

Environmental health outcomes of work carried out in Uganda by the charity “Water for Kids”

Abstract

This research aimed to evaluate the environmental health outcomes of work carried out in Uganda by the charity “Water for Kids” which is based in the United Kingdom. Whilst developments in Environmental and Public Health Practice in developed countries have resulted in improved health of their residents, it is important to note that developing countries are struggling to provide their residents with basic essentials for improved health such as access to improve water supplies and sanitation facilities. In the year 2000, member states of the United Nations agreed 8 goals to be achieved by the year 2015 which aimed to eradicate poverty worldwide; these goals are called the Millennium Development Goals.

The research was carried out during 2 visits to Iganga District in February and June 2009. The main focus of the work centred on carrying out water testing of water improvements works carried out by Water for Kids in Iganga District, South-East Uganda. Turbidity, pH and the bacteriological quality of the water sources were assessed. Further observations and notes were made of other public or environmental health related benefits caused directly or indirectly by Water for Kids’ work.

The findings of the research found that the water improvement works carried out by Water for Kids resulted in an improved quality of water with particular improvements noted in turbidity readings. The water quality of 2 water sources before and after improvement works were able to be compared however the data collected for bacteriological content has some limitations which are noted in the report. Other observations noted that Water for Kids’ work resulted in a reduction of health and safety risk surrounding unprotected springs, increased potential for income generation of residents and that the work would contribute to both national and international goals set in relation to human development.

Some recommendations are suggested which may improve the results of future works by Water for Kids in Uganda and they include increased efforts to build partnerships with the Iganga District Council particularly with the District Chief Health Officer and the District Water Officer, in-depth analysis of the suitability of certain water improvement methods for identified areas and an increase of resource aimed at improving hygiene and sanitation in the area particularly through the training of communities and the provision of facilities where resources allow.