WASH NEWS
WASH ROTARY ACTION GROUP

WASH-RAG at the Rotterdam Institute; IHE Delft and New Partnerships

By S.N. Srikanth on Monday, September 21, 2026



WASH-RAG had a strong presence at the Rotary European Action Summit in Rotterdam, held September 11â€“13, 2026. Our booth attracted many visitors, and the WASH-RAG Action Conference & Dinner on September 11 at the Postillion Hotel brought together an engaged and knowledgeable audience for an excellent program of speakers and discussion.

A special thank-you goes to our Regional Coordinator, Dilip Mirchandani, whose hard work helped make WASH-RAGâ€™s participation a success, and to Board member Bas Hendriksen for his important support.

Building a Partnership with IHE Delft



Thanks to Bas, WASH-RAG also had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, one of the worldâ€™s leading institutions for graduate education in water.

My colleagues and I met with Operations Director Han de Groot and his team to discuss potential areas of cooperation, including opportunities for scholars to study at IHE Delft and the development of joint educational programs with certificates issued by both IHE Delft and WASH-RAG. The group also discussed how IHE Delft might support WASH-RAGâ€™s â€œ3 Districts Initiative.â€

During the visit, the WASH-RAG team was also invited to a meeting with Rotary International President Yinka Babalola, Rotary International General Secretary John Hewko, Rotary International Directors Dr. Harriette Verwey and Emmanuel Katongole, and others. Srikanth shared WASH-RAGâ€™s vision for helping advance Sustainable Development Goal 6â€”clean water and sanitation for allâ€”through Rotary and beyond. President Yinka expressed interest in continuing the discussion, and further conversations are planned.

Connecting with Rotary Club H2O



Following the Rotterdam Summit, I traveled to Basel, Switzerland, where I met with leaders of Rotary Club H2O, including Immediate Past President Christiane Hamacher. The club has a special focus on WASH and brings together Rotarians from Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, and Austria.

The club is interested in closer cooperation with WASH-RAG and is also considering having the club itself become a WASH-RAG member.

The Opportunity for WASH Theme Clubs

These conversations point to an exciting opportunity for WASH-RAG: encouraging the development of more Rotary clubs specifically focused on WASH.

WASH-focused clubs could become important partners in advancing WASH-RAGâ€™s goals, while creating a network of Rotarians with particular expertise, commitment, and interest in water, sanitation and hygiene. WASH-RAG may also explore opportunities to welcome Rotary clubs as members, in addition to individual Rotarians.

We encourage WASH-RAG Board and Operations Team members to participate in Rotary Institutes and District Conferences around the world. These gatherings provide valuable opportunities to introduce WASH-RAG, build relationships and develop new partnerships.

Finally, thank you to Gunes Ertas, our Cadre member and Ambassador, for covering the Rotterdam events and sharing them on social mediaâ€”and to everyone who helped make WASH-RAGâ€™s presence in Europe such a success.



Eric Johnsen, MBA/MDiv WASH-RAG Operations Chair Assistant Governor, Area 2, District 5230

By Eric Johnsen on Monday, September 21, 2026





Meet Eric Johnsen, MBA/MDiv, WASH-RAGâ€™s new Operations Chair. A longtime Rotarian with a background spanning healthcare administration, finance, risk management, construction, and nonprofit leadership, Eric brings a strong commitment to service and a passion for expanding WASH-RAGâ€™s impact around the world.

In his new role, Eric is helping lead WASH-RAGâ€™s focus on moving from individual projects to larger programs, expanding our Ambassador and membership network, and developing sustainable, long-term solutions. Get to know Eric, his Rotary journey, and his vision for WASH-RAG.

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The Well at Katanga

By Christopher Roesel on Monday, September 21, 2026



Adile is a young woman from Katanga village, Uganda. Her story shows how access to clean water can change much more than a familyâ€™s daily routineâ€”from health and education to womenâ€™s leadership and economic opportunity.

The story grew out of our community assessment and illustrates why the proposed Rotary Global Grant takes an integrated, community-led approach to WASH, health, education, and economic empowerment.

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Water Footprint: Concepts, Assessment Methods, and Applications

By Rajendrakumar Saraf on Sunday, September 20, 2026



Water use extends far beyond what we see at the tap. The **Water Footprint (WFP)** measures the direct and indirect freshwater consumed and polluted throughout the lifecycle of products, services, and processes.

By looking at **Green, Blue, and Grey Water Footprints**, we can better understand pressures on rainfall, rivers, aquifers, and water quality. The approach has applications across agriculture, energy, industry, water infrastructure, and urban development.

From reducing irrigation demand and fixing distribution leaks to reusing treated wastewater and harvesting rainwater, Water Footprint assessment can help identify practical opportunities for more sustainable water management.

Read the full article to explore the concepts, assessment methods, applications, and policy implications of Water Footprint.

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The Economics of Water - Valuing the Hydrological Cycle as a Global Common Good

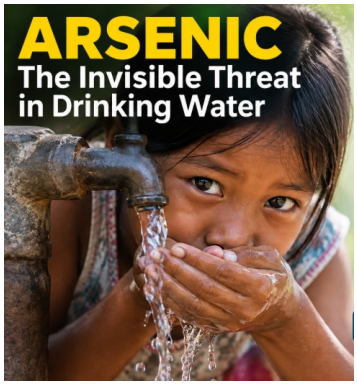
By Stewart Martin on Monday, September 21, 2026



Hereâ€™s a great, easy-to-read resource for anyone interested in WASH and the global water crisis. The Economics of Water explains why water is more than a local resourceâ€”it is a global common goodâ€”and explores the hydrological cycle, water stress, groundwater overuse, and the economic value of water. Take a few minutes to explore the website, then scroll to the bottom for the Executive Summary or the full report. Itâ€™s well worth sharing with your club and district WASH colleagues. https://watercommission.org

The Invisible Threat in Drinking Water

By Ian Rumbles on Sunday, September 20, 2026



Unsafe drinking water isnâ€™t always visibly contaminated. **Arsenicâ€”a naturally occurring contaminant in groundwaterâ€”affects millions of people worldwide**, particularly in parts of South and Southeast Asia. Because arsenic cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted, people can unknowingly consume contaminated water for years.

Long-term exposure is associated with serious health impacts, including skin lesions, cancers, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. The burden can also extend to household finances and livelihoods through increased healthcare costs and chronic illness.

The challenge is significant, but **solutions exist**. Testing can identify contaminated wells, communities can be connected to safer water sources, and treatment technologies can remove arsenic effectively. A project at a primary school near Hanoi, Vietnam, reduced groundwater arsenic from 0.55 mg/L to below 0.001 mg/L, providing safer drinking water to more than 1,000 children and community members.

The key message for the WASH sector is simple: **access to water is not enoughâ€”water must also be safe.** Arsenic testing, public awareness, alternative water supplies, appropriate treatment, health support, research, and sustained funding all have a role to play.

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Align to Accelerate

By Ian Rumbles on Sunday, September 20, 2026



Many organizations are trying to determine the best way to measure the impact of WASH projects.

WHO and UNICEF are hosting a webinar to begin discussions on developing common monitoring tools and indicators to measure WASH systems.
8 October 2026 14:00â€“15:30 Central European Summer Time (CEST)

Working with Align to Accelerate (A2A), they have developed a short list of indicators. The webinar will start a public consultation on the indicator shortlist and explain how to contribute.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Spanish and French.
Register here

Happy Anniversary E-Club of WASH

By Ian Rumbles on Sunday, September 20, 2026



Past Rotary International President Bill Boyd strongly promoted WASH, and in 2016 he was instrumental in establishing the E-Club of WASH in his home country of New Zealand.

On Thursday, October 22, at 18:00 UTC, this vibrant virtual club of WASH professionals and WASH enthusiasts is holding its 10th Anniversary Party, and everyone is invited. Please follow this Zoom link, and enter our Rotary District Number â€“ 9999.

Even if you cannot attend, you might want to check out their Vimeo Library of almost 200 videos on a variety of WASH topics.

Last year, on World Water Day, the E-Club of WASH inducted Ron Denham, Erica Gwynn, and Steve Werner as Honorary Members of the Club.

Listen to the Best Virtually

By Ian Rumbles on Monday, September 21, 2026

Listen to the Best Virtually



World Water Week, held annually in late August in Stockholm, is known for its exceptional program of WASH Experts. You can watch hundreds of inspiring and informative sessions on their YouTube channel for free. One session this year highlighted how Rotary is involved in making a difference in Securing Freshwater

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â€œWhere WASH Professionals of the World Come Togetherâ€ is how the annual UNC Water and Health Conference promotes itself. The conference will be held October 26-30 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. You can now register to attend the Conference virtually by going to Virtual Platform Registration.



Be a Handwashing Hero

By Ian Rumbles on Monday, September 21, 2026



October 15 is Global Handwashing Day, a day to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of washing hands with soap.

The multi-year theme, â€œBe a Handwashing Heroâ€ is a creative way to encourage people to stop the spread of infections and harmful germs by using soap effectively when handwashing.

Visit their Resources page to get factsheets, infographics, logos and much more, in multiple languages.

4 in 10 people Lack Safe Toilets

By Ian Rumbles on Monday, September 21, 2026

4 in 10 people Lack Safe Toilets



With the theme of â€œSafe Toilets. Equal Featuresâ€, November 19, World Toilet Day, will highlight how safe sanitation enables women and girls the ability to attend school, work, and take part in society.

The UN estimates that 3.4 billion people are without safe sanitation, but the lack of access impacts women and girls especially, exposing them to diseases and especially danger and abuse.

Schools with clean, safe toilets and access to menstrual hygiene kits allow girls to stay in school longer, marry later, have fewer children, earn more over their lifetimes, and be more independent.

To promote equal access to toilets, visit the World Toilet Day Resources page.

WASH Ambassadors: Advocating, Growing, and Making an Impact

By Stephen Mark Werner on Monday, September 21, 2026

Update from the Ambassador Program:

First, a big thank you to all Ambassadors for everything that you are doing to be strong ambassadors (advocates) for WASH in your District. Please continue to ask your District leaders (DGs, DGEs, DGNs) to mention how the WASH Area of Focus can help all the other Areas of Focus to be more effective. Just one small exampleâ€¦the economic/community development wants to help create more economic benefits, but men canâ€™t work as much when they suffer from chronic, preventable water-related health concerns, and women canâ€™t be as productive if a lot of their time is spent fetching water (usually from unsafe sources) or they have to repeatedly care for sick family members. It would also be nice for Rotary clubs to follow up on their WASH projects by helping women create small enterprises that they can do when they spend less time fetching water.

Second, we are one-third towards our goal of having at least one Ambassador in every one of the 530 Rotary Districts in the world. But we need your help recommending someone to be an Ambassador if you work with a Rotarian on WASH projects in a District that doesnâ€™t have an Ambassador https://www.wash-rag.org/ambassadors/. Our vetting process is very quick and easy, and mainly is focused on the volunteer job responsibilities and time commitment, so we just need you to introduce us to someone who would be a strong Ambassador, and then weâ€™ll take it from there. (And you can self-nominate yourself if you are interested in becoming an Ambassador.)

Finally, a few thank-yous (which is difficult to do since so many of you are helping a lot), Dilip Mirchandani from Belgium, with help from other Ambassadors in Europe, had a wonderful focus on WASH and the WASH Ambassador program at the Rotary Rotterdam Zone Institute held a few weeks ago. Thank you, Dilip and team! Also, Rick Chinn and Ralph Young from the U.S. have done a lot to process new Ambassador applications, and they have made the process easier and more impactful. We have about 7-10 new Ambassadors joining every month. And finally, Ranjeev Shrestha from Nepal has done a lot to post stories on WASH-RAGâ€™s social media pages, while he helps his fellow Ambassadors and Rotarians deal with the recovery from their terrible floods that made international news. Thank you, Ranjeev, and everyone helping with that terrible humanitarian crisis.

Free WASH Courses from the WHO Academy

By Ian Rumbles on Sunday, September 20, 2026



The World Health Organization (WHO), working with adult learning and its WASH experts, has created top-tier courses on a range of topics in multiple languages.

The free courses take 2-3 hours to complete and include a certificate upon completion.

The WHO Academy uses cutting-edge technology combined with the latest evidence-based information.

To learn more or to register, visit the WHO Academy.

Footer

Submit your stories, videos, and pictures for upcoming Newsletters to us at info@wash-rag.org.

WASH-RAG reserves the right to edit stories for length and content. By submitting a story you give us permission to publish and make public your contact information including but not limited to your email or club's website.

The WASH Rotary Action Group is pleased to consider partnerships with any corporate supporter. Due to the unique attributes of water sources and water provision, accepting corporate support does not imply an endorsement of any particular water technology. Rotarians, Rotary Clubs, and Rotary partners must evaluate any technology to determine if it is the best solution for the conditions where the program will be implemented. The WASH Rotary Action Group can provide guidance about where different technologies work best, but Rotarians and Rotary clubs must decide how to implement their programs.

This Rotary Action Group is recognized and operates in accordance with Rotary International policy, but is not an agency of, or controlled by, Rotary International. To learn more please contact the WASH Rotary Action Group by email at info@wash-rag.org Thank you.

WASH Rotary Action Group | USA