

12.0 IMPLEMENT THE PROJECT

Tasks:

- Produce and distribute vessels, disinfectant and educational/promotional materials
- Launch the pilot project (special event)
- Supervise and support activities to implement the behavior change strategy and sell vessels and disinfectant through distribution systems as planned; monitor the activities
- Continue supplying bottles of disinfectant
- Evaluate the pilot project
- Implement the project on a larger scale



The project should first be implemented as a pilot. This is strongly recommended in order to test methods and determine what is effective, before implementing on a large scale. A pilot project discovers mistakes or weaknesses, and permits adjustments and improvements, without jeopardizing the larger activity. Also, a successful pilot can be used to justify increased funding from donor agencies.

The length of the pilot depends on what you need to learn from it. A pilot to determine the acceptability to the target audience and the effectiveness of the Safe Water System can be fairly short, such as 12 weeks. A pilot of a social marketing approach to distribution, education and promotion will take longer, to give time for the messages and distribution to diffuse in the community. **In Zambia**, for example, a pilot project lasted one year. It was successful and was instrumental in helping the Ministry of Health control a cholera outbreak, which convinced USAID to increase funding to expand the project to other regions of the country in the second year.

12.1 Produce and distribute vessels, disinfectant, and educational/promotional materials

- Procure or produce vessels. (See section 5.0.)
- Procure or produce disinfectant. (See section 5.0.)
 - Bottle disinfectant (with appropriate label)
 - Assure quality/concentration of disinfectant when produced and when distributed (see Annex C)
 - Distribute disinfectant to outlets (clinics, stores, and other outlets). Provide health facilities and other outlets such as clinics, pharmacies, NGO clinics, and volunteer sales people, with an initial supply of vessels and disinfectant. Monitor to ensure that deliveries are made to outlets in a timely way and that families who hear of the products and come to purchase them will not be disappointed.
- Print and distribute educational/promotional materials

Print sufficient quantities and materials for all anticipated needs during the pilot. It is usually more cost effective to print a large quantity than to reprint smaller quantities each time supplies run out. Distribute materials so that they are in outlets and in the hands of staff who will use them prior to the launch.

12.2 Launch the pilot project (special event)

The launch event is a special promotional activity to introduce the products and outlets in the pilot area and generate excitement and awareness in the target population. **In Bolivia**, for example, the launch included a parade of traditional dancers through the streets of La Paz followed by a ceremony on stage that included popular musicians and political figures. **In Madagascar**, the launch included a performance by the leading popular singer and other educational activities.

Timing of the launch is very important. In some settings, it is most effective to first implement some educational activities to convey some messages about diarrhea as a problem and the need for safe water. These activities should make the audience aware of the link between diarrhea and unsafe water and stimulate their interest.



In Pakistan, for example, the project spent a couple of weeks doing community-based education about contamination in the drinking water and the diseases it caused, using videotapes, slide shows, posters, and group meetings. Then the project brought in the water vessels, demonstrated and distributed them. The initial 2 weeks of focus on the problem effectively increased enthusiasm for the subsequent intervention.

A launch event might be timed to correspond with a cholera season or other seasonal increase of diarrhea, a time when people are especially motivated to avoid disease transmission.

However, a launch event does not have to be expensive. **In Kenya**, the launch was a meeting with community leaders to hand out and discuss information about the Safe Water System. The community leaders were then asked to take back the information to their villages. No press was present, but the effort reached all villages in the project area.

12.3 Supervise and support activities to implement the behavior change strategy and sell vessels and disinfectant through distribution systems as planned; monitor the activities

Health staff, staff at pharmacies and shops, and volunteers sell the products as planned. They will require an uninterrupted supply of the vessels, disinfectant, and educational and promotional materials.

Promote and sell the products through different distribution systems and media channels as planned.

- Use print materials – Health facilities display posters and staff use brochures when teaching family members about making water safe. Labels are put on disinfectant bottles. Posters are hung in places where groups will see them, such as in the market place, post office, shops.
- Disseminate messages to groups — Radio spots are broadcast, demonstrations are conducted at community meetings, audio-visual trucks visit communities to show a video on the Safe Water System, and drama groups stage promotional events.

- Implement interpersonal communication — Health staff teach clients about diarrhea and the Safe Water System including answering questions and ensuring clients understand how to use the products. Pharmacists and shopkeepers promote and teach clients about the Safe Water System products as they sell the products to them.



Neighborhood health committee representatives trained in motivational interviewing talk with community members about the Safe Water System and sell the products to them.

It is important to monitor these activities from the beginning to be sure that the activities are getting underway as planned, that the products are available for families to buy, that the target population understands the messages, and that there are no significant barriers to acceptance. If results are unexpected, conduct analyses to determine what went wrong. Solve problems that have delayed activities such as distribution of products or promotion of the Safe Water System and make adjustments as needed. Sometimes rumors are spread about a product, for example that it causes sterility. If this happens, it is necessary to seek out the source of the rumor to dispel concerns, and to reinforce educational and promotional efforts in populations affected by the rumor. Another potential problem is misuse of the products, for example using the water vessel to dispense alcoholic beverages. While such occurrences are impossible to prevent, it is important to disseminate a clear message that the purpose of the products is to make water safe.

Over time, assess the audience's response to the messages. If necessary, adjust messages and the way they are delivered. Even if the messages are still appropriate, their format and presentation should change over time so that people do not become bored and ignore them. Over time, promotion can emphasize different aspects of the product and the image associated with it. Early in the campaign, messages may emphasize purchasing a Safe Water System storage vessel and a bottle of disinfectant solution. Later messages may emphasize the ongoing purchase and proper use of the disinfectant along with improved sanitary practices.

Monitoring and Supervision

Monitoring and supervision are important to ensure that the activities are carried out as planned. In one project, after extensive media coverage, shipment of the disinfectant became unreliable and people did not have access to the product. Use of, and demand for, the disinfectant dropped to zero.

Some factors that often result in poor motivation and lead to project failures include:

- lack of clarity about responsibilities
- inadequate transport
- lack of support from supervisors and colleagues
- inadequate incentives, pay and resources
- heavy workload or conflicting tasks

Staff at health centers, pharmacies and shops, and volunteers who will sell the products need support and supervision. These individuals were given training and materials to help them teach about and sell the products. In addition, a visit to their site to answer their questions and give them encouragement, particularly early in the pilot project, can help to increase their effectiveness and motivation.

Strategies for improving supervision and staff motivation include:

- Giving staff clear and detailed job descriptions so that they know what is expected of them
- Establishing clear roles and allocating responsibility for supervision, especially if activities are being integrated into existing health programmes and activities and personnel already have a range of tasks to carry out
- Holding regular meetings to ensure that staff at all levels are aware of plans, progress and changes as a result of monitoring, and can exchange information about their experiences.
- Investigating and addressing the specific causes of poor motivation
- Ensuring that staff are paid a salary in accordance with the job and have the resources to carry out their jobs
- Ensuring that volunteers receive sufficient incentives to play their expected roles
- Providing staff with incentives for good work, such as bonus payments, recognition through prizes or awards, in-service training, or promotion
- Including funds for supervision in project budgets

12.4 Continue supplying bottles of disinfectant

Monitor to ensure that production of disinfectant is keeping up with the need to resupply outlets. If demand exceeds the supply, consider whether an additional machine is needed in order to increase the production, or whether the existing machines could be run more hours each day to increase output. Determine that there are not large stocks sitting in some outlets while other outlets run out. If some outlets have stock outages, help staff at those outlets to anticipate their needs and order products to restock their shelves in a timely way.

12.5 Evaluate the pilot project

- Meet with community leaders to inform them about the need for evaluation and to get their approval and cooperation
- Initiate field work; obtain consent from every participating household
- Collect and store evaluation data as planned
- Analyze and interpret evaluation data
- Review findings with project staff
- Make adjustments in project activities based on findings
- Write the evaluation report
 - Organize report around objectives that were evaluated
 - Write a summary, purpose of evaluation, methods, results, conclusions, recommendations

12.6 Implement the project on a larger scale

Each successful Safe Water System pilot project has been subsequently implemented on a larger scale. This requires additional funding and partners. Successful projects have been able to find substantial additional funding. It is important to document success through project evaluations and reports so that this information can be presented to donor agencies and other potential partners. Each effort to expand a project will be unique, but will probably include the following steps:

- Make adjustments in the project design for the next phase (going to bigger scale). Slow incremental growth is recommended so that supply and demand can be generated evenly in new areas.

- Make needed adjustments in the products, methods of distribution, communication methods or messages needed to implement on a larger scale, and any adjustments based on evaluation of the pilot.
- Obtain funding for increased product volume, distribution, behavior change strategy.
- Arrange for transportation and storage for increased distribution of products in larger area.
- Establish additional points of sale for vessels and disinfectant, including providing promotional and educational materials, and training staff.
- Implement distribution, sales, and the behavior change strategy on a larger scale (e.g., promotion, education, motivational interviewing, community mobilization).
- Monitor and evaluate.

When expanding, consider additional target populations, such as schools, health clinics, mothers' clubs, restaurants, or public places where people must wait (e.g., city offices).

Also consider different applications of the Safe Water System. Examples of additional applications that have been tried in pilot projects include:

- street vendors of beverages (Guatemala and Bolivia)⁸
- preparation of bulk ORS solution in cholera wards, hospitals, or clinics (Guinea-Bissau, Bolivia)⁹
- emergency response to natural disasters and epidemics (Bolivia, Zambia, Madagascar)¹²
- preparation of infant formula by HIV-positive mothers (Cote d'Ivoire).

Safe Water System projects have been expanded to a national, or near-national level in Zambia, Madagascar, and Ecuador. A similar project was expanded to several regions of Peru. Bolivia expanded to 7 regions of the country, but then reduced the project due to lack of funding and management problems. These projects can be contacted for more specific information.



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