

DRAWING  
WATER



# DRAWING WATER

A resource book of illustrations on water  
and sanitation in low-income countries

**Rod Shaw**



Water, Engineering and Development Centre  
Loughborough University  
2005



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**Please note that some of the images in this book are intended to represent poor practice.**

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Designed and produced at WEDC

## **About the Illustrator**

Rod Shaw is a specialist in publications management, graphic and information design and illustration. Originally a Fine Art graduate, he has developed his expertise both in practice and academically, now holding a postgraduate diploma in management as well as an M.Phil. degree for his research into information design for international development.

At WEDC, Rod Shaw leads the Information and Resources Team in the delivery and development of its services, which includes the production and distribution of WEDC publications.

## **About WEDC**

The Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) is concerned with education, training, research and consultancy for improved planning, provision and management of physical infrastructure and services for development in low- and middle-income countries, focusing on the needs and demands of the poor.

WEDC is devoted to activities that improve the health and well-being of people living in both rural areas and urban communities. We encourage the integration of technological, environmental, social, economic and management inputs for effective and sustainable development.

# Introduction

In 1988, John Pickford, co-founder and Leader of WEDC invited me for an interview for the post of Editorial Assistant. Drawing skills featured in the job description, so with a degree in Fine Art behind me and an interest in international development, I thought I might be in with a chance. I asked John if he would like me to bring along to the interview a portfolio of my artwork for inspection. To this he replied: “Just bring along any drawings you’ve done of people sitting on the toilet!”

I was somewhat taken aback by his response, and wondered whether this really was the job for me. But I was also curious. Needless to say, my portfolio was missing the vital collection of images that would sway the appointment in my favour. Not sure whether John was joking or not, I hurriedly produced a few sketches and set off to attend the interview.

I soon discovered what WEDC was about. It had an established reputation as one of the world’s leading centres for education, training and research concerned, principally, with improving access to water and sanitation for the poor in low- and middle-income countries. I was immediately struck by ‘the human touch’ which pervaded the ethos of WEDC and realized that this was intended to spill over into the publications which WEDC produced. Not only were technical illustrations used to convey information, but line drawings were to be used to describe the context of a subject in an approachable way, and also to enliven the page.

With the advancement of printing and publishing technologies throughout the 1990s, I questioned whether black and white line drawings were still an effective means of visual communication. After all, the advent of desktop scanning and digital photography meant that photographs were now easy to drop into documents. There were (and still are), however, problems associated with using photographs. They are usually country or culture specific and do not withstand multiple-generation copying. Both factors are limiting for materials intended for wide distribution in developing countries. Furthermore, particular features of a subject can be emphasized and given focus using an illustration. My doubts over the continued relevance of line drawings were finally put to rest when I researched the issue during the course of studying for my postgraduate degree. Many accounts suggest that the pictorial style most easily understood by people who have had relatively little exposure to pictures are shaded line drawings<sup>1</sup>.

In 2004, I was commissioned by the World Health Organization and UNICEF through their Joint Monitoring Programme to prepare a set of illustrations on a broad range of subjects relating to water supply and sanitation in developing countries. They were produced to feature in educational materials for staff as they train to conduct household surveys designed to report global estimates of access to water supply and sanitation. This project provided the opportunity for me to gather together into a set the line illustrations I have produced over the years for various reasons, and to present them here as a resource for others.

*Drawing Water* follows in the tradition of other collections of development illustrations, notably *The Copy Book*<sup>2</sup> and *Where There is No Artist*<sup>3</sup>. As such, I hope it will be useful for teachers, project managers, fieldworkers and health professionals active in communication and education work. It provides 'ready-made' drawings, but can also be used as a source from which locally-adapted drawings can be made by artists and non-artists alike.

My thanks go to colleagues at WEDC who have provided descriptions and photographs from which a number of the illustrations published in this volume have been produced, and to the willing models who posed for many of the others.

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*2005*

1. Shaw, R.J. (2001) *Information Design and Distance Learning for International Development: A WEDC M.Phil. study*, WEDC, Loughborough University, UK.

2. Rohr-Rouendaa, Petra (1997) *Where There is No Artist: Development drawings and how to use them*, ITDG Publishing, Rugby, UK. This book contains more than 400 drawings relating to a wide range of educational and health issues, along with advice on copying, enlarging and otherwise changing the illustrations without using special equipment to make them appropriate to a particular situation.

3. Linney, Bob and Wilson, Bruce (1988) *The Copy Book: Copyright free illustrations for development*, ITDG Publishing, Rugby, UK. This book comprises over a hundred pages of drawings donated by the British Association of Illustrators. It covers food, water, health, shelter and work.



# Contents

Note: The two main sections of the book *Water* and *Sanitation* are further divided into sub-sections as listed below. Section labels and captions refer to the folders and filenames of the high-resolution electronic versions of the images presented on the compact disk which accompanies the book.

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