



Safe Drinking Water in the Developing World: P&G's Focal Philanthropy Program

Greg Allgood, MSPH, PhD
2006 ESE Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient
Director, Children's Safe Drinking Water
Procter & Gamble

Friday, October 6, 2006
2301 McGavran-Greenberg Hall
2:00-2:50 p.m.

Abstract

An estimated 4000 children die every day because of preventable diseases largely related to unsafe drinking water. More than 90 organizations have recognized the importance of a new approach to address this public health crisis and formed the World Health Organization's (WHO's) International Network to Promote Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage. One of the technologies recognized by the WHO as effective in providing safe drinking water at the household level is PUR Purifier of Water, a combination coagulation, flocculation, and disinfection treatment product developed through collaboration between Procter & Gamble (P&G) and CDC. Laboratory evaluations including studies at UNC-CH demonstrate that this product effectively reduces pathogenic bacteria, viruses, and parasites. In addition, PUR reduces turbidity and removes a variety of chemical contaminants such as arsenic making it suitable for treating a wide variety of water sources in developing countries. Five randomized, controlled, health intervention trials (n=25,000 people) demonstrated that the combination system reduces the incidence of diarrhea by an average of 50%.

As it's focal philanthropy program called the Children's Safe Drinking Water program, P&G has committed to long-term not-for-profit provision of PUR in the developing world for emergency relief and for sustained social marketing. P&G has formed partnerships with a wide group of stakeholders including governments, academia, UN agencies, and not-for-profit organizations. Global emergency relief groups have used the product to provide safe drinking water during relief operations including for the Southeast Asia tsunami and the devastating earthquakes in Pakistan and Indonesia. Social marketing efforts have focused on provision of PUR in Africa, and P&G has recently announced a commitment to reach 1 million children through school education programs in Africa. To date, the Children's Safe Drinking Water program has provided more than 500 million liters of safe drinking water in the developing world.