

Press Release
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Swedish design can help millions (hint: it's not Ikea)

When one thinks of the world's sanitation crisis, one might not first think of good design as an important part of the solution. But the Swedish company Peepoople has managed to combine both function and design in its biodegradable portable toilet solution that could affect the health and wellbeing of millions.

With the annual World Toilet Day taking place on November 19th, it is a good time to review the facts. The UN estimates that 2.5 billion people do not have access to proper sanitation, including toilets or latrines. 1 billion people still defecate in the open. Women and girls risk rape and abuse because they have no toilet that offers privacy. There is no reason for humour or taboo around the issue of toilets. The world's sanitation crisis has dramatic consequences on human health, dignity and security, the environment, and social and economic development.

The Peepoo toilet, created by Swedish company Peepoople, is a personal, single-use, self-sanitising, fully biodegradable toilet that prevents faeces from contaminating the immediate area as well as the surrounding ecosystem. After use, Peepoo turns into valuable fertiliser that can improve livelihoods and increase food security.

Understanding that a playful, appealing, and intuitive design would contribute both to acceptance and to understanding of use, the company ensured that the Peepoo's simple form, and colorful graphic design was as important part of the concept.

Karin Ruiz, CEO of Peepoople explains, "The design of the Peepoo is really a core part of the concept. You need to consider the appeal and attraction to get user acceptance, but also, of course the functional design aspects to create a (complete) system".

Although Swedish creativity and design is well known throughout the world, the Swedes believe that good design is not only something for the wealthy.

Sara Ilstedt, Director of Greenleap based at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology, and a Professor of Product and Service Design, comments, "Sweden has a long tradition of design, in a democratic sense... of making good design and good things that are available for everyone, not only people that have money. It's very much a part of our backbone".

We only need to look at H&M and Ikea to see that particular Swedish design philosophy successfully carried out in other businesses. But for now, on World Toilet Day, a well-designed Swedish product may have a different kind of impact: to help bring equality and dignity to the millions, even billions, in need.

See the Video News Release and Broll, to share and download, on <http://mediaroom.sweden.se>

Contacts and further information:

World Toilet Day November 19

<http://www.unwater.org/worldtoiletday>

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Green Leap is a network for design and sustainable development that is being established at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in collaboration with Konstfack - University College of Arts, Crafts and Design. The general goal of Green Leap is act as a catalyst for change by involving design in sustainable development. The initiative is supported by the Swedish Energy Agency which has realised that changed attitudes and behavior is key to a sustainable future.

The Swedish Institute

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