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## Water and Sanitation

Savi Bhim, Assistant Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator

More children under 5, will die from diarrhea as a result of drinking contaminated water, than a combination of AIDS, malaria, and measles. Each day, close to 1000 children die from preventable water and sanitation related diseases, in some cases, it is as simple as a child not having access to washing her hands with soap and water.

Worldwide, 3 in 10 people do not have access to safe drinking water, 2 out of 5 people lack basic hand-washing facility and more than 2.4 billion people lack access to toilets or latrines.

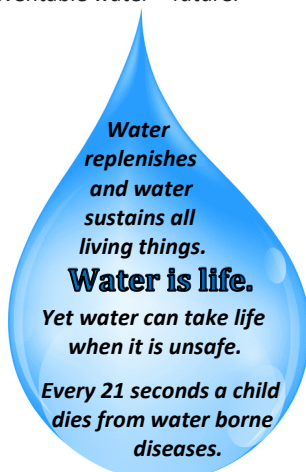
Water is essential not only to health, but also to poverty reduction, food security, peace, and human rights.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the critical importance of sanitation, hygiene, and access to clean water in containing and preventing diseases. According to the World Health Organization, hand washing is one of the most effective actions and cheapest ways for COVID-19 prevention. Yet an estimated 3 billion people world-wide, do not have this facility.

200 million hours are spent every year by girls gathering water for their families, many times, restricting their educational opportunities and any chance of a better future.

These figures are staggering but there has been steady improvement mainly because of the ceaseless work of Rotary, our partners, and the United Nations.

This month's interview with Wade Nomura on the Hanwash project is one such example. Large scale projects such as these will bring us closer to achieving Rotary's goal of making clean water accessible to all



by 2030.

For over a century, Rotarians have initiated and supported water and sanitation projects worldwide, reaching the world's poorest and most vulnerable. In this month's article "Victoria in the Congo" you will read of Rotarian Victoria's mission to bring clean water to the neglected and mistreated Pygmies of the Congo.

Every child is precious, every life is valuable, everyone has a right to a life of dignity and health. Clean water and sanitation help to give them that right.



The  
**Rotary**  
Foundation



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## UBUNTU

*In certain regions of South Africa when someone does something wrong, he is taken to the center of the village and surrounded by his tribe for two days while they speak of all the good that he has done. They believe that each person is good yet sometimes we make mistakes. They unite in this ritual to encourage the person to reconnect with his true nature. The belief is that unity and affirmation have more power to change behavior than shame and punishment. This is known as Ubuntu - humanity towards others .*

# What is Hanwash?

## Interview with Past District Governor Wade Nomura



### What is HANWASH?

Haiti National Clean Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Strategy

### What is the goal of HANWASH?

To bring potable water and good sanitation to the entire country of Haiti

### Why Haiti?

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world. It has been devastated by multiple natural disasters and governmental challenges. As Rotarians, we see a huge need to assist this country and the people of Haiti, and we are working with the local clubs of Haiti to address the needs of the people there. Water has been identified as the building block for their economic development, and HANWASH is the organization committed to make this happen.

### Will Rotary be working with partners? How will they help?

Because of the size and scale of this undertaking, partners are essential in making this goal attainable. Some of our partners include Pure Water for the World, Haiti Outreach, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Rotary Action Group, mWater, Direction Nationale de l'Eau Potable et de l'Assainissement of the Republic of Haiti.



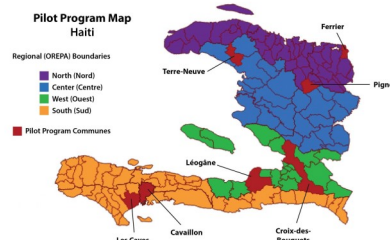
These partners come in with specific roles and areas of expertise. We have partners for community assessments, education, recruiting local community members to serve on the water committees, technical experts that analyze the best treatment and means to bringing safe water to a specific commune, and government groups to make sure the projects are sustainable through government support.

### What is the specific role of Rotary?

Rotary's role is that of the organizing body and is responsible for the implementation of these projects. We seek Rotary district and club partners and organizations that are willing to participate in this project.

### How will the program be implemented?

The program will study and select specific areas that will serve as "Pilot" sites for projects. Each of these sites will be addressed individually for now using the Rotary Global Grants program, creating multiple grant projects being implemented. Each



of these projects will be evaluated and templates will be created to establish best practices based on the success factors of each of these projects. The goal is to have templates available to be used anywhere in the world, knowing that Haiti is one of the most challenging areas of the world to do water projects.

### When will it start?

HANWASH submitted its first Global grant three years ago and it is now being implemented. The second Global Grant project was started last year, and within the last few months, 2 more have been approved, with another 6 projects in the works.

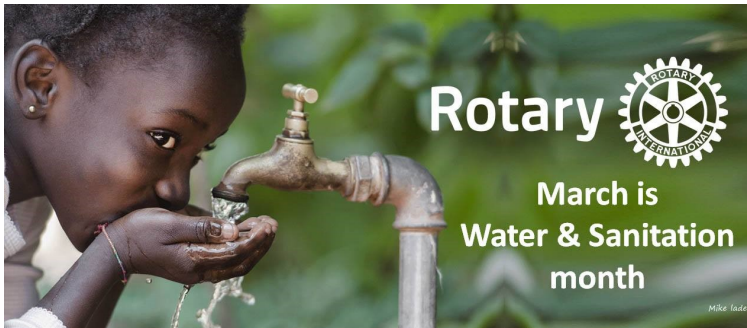
### Haiti has been the recipient in the past of aid funding for clean water, but it was not sustainable. What measures will HANWASH put in place to make this program sustainable?

Prior to HANWASH, there were 43 global grant water projects completed in Haiti. Through community surveys on current water resources, HANWASH develops a plan based on the most affordable methods to deliver safe water to each commune. The reason for past failures was due in large part to a lack of "ownership" of these communes. HANWASH has developed a "pay for service" plan where the cost of the service is a fraction of the cost of purchasing bottled water, and the government of Haiti is also involved in these projects. They take over the projects



through the local municipalities and will be responsible for the maintenance of these systems using the funds generated from the commune and federal funding. The sustainability of any project depends on local buy in and the convenience and benefits of having safe water on a regular basis.





## The Rotary Foundation—Did you know?

Clean water is a basic need for human beings. When people have access to clean water, they live healthier and more productive lives. When waterborne diseases decrease, children stay healthier and attend school more regularly, and mothers can spend less time carrying water and more time helping their families.



*However, at least 3,000 children die each day from diseases caused by unsafe water, which is what motivates Rotary members to build wells, install rainwater harvesting systems, and teach community members how to maintain new infrastructure.* While very few people die of thirst, millions die from preventable waterborne diseases, providing the impetus for our members to also improve sanitation facilities in undeveloped countries.

### How The Rotary Foundation Makes Help Happen

The Rotary Foundation is changing the world by providing grants for projects and activities around the globe and in our own backyard that have been invested in water, sanitation, hygiene and water resource management interventions globally. These include:

#### WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Global Grant Projects:

Since 2013, The Rotary Foundation has invested more than \$148 million in over 2000 projects worldwide. Through this investment, our volunteers of action have improved access to safely managed and basic WASH services to communities, schools and healthcare facilities, while protecting and conserving water resources.



communities and governments to plan, finance and deliver safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, while sustainably managing water resources. More than 123 schools in Ghana have gained access to basic sanitation and hygiene services due to the Rotary-USAID partnership.

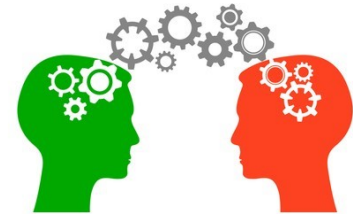
#### WASH in Schools Target Challenge:

Rotary challenges our members to develop sustainable projects that comprehensively address the most pressing water, sanitation, hygiene and education needs in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, India, and Kenya.



#### Rotary-USAID WASH Partnership:

Rotary and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assist



### In Case You Don't Know, Now You Know

In 1907, the Rotary Club of Chicago initiated Rotary's first service project when it created public comfort stations (public toilets) in the City of Chicago. Over one century later Rotarians are still building toilets worldwide as sanitation continues to be a major area of focus.

Do you know that Rotary has an Online Official Directory? It provides information on every club in the world such as the meeting day, where they meet and at what time. It provides contact information of each club president and secretary, the number of club members and charter date. It's a helpful tool for planning a club visit, making connections, or finding international service partners. So, if you are looking for information on the Rotary Clubs of Toowoomba, Pondicherry and even Recklinghausen check out the Online Official Directory at <https://my.rotary.org/en/search/official-directory>.

Rotary has 7 official languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Rotary's award for World Understanding and Peace is open to Rotarians who may nominate individuals or organizations involved in local or international humanitarian efforts. A selection committee reviews the applications and selects a recipient. The RI president and the trustee chairman confirm the selection on behalf of the RI Board of Directors and the Rotary Foundation Trustees. A contribution of \$100,000 is donated to support a project of the recipients' choice. Recipients include Dr Sabin, the developer of oral polio vaccine, The International Committee of the Red Cross, Nelson Mandela, freedom fighter and past president of South Africa, Dr Muhammad Yunus who introduced the concept of microcredit.

# Victoria in the Congo

*A Story of Indomitable Human Spirit as Experienced by Victoria Bentley, PsyD— Rotary Club of Palm Springs*

One day in 2007 Victoria Bentley watched a news program about women who were raped during the 1996-2003 war between Rwanda and Congo. The newscaster interviewed a woman who had been raped and tortured and left for dead. The horror she went through was evident as her body was broken beyond recovery.

Victoria could not get this image off her mind. She is a Trauma Psychologist and believed she could help these poor women. So, after meeting a few people online, she flew to Congo to help women and girl victims of sexual violence.

She did not speak French and certainly did not know Swahili. Victoria was aware it was a dangerous place for a single white woman. She knew from a rational perspective it was a wild idea, but she felt morally called to offer what help she could.

She learned that women who had been brutally raped had also been disowned by their villages and husbands. Instead of comfort, they were sent off alone with their children to become refugees in Bukavu, the largest city in eastern Congo. They were alone without skills to make a living.



*In 2008 when Victoria made the first of 15 trips to the DR of Congo she was intent on changing the lives of others for the better. Little did she know that perhaps the one whose life would be changed the most was hers.*

*Victoria said she 'grew up' during her time in Congo. Her priorities in life have changed and she now understands how fortunate we are to be protected from the harsh reality in other parts of the world.*

*She felt that most people could be saved but realizes now that is not the case. She did all that she could, but much depended on the person's will to survive. She watched as some women rose above their horrific experiences while others were too devastated to move beyond.*

*From people who have lost so much and have almost nothing by western standards, she learned that happiness comes not from things but from service to others and that kindness is the light that demolishes the barriers of differences and never goes wasted.*

So, Victoria started Ushindi Center, a vocational center where these women could learn a trade to support themselves. The center also gave them food, medical care, and sent their children to school.

In 2008 Victoria was recruited by the Rotary Club of Montecito (RCM). Over the next four years, RCM secured four Rotary Global Grants, which continued to empower women and girls by teaching them entrepreneurship. They learned how to sew, weave baskets, and make soap. One project gave goats to individual women, who in turn gifted their goat's offspring to another woman, so the cycle of giving continued.

She was helped by Amani Matabaro, a Congolese man whose mission is to bring peace and prosperity to eastern Congo. Together they would build a community center and a large pavilion market they called the Mumosho Peace Market, because it brings Rwandans and Congolese together to trade like they used to in the peaceful days before the war.

Her mission was successful and by all accounts her work was done, but this was not to be.

She was recently asked by Amani to craft a Rotary grant to bring clean water to Pygmies.

During her time in Congo, Victoria had met this Pygmy tribe and photographed them in their village, which is unusual since Pygmies are shy and do not trust strangers.

Pygmies are the indigenous people of Africa, one of the last hunter-gatherer people left in the world. They lived happily in the rainforest and preserved their way of life, which can be traced to the Stone Age. However, in 1976, Pygmy people were evicted from the forest by the Congolese government, who turned their forest homes into national parks. They were banned from living in the forest and hunting there. No provisions were set up for them. They had nowhere to live or any work to support themselves. The displacement has taken a heavy toll on the Pygmies, and they are in danger of extinction.



Because they are unlike other Congolese, Pygmy people are considered weird and subhuman, and they are savagely mistreated. They are too poor to buy healthy food, and their only water comes from a contaminated river. As a result, their child mortality rate is higher than other tribes in Congo—a third of their babies die from diarrhea before they reach age three.

Victoria once again turned to Rotary to help, but this time to the Rotary Club of Palm Springs because she had relocated. They are working to raise money for a global grant, Pygmy Water Project for Peace, to bring clean water to Pygmy villages.

Victoria is aware that you cannot just give people clean water and expect their lives to change drastically. Of course, it will improve their health and increase their income, but they have been downtrodden and enslaved by the Bantu people for many years. They have lost their identity in struggling to survive.

So in addition to the water project, Victoria's non-profit organization, Empower Congo Women, recently set up the Pygmy Oral History Project.



Her Congolese liaison with this project is Dominique Bikaba, a man who is well-known to the Pygmy. He will interview them about their history and help them recall their language, which they are losing. He will record their invaluable forest knowledge and remind them they survived where no one else can. He will encourage them to be proud of their legacy.

*She has witnessed how indomitable the human spirit is. She has seen how a mother will sacrifice herself to feed her children, how these raped and rejected women carry 110lb sacks of firewood on their backs every day, a task that otherwise requires two able bodied men, just so their children can eat.*

Dominique, who continues to help her, has an interesting story. When he was a baby, his Bantu mother could not take care of him, so she gave him to the Pygmy chief's wife who raised him as her own son. While he looks physically different, his heart belongs with the Pygmies, and his life mission is to champion their cause. He has helped them find other ways to make a living. Now he is working on the Pygmy Oral History Project to rebuild their pride in being one of the oldest surviving cultures in the history of mankind.





## Rotary Water and Sanitation Projects

An estimated 2.5 billion people lack access to improved sanitation facilities that hygienically separate human excreta from human contact. Rotarian Alfredo Pérez knows the schools in Guatemala and neighboring countries can use all the help available in this area.

So, when Carlos Flores, then governor of District 4250 (Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras), asked



Pérez in 2016 to get involved with the [Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene \(WASH\) in Schools Target Challenge](#), he quickly accepted. As the name suggests, the pilot program focuses on providing clean water and sanitation systems, and equipping teachers to educate students on better hygiene practices.

"The objective of the project is to develop good hygiene habits in children," Pérez says. "By reducing absenteeism due to diseases that are acquired due to lack of water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools, we can increase their academic development. Training teachers to help children develop good hygiene habits is key."

Indeed, more than a year after the effort began, the Rotary Club of Valle de Guatemala, where

Pérez is a member, has improved conditions for as many as 1,793 children from 10 schools in the town of Escuintla, about 40 miles south of Guatemala City, the capital.

Corporación Energías de Guatemala, an energy company, backed the project with a \$62,000 grant. Pérez's club and the Rotary Club of Escuintla worked with local public health officials and urban and rural planners. The project provided toilets, washing stations, and water tanks, and also supported training for teachers so that the facilities would be put to good use.

This year, members of Pérez's club have a budget of \$30,000 for work at five more schools.

Pérez is giving talks around his country in hopes of recruiting more clubs to take up the challenge in their



communities, and he's seeking international partners to help expand the program.

Educators tell Rotarians that fewer students now miss school because of gastrointestinal and respiratory illnesses, which sometimes spread by poor hand washing or lack of safe water.

- **Unsafe sanitation is responsible for 775,000 deaths each year**
- **Poor sanitation are also contributors to pneumonia and malaria**
- **In low income countries, poor sanitation accounts for 5% of deaths**
- **More than 650 million people have no access to clean water**
- **More than 2.3 billion don't have access to a safe private toilet**
- **Diarrhea is in the top 3 contributors to death in children globally**

### Toilets 4 Life



Riverside East Rotary is proud to host Global Grant **#1985875**, a project to construct septic toilets and to bring sanitation and clean water to the Bugiri District of Uganda. This project will bring clean water and sanitation to thousands of people and make a lasting difference.

The Bugiri District is in southeastern Uganda and is plagued by poor water and sanitation coverage. The urban area of the district has a population of 45,650 residents, and over 76% of them lack access to safe water, toilets, and sewage systems. This absence of proper facilities has led to a proliferation of pit latrines and is causing sewage to make its way into local water sources. The hospitals, schools, and other public places in the region responsible for serving both the direct and the surrounding populations are not able to provide safe and sanitary conditions. Homes and businesses are forced to use dirty latrine blocks which present clear health hazards. And to compound matters, soil conditions include shallow subsoil and underlying hard rock, making construction of safe latrines more difficult.

The **Toilets 4 Life** project will bring a sustainable system of waste disposal and water-use management to the district. Septic toilets will be installed, and trucks will be used to pick up waste and bring it to locations where it can be properly disposed. Local stakeholders will be trained, and a plan for ongoing community participation will be implemented.

Lack of access to clean water and sanitation causes a wide array of illnesses, danger to maternal health, developmental impairment in children, and implications for gender equality. Few projects can provide as meaningful and lasting a difference to the local population as providing sanitation and clean water.

## A Look at Our Three Rotary Districts

### Rotary District 5240



**District Governor**  
**Dana Moldovan**

Arroyo Grande  
Atascadero  
Bakersfield  
Bakersfield  
Breakfast  
Bakersfield East  
Bakersfield North  
Bakersfield  
Twilight  
Bakersfield West  
Buelton  
Camarillo Rotary  
Camarillo Sunrise  
Cambria  
Carpinteria  
Carpinteria  
Morning  
Carpinteria  
Sunset  
Cayucos  
China Lake  
Conejo Valley  
Delano  
E-Club of One  
World  
Fillmore  
Goleta  
Goleta Noontime  
Grover Beach  
Indian Wells  
Valley  
Kern River Valley  
Lompoc  
Los Olivos Rotary  
Los Osos  
Montecito  
Moorpark  
Moorpark  
Morning  
Morro Bay  
NexGen  
Nipomo  
Ojai  
Ojai West  
Oxnard  
Paso Robles  
Rotary  
Paso Robles  
Sunrise  
Passport Club of  
the Central Coast  
Pismo Beach-Five  
Cities

RCSC  
Rotaract Santa  
Barbara  
Rotaract Santa  
Maria Valley  
Rotaract Cal  
Rotaract UCSB  
Rotaract Ventura  
San Luis Obispo  
San Luis Obispo  
de Tolosa  
Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara  
North  
Santa Barbara  
Sunrise  
Santa Maria -  
Noon  
Santa Maria -  
Breakfast  
Santa Maria  
South  
Santa Paula  
Santa Ynez Valley  
Shafter  
Simi Sunrise  
Simi Sunset  
Simi Valley  
SLO Daybreak  
Solvang  
Taft  
Tehachapi  
Templeton  
Thousand Oaks  
Vandenberg  
Village  
Ventura  
Ventura East  
Ventura South  
Wasco  
Westlake Sunrise  
Westlake Village

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### Rotary District 5300



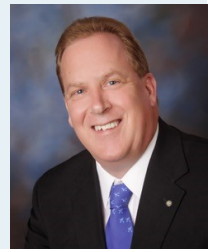
**District Governor**  
**Elizabeth Barry**

Alhambra  
Altadena  
Antelope Valley  
Apple Valley  
Arcadia  
Azusa  
Barstow  
Boulder City  
Boulder City  
Sunrise  
Chino Valley  
Claremont  
Covina  
Covina Sunrise  
Downtown Las  
Vegas  
Duarte  
East Los Angeles  
Five Points/El  
Monte/South El  
Monte  
Glendora  
Greater Chino  
Hills  
GSGV  
Green Valley  
Henderson  
Industry Hills  
La Verne  
Lancaster  
Lancaster  
Sunrise  
Lancaster West  
Las Vegas  
Las Vegas After  
Hours  
Las Vegas Red  
Rock  
Las Vegas  
Southwest  
Las Vegas Spring  
Mountains  
Las Vegas  
Summerlin  
Las Vegas West  
Las Vegas WON

Monrovia  
Montebello  
Mesquite  
Sunrise  
Moapa Valley  
(Logandale)  
Monterey Park  
North Las Vegas  
Ontario -  
Montclair  
Pahrump Valley  
Pasadena  
Pasadena After  
Hours  
Pico Rivera  
Pomona  
Rancho  
Cucamonga  
Rancho Del  
Chino  
San Dimas  
San Gabriel  
San Gabriel  
Valley NG  
San Marino  
Sierra Madre  
South Pasadena  
The High Desert -  
Hesperia  
Upland  
Victorville  
Walnut Valley  
West Covina

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Arlington  
(Riverside)  
Beaumont-Cherry  
Valley  
Big Bear Lake  
Cathedral City  
Cathedral City  
Evening  
Coachella East  
Coachella Valley  
Colton  
Corona  
Corona-Circle City  
Crestline-Lake  
Gregory  
Desert Hot Springs  
E-Club of San  
Bernardino  
E-Club of World  
Peace, D5330  
Fontana  
Greater Eastvale  
Hemet  
Highland  
Idyllwild  
Indian Wells  
Indio  
Indio Sunrise  
Joshua Tree  
Jurupa Valley  
La Quinta  
Lake Arrowhead  
Lake Arrowhead  
Mountain Sunrise  
Lake Elsinore  
Menifee  
Moreno Valley  
Moreno Valley  
Morning  
Murrieta  
Norco  
Old Town  
Temecula

Perris  
Rancho Mirage  
Redlands  
Redlands Sunrise  
Palm Desert  
Palm Desert  
Sunset Club  
Palm Desert-Palms  
Palm Springs  
Palm Springs  
Sunup  
Rialto  
Riverside  
Riverside East  
Riverside Sunrise  
San Bernardino  
San Bernardino  
Crossroads  
San Bernardino  
North  
San Bernardino  
Sunset  
San Geronio Pass  
(Banning)  
San Jacinto  
Sin Fronteras  
Temecula  
Temecula Sunrise  
Temecula Valley -  
New Generation  
Twentynine Palms  
Wildomar  
Yucaipa  
Yucca Valley  
Yucca Valley  
Sunset

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Rotary is 1.2 million members in over 35,000 clubs all over the world. Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.