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## Social Entrepreneurs Create 2 Amazingly Simple Water Carriers

Posted on Wednesday, July 11, 2012 By [Maryruth Belsey Priebe](#)

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Two social entrepreneurs have recently introduced simple, yet astoundingly effective systems that can be used by women living in developing countries to collect and carry clean water. Many women and children living in water-stressed African regions are forced to travel an average of 3.5 miles (5.6 km) daily with up to 15 liters (5.3 gallons) of water on their backs. That's an incredible physical burden and an extreme drain on productivity. Having better water-carrying solutions can minimize both the physical pain and the time waste these

women and children face.

**Wello WaterWheel**

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Wello is a social venture focused on finding ways to effectively deliver clean water in developing regions. They have chosen to reframe the issue in terms of an opportunity to reinvent the wheel. Their goal is to develop a system that is both an income-generating tool for families living in poverty, as well as a highly effective way to collect and transport potable water.

Designed by social entrepreneur, Cynthia Koenig, the Wello WaterWheel is essentially a barrel with a handle for pushing or pulling. The barrel can carry up to 25 gallons (94.6 liters) of water - a volume that weighs 200 pounds (90 kg) and is up to five times more than the average woman can carry on her head. Not only does the WaterWheel make it much less painful to transport clean water, it also frees up more of their time which they can use to be productive in work or school. And because it is ruggedly built, almost anyone can use the WaterWheel over even the toughest terrain.

Wello is just a few weeks away from releasing WaterWheel 2.0 after nine months of research and countless trips to fetch water. Watch their website for more information! In the future, they hope to add features such as filtration systems and add-on drop irrigation kits. There's even talk of creating a cell phone charger that would use the wheel's rotation to charge a battery!

### WaterWear Backpack



Developed as a collaboration between social entrepreneurs and an industrial packaging manufacturer Greif, the WaterWear backpack is a safe, easy way for people to transport their water. One of the concerns addressed by Greif is that people living in the developing world often inadvertently use secondhand containers that previously held

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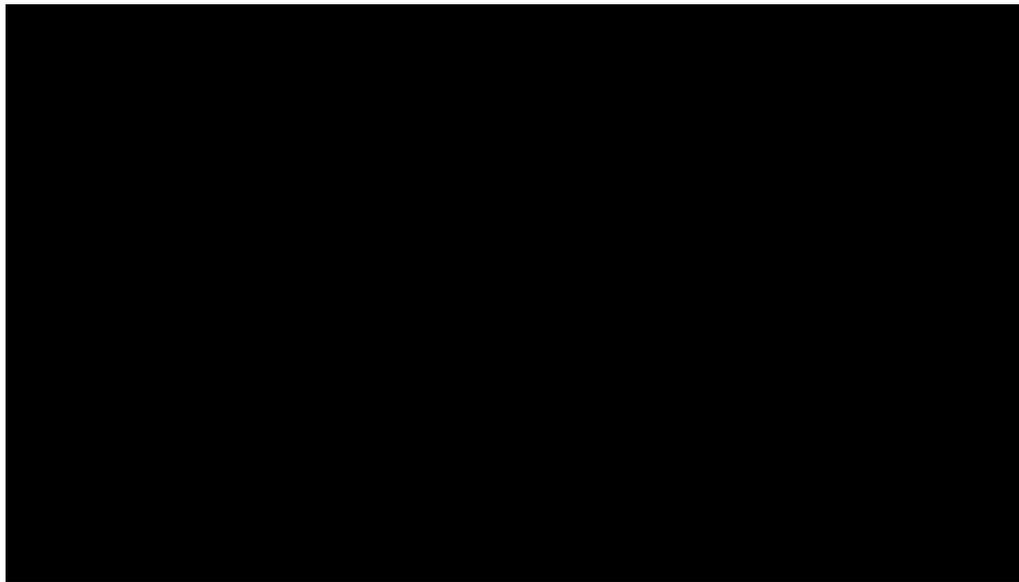


poisonous compounds. Exposure to these substances through water stored in the used

containers can cause severe health concerns. Greif also wanted to create a design that was both collapsible and lightweight so that the carrier would be easy on the body, unlike some other water carrying devices that put too much strain on the upper portion of the back.

Greif's CEO, David Fischer, is a cancer survivor and a former chemical industry professional. He had this to say about the dangers of contaminated products:

“These containers used [to transport water] oftentimes have been used with paint, fuels, pesticides. Being from a packaging company, I know those packages with tight-knit enclosures on top are impossible to get clean.”



As part of the Clinton Global Initiative's water action group, Greif wanted to develop an affordable, safe water carrying solution, and they've done just that. The WaterWear backpacks cost somewhere around \$5.50 to \$6 to distribute for disaster relief, with 2,000 packs already handed out in four communities in Haiti, and another 1,000 headed to Guatemala. They come in 20 liter (5.3 gallon) or 15 liter (3.9 gallon) models.



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This post was written by:



### Maryruth Belsey Priebe

Maryruth has been seeking the keys to environmental justice - both at home and at work - for over a decade. Growing up adjacent to wild spaces, Maryruth developed a healthy respect (and whimsical appreciation) for things non-human, but her practical mind constantly draws her down to earth to ponder tangible solutions to complex eco-problems.

With interests that range from green living to green business, sustainable building designs to organic gardening practices, ecosystem restoration to environmental health, Maryruth has been exploring and writing about earth-matters for most of her life. Of special interest is the subject of ecopsychology and the role the natural world plays in the long-term

health and well-being of humanity. You can learn more about Maryruth's work at [www.JadeCreative.ca](http://www.JadeCreative.ca).



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**Vincent says:**

Sunday, July 22, 2012 at 1:42 am



This is a very nice project! Hope to see that more people use these water carriers in the future!

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