

## Safe Water and AIDS Project – SWAP

### 1. Brief Summary

SWAP's mission is to facilitate access to safe water, improve hygiene, reduce disease burden, and improve economic well-being among vulnerable populations in western Kenya.

SWAP's objectives include:

- Prevention of water related diseases and other leading causes of childhood illness and death, such as malaria, malnutrition and respiratory infection.
- Improvement of the health of HIV support group members as well of the general public by promoting and selling household water treatment and other health and hygiene products.
- Supporting economic well-being of vulnerable populations by empowering HIV support groups and other community self help groups to generate income through provision of products and services.

Main achievements:

- Over 900 HIV support groups trained and vending products for SWAP
- Two provincial offices and 9 satellite offices up and running
- Over 50 Kenyan employees working for SWAP
- Won a World Bank Development Marketplace Award in 2006
- Responded to over 30 cholera and typhoid outbreaks and flooding disasters with the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation
- Has developed a basket of goods with over 30 health products for self-help groups to sell in their communities
- Member of National Health NGO network HENNET and represented in the Board
- Obtained financial support by a variety of donors: Rotary International, World Bank, CDC, WHO, Vestergaard Fransen, Gain Foundation, USAID, CHAK, UNICEF, Procter and Gamble and a number of private individuals.
- Formalized partnership with PSI (Population Services International) and received technical support and a USAID sub award through PSI.
- Established a functioning Board of Directors and management team
- Established research wing which gives regular feedback to the community and SWAP staff regarding program impact, which permits programmatic adjustments to address emerging trends and needs.
- Media coverage from CNN, GAIN Foundation and Students of the World

- 50,000 bottles of Waterguard (Chlorine Solution) and over 172,000 sachets of PuR sold in 2010
- Launched a Baby and Family Care Centre that includes a water treatment plant that produces safe, potable water from the local source and includes a kiosk to sell health products
- 250 HIV support groups trained on safe water systems in 2010
- 250 HIV support groups accessing microfinance services in 2010

## **2. Milestones**

January 2005 – Initiation of Safe Water and AIDS Project

June 2006 – Registration of SWAP as an Non Governmental Organization

October 2006 – SWAP won World Bank Development Marketplace Award

January 2007 – SWAP established research wing supported by CDC, WHO, and private donors

October 2007 – SWAP got USAID sub-award for 5 years through PSI

## **3. Narrative**

### Situation before initiative began

Nyanza Province has an HIV prevalence of 15%, the highest in Kenya. Nyanza Province also has the highest infant mortality rate -- 125 per 1000 live births -- and under five mortality rate -- 227 per 1000 live births -- in the country. In 2004, life expectancy at birth was 38 years. Diarrhea and pneumonia alone count for over one third of all deaths in children under five years old and malaria accounts for an additional 14%. Only 63% of households in Nyanza Provinces have access to improved water supplies and 34% had adequate sanitation. The area is subject to floods and experiences recurrent cholera outbreaks.

### Priorities

SWAP has introduced several products for water treatment that have been proven to improve water quality and prevent diarrhea. These include WaterGuard, PuR (a flocculent-disinfectant product made by Procter and Gamble Co), Aquatabs (sodium dichloroisocyanurate), and locally made Chujio (ceramic Potters for Peace) filters. In addition, SWAP produces and sells improved water containers (ceramic and plastic) for safe storage that are fitted with lids and spigots. SWAP also sells two types of hand soap and metal stands upon which the improved storage containers can be placed to create a hand washing station. As noted above, SWAP trainers have introduced safe water, hygiene, and a number of other health products to HIV support groups and other community self help groups. In 2007 SWAP established a partnership with Population Services International, a social marketing non-governmental organizations, that markets

Waterguard, Aquatabs, PuR, mosquito nets, family planning pills and condoms, and provides them to SWAP at wholesale prices, which self-help groups then sell to community members at the retail price, keeping the difference as an incentive. SWAP collaborates closely with a number of partners, including the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, community leaders, local and international NGOs, UNICEF, WHO, the Rotary Club, and a number of private sector partners..

### Target

SWAP has been targeting HIV support groups, including people living with HIV, Home Based Care Groups, Orphan Support Groups, Widow Groups, Youth Groups, and other community self help groups. Each of these groups serve their communities, which are typically impoverished peri-urban slums or rural villages.

### Objectives and Strategies

The main objectives are to prevent water related illnesses and other major causes of illness and death such as malaria and malnutrition, and to improve the economic well-being of the members of HIV support groups. SWAP's strategies are to use already existing community structures and enhance their capabilities through training, access to inexpensive, proven health products, consultation, and collaboration. The self-help groups receive training in health topics, running a small business, and receiving and managing microcredit. In addition, to improve their ability to motivate their friends and neighbors to improve their health, self-help group members are provided training in the Education through Listening (ETL) behavior change methodology based on motivational interviewing, stages of change theory, and social learning theory. ETL is a community engagement technique that is a person centered way of communicating and giving feedback to promote behavioral change.

### Mobilization of resources

SWAP has a functioning Board of Directors that meets quarterly, and whose members have been instrumental in making linkages with donors and helping develop proposals for funding. SWAP is further managed by a competent team that is under the leadership of a Program Director with over 25 years experience in community work and management in Africa. The initial funding was obtained from a Rotary Club in Atlanta, which was subsequently supplemented with a World Bank Development Marketplace Award. SWAP continued to expand and grow through a partnership with PSI in 2007 which included a USAID sub-award to scale up activities with technical support from PSI. A research component was initiated with technical support and funding from CDC, and has expanded through grants from a variety of organizations, including WHO, GTZ, the US Department of Health and Human Services, and several private sector partners. SWAP has international accounting systems and undergoes internal and external audits.

## Implementation

SWAP has annual strategic planning workshops during which the organization develops annual work-plans and set targets for the field staff. A monitoring and evaluation unit has been established to track progress in enrollment of groups, training sessions held, and product sales. The M&E unit has GPS mapped all groups and has developed a database to introduce new groups as they register with SWAP. SWAP has a field coordinator and a training coordinator who plan and monitor field and training activities. A total of 9 satellite offices have been established and are staffed by a field officer, who is issued a supply of health products for distribution to self-help groups. Whenever SWAP initiates a program in a new area, they hold an orientation workshop for local leaders, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation officers, and other stakeholders to introduce them to SWAP, its activities, the products, and the health and economic benefits of the program. Periodic follow-up meetings are called with the leaders to continue to solicit their support and share research findings.

SWAP field officers identify existing HIV support groups and other community self help groups and introduce them to the health products, describe the SWAP model, and explain the health and economic impact of the interventions. Active vendors are recruited for trainings in safe water and business skills. SWAP has established a partnership with K-Rep, one of the leading microfinance organizations in Kenya, which has been providing microfinance services to the groups. Groups visit community members door-to-door and are invited by the leaders to community meetings and public functions. Field officers visit self-help groups on a regular basis to provide business counseling, restock them with supplies, and assist them to become more efficient promoters and vendors.

SWAP's field staff has attended regular stakeholders meetings and planning meetings organized by the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation and reports to HENNET about the same. HENNET lobbies and advocates for emerging issues raised during the meetings with the Ministries at the National level.

SWAP experienced challenges at the initial stages with fast organizational growth. As more stringent administrative systems were slowly put in place, there was some resistance to the change from an informal to a professional organization, but these problems were overcome through regular communication and involvement of all staff in strategic planning. SWAP also provides capacity building for a number of staff members to help them keep up with organizational growth and administrative requirements. A major challenge is to achieve self-sustaining status, which is difficult for a small, local non-profit organization in a time of world recession. SWAP has initiated a number of fund raising activities, as it still depends on donors for its core activities. Another challenge has been the

overwhelming demand for services. SWAP has tried to decentralize the activities by opening satellite offices and establishing effective partnerships with other organizations.

### Results achieved

SWAP has exceeded most of its targets. Over a period of 5 years, SWAP has opened 11 offices including the headquarters in Kisumu serving Nyanza Province and a provincial office in Western Province. SWAP's original target was to have 4000 individual vendors but the actual number is more than 6,300 from approximately 900 groups. SWAP was able to exceed the targets because of support from various donors and demand for participation from the community that is greater than SWAP's capacity to respond. Since the beginning of the project, over 5500 self-help group members have opened savings accounts and have taken out loans with a total value of \$690,000. Annual sales of WaterGuard have increased from a few hundred in 2005 to an average of over 50,000 per year over the past 3 years. A survey in 2006 documented that over 30% of households in villages with active self-help groups had detectable chlorine residual in stored water, an objective measure of water treatment behavior. A 2-year-long research project in 60 villages that included biweekly home visits to assess product use and diarrhea rate showed that over 40% of households were treat their water and biweekly diarrhea prevalence has declined from over 10% to under 1%. A separate project in which handwashing stations were installed in 41 primary schools documented a 21% decrease in the risk of acute respiratory infections among students. A study of a novel hollow-fiber filter in 10 villages documented a 25% decrease in diarrhea risk in children less than 2 years old in project households. The beneficiaries are the HIV support groups and the community members at large in the most remote and vulnerable areas in Western Kenya.

### Sustainability

SWAP has continued the discussion about how to become more self reliant and reduce dependency on external donors. Various initiatives have been undertaken:

- A separate bank account has been opened for the purchase of products, so no external funds are utilized to purchase new supplies. Earnings are banked in a high interest savings account.
- Office based services are offered, including photocopying and laminating documents, which raise income to pay some junior staff members.
- A Baby and Family Care Centre was opened in Nyakwere Town as a pilot project in which products are sold from a community kiosk and treated river water is sold as an income generating activity. After a six-month pilot period, SWAP will apply lessons learned to scale up the activity by opening additional centers in other communities.
- A consultant wrote a business plan for SWAP to manage a training facility with a long stay unit, hotel, and conference centre to raise revenue to pay staff salaries and

support core activities of SWAP. The facility would employ local HIV self-help group members and earnings would enable SWAP to become fully self-sustaining. Fundraising is underway.

- A skyhydrant water treatment plant in the town of Ahero will be launched in February 2011 in collaboration with Aquaya Institute. The plant will produce 1000 litres of clarified, disinfected water per hour from raw water from the Nyando River. The water will be sold to local communities as an income generating activity for SWAP. On the grounds of the water treatment plant, SWAP will build a model village in which SWAP interventions will be showcased.

To further efforts at sustainability, SWAP works with various partners in joint activities, referrals for services and funding opportunities, and resource sharing. This initiative has been strengthened through SWAP's membership in HENNET (Health NGO Network) which provides an opportunity to meet partner organizations in various forums at the national level. SWAP has built the capacity of project staff and management team to document program activities, write proposals, and collaborate with essential partners. SWAP has identified and hired a Kenyan deputy director who is being coached and introduced to extensive partner networks by the current expatriate Program Director.

#### Lessons learned

- Importance of proper documentation as a tool for fundraising and to keep up with current trends. SWAP has markedly improved documentation and reporting. Current documentation includes monthly reports, a database of self-help groups, GPS mapping of all self-help groups, annual reports, audit reports, strategic planning documents, IEC materials, policy guidelines, training manuals, and research documents. Capacity building of SWAP staff has included proper reporting and documentation of achievements and interventions.
- Need to be proactive in strengthening partnership with the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation. This partnership has been strengthened through HENNET membership and targets set with field staff to ensure participation in stakeholders meetings and planning meetings with the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation
- Product sales and community support can be increased through use of Education through Listening method. Research findings showed positive impact of using this interactive behavioral change method with interventions designed to improve water quality and indoor air quality.

#### Replicability

SWAP began in Nyanza Province and was successfully replicated in Western Province. A similar project in Uganda has successfully applied some of SWAP's methods. A project to increase access to improved stoves in Cameroon has adopted some of SWAP's community

intervention methods. Currently, proposals to replicate the SWAP model have been prepared for Liberia and Haiti.

### References

*Title of document:* Increasing equity of access to point-of-use water treatment products through social marketing and entrepreneurship: a case study in Western Kenya.

*Date:* 2009

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*Title of document:* Community engagement and social entrepreneurship for distribution of household water treatment and storage products

*Date:* 2010

URL: [www.who.int/household\\_water/resources/en](http://www.who.int/household_water/resources/en)