



# WATERSHED

WORLD WATER DAY • 22 MARCH 2017  THE VATICAN

## “Replenishing Water Values for a Thirsty World”

Workshop Notes | From Tuesday 21 March 2017

### What has been your organization’s most impactful activity and why?

- **In Argentina** - provided access to water to two communities of indigenous people
- **NOAA**- pulled together the scientific data and understanding of the hydrologic cycle to model and forecast streamflow of an entire river- pulling together 6 organizations in the US to make this model a reliable platform
- **In political sector**- GFFA (Global Forum for Food & Agriculture) gathered 83 ministers from around the world to work on a global communiqué; did this back-to-back with G20 summit ministers meeting
- **First time in Swiss ministry of foreign affairs**- 4 year strategy through 2020- they have 50 partners- empowerment of women, young people, different sectors (energy, transport, etc.) focus on making the water sector more attractive to capture more engagement
- **Toilet Board Coalition** - 2 streams of programs- toilet accelerator program (mentorships) & thought leadership programs (circular economy)
- **Virtual Reality use** - film debuted at Metropolitan Museum of Art- raised \$2.5M at end of showing & collected 11,000 email addresses; dropped 3,000 remote sensor (\$5M grant from Google)- sensors dropped in Africa and 23,000 water points around the world (open sourced entire data set to raise awareness)
- **Circle of Blue**- biggest innovation or mindset shift- world of perception vs. reality- using new tools to understand perception vs. reality such as IBM Watson
- **Hungary**- initiated with Government Academic Science- re-wrote national scientific program on water, requiring new approach to understanding of water nationally and beyond. Program will be launched in next 2-3 months with a new institution. On international level, HLPW- approaching the difficulties, bottlenecks and finding solutions for financing water infrastructure- how to involve knowledge, investment and management
- **Water Action Day and interlinking STG and climate agenda** - cross country collaborations.
- **During World Water Week** - highlighting thought leaders. Stockholm Water Prize (adult and junior level)
- **Global Water Partnership** - have seen a very effective engagement of youth organizations in the policy arena- active and well-informed to shape major policy events (inside the box) - Outside the box they are bringing faith-based organizations to the water talks- outreach to the finance industry is an area to grow (don’t speak the same language- this area needs work)
- **Sweden** - working in partnership with colleagues around the world (donor colleagues, NGOs, corporations and Governments)- gender-balanced approach to foreign policy and government- they have been very active to bring attention to women and girls (WASH) in schools and with partners- links to health and education- systems approach- seeing positive results
- **Expanding on services to water** beyond just access and hygiene, mobilizing villages to create their own food sovereignty, climate change strategies. Water counting- scientific approach to understanding where the greatest need for water is within a village— where wells are most needed—a scientific method to avoid the politics of location of wells. GPS mapping and overlays of population density to understand where the greatest needs are in a community, what water is used for in different locations (agriculture, animal husbandry, human needs) to gain an understanding of where the gaps are and the smartest locations to drill for water.

- **Student volunteerism** - Created online symposium for students to interact with leaders from around the world—measuring volunteerism—in high school students it has increased by 28%.
- **Promoting the future of blue-green cities**—looking around the world to learn and then share—city water index to see where priorities need to be focused
- **Remedy human folly** - Salton Sea in southern CA- a depression in the desert that filled from a canal- has rights to 1/3 of the water from the Colorado River. Lake has been receding and lake bed is exposed generating toxic fumes. (highest rate in asthma and unemployment in CA) Rockefeller collaborated with communities & government to address water deficit in Lake Mead, restore the lake bed, diversify the economy, improve bird habitats
- **Design road infrastructure** in arid regions to maximize capture of rainfall. Design innovation with NGO in Ethiopia & scaled nationally- 1.5 million farmers expected to benefit
- **World Bank** - new partnership for a water secure world for all. Allows for more technical assistance around the world. WASH diagnostics and linkage to local communities to determine investment. Eco-sludge management- alternatives to pipe sewers.
- **Stockholm** - leaders meeting in Africa?
- **Head of UN Nairobi** - children's meeting place to be developed for leaders to learn from children
- **Ghana** - effort to encourage children to attend school; free uniform, food and education for children – so popular it has increased enrollment and education in a significant way. Children having to walk 2-3 hours to gain access to water—crossing borders. Leaders need to meet in Africa to learn more about the challenges they are facing there.
- **Project WET Foundation** – one of the most important things that happened is when they were founded there were many organizations they were working with who were working in silos- they put WATER in the middle and set up an activity called “water works” so that every child understood they were connected to water and couldn't take sides
- **Working on humanitarian emergencies (Sweden)** providing additional funding such as the crisis in Syria and looking for innovative technologies to solve some of these crises
- **India project** - serving 20,000 families every day- funding access is a big challenge; WASH and school programs – funds come in bits and pieces vs. sustainable support. Need a common platform.
- **Cape Verde Islands** - in 1 hectare, 40 million liters of water saved through a new invention (powder) (used 4x per year= saving of 160 million liters of water)
- **6 months ago UNESCO** International Journalism program (IHP)- water culture & water perceptions - global network/ workshop

**What have been the biggest failures? What have you tried that hasn't really worked/ met your expectation (apart from not having the financial resources).**

- **Accelerator program** – communication failure- entrepreneur didn't show up for VIP level meeting. Translation is necessary for people on the ground in NGO world and corporate world. Common language is needed so expectations are defined and met.
- **Working with government(s)** - whatever idea is presented it is stuck on the governmental level. In 7 years experience in different countries is that if you want to start something, start at a lower level and then build up.
- **Governmental corruption** – pervasive; have become more aware of that. Sometimes have to suspend projects. Others driven by numbers and behavior change isn't addressed.
- **Transparency & corruption** - huge challenge for many donors- disrupts the whole system. Water Integrity Global Outlook (10% of investments in water sector are lost to corruption). Innovations that might offer solutions to countries might be unaffordable or unacceptable to a country (due to ownership). Sustainable Development Goal #6- refers to saving water vs. claiming water
- **Club of Rome, Bigger picture**- In 70s identified that if we continue on the economic footprint we were on, we would see a significant decline. Some progress but for every battle we are winning the war is being lost.
- **In science arena there is a mismatch of timeframes and measurement.** Sponsors (congress or funders) operating on a timeframe whereby they want to see a return but the problems we are working on are often on a different time cycle—need alignment or mutual understanding about the timeframe. Expectations need to be clarified if we are serious about making a difference. We don't own the time processes in terms of the future of the planet.
- **UN** - 1. tried to introduce a 4<sup>th</sup> dimension of sustainable development—Governments/ functioning of our societies. Haven't been able to implement. Probably need a few more collapses for there to be an understanding for this need. 2. Need to identify the tipping points- how to factor in to calculations- haven't been able to do this yet
- **Success in engaging youth**, but at the cost of others feeling that they haven't had a role (how to push out a volunteer that feels they haven't been heard?) Cultural contexts- there is not a single global recipe.
- **Armchair philosophers** - There is nothing like a quick fix- must provide complete solutions- not doing that leads to failure
- **Inability to partner** with the right person/ organization – trying to bring together dynamic partners with creative approaches—must dedicate time for that. There has been a lack of time to find the right partner. (administration or civil society)- who are they representing?
- **Convince political leaders** to dedicate financing to the invisible issue- water pollution (250 million globally- people dying from water born diseases) Long-term payoff vs. short term.
- **Federal Ministry of Food & Agriculture (Germany)** - willing to take responsibility now—biggest user of water—time to take a seat at the table

## BREAKOUT SESSION

### Does one's age require different messaging?

- The “what” should be consistent - For different ages it is more important HOW you convey a message - appropriate to age, religious, cultural, economic status. A message needs to be 2-way. Feedback is essential- clear and consistent. Use feedback to refine message.
- Approach according to geography and culture
- Different age groups are important but there are overlaps (VENN Diagram)- message becomes more developed and complex as you work out (age groups)
- Link education to action—from little ones (making message relevant—i.e. “water is life”) to older. Message can be the same but methodology is age-appropriate.

### What should be our top 3 initiatives—and directed at whom?

- Behavioral change is really important
  - Use the Pope as a global champion, providing opportunity to give independent message from a faith leader
- Local outreach/ education- i.e. Hygiene through schools—ripples out and reaches more people
- Use something like a LinkedIn group so we can communicate and collaborate
- 2 themes
  - awareness about values of water
- Education
  - Working with schools- Center for Imagination- get young people excited about imagining about their future
  - Universities- water resources education- we have engineers, water management foci—but that reinforces the silos. How do we revisit? - interdisciplinary, collaborations—need to push on the approach here with those who set the agenda—water leaders, government leaders etc.
  - Those who don't have formal education opportunities- everyone depends on water in different ways and we have to have ways to reach homeless and others not in traditional schooling environments—water as a life skill
- You can use, protect water from many approaches—link messaging to action—appropriate to participant in the process
- Need for a multi-stakeholder coalition inclusive of the willing- convened by a champion (or the Vatican)- three arms of activity- water is a moral question and issue and the Vatican has a unique opportunity to approach from that angle
  - Education & communication initiative on the quality and quantity issues around water
  - Focus on impact measurement- becoming a funnel and vector for the solutions and disseminating out to others
  - Turning obstacles into opportunities- chart a course that is sustainable.

### How do we make opportunities from obstacles? (Don't think outside the box. Burn the box!)

- Identify obstacles—understanding. Think about the different perspectives and backgrounds to be able to develop options
- Opportunity is about perspective related to perceived obstacle
- No matter what kind of wall, there needs to be listening, trust building, humility, ability to incarnate the message but ready to ask questions more than deliver simple messages. Challenge the walls and blockages—ask others—are you blocking? Are you walking the talk?
- This is a long-term/ forever issue and every generation has opportunities to make our existence better for future generations

### Additional comments:

- Spirit of this issue is ecumenical – yet we can build upon the support from the Vatican.
- How much time are we going to share and give to this work? — the commitment?