to look at innovative approaches and effective partnerships that can help us achieve a water-secure future.

Our cover story takes a closer look at how cooperation with faith-based communities is helping to promote efficient water use, stamp out water-borne disease, and foster peace. “It has never been more important for secular and religious organizations around the world to step up and cooperate,” writes USAID Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Director J. Mark Brinkmoeller in this issue’s Perspectives piece. With centuries of experience helping the vulnerable, faith-based community groups are critical partners in efforts to make the world a better place. The stories are inspiring: Hindu and Muslim religious leaders working together with secular leaders to eradicate polio in India, Egyptian Sheikhs preaching about water conservation in their Friday sermons, and Kenyan Christians and Muslims fostering peaceful coexistence by digging wells, building water pumps, and working together to govern water resources.

The USAID Water and Development Strategy stresses integrated approaches that address the competing demands of multiple water users, including households, communities, agriculture, and industry. In this issue, we take you inside the villages in Nepal’s Mid-Western region, where USAID introduced multiple use water systems that are boosting water productivity and livelihoods. Now, families are thriving as they spend their time improving their farms instead of collecting water.

Integrated approaches are also necessary when addressing devastating crises such as the food, water, health, and security crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo. To provide sustainable relief to conflict-affected victims in this war-torn country, USAID is simultaneously working to improve WASH and healthcare in camps for displaced people, repair damaged infrastructure, support local farmers with training, and bring hope to the country.

We hope you enjoy this issue. Happy World Water Week!

*The Water Office*  
waterteam@usaid.gov



**RALLYING AROUND FAITH:** Members of the Zambia Council of Churches march to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS.

Photo Credit: Center for Communication Programs, Courtesy of Photoshare

06  
On  
The  
Waterfront

Faith, Water, and  
Development



12  
In  
Focus

Improving  
Efficiency with  
Multiple-Use  
Systems in Nepal



16  
Real  
Impact

Building a More  
Secure Society  
in the DRC



10  
Currents

- ▶ Global Water Initiative Promotes Sustainable Watershed Management in East Africa
- ▶ World Vision Builds a Framework for Behavior Change
- ▶ EnterpriseWorks Introduces Domestic Rainwater Harvesting Product

**Global Waters Staff:**

Celia Zeilberger  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
Caitlin Wixted  
*Production Coordinator*  
Amy Gambrell  
*Editor*

**Research:**

Cydney Gumann  
Sue Hoye

**Contributing Writers:**

Katie Unger Baillie

**Graphic Design:**

Six Half Dozen

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by ME&A.



# Extending Our Reach:

## Faith-Based Partnerships and Development

By J. Mark Brinkmoeller



For over five decades, USAID has been working with countries around the world to help the earth's vulnerable populations. Whether combating floods or droughts, food insecurity or infant mortality, we have seen the necessity of cooperation. Some of our most productive partnerships have been with small, local grassroots organizations that have the closest contact with those in need—groups like indigenous governing bodies, neighborhood clinics, local hospitals, and faith-based community groups.

Faith-based groups in particular are increasingly relevant partners because they are integrally intertwined with human daily life around the globe. Over 80 percent of people practice a religion, over half of the world's schools are faith-affiliated, and many health facilities in the world's poorest areas are associated with faiths.

Religious institutions exist in virtually every community in the world. They are respected, bringing trusted knowledge, values, and skills to communities that many other institutions cannot reach. In the developing world, faith leaders are working tirelessly to improve access to clean and safe water to combat poverty and alleviate disease among their followers. Since 2000, joint efforts to meet the

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for greater access to water and sanitation have brought development and faith organizations together to address pervasive health and environmental issues around water. It is this kind of cooperation that led to the remarkable achievement of improving access to water two years ahead of the MDG target.

For an example of faith's reach, take a look at the slums of Nairobi, Kenya, where over 70 percent of people get their basic healthcare from faith-based organizations and hospitals. Islamic groups and Christian groups work alongside secular development organizations there to bring clean and safe water to the most vulnerable, helping families and communities to thrive.

Within the United States, faith-based groups not only work on specific projects to help bring water to millions of people, but they also speak out and raise awareness on the importance

of water issues. The Grammy Award-winning band Jars of Clay joined the launch of USAID's Water and Development strategy by video during their world tour.

Faith-based groups are effective partners because they have spent hundreds of years gathering knowledge and cultivating trust,

and they uniquely affect people's behavior. USAID collaborated with over 30 faith-based groups on our Child Survival Call to Action, when we together declared, "Every Child Deserves a 5th Birthday." Organizations like Islamic Relief USA, Catholic Relief Services, Episcopal Relief & Development, and the Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty have adopted this rallying cry and joined forces

with us to prevent diarrheal diseases, promote good nutrition, and bring safe water, sanitation, and hygiene to children under 5.

In the field, faith leaders are especially key. In conflict-ridden

**FAITH-BASED GROUPS NOT ONLY WORK ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS TO HELP BRING WATER TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, BUT THEY ALSO SPEAK OUT AND RAISE AWARENESS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER ISSUES.**



**AGENTS FOR CHANGE:** Dan Haseltine, lead singer of multi-platinum Christian rock band Jars of Clay, supported the U.S. Water and Development Strategy launch and started the grassroots organization Blood: Water Mission to empower communities to fight the HIV/AIDS and water crises in Africa.

*Photo Credit: David Bergman/Corbis*

and water-scarce Yemen, imams who received training supported by USAID teach mothers and children important hygiene messages. In Indonesia, Paengajian As-Salaam, a Muslim women's prayer group supported by USAID, distributes Air RahMat, a chemical solution that purifies water. In Cambodia, monks teach important disease prevention measures like hand washing and provide HIV/AIDS care. And last year, we supported a workshop that trained Christian, Muslim, and Hindu leaders from sub-Saharan Africa on topics

like sustainable water resources management and water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools, leading to over 25 new long-term plans. Now, leaders from these different faiths are working throughout the continent toward goals like teaching water harvesting in Nigeria's Catholic schools and creating "ecosques" throughout Ethiopia.

These partnerships have been fruitful, but it is time to do more. With climate change intensifying, the world's population swelling, and water resources dwindling, it

has never been more important for secular and religious organizations around the world to step up and cooperate. These partnerships offer the opportunity for greater impact, wider reach, and a lasting future: A future where every family has access to clean water and enough to eat, and every child reaches his or her 5th birthday.

*J. Mark Brinkmoeller is the director of the USAID Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.*



**PARTNERING FOR WASH:** Children line up to wash their hands in Kibera, a slum outside of Nairobi, Kenya, where Christian and Muslim groups work alongside secular development organizations to increase access to WASH.

*Photo Credit: Christy Gillmore*



**RIVERS OF CHANGE:** Women pray in the Ganges River in India. Water is central to many faiths, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.

Photo Credit: Pranab Chandra, Courtesy of Photoshare



# FAITH, WATER, AND DEVELOPMENT

Millions of Hindus gather to bathe in the Ganges River in India every 12 years. They chant scriptures, sing religious songs, and cleanse themselves in the rivers during “Ardh Kumbh Mela,” the Half Pitcher Festival. Sacred Hindu writings say that this ritual bathing cleanses believers, speeding their way to Nirvana.

Almost 4,000 miles away in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, several million Muslims will sip water from the Zamzam Well as part of the annual Hajj. This well is said to have saved the Prophet Ismail from dying of thirst and to have enabled the holy city of Mecca to thrive in ancient times.

Water is central to most faiths. Christians perform baptisms in water, Judaism prescribes ritual washings, Buddhists present monks with water during funerals, and Zoroastrianism forbids water pollution. Many faiths have deemed certain water sources as sacred – truly the oldest form of environmental protection.

Increasingly, aid organizations are finding that the inverse is also true. Faith-based groups can be essential partners in the quest to bring water to people and boost public health. For more than 50 years, from the smallest villages to vast regions, USAID has been engaging monks, priests, imams, and other religious leaders across the world around

goals that are integral to all faiths: Safe access to water, improved livelihoods, and thriving families.

## PARTNERS FOR GENERATIONS

Today, over 80 percent of people worldwide identify as members of a religious or spiritual community. Religious values and practices are deeply entwined in the fabric of daily lives, and the leaders of churches, mosques, temples, and other religious communities play an important role in shaping attitudes, opinions, and behaviors.

According to USAID’s Assistant Administrator for Global Health



These partnerships have been especially indispensable in the wake of conflicts and natural disasters. After the Arab Spring uprisings in Yemen in 2010, USAID's Responsive Governance Project engaged religious leaders in efforts to promote health and stability. And in the wake of debilitating floods in Pakistan in 2010, USAID/Pakistan's Agriculture Recovery Project was able to reach victims in remote areas by holding meetings in mosques where neighbors gathered and identified the most in need.

During times of political flux, religious institutions can be the most stable development partners on the ground. When a coup destabilized Madagascar in 2009, the U.S. Government stopped providing direct foreign assistance to the Government of Madagascar and instead partnered with churches to promote water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) by educating parishioners, associations of church-going women, scouts, and Sunday school teachers. Mr. Haja, a pastor-in-training there, noted that this partnership proved uniquely effective. "Prior to this, people didn't have the habit of washing their hands after going to the toilet. Now everyone washes their hands," he said.

Dr. Ariel Pablos-Mendez, "Faith communities are essential because of their extensive networks, their credibility and leadership within communities, and their capacity to mobilize significant numbers of volunteers. Put simply, religion has a staying power that we need to get the job done."

The USAID Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (CFBCI) was established by Presidential Executive Order in December 2002 to more effectively facilitate partnerships with faith communities. In just over a decade, CFBCI, in conjunction with other offices at USAID, has been successful in engaging these groups to work together toward common goals.

## REACHING THE MASSES

Because faith groups have spent centuries gaining the trust and love of the people they reach, they are powerful agents of behavior change. In Egypt, USAID's Water and Wastewater Sector Support program engaged local priests and sheikhs to spread messages about water conservation that were rooted in theology. At one meeting held in the Nile-side city of Sohag, the program facilitated a discussion between local sheikhs about references to water in the Koran and the *hadith*, the collection of traditions about the Prophet Mohammed. In one such reference, the Prophet Mohammed sees his companion S'ad using excessive amounts of water while conducting Muslim ritual washings and intervenes saying, "What is this? You are wasting water." When S'ad replies that it is permissible because he was performing his religious duty, the Prophet replied that wasting water is never permissible, "even if you take it from the bank of a rushing river." The sheikhs retold these stories during their Friday sermons, ensuring that these environmental messages spread amongst their followers.



**INTERFAITH BRAINSTORMING:** In Egypt, USAID works with priests and sheikhs to spread water conservation messages.

Photo Credit: WWSS Program





**WATER'S TRIBUTE:** At the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, Saudi Arabia, the second holiest site in Islam, pilgrims drink water from the Zamzam Well from water coolers. The Zamzam Well was said to have saved the Prophet Ismail from dying of thirst and to have enabled early Islamic society to thrive.

Photo Credit: Ikhlasil Amal

In India, USAID found that religious leaders helped to eliminate the deadly waterborne disease polio. When USAID began its ongoing Global Polio Eradication Initiative there in 1997, skeptics spread rumors that vaccinations were harmful. To counter this misinformation, USAID dispatched community mobilizers who joined forces with Hindu and Muslim religious leaders, local and traditional leaders, and community groups. In January 2013, India celebrated two years as polio-free. The campaign was so successful that USAID dispatched this coalition to spread messages about

water, sanitation, handwashing, and other public health issues. Religious leaders have also worked with USAID to fight polio in Yemen, Nigeria, and other countries.

Schools are another essential place to partner with faiths, as the majority of the world's schools are religiously affiliated. When schools teach lessons about hygiene and environmental conservation, they instill life-long habits. Often, faith-based schools will link these lessons with faith teachings as part of their curriculum, which is reinforced throughout their lives.

In Indonesia, the Darul Ulum Muslim boarding school mobilized local water resources. Students received lessons on *himma*, the Islamic system of natural resource conservation that has been practiced for over 1400 years, and teachers, students, and even neighboring community members stepped up to plant trees, stop pollution, and designate protected areas of rivers. Word spread of the school's success and now a consortium of 19 Muslim boarding schools with over 30,000 students is, with financial support with USAID, working to protect two major national parks through *himma*. "Protecting the environment is a religious duty," explained K.H. Mansyur Ma'mun, leader of the Al-Amanah boarding school in Cililin, Bandung.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES


Sometimes, religious practices can present health and water resource management challenges. But USAID has found that in these situations, working



**COMMITMENT TO CARE:** A healthcare facility in Yemen, where USAID engages faith leaders to promote health and stability.

Photo Credit: C. Martin-Chico, ICRC





**"OFTEN IT IS COMMUNITIES  
OF FAITH AND FAITH-  
BASED ORGANIZATIONS  
THAT ARE THERE WORKING  
WHEN THE REST OF THE  
WORLD HAS FORGOTTEN  
ABOUT PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO  
OTHER PLACE TO TURN."**

**- USAID ADMINISTRATOR RAJIV SHAH**

with religious communities is more important than ever.

Large gatherings of the faithful, like pilgrimages, can pose health risks because of the sheer number of people who come together in one place. But pilgrimages also present an opportunity to effectively spread messages about health to large audiences.

USAID successfully increased health awareness in Touba, Senegal, where 2 million Mouride Sufi Muslims gather annually for the Magal festival. For several years, large crowds, poor sanitation systems, and lack of clean drinking water led to disease outbreaks, including cholera. But in 2010, USAID sent a social marketing team to Touba and two other regional religious festivals to distribute 62,000 Aquatab water purification tablets. Each tablet was able to purify 20 liters of water for less than four cents per liter. The marketing team visited religious leaders, held product demonstrations, conducted radio interviews, and passed out samples during the festival. At that year's festival, for the first time in history,

there were no outbreaks of cholera or other acute diarrheal diseases.

Engaging with faith communities can also help mitigate the negative impacts that result from religious conflicts.

In coastal Kenya, which is plagued by fighting between religious and ethnic groups over water, land, and jobs, USAID's Likoni Water-for-Peace project fostered coexistence through communal water projects, such as clearing sites, digging wells, and constructing water pumps. The project facilitated a community social agreement that outlines roles of the Coastal Inter-faith Council of Clerics, peace-building committees, a water committee, and community water users including elders, women, and youth. Community members transcended ethnic and religious lines to build and maintain the water structures together. "How can you be crosswise with your neighbor when you chat with her at the well; when you manage a project together; when you discuss how best to use this vital water?" said former USAID/Kenya Mission Director Erna Kerst at the project launch.

While there are challenges, faith communities continue to be indispensable partners in USAID's work to make the world a better place. USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah summed it up in a 2012 interview when he said, "We want to do our work, which is about protecting people who are vulnerable around the world and expanding the reach of human dignity, as broadly as possible, and often it is communities of faith and faith-based organizations that are there working when the rest of the world has forgotten about people who have no other place to turn."

*A. Gambrill and C. Zeilberger*

## **More Information**

**USAID/CFBCI newsletter**

**White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships**

**USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah  
PBS Interview about Faith and Development**

## CURRENTS

Water and sanitation professionals work tirelessly to improve health, promote food security, and boost livelihoods. To further USAID's knowledge sharing goals, the Water Office holds learning events that present solutions and challenges common to water programs. In Currents, we share the solutions discussed at the events and others. Email us at [waterteam@usaid.gov](mailto:waterteam@usaid.gov) if you would like your project to be considered for featuring in *Global Waters*.



Photo Credit: EnterpriseWorks

## GLOBAL WATER INITIATIVE PROMOTES SUSTAINABLE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

In parts of Samé District in Tanzania, the rainy season can be brief, and the much-needed water it provides only available for a short time. The resource is so precious and the timing so difficult to predict that some women sleep with their feet in dry riverbeds to ensure that if water comes at night they won't miss a single drop.

This district illustrates how variety in a watershed presents different management challenges for smallholder farmers based on their location upstream or downstream. Those at the top work to capture what water they can before it rushes (often with great force) downstream, where floods can be devastating. Competition for the limited resource at both ends and in the middle calls for strong management, particularly given the increasingly variable rainfall.

The Global Water Initiative (GWI), a partnership of international NGOs funded by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, is working in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and

Uganda to make water use for smallholder farmers more equitable and sustainable. A key aspect of their work is strengthening user participation, planning, and decision-making in water management. In Samé District, GWI has helped to establish a Learning and Practice Alliance with key government, community, research institutions, and non-government stakeholders to help explore, share, and scale up best practices in water management by working with select champion farmers, particularly women farmers. Building on principles of integrated water resources management (IWRM), the project uses a micro-watershed as a focal area and implements a series of action research activities on water management for smallholder farmers. Learning, including a better understanding of investment needs, will be shared widely at the district, national, and regional levels, helping to enhance farmer resilience and increase food security.

For more information on this project and other GWI projects highlighted during USAID's June 28, 2013 learning event, visit USAID's Water Learning and Sharing [website](#).



## WORLD VISION BUILDS BEHAVIOR CHANGE FRAMEWORK

Behavior change is necessary for all other health-related interventions to succeed. While providing access to improved water and sanitation is important, it will not lead to improved health if people do not use the improved services or modify their hygiene behavior. However, behavior change programs present challenges, as they necessitate not just reaching people but ensuring that messages resonate with them enough to inspire sustainable, long-term change.

World Vision has experienced positive results through community-led total sanitation (CLTS), participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation initiatives, community health clubs, and school WASH clubs. Their experience shows that behavior change happens when there is a focus on interacting with the audience, instead of one-way communication. They stress that harmful hygiene behaviors persist not because of lack of awareness, but that other factors are at work, and knowledge is often not the controlling determinant. By learning what the barriers to behavior change are and comparing the perceptions of doers and non-doers, a framework can be designed to address perceived negative consequences and create bridges to these activities.

In Ethiopia, a World Vision WASH program using this type of framework led to a drop in open defecation from 69 to 44 percent between 2008 and 2010. Factors of success included participation in CLTS, household visits from a community outreach worker, and regular follow-up visits. Through these efforts, latrine ownership came to be viewed positively as contributing to the community's health and development.

For more information on this project and other behavior change approaches highlighted during USAID's June 27, 2013 learning event, visit USAID's [Water Learning and Sharing website](#).

## ENTERPRISEWORKS INTRODUCES DOMESTIC RAINWATER HARVESTING PRODUCT

Projections show that by 2025, two thirds of the world's population could be living in severe water stress conditions. The quest for water overtakes the lives of millions. In the developing world, on average, women walk six kilometers each day to collect water – a daily total of 200 million hours or 293 lifetimes. Given the growing scarcity of water, the USAID Water and Development Strategy

promotes innovative water harvesting possibilities. EnterpriseWorks, a division of U.S. nonprofit Relief International, is introducing one such product, a device called bob® the rainwater bag.

The bob® is a portable rainwater storage bag that enables the collection and use of rainwater at the household level. Domestic rainwater harvesting has been practiced for thousands of years but is under-utilized because current water storage technologies are expensive and difficult to move. EnterpriseWorks developed and field-tested bob® to address these shortcomings. The rainwater bag costs less than half of what other domestic rainwater harvesting products cost and has a storage capacity of 1,400 liters, but comes in a compact 20-liter package. If successful, bob® has the potential to help millions of people in the developing world access safe water in their own homes and make the most of erratic rainfall.

EnterpriseWorks is marketing bob® with wall paintings, radio and TV messages, posters, and billboards through a commercial pilot project in Uganda, where over 2,800 units have been sold. They are testing bob® in more than 10 countries with local partners and have plans to scale up if the Uganda pilot project proves successful.

For more information on this project, visit bob® on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).



Photo Credit: Tibebe Lemma, UNICEF Ethiopia



# IMPROVING MULTIPLE-USE



**TEACHING WATER USE:** An EIG trainer demonstrates how to use drip irrigation, a water-efficient method of growing crops.

Photo Credit: George Figdor



# EFFICIENCY WITH SYSTEMS IN NEPAL

**R**ina Chaudhury of the rural Dang district in Nepal's Mid-Western region has risen from the ashes of modern-day slavery to become a self-sufficient, empowered farmer. Rina was sold into forced labor as a little girl through Nepal's notorious Kamalari indentured servant system. When she was finally freed, she was able to marry but had no skills to earn money. "I have always had to depend on my husband for money. Who else could I turn to?" she said. But now, thanks to help from USAID/Nepal's Education for Income Generation project (EIG), which increased water efficiency and taught marginalized people in Nepal's Mid-Western region the skills to thrive, Rina is the proud owner of a booming vegetable business.

People in the Mid-Western Region, where poverty is rampant, face a number of challenges. Lack of physical infrastructure makes service delivery difficult and farmers often do not have key inputs such as water. Over three-

quarters lack access to improved sanitation. Consequently, over 10 percent of deaths of children under 5 are due to diarrhea.

At the heart of these problems is water – water for sanitation, water for growing food, and clean water for drinking. To simultaneously address these competing needs, EIG introduced multiple-use systems (MUS), a concept that USAID is increasingly employing around the world. MUS employs a multi-faceted approach that can meet domestic, agricultural, and sanitation demands, so water resources are efficiently and safely utilized.

Dr. Mary Renwick, who leads the MUS portfolio for EIG's implementing partner Winrock International, said that with traditional single-use systems, "Irrigation canals may be used for bathing or people may water their livestock at a drinking water well." This can lead to contaminated drinking water, inefficient use, and conflicts over water. "MUS is a way of avoiding those scenarios by



**WOMEN TAKE CONTROL:** EIG enabled tens of thousands of Nepalese to increase their incomes by providing targeted trainings and improving water management.

Photo Credit: George Figdor, Winrock International





**MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS:** In Nepal's hills, where water is scarce, EIG helped communities create above-ground water storage tanks.

*Photo Caption: George Figdor, Winrock International*



**WATER FOR HEALTH:** EIG provided hygiene training in addition to more water for hand washing.


*Photo Credit: George Figdor, Winrock International*



**WATER FOR FOOD:** Drip irrigation enables farmers to grow high value vegetables with relatively low amounts of water.

*Photo Credit: George Figdor, Winrock International*





**“MUS IS A WAY OF AVOIDING THOSE SCENARIOS BY STRATEGICALLY PLANNING FOR PEOPLE'S DOMESTIC AND PRODUCTIVE WATER NEEDS.”**

- DR. MARY RENWICK,  
WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

strategically planning for people's domestic and productive water needs, with the overarching goal of improving health and livelihoods sustainably,” Dr. Renwick said.

The new community water systems in Nepal consist of a single source pipe with dual storage and distribution systems for domestic use and for irrigation using drip and micro-sprinklers. The systems cost \$100-\$150 per household and are funded with investments from public and private sector sources within each community. They are particularly life changing for women, who are typically responsible for collecting water in Nepal. As a result of EIG's relatively small investments in MUS, women who once devoted vast amounts of time and energy to fetching water can channel those efforts into expanding their farms and growing high-value vegetables.

To ensure sustainability, EIG trained young people to manage the water systems and facilitated the formation of water user groups to ensure the community could maintain the systems. In addition, the project trained 74,000 people on literacy, hygiene, nutrition, agricultural productivity, and other life skills. The benefits of these trainings have reverberated as EIG alumnae have launched their own businesses and created jobs for their countrymen and women.

“The impact of the program on household well-being has been enormous,” said Anita Mahat, an economic specialist for USAID/Nepal. “It addressed education, health, and food security. The empowerment of women was visible. These are sustainable impacts.”

Though EIG ended in March 2013, the work will continue under two new projects that are part of the U.S. Feed the Future Initiative.

The first, the Knowledge-based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture project, or KISAN (“farmer” in Nepali), is already underway, aiming to improve agriculture production, nutrition, and hygiene throughout Nepal, with an emphasis on women and children under 5 years old. And the second, an entrepreneurial literacy project, will continue and expand upon some of the training successes of EIG, targeting KISAN beneficiaries.

Outside Nepal, Winrock is applying the lessons of EIG to expand MUS around the world. “We're consciously working on building linkages between South Asia, West Africa, and East Africa through cross-learning, joint training, and research to facilitate acceleration of MUS scale-up,” said Ms. Renwick.

Meanwhile, the thousands reached by EIG continue to benefit from the increased access to water for all of their needs and the skills that have given them new earning power. Due to these interventions, more than 54,000 people working in agriculture, 82 percent of whom are women, have increased their incomes by an average of 250 percent.

Rina is one of these women, and her ambitions continue to soar. “Today, with my EIG education, I am determined to grow my agricultural business,” she said. “My self-confidence is higher now.”

*K. Unger Baillie*

## More Information

**Winrock International  
MUS video**

**USAID/Nepal on Facebook**

**Feed the Future**



# BUILDING A MORE SECURE SOCIETY

*in the Democratic Republic of Congo*



**PROVIDING A LIFELINE:** In DRC, USAID improves WASH in IDP camps, where thousands of people who have been displaced by the ongoing violence reside.

Photo Credit: Oxfam International





**A CLEAN START:** Soap is distributed at an IDP camp to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases like cholera and diarrhea.

Photo Credit: Julien Harneis

**F**aida Landry, a widowed goat breeder who lives with her five children in the rural village of Makunga in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), was already struggling to feed her family before the conflict came to her doorstep. But after armed gangs ravaged her village making her one of millions of victims of the bloodiest conflict since World War II, she was not sure if her family would make it. “The armed people destroyed all of our family goods, including the goats, and my family suffered as a result,” she said.

Fortunately, Faida and other victims of the violence in the DRC have received food, shelter, healthcare, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance through a wide-ranging \$139.5 million relief effort administered by USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) and Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster

Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and the U.S. Department of State.

Years of conflict have worsened an already dire humanitarian situation in the chronically poor and underdeveloped country, stealing millions of lives, compromising essential infrastructure, and hindering development efforts. The most recent stage of the conflict started after the implementation of a peace treaty in 2003, when fighting broke out between forces loyal to the Kinshasa government and various armed groups in eastern DRC. In the last decade, the situation has deteriorated, leaving approximately 2.6 million people displaced from their homes.

Recent violence has led to dramatic growth in the number of internally displaced people (IDPs)—there were over 174,000 new IDPs between April and May 2013 alone—

making administering aid difficult. “The biggest challenge is that people are being displaced—sometimes multiple times—and in some cases with no stable location to resettle because the conflict moves constantly,” explained Jessica Hartl, a USAID/FFP information officer.

## SAFE WATER, SAFE LIVES

To reach as many of these vulnerable people as possible, USAID has been providing aid in IDP camps, temporary shelters that can each house up to tens of thousands of people displaced by the ongoing violence.

But even once they reach the relative safety of the camps, IDPs face a different but equally deadly threat: Unhealthy living conditions as a result of inadequate access to WASH. “Displacement due to ongoing conflict between the government and a myriad of armed groups has exacerbated WASH needs among many Congolese,” said James Mosher, disaster operations specialist for USAID/

**"THE ARMED PEOPLE DESTROYED ALL OF OUR FAMILY GOODS, INCLUDING THE GOATS."**

**- FAIDA LANDRY, GOAT BREEDER**



**"WE ARE NOT JUST TRYING TO SAVE LIVES, WE'RE ALSO TRYING TO FOSTER A MORE SECURE, SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY."**

**-JESSICA HARTL,  
USAID OFFICE OF  
FOOD FOR PEACE**



**WATER FOR LIFE:** A woman gives water to her young daughter in Mugunga I camp near the city of Goma in eastern DRC.

*Photo Credit: Oxfam International*





**SUSTAINING FUTURES:** Children collect water at a water point in the Goma area. USAID is working in Goma and other cities throughout DRC to ensure that victims of violence have adequate access to WASH.

*Photo Credit: Oxfam International*

OFDA. “Spontaneous displacement sites throughout the east often lack the water and sanitation facilities required by IDPs.”

Indeed, the majority of people in some IDP hubs, such as the city of Goma, lack access to safe drinking water. Consequently, many IDPs walk up to three hours through insecure areas to search for clean water. In Goma, vulnerable populations often resorted to consuming untreated water directly from Lake Kivu, increasing the risk of cholera and other waterborne diseases. Diarrheal disease is the single most common cause of death in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the first half of 2013 alone, Congolese health facilities reported over 17,400 cases of cholera. As of May 2013, the U.N. estimates that nearly 21 million people in DRC are in need of WASH assistance due to the complex emergency.

USAID is therefore focusing on improving WASH, especially in IDP camps in Goma and other areas. They are working with

implementing partners to upgrade key water supply infrastructure, install water chlorination points, and build latrines. In addition, they empower the Congolese to take control over their health by facilitating the formation of health and water committees and by conducting trainings on sanitation and hygiene while distributing hygiene supplies like soap. These trainings can make the difference between life and death in the camps, where people live in extremely close quarters. USAID hopes to reach over 1 million people with these efforts.

### **FOSTERING A FOOD-SECURE AND SELF-SUFFICIENT FUTURE**

While the conflict continues, USAID is also looking outside the camps to foster long-term stability, self-sufficiency, and food security. Whenever possible, USAID buys food from local farmers to distribute in the camps, which provides a market for food from smallholder farmers. USAID supports other farmers by providing agriculture

productivity training, distributing key farming materials, and paying local Congolese with food to repair damaged irrigation infrastructure. “We are not just trying to save lives, we’re also trying to help foster a more secure, sustainable society,” said Ms. Hartl.

For conflict victims like Faida, these efforts not only boost health, food security, and livelihoods—but also hope. Faida reported that, after days and days of feeling hopeless, “Today I am dreaming of a good future for my family.”

*C. Zeilberger*

#### **More Information**

**USAID/OFDA on Facebook**

**USAID Office of Food For Peace**

**USAID/DRC on YouTube**



**U.S. Agency for International Development**

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Tel: (202) 712-0000

Fax: (202) 216-3524

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

**SUBSCRIBE**



GLOBALWATERS



*Photo Credit: Naman Shah, Courtesy of Photoshare*