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The Impact of Clean Water Efforts on the World

Ginger · Wednesday, September 29th, 2021

When you want to take a bath, scrub the dishes, do laundry, wash your hands or simply enjoy a glass of water, all you have to do is turn on a faucet. You probably don't give it a second thought, because clean water is non-negotiable and necessary for daily life. But not everyone is so lucky.

What Is the Global Water Crisis?

About 785 million people — one in nine — lack access to this vital resource. Sadly, [1 million of them die every year](#) due to water, sanitation, and hygiene-related diseases. Meanwhile, those in developed countries overuse and pollute freshwater, leaving little for those who need it the most. This is the global water crisis in a nutshell.

From the outside, it might seem like an unsolvable problem. After all, there's only so much freshwater available. However, countless individuals and organizations are working around the clock to fix this very issue. These selfless humans provide clean water access to communities in the farthest corners of the world. Their efforts are making a huge impact on the planet and everyone who calls it home.

Farming and Irrigation

Clean water is an essential resource for human and farm animal use, irrigation, agriculture and fish habitats. However, bacteria, nitrogen, chemicals and other pollutants in groundwater and surface water have recently raised concerns for farmers, herders and the people who rely on them for food. This dilemma is especially concerning for small villages that are already struggling to produce food. If pollutants contaminate their crops or livestock, anyone who consumes them can become ill or die.

Alarmed at the severity of these issues, many organizations have risen to meet farmers' needs by providing access to clean water. Thanks to their efforts, more small-scale producers also have technology that [helps them monitor water data](#) and techniques to actively reduce contamination and subsequent health effects.

Health and Safety

Contamination and a lack of water, in general, are linked to increased transmission of diseases like diarrhea, hepatitis A, polio, cholera and typhoid. Most of these conditions are preventable. However, [297,000 children under age 5](#) die of diarrhea every year because of unsafe drinking

water, sanitation and hand hygiene. Their plight underscores the importance of clean water efforts, many of which are already underway.

For example, the nonprofit organization World Vision makes a point to ensure clean water, sanitation and hygiene in every community it works in. So far, it's [provided 3.4 million people](#) with access to clean water and supported 8.2 million with hygiene behavior changes. The organization has also constructed toilets for 2.7 million households around the world.

Social and Economic Effects

People spend less time and effort obtaining water when it's safe and accessible, which allows them to invest their energy elsewhere. For instance, kids can go to school instead of collecting water, and women — who are disproportionately affected by the clean water crisis — can pursue education and careers.

Ultimately, these social effects siphon money back into the community. Globally, basic water and sanitation could [contribute \\$260 billion each year](#) to the economy and help millions break the cycle of poverty, which is why clean water efforts are crucial.

How We Can Improve Clean Water Access

Some [80% of the world's wastewater](#) is dumped and pollutes rivers, reservoirs, lakes and oceans. This widespread problem is jeopardizing human health and undoing efforts on a global scale. Everyone must do their part to reduce pollution and improve clean water access for generations to come.

You can make an effort — and a huge difference — by picking up after your dog, avoiding chemical fertilizers, and properly disposing of pills, paints and other questionable products. Donating to organizations that prioritize access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene can also maximize the impact of clean water worldwide. Every little bit helps.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, September 29th, 2021 at 7:41 am and is filed under [Health](#), [Politics](#), [Social Action](#)

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