



Aqua Clara International E-News Flash



The State of Aqua Clara in Kenya, 2012

A chronicle of the development of our model program in Kenya, including a tribute to Scott and Claire Rumpsa who led the efforts that brought it to its present status, and a welcome to Paul Kaufman who is joining the ACI team.

Letter from Harry Knopke, President, Aqua Clara International

Dear Friends,

Things have come a long way in the past three years! Aqua Clara officially registered for its work in Kenya in early 2009. Now, in 2012, Scott and Claire Rumpsa are leaving ACI to join NURU, another organization providing significant services for individuals, families and communities in Africa. All of us will miss Scott and Claire, but we know they will contribute a great deal to more population groups as they continue to progress in their professional careers.

In their place to lead our African initiatives and expand them into other countries is Paul Kaufman, born in Nairobi and who has a substantial background in development work of many types that he has acquired in many countries. Paul is exceptionally well-suited to oversee the maturation of our Kenya programs and to lead their replication.

Through the dedication and consistent efforts Scott and Claire devoted to it, Aqua Clara Kenya has grown substantially in the few short years it has been in operation. ACI now has programs in 51 communities across large parts of Western Kenya, with staff in two regional offices supervising a multi-faceted work agenda to ensure high quality, follow up, and follow through. While growing our programs in geographic reach, Scott and Claire have moved the program model itself through several iterations towards a more holistic approach to community service, adding various beneficial products and programs onto the program's solid base of local entrepreneurs selling water filters in their own communities.

With 2012 set to be another year in which ACI grows in geographic reach, community impact and product offerings, and with Paul Kaufman now in place as a senior member of the ACI team, the future for ACI-Kenya looks very bright indeed.

We're taking this opportunity to fully update you all - the wider ACI community - on how far we've come in Kenya, and where we're going. And, as always, if you have any questions, email us at info@aquaclara.org.

Sincerely,

Harry Knopke, President



Scott and Claire in Kenya

Scott and Claire Rumpsa have led Aqua Clara's growing program in Kenya since being handed the reigns at the end of 2008. Scott has been providing overall direction of the program, while Claire has overseen the training, monitoring and health and hygiene promotion programs. With Scott and others, she has also managed

many of our ACI-Kenya funding relationships that have expanded the Kenyan budget and enabled so much growth to take place. Of course, Scott & Claire haven't done this on their own - they've had the support of Bob McDonald, our ACI core team members, and the Kenyan program staff.



Program History

The first, pilot biosand filters were installed in Kenya in 2007-2008. Once they were shown to be effective, ACI officially registered itself in early 2009 as 'Aqua Clara Kenya' (AC-K). At the beginning, AC-K was focused on expanding the project through a network of local filter entrepreneurs. Initial tactics involved drawing in wide varieties of groups - church-based, other NGOs, and self-help groups, who attended ACI's various trainings, and then returned to their own communities to build filters. The groups then forged their own way ahead, with each initiating filter construction and placement work in their own way.

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Community Development Entrepreneurs



CDEs are the local entrepreneurs trained and empowered by ACI to market, sell, build and install ACI products - beginning with our standard water filter (locally constructed biosand filters). These entrepreneurs are selected by their local community members and ACI staff together, and then work to serve their surrounding community members by demonstrating, selling, building, installing and servicing products such as water filters, safe water storage containers, and handwashing stations. For their sales, they are loaned materials by ACI, and once products are installed, they repay their loans and are thereby resupplied by ACI logistics staff. In

this way, they can focus on doing what they do best - making money by building and servicing products in their own communities, while ACI's staff simplify the management of their small businesses by managing the supply chain and organizing seasonal marketing efforts.

Partner Schools



All of ACI's projects are focused on serving remote, rural populations. To best do this, we partner with rural primary schools. These sites receive ACI products (water filters, etc.) and education support (water hygiene clubs) that benefit their students, while aiding ACI's mission by serving as a base of operation for their area - they provide a base for product demonstration,

manufacture and sale. Basically, each CDE is selected from the community surrounding a partner school, and then he/she runs their business from the school. This is important, as the products are thereby effectively demonstrated on the school grounds - it's a great network that enables ACI to reach out into the surrounding community.



Community Health Promoters

CHPs are an integral part of our program. They allow us to reach out into filter purchasing households for follow-up training in filter use as well as household health and hygiene practices. Additionally, during these visits they collect valuable data for us which allow us to better understand how the program is functioning, and provide us the data with which we can improve the project. Beyond providing these services at the household level in their communities, our CHPs also run water & hygiene clubs with students at our partner schools which benefit students by teaching them simple, effective ways to improve their health - and the health of their family members. A side benefit of this is 'child-led marketing' in which the students return home and promote ACI practices in their own households, and become effective agents of change.



Local Staff, Office & Training Center

In early 2011, ACI completed our first Hope Center - office and training center in Rigoma, in the rural area outside of Kisii. The space was donated by the community, and a donation from a new funder afforded us the opportunity to create an effective space from where we can manage as well as host our frequent training sessions. Now, our staff not only conduct regular meetings and trainings, but also keep all of our program tracking copies. Our local staff, each month, collect paper records of each product sold and placed, and after these are input into our database for online storage, area CHPs are assigned their month's collection of

households to visit. In the coming months we expect to replace much of the paper-based process, which was unavoidable when the program began, with an electronic-based system wherein data is collected and immediately moved into a comprehensive data system.

ACI Water Filters

ACI continues to deploy its version of the biosand filter (BSF) for water filtration - it has long been shown to be one of the most inexpensive ways to generate a household quantity of safe drinking water. Each filter is made from a locally manufactured plastic tank, PVC piping, and carefully selected and prepared filtration sand, coarse sand, and gravel. Each filter costs approximately 12 USD in material costs, and sells for under 15 USD. By selling two in a day, a CDE can increase his/her income to that of a skilled laborer - more than twice the daily income of casual labor.

It's important to note, though, that these costs reflect the prevailing prices of materials in Kenya. Costs in other countries will necessarily be different.



Safe Water Storage

After beginning the project based solely on ACI's biosand water filters, the feedback provided by our CHPs, as well as the data collected through our water testing program, caused us to discover that post-filtration recontamination was a serious issue. This resulted in another important initiative: offering two versions of safe water storage containers for sale through our network of CDEs. Since then, both versions (standard and premium) have been a significant portion of our CDE's sales. In fact, filters are seldom bought without SWS containers in many regions now. And, these containers, which

have lids to cover them and taps to dispense the clean water, also serve to decrease avenues for recontamination. Additionally, the prestige factor associated with these containers may be leading to better unit care and more regular cleaning.





Handwashing Stations

As a part of our work at schools, ACI now provides simple handwashing stations for student use. As many of the same diseases are passed through unclean hands as through untreated water, this is a very simple, effective way to improve health (some handwashing studies have shown a 50% improvement). While we initially planned on these being school-only units, local demand led us to offering the stations for sale to our customer base which we're now doing. Importantly, this exhibits how effective the working with our partner schools has been: demonstrating units at schools while training school children has spread the word out into rural communities, whose residents then begin demanding these products.



School Water & Hygiene Clubs

One of the most enjoyable functions of our Community Health Promoters is helping to manage school clubs at each of our partner schools. They focus on engaging lessons on health topics, from proper handwashing techniques, to times when handwashing should be done, to various water treatment methods, to soapmaking, etc. There are even annual contests and gatherings between school clubs. And the students love it!



Carbon and Program Sustainability

Recently, ACI has signed a carbon credit financing agreement which will provide a stable and increasing line of financing for the next seven years. Basically, households that would boil water for disinfection and emit carbon in doing so, after first cutting down trees and thereby depleting forests that sequester carbon, can instead install and use ACI filters that require no energy to operate. Then, with our portfolio of successfully operating filters in hand, businesses in different parts of the world can offset the carbon their

operations produce by purchasing the credits generated by our filters. In doing so they will be financing the expansion of ACI's work. This is an exciting development for ACI, as it means that ACI Kenya will have the stability to continue its growth and good work for the foreseeable future.

Rainwater Harvesting Systems



Rainwater Harvesting

Late in 2011, ACI began its work in water supply by launching its rainwater harvesting programs. As seen in the photo at left, its first rainwater collection systems are being constructed at our partner schools. The first set of 20 schools, by using average rainfall computations, will be adding nearly 7 million liters of annual water supply for nearly 10,000 students! And now, with additional funding, we will be able to further extend our rainwater harvesting initiatives. What a difference this makes in the lives of students: where once before they had to walk miles each way from school for water, every day, they now

simply walk outside and turn the tap.

Just as important, ACI is employing the same model here as we have developed for our biosand filters: the unit is first constructed at schools to demonstrate its capabilities, but then household units will be promoted and sold by our network of CDEs. This will be a great way to promote effective and affordable rainwater harvesting techniques in the remote, rural areas where ACI works.



Schools for Water

Currently ACI is in the middle of a big fundraiser for the expansion of its work with schools in Kenya - the Schools for Water campaign. This campaign is expected to raise \$100,000 with matching funds coming from an Aqua Clara funder to empower 10,000 Kenyan students with safe drinking water. Katie Spatz, adventurer, endurance athlete, and clean water advocate, is spearheading this campaign with 13 schools in Ohio and Michigan. Get more information [here](#).

Program History Continued...

... However, few were sustaining regular and growing sales, so AC-K decided to focus its efforts on simplifying the process for its network of filter entrepreneurs. With this in mind, the program was repositioned to be based at rural primary schools, with much more support for the local entrepreneur in the form of continual training and oversight visits, as well as full logistical support. With this method, the program really took off, as filter entrepreneurs were able to focus on building and selling filters, while AC-K staff managed their supplies and helped with some marketing activities. Once structured at schools, ACI began adding other elements to its programs - first, community health promoters, then safe water storage containers for sale, then school water and hygiene clubs, and finally handwashing stations for sale. In late 2010, AC-K constructed its Kisii office, which included water testing facility as well as a training and demonstration center, and in late 2011, AC-K began constructing rainwater harvesting systems in partnership with its associated school communities. Through it all, AC-K's impact has grown substantially, and AC-K continues to look for ways to extend its presence using its current entrepreneurial model. For instance, in the summer of 2012, filter entrepreneurs will begin marketing and selling household scale rainwater harvesting systems, to add to their sales of water filters, safe water storage containers and handwashing stations.



Claire Rumpsa



Scott Rumpsa

What's Next for Claire & Scott

While it was time for a comprehensive update on ACI-Kenya, this time was selected because Scott and Claire have recently taken new positions in the development sector, and will be moving on from their work with Aqua Clara this May. Aqua Clara is disappointed at losing these two, however, we are really pleased with all that's been accomplished so far and the trajectory that ACI-Kenya is on. We're more pleased still that they've been offered promotions in the same industry, this time working for Nuru International, which will allow them to expand their reach, and also afford them the opportunity to move full time to Kenya this June. They are excited for these new steps, and we at Aqua Clara are excited for them.

They've been closely managing the hand-off of Aqua Clara to our newest full-time team member, **Paul Kaufman**, who brings with him a wealth of experience in the development sector as well as an intense passion for development work in Kenya. More great things are sure to come for ACI-Kenya!