

# GLOBAL WATER AWARENESS WORLD TOUR

Read the information about the following countries and complete the Global Water Awareness Chart

## Bangladesh

- Bangladesh is located in South Asia. It is mostly a flat plain with hills in the southeast.
- Each year during the summer monsoon season about one third of Bangladesh floods. These floods often force people from their homes, and hinder the economic development of the country.
- Preventable diseases, largely the results of poverty and overcrowding, remain highly prevalent.
- Like many other developing nations, Bangladesh is experiencing a water crisis. Bangladesh has made progress in supply of safe water to its people. However, gross disparity in coverage exists across the country. Latrine usage is very poor across the country, averaging only 16% in the rural areas.
- The size of the urban population is increasing at alarming rates. The poor people from the rural areas continue to migrate to the urban areas in hope of being able to earn larger wages to support their families. Many of these people find shelter in the Dhaka's slum communities.
- The enormous quantity of people living in such close quarters causes people living in these slums to have some of the worst health in the country. Acute poverty, overcrowding, poor housing, and unhealthy disposal of waste all play major roles in the water and sanitation crisis in the urban areas of Bangladesh.

## Ethiopia

- Ethiopia is a landlocked country in the eastern Horn of Africa. It is slightly less than twice the size of Texas. The average temperature throughout much of the country is about 60° Fahrenheit. However, the northern part of the country along the Sudanese border can be much hotter.
- The need for water and sanitation in Ethiopia is severe. Only 22% of the population has access to an improved water supply. In rural areas, these numbers drop even further.
- In the last 20 years, Ethiopia has experienced droughts followed by food shortages and famines. In rural areas, women and children walk up to six hours to collect water. Most people collect water from shallow ponds which they share with animals! Other people collect water from shallow wells. Both types of these sources are subject to contamination as rain water washes waste from surrounding areas into the source.
- Ethiopian women carry large clay jugs of water from ponds back to their villages. These jugs can weigh up to 40 pounds! Often, young children are left home by themselves or with a slightly older sibling while their mother and older siblings collect water and their father works tends to animals or tries to earn money at a job outside the house.
- Water-related diseases are among the principle causes of death in young children.

## India

- India boasts the world's second largest population with more than 1 billion people. Its population is more than 3.5 times the size of that of the United States. However, India is only one-third of the physical size of the US.
- The population is incredibly diverse. Hindi is the national language, but there are 14 other official languages. India's schools teach 58 languages and its national newspapers are published in 87 languages. The predominant religion is Hindu (81.3%), but 12% of the population is Muslim.
- Poverty is a chief concern in India. Although overall poverty in India has decreased in the last 50 years, more than 25% of India's population still lives on less than two dollars a day. There is an ever-widening gap between poor people and those who are better off.
- India does not have enough freshwater for all of its people. India's huge and growing population is putting a severe strain on all of the country's natural resources.
- Most water sources are contaminated by sewage and agricultural runoff. India has made progress in the supply of safe water to its people, but gross disparity in coverage exists across the country. In order to decrease the amount of disease spread through drinking-water, toilet usage and hygiene must both be improved.

## The Philippines

- The Philippines is located in southeastern Asia. It is an archipelago between the Philippine Sea and the South China Sea, east of Vietnam. The Philippine archipelago is made up of 7,107 islands.
- The climate is tropical marine. Terrain is mostly mountains with narrow to extensive coastal lowlands. Natural hazards include cyclonic storms, landslides, active volcanoes, destructive earthquakes, and tsunamis.
- Current environmental issues include uncontrolled deforestation especially in watershed areas; soil erosion; air and water pollution in major urban centers; coral reef degradation; and increasing pollution of coastal mangrove swamps.
- Fifteen percent of the all families in the Philippines do not have access to safe drinking water, and 28 percent do not have sanitary toilets. Waterborne diseases are a major cause of infectious disease in the Philippines, and include bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever.

## Honduras

- Honduras is the knee of Central America, bordered to the south by Nicaragua and El Salvador and to the west by Guatemala. In the rural regions, nearly 63% of the population is considered extremely poor, living on less than a dollar a day.
- Families often work as subsistence farmers—growing only what they can use to feed their own families, and leaving very little money for other purchases.
- The water crisis in Honduras was made much worse in 1998 by an enormous hurricane. The hurricane was followed by three days of rain that caused landslides and floods and killed thousands of people.
- Reconstruction efforts are continuing. However, until they are complete, in these areas families are forced to rely on contaminated water supplies, and the prevalence of waterborne diseases like cholera is increasing. Mosquitoes that carry malaria and dengue fever are also a problem.
- Many women and children in the rural areas of Honduras spend up to six hours each day simply fetching water and carrying it home on their heads.

# GLOBAL WATER AWARENESS CHART

Use information from the "Global Water Awareness World Tour" information sheet to complete the chart.

| Information                      | Ethopia | The Philippines | Bangladesh | Honduras | India |
|----------------------------------|---------|-----------------|------------|----------|-------|
| Description of physical location |         |                 |            |          |       |
| Other geographical facts         |         |                 |            |          |       |
| Important statistics             |         |                 |            |          |       |
| Description of the water crisis  |         |                 |            |          |       |