

# More than Money and Hardware: Water and Sanitation for Health in the Developing World



ESE Distinguished Alumnus Award and  
UNC Barr Award Recipient

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## ABSTRACT

"Ever since the "sanitary awakening" of the 19th century, and the recognition of water-borne disease transmission, sanitary/environmental engineers have rightly viewed themselves as key players in the protection of public health. In a similar vein, the success of the Marshall Plan, the World Bank and others in the reconstruction of Europe after World War II showed the valuable role that capital transfer can play in combating poverty .

Reducing the sickness and disease from poor water and sanitation in the developing world, however, will require more than money and hardware. Solving these problems will require, in addition,

- 1) a more thoughtful understanding of what kinds of interventions and investments are most effective in promoting public health
- 2) closer attention to the role of individual and family behaviour and preferences in protecting and promoting health, and
- 3) effective institutions (or collective behaviour) to ensure the necessary cooperation to build, and more importantly, maintain water and sanitation systems.

The presenter will share the good ideas of others that he has found most helpful in thinking through issues of water, sanitation and health, and will describe some of the more effective and promising approaches to service promotion and provision. These approaches succeed by addressing behaviour and preferences of the end-user and operator, and not just the money and hardware requirements of the donor."

## BIO

Dr Pete Kolsky is a Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist of the World Bank working in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, primarily on projects in Haiti. Prior to this assignment, Pete supported the World Bank's global efforts to boost access to basic sanitation, and served as the Bank's "fecal point" on this issue. He joined the World Bank Group in 2001 in Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire, where he developed and managed the Water and Sanitation Program's activities in sanitation in Africa for two years. Before this, Pete worked for 10 years in the Environmental Health Group (EHG) of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) at the University of London. He headed EHG for two and a half years, and split his time evenly between teaching, research and consultancy, all of which focused on the interplay between infrastructure and environmental health. Pete received his PhD from the University of London in 1999 for research on flooding and drainage design in Indian slums.

Before LSHTM, Pete's experience included work as an engineer on sewerage in Alexandria and Cairo Egypt (2 years with an American consulting firm), water supply and sanitation in Tete Province, Mozambique (2 years as a Mozambican government employee), rehabilitation of the Phnom Penh water works in Cambodia (2 years with the international NGO Oxfam) and hydraulics and software engineering for a consulting firm in California (2 years). Pete earned his Master's degree in Environmental Engineering at UNC in 1977, where he supported Professor Lauria's World Bank research on the varying costs of alternative service levels in water supply in Yemen. Pete started work in the sector as a rural water supply technician in Madagascar during a year off from undergraduate studies at Harvard in 1973.