

# Safe water. Just double it.



# 300in6

Scaling up access to safe water

# The need for safe water is so obvious

that perhaps we should dramatise it less. Maybe we should allocate our energies away from pleas and exhortations? We should certainly invest more of our energy in persuading all stake holders that the need can be met – and, **300in6** believes, sooner and with more impact than has become the custom.

To summarise the challenge of scaling-up safe water, in the words of the World Health Organisation, the vulnerable communities are:

- 884 million people without access to safe drinking water, plus:
- people relying on wells and other improved water sources, plus:
- people supplied by unreliable piped water systems, plus:
- people traditionally relying on rainwater harvesting, plus:
- victims of natural disasters and humanitarian crises

Yes, phenomenal progress is being made, with a constant stream of innovations in technology and systems, more sophisticated in design and more simplified in use for adoption by the poor at the Base of the Pyramid. These advances, though, are partly eroded by population growth, to the extent that the ultimate goal appears for ever distant.

Again, explains the WHO: *"The high initial capital costs and long time frame associated with implementing centralized treatment and distribution of drinking-water may exclude many communities, particularly in poor rural areas, from the health benefits of a piped water source in the immediate future. Household-level water treatment and safe storage are additional steps that can be taken immediately where and when 'improved' water sources do not deliver consistently safe water or where safe water is available only intermittently."*

We subscribe to this analysis of exclusion, and the appropriate, immediate response. In our strategies we include not only treatment and storage in the household, but also proximity, non-piped services such as local treatment and vending points – often known as 'kiosks' – which are operated, for example, by local enterprises.



Dominic Sansoni/World Bank, 2002

*"Plugging in all the players properly..."*

## The services of 300in6

### Our focus: household and community water treatment

The overall thrust of our communications work is to enable our peers to further scale up their work, from their many perspectives, in safe drinking water at the Base of the Pyramid.

We thus work to identify and remove any internal inhibitions and barriers, through a process of persuasion, encouragement, reporting and demonstration of what is possible. Equally, we strive to identify external barriers and obstacles to scaling up, through advising on the re-direction of enabling policies, and on the elimination of bad practice.

In this, we are guided by the principles of no gifting, no market distortions, smart grants and financial-fiscal measures to enhance the supply chain of safe water solutions, and social marketing.

### Our advisory services

On the basis of our knowledge of what works where, we aim to empower local, national and sub-initiatives with the tools and guidelines on project design and implementation, with special attention to resourcing.

Where appropriate, we shall seek to effect leverage, through the exploration of the concept of national platforms, in which support and facilitation of convergent stakeholder action can be optimised.

### Our participatory information services

Our knowledge centre is a pool of data and experiences on:

- policies and platforms,
- technical and management standards and guidelines
- proven practices with detailed case studies,
- business models and project design
- the processes of water treatment and storage, and
- the specific treatment and storage products in use and in development

Our Yearbook on household and community water treatment and storage systems (HCWTS) provides an overview and a state-of-the-art review of the overall sector, including its growth trends, obstacles and future prospects. By compiling such a set of shared data, we intend to ensure an overall service to the safe water (HCWTS) sector in tracking and reporting its progress and general impact.

Our **300in6.org** website is customised as an interactive tool for optimal use by the user. It features all our publications, regular news, updates and a growing and extensive collection of informational, resource and planning materials.



John Isaac/World Bank 2002

*"Unplugging the obstacles will advance affordable, accessible solutions..."*

# The gains are so obvious that we need

to ask ourselves if, indeed why, they are not understood. If the potential gains are invisible to those who should act on them, then we have to find ways to communicate them in more acceptable, comprehensible ways.

In 2004, a WHO study showed that, if people had access to improved water and sanitation, and a minimum of water disinfection at the point of use, then the cost-benefit ratio would be between 5 and 60 across all developing regions. With a potential gain of saving 60 dollars in social and economic costs, for an investment of 1 dollar, this represents a compelling case for public and public-interest investment.

Similarly, even though many of the poor cannot afford or receive hospital care, the fact is that more than 50% of all hospitalisations in the world are related to water-borne diseases.

In tracking these issues, **300in6** is keen to explore how to help governments and key sectors such as the actuarial (insurance) to integrate such cost-benefit analysis into national accounting and budget allocations.

# Business opportunities are so obviously attractive,

it is essential to present them more clearly to entrepreneurs and the business development community. At present, the market for low-cost, low-threshold treatment and storage technologies is fragmented and scattered. As a result, operational and transactional costs in the bare bazaar of the poor are often seen as too high.

Just how a vibrant supply chain can be enabled and empowered to grow – for that is, realistically, the only course to follow – depends on two factors. First, demand has to be tweaked to a level and intensity that it represents a viable market for suppliers. In this regard, the provision, by governmental or non-governmental agencies, of HWTS technology in the form of gifts to the consumer is likely to distort the market. If such public funds are available, they can be more usefully applied in encouraging the supply chain to grow. To move in this demand-driven direction requires a re-orientation of resources by the professional safe water community – and thus a re-definition of attitude by our peers. An internal process, as it were, of education and persuasion about the value of stimulating the supply chain.

Second, all the players in the supply chain of water treatment and storage services and equipment need to see, and see to it, that the business opportunities are lasting. This requires information and training on products and processes for traders and dealers, education for the technical agents who can ensure maintenance, to proper market research and results, as well as awareness building among the decision makers and deliverers in financial institutions. It also needs enforceable laws and guidelines – from the selection and approval of best practice and products in the procurement process, and in quality control. Equally, it requires the removal of laws and practices which, unwittingly, stand in the way of this supply chain development. Unplugging obstacles will play a valuable role in advancing affordable, accessible solutions.

In all these areas, business development agencies must be closely involved. They too must be exposed to and sensitised about the opportunities in the sector as a lasting business.

## Strength in networking

**300in6** is a pro-active member of the International Network on Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage (HWTS). The network is co-hosted by WHO and UNICEF, and its communications are serviced by the Water Institute of the University of North Carolina.

Among the strategic objectives of the network: *"to achieve tangible results in the scaling-up of household water treatment and safe storage achieved in countries in all regions of the world"*

We are similarly active in other professional networks which nurture the skills and resources we need to attain our goals. These are home to fellow communicators who practice communication as a strategic instrument for development change, including social marketers; social impact investors; and business development services, including financial engineering.

# To build platforms, obviously

In the world of safe water, the building of a platform is an essential practice, indeed our second nature. At the wellhead, one builds a platform. To secure the pump, one builds a platform. To stabilise equipment in the lab, the kiosk, the kitchen, the maintenance shed, build a platform.

In the words of the proverb *"Walk alone and you will go faster, walk together and we shall go further"*. And so, in the world of safe water, with its amazingly unfulfilled goals, the analogy of cooperation through platforms is also an essential practice. Some approach safe water as a duty, others as a scientific challenge, others as a business opportunity, yet again others as the basis for the elimination of extreme poverty. We all approach it as a right, as the most natural thing in the world.

No one alone can bring all the required knowledge and resources to the process. Such is the diversity of knowledge and professions in ensuring safe water for all that a creative, welcoming space is needed for skills and interests to converge. A platform.

As a communications platform itself, with its growing knowledge base and range of information and advisory services, **300in6** supports the development of platforms of cooperation in scaling-up access to safe water, locally and national. They provide the opportunity for plugging in all the players properly.

## Join with us

The 300in6 Initiative is not a membership organisation. You do not 'join' 300in6. You simply '300in6' your work.

Our organisation seeks to energise and focus the consumers, suppliers and various professional communities at work in the sector of safe water for the lower pyramid. To double its performance.

If you share our general principles and our strategic vision, welcome. If you have information or resources to share, give, acquire, welcome. Our website features a page where you can express your support.

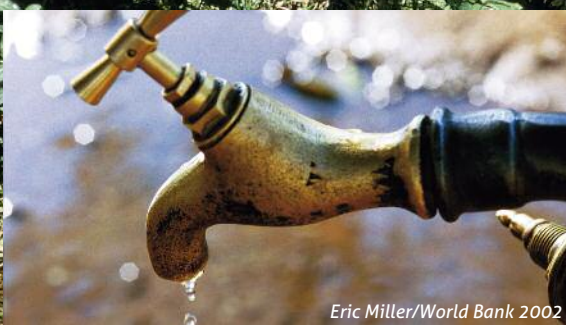


Ray Witlin/World Bank

### Number One solution

*"No other single intervention is likely to reduce global poverty more than the provision of safe water and sanitation."*

- United Nations University



Eric Miller/World Bank 2002

### The tap, our final frontier

Behind many taps lie unreliable, diseased water grids. Ahead, let's be honest, for the tapless and the pipeless, lie decades of self-treating water, community utilities or ill-health.

Will you make this your business?



Ray Witlin/World Bank

# 1 You are a central player in the scaling-up of access to safe water.

As a service platform, our communications are designed to serve you with information on what works where and who's working. From the details and vision of removing the smallest bacteria from water, through products and processes and business models to the vision and details of national strategies

1.8 Cost per person of effective social marketing of safe water – to the point of permanent adoption  
4 cents (USD)

Price per 10-litre jerry can of drinking water from a local treatment and kiosk franchise, delivered to your door (within 4km). Half the price if you come and collect...

50% More than half of all hospital cases in the world are related to water-borne diseases

The top-end return on investment in household water treatment (range = 5 – 60 times) at 'point-of-use', in a context of improved sanitation and hygiene.

150,000,000 new users of household water treatment, according to plans of 2009

150,000,000 1 additional new users, if 2009 plans can be doubled by scaling-up

300,000,000 more people enjoying safe water by 2015 (our goal)

884,000,000 people without access to safe drinking water



Curt Carnemark/World Bank 1993

## About 300in6

The 300in6 Initiative is a communications platform for doubling to 300 million the number of people adopting safe water treatment and storage at household and community level, in the six years leading to end-2015. We seek to strengthen the performance of communities, businesses, government agencies and civil society players in ensuring a vibrant, affordable supply chain of safe water solutions.

**Visit our inter-active website for full details of the business-like resources we can mobilise.**

- Principles of no gifting, smart grants, supply chain enhancement and social marketing
- Policy issues on the barriers to remove and the doors to open
- Platform building for leveraging national rollouts
- Proven practice and models for project success
- Processes of water treatment and storage
- Products in the constant flow of innovation for treatment and storage

# 43+ How many types of people does it take to make a glass of water safe to drink (in a HCWTS scenario)?

A consumer · Banker · Bicycle and vehicle maintenance staff · Broadcaster · Business counsellor · Celebrity · Curriculum developer (primary) · Curriculum developer (technical education) · Delivery and transport worker · Distribution planner · Equipment vendor · Evaluator and monitor · Financial adviser · Health worker · Household manager · Hygiene agent · Industrial designer · Interpreter of micro-to-macro policy · Laboratory technician · Law enforcer · Legislator · Maintenance agent · Marketeer · Media producer · Minister (Finance) · Paradigm designer · Procurement specialist · Production engineer · Retailer · Role model · Scaling-up specialist · Scientist · Sector builder · Social investor · Social media specialist · International development specialist · Supply chain manager · Survey specialist · Teacher · Teacher trainer · Trader · Trainer of technical agents · Water vendor · (List deliberately incomplete)

[www.300in6.org](http://www.300in6.org)

*The 300in6 Initiative is jointly supported by Aqua for All, Connect International, Safe Water International and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*

