

The Vision



**A newsletter of A Vision for Clean Water
providing clean water and sanitation to those who need them
through education and collaboration**

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Days for Girls, Paving the Way for a Brighter Future

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Cambodia with A Vision for Clean Water. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, we distributed Days for Girls (DfG) reusable menstrual hygiene kits to a government school in Cambodia. We would like to continue donating DfG kits to schools worldwide.

Without the proper sanitary products, the girls are forced to stay home from school, missing 4 - 5 days a month. After six months, many feel that they have fallen so far behind that they quit school altogether. The Days for Girls kits allow them to stay in school every day of every month.

We recognize the importance of addressing menstrual health as a crucial step toward ensuring girls' consistent attendance in school. DfG's reusable kits have been a game-changer in the lives of millions of young girls worldwide already. DfG also provides teachers, who, when handing out the kits, show the girls how to take care of the reusable pads. They provide information about puberty and menstruation. This leads to increased body literacy and decreased stigma and shame. With your support as well as Patti Lee's from the Canadian Landmine Foundation, we have already distributed 300 kits, reducing waste and providing a sustainable, cost-effective solution. We plan to distribute more in January 2024!

Personally, experiencing this distribution of kits is something I will not forget. The girls were shy in the beginning but excited about being pulled out of class to speak with people from another country. Once their teacher began explaining why we were there, a look of shock filled the room. We interacted with the girls more and they became comfortable with the topic. The students were asked to repeat the demonstration the teacher gave in front of the class and one girl bravely volunteered. We then headed outside to take pictures. On the way the girls asked that we take selfies with them. Overall, the experience gave me a warm feeling inside, not just because it was very hot in Cambodia, but because I felt like I was making a positive impact on these girls. I hope to continue promoting feminine hygiene and the pursuit of education in the future.

From Simran Singh, AVFCW volunteer and Board member



**Girls receiving DfG kits and
being instructed**



**11th and 12th grade girls who received
kits with teachers and AVFCW guests**

Mentoring Others

A Vision for Clean Water's mission is to provide safe drinking water and sanitation to those who need them through education and collaboration. Here is how Eileen Heasley, Founder and former Executive Director, is now helping AVFCW accomplish its mission. Although Eileen has stepped down as Executive Director of A Vision for Clean Water, she continues to be an active Board member who mentors groups which are interested in implementing projects. Cautioning that poorly planned and monitored projects are often not successful, she works with teams and individuals who are beginning water and sanitation projects to best set them up for success.

Eileen has over 20 years of volunteer experience in writing and obtaining grants and implementing and following up on these projects. She facilitated over 25 training events which brought experts to Michigan to teach implementers about water testing in the field, biosand and other filters, low-cost sanitation, rainwater harvesting and more.

This year, Eileen has helped two Michigan Rotary clubs who wanted to initiate projects in different parts of Guatemala. Eileen spoke at these clubs about what support was needed from here at home in Michigan and what was needed in-country. She introduced the teams to Guatemalan connections, importantly Spanish fluent, who were looking for partners. Over the years, Eileen has learned the importance of in-country partners to a project's success.

Other important advice to newbie implementers is the suggestion that the chosen project should start small. The implementers must expect the potential need to modify the project along the way. And, they must have a plan for checking on the progress and to evaluate if it is successful. Finding and choosing a project that has a well-defined achievable beginning and end is important. A concept that might be expanded or duplicated in the same area, known as being scalable, is a real bonus. For more information on AVFCW's work, contact: eileenheasley@gmail.com.

***Eileen Heasley
in Honduras
with biosand filters
to be distributed
to those who need
them***



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or

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Dexter, MI 48130

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