

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Comments from around the world on the use of Sawyer filters

“In 2009 typhoid was 14% of MUSACA consultations, and in 2011 it is 3%. That looks like good evidence that the Sawyer filters are working.”-Heather Hart

Water Ambassadors of Canada

Water Ambassadors Canada is a registered Canadian charity dedicated to providing clean drinking water in the developing world. We drill wells, repair wells, install purification systems, distribute Sawyer filters and teach hygiene. We first saw Sawyer filters at Mission Fest Vancouver in 2009 and were impressed.

Halfway around the world in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) we have friends Drs Philip and Nancy Wood. They have spent their entire medical careers in Africa ministering to the people there. They work in Bunia, a city of over 300,000 in eastern DRC. Due to a violent past its infrastructure is marginal. Sadly, despite its natural riches, it is the second poorest country in the world. The water supply is marginal and when it is available it is contaminated with typhoid. Drilling companies in nearby Uganda and Kenya are reluctant to drive on the poor roads in this risky country to drill wells. A portable solution was the answer.

Working with MUSACA, a medical coop there, we have distributed hundreds of Point One filters. People pay \$7 /year to join the medical co-op. This gives them access to a doctor and the hospital and they are able to get clean water from a Sawyer filter. We ask the families who share the filter and ask “How many people are using the filter?” and “How do you feel?” One filter provides enough clean water for several families (so 20 people can share it). In EVERY case, the person questioned put their hand on their tummy and said ‘The diarrhea is gone. There has been a noticeable drop in typhoid cases at the hospital.

Dr Wood has reported that, “Typhoid Fever was 14% of MUSACA consultations in 2009, and 6% in 2010 and 3% in 2011. That looks like good evidence that the filters are working.” That is good enough for us!

“We see signs of improved health in the poorest children: kids we have known for years as listless, underweight, and constantly complaining of parasite symptoms, now show signs of thriving. Their moms and teachers tell us they see a remarkable difference.” -Sister Lorraine Lauter

Agua con Bendiciones

Our unique “Ministry Model” in Honduras requires recipients to share their new capacity for water purification with at least two other households for no less than 6 months. Prior to receiving a filter recipients are required to complete a training component that incorporates Gospel spirituality, a culture of service, basic understanding of parasitic contamination and health issues, assembly, decoration (very important!) and maintenance--concluding in blessing and contractual commitments.

Two years into the program, at nearly 500 filters, we have plenty to celebrate: The program is successful! Nearly 500 filters have been placed in 13 different congregations, via the sponsorship and leadership of various US congregations and individuals. In a recently conducted study, the mothers report complete satisfaction with the filters. 100% claim that their families are free of intestinal parasites. We see signs of improved health in the poorest children: kids we have known for years as listless, underweight, and constantly complaining of parasite symptoms, now show signs of thriving. Their moms and teachers tell us they see a remarkable difference. Only one filter is known to have been retrieved from a family because of irresponsibility. The women, according to one another’s witness, are faithful to the ministry model (everyone in the neighborhood understands the expectations and looks to see the results.)

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-Dr. Ravi Jayakaran

Map International

In total, MAP International has distributed around 650 water filters, reaching over 9,000 people worldwide. We saw in Ecuador improved behavior and school performance in children. In Kenya, the village boss recognized how valuable the filters were, and searched all over to find more. In Bolivia, the introduction of the water filters meant much more than just a source of clean water. The filters served as a springboard for holistic, community-wide change in water and sanitation. We are very happy with the Sawyer water filters and are now introducing it in new areas

MAP International has been using Sawyer water filters in our field programs for over two years. They are easy to install, easy to use and easy to maintain. In the THVs (Total Health Villages) where we have used them, the CORP (Community’s own resource persons) are able to train their peers in proper use of the filters. We have seen the following impact in the lives of the households using only filtered water: Significant reduction in diarrhea (especially among children), reduction in repeat intestinal worm infections (we advise de-worming after the family has switched entirely to drinking filtered water and an overall improvement in the family’s health. The ‘Safe water for the needy’ project has also leveraged a significant amount of ‘sweat equity’ (a family contributes 25 days of labor to the ‘general labor pool’ of the village and this is then used for the development of village infrastructure.

“I’m very thankful to FH for such a wonderful initiative. These filters help this area to get safe drinking water. I like the criteria of distribution. Hopefully in the future, FH can take the same initiative to other needy communities”. -Local government official in Bangladesh

Food for the Hungry

Haimchar (Bangladesh) is a sub-district of Chandpur district, next to the River Meghna, one of the largest rivers in the world. Almost 70% of the land in this sub district is islands or sandbanks which have been built on at times when the river is low. There are three communities in that area, with around 1200 families living there. People living in the area are in constant fear of floods, cyclones, or river-erosion – where the fast-flowing river literally sweeps the land away from under their houses. However, the area is remote and disconnected from the development efforts of the government. People of the area are suffering from the effects of poverty, including various kinds of health and sanitation problems.

Water is everywhere but no water is drinkable. All available water is dirty and polluted. People often use and drink this contaminated water and become sick. Children often suffer from water-transmitted diseases. Diarrhea is very common here. Clean water could be accessed with tube-wells, but sinking tube-wells is very expensive and difficult because they need to be more than 400 feet deep to reach safe water. The communities have few tube-wells, but not enough to cover the whole community. An affordable alternative to deep tube wells is water filters, which can be shared in the community, requiring only a bucket and a source of water.

“Before we received the Sawyer filters, 5 to 6 children would die every month due to water related diseases. Since receiving the filters the number of deaths has decreased significantly.” –Bishop Alex Wabwile

Life Spring Ministry

Bishop Alex oversees over 100 churches in Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi. His hometown in Webuye, Kenya is in a region of Kenya that does not receive assistance from the government or foreign NGO’s for political reasons. Life Spring Ministries was able to bring Bishop Alex Sawyer filters so they could filter the contaminated water from their self-dug boreholes.

At the church in Webuye you will find a 1000 liter tank with a Sawyer filter attached to it. This set-up has been supplying clean drinking water to over 100 families in the community for the past two years.

“People in Ethiopia and around Africa from larger organizations than ours heard about what we were doing and sent their rep representatives hundreds of miles to come see our water presentations in these remote villages and they were also amazed.” –Dr. Jana Turns

Doctors Giving Back

The filters were nothing short of AMAZING...we took all of the filters that we purchased from you in February and traveled out to the most remote villages in Western Ethiopia...and I mean remote. These are villages where the women and children walk miles 2 -3 times per day to get water from streams and rivers and bring back to cook with, bathe in, play in and worst of all DRINK!! As I think I mentioned to you before, these poor destitute people suffer from horrible diseases such as Typhoid, Cholera, Malaria, Intestinal Parasites and TB and 85% of these diseases are caused by this terrible dirty water that they drink!!

We were able to set up "water stations" and supply 15 remote hut villages, each with 2500 people, with CLEAN DISEASE FREE WATER! It was beyond incredible! Still brings goose bumps to my skin and tears to my eyes...While we were there we also supplied water filters for some of the top Ethiopian government officials personal use as their families do not have clean water to drink either. They had never heard of such a filter and were thrilled to be introduced to Sawyer through Doctors Giving Back. People in Ethiopia and around Africa from larger organizations than ours heard about what we were doing and sent their rep representatives hundreds of miles to come see our water presentations in these remote villages and they were also amazed. These are groups that continue to try to clean the water with wells, pumps, generators and solar options, which we have also tried and find that they just don't solve the huge problem!

“We have seen the impact of these filters where many households are now fully dependent on this for drinking purposes, family members are free of chronic diarrhea, and the general health status has improved” – Fiji Health Department

Give Clean Water

In August, Give Clean Water celebrated its third year anniversary of providing clean water to those in need. It's been an amazing three years! Since 2008 we have provided over 35,000 people with clean water to drink. Our reach has touched areas of the world including Fiji, Haiti, Ecuador, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, and many other parts of the world. The need for clean water is still great. The World Health Organization claims that water issues affect one in three people on every continent of the globe. The statistics can be overwhelming, but we try to always focus on the individual family. The smile on the face of a child as they taste their new clean water. The joy in the eyes of a mother telling us her kids haven't been sick since we installed the water filter. It's those moments that keep us motivated to continue our work to change the world one family, one filter at a time.

“They have reached out to them for nearly a decade with no real success...The dramatic improvement in the tribe's health has built a bridge of trust that has resulted in many Guarani accepting Christ.”- Saddleback Clean Water Initiative

Saddleback Church Clean Water Initiative

Pastor Guillermo and his church in Argentina have a heart for the Guarani Indian tribe. They have reached out to them for nearly a decade with no real success. Saddleback's PEACEWater team equipped his church with health and hygiene training, and Sawyer water filters. The dramatic improvement in the tribe's health has built a bridge of trust that has resulted in many Guarani accepting Christ.

Saddleback's PEACEwater team was surprised at the dramatic, visible health changes they saw in the tribe. Our team told us that the Guarani were lethargic and did not participate in the Health and Hygiene class with any energy or enthusiasm. A year after the training and technology installations our team returned and was amazed at how much better the Guarani looked physically. The Guarani ran to greet them and engaged in all activities. Pastor Guillermo visited Saddleback Church last week and asked for more Sawyer filters to further his ministry helping the Guarani Indians live better lives.

“Many who were non-believers found the filters as a God-sent miracle and changed their lifestyle. They are now changed to become believers in Jesus and accepted to be baptized. I now baptize every three months, yet before I used to do so once a year.” - Pastor Rubaduka Mathias in Rwanda

Compassion International

The supported children in this community had a big problem of lack of safe water before they were issued with water filters, which improved the sanitation and health of the children and their families. Hence, the whole church community benefited as well. Initially the surrounding community used to fetch and drink dirty water, while others took their time boiling water, then wait for the water to settle down before they could separate the water from the residues, and then wait for the water to cool down before they drink it. It was a long process which many could not do due to lack of firewood to boil the water that is so scarce in the area. Most of the people in this community suffer from waterborne diseases such as parasites, dysentery, typhoid, malaria and so on. The problem was aggravated by lack of enough firewood in the area to boil the water, and many people drank it just the way it was. In 2010, God performed for us a great miracle for He had understood well the great difficulties we had for long of not having safe water. At that time 250 water filters were issued to 250 families of the supported children. The families that received these filters had a great change in their lives, for their children now no longer suffer from the above waterborne diseases, and they are no longer sickly as before. They now participate fully in the project activities, study well and get good results in class. Many are worshipers and born-again Christians. They play well and interact with fellow children with no difficulties. People around the community benefited a lot, for they come to seek for drinking water from the families that received these filters. A single filter can serve as many as six families around them. Many who were non-believers found it as a God-sent miracle and changed their lifestyle. They are now changed to become believers in Jesus and accepted to be baptized. I now baptize every three months, yet before I used to do so once a year. In short, the church congregation has grown so big because the community is now free from diseases and buying firewood to boil water to drink. The time spent on searching for firewood and boiling water is now spent on other activities.

“School attendance was about 72%. After we installed Sawyer filters into the school, the attendance increased to 90%” – Dr. Feroz Ismail

HASWA

HASWA has been providing clean water to families in Pakistan since the flooding occurred. The sharing model we use provides clean water for the children during the school day and at the end of the day each child brings a two liter bottle of clean water home to share with the family.

HASWA began by helping children suffering from severe burns and post-trauma deformity. Our next milestone effort was with SmileTrain, an international organization. In this programme, we are treating hundreds of children with congenital deformities of cleft lip & palates and minor & major surgeries.

We arrived in Tokyo on April 5th at 7:15pm. We had 100+ Sawyer filters (can provide 10,000+ people with clean water) on us. What we encountered upon first light will be engrained in my memory forever. Apocalyptic is the only word that comes to mind... There was not a soul in sight... just complete utter devastation.... tanker ships in the middle of roads...” –Jon Rose

Waves for Water

We quickly determined that the best candidates for our program were the little neighborhoods that were right along the edge of where the tsunami waters stopped. These people have houses that are still standing yet they have no water, plumbing, or electricity. In one case we saw an elderly woman washing clothes by hand in her driveway. The elderly woman's daughter, also a mother (of three younger children who were helping as well), was the subject of our filter bucket demonstration. We explained our mission and then offered her family a system. She looked at us and started to cry. She asked us why her...? Why her family? What did they do to deserve this help? It was at this moment that my original intuition about finding pockets of people that, for some reason were being overlooked, was validated. It is these touching moments that symbolize everything we do and why we do it...”