

Newsletter January 2020

It is easy to forget how lucky we are to have clean water. How many times have you already turned the tap on today? Many people have to carry their water a long way and that water is far from clean often causing diarrhoea, typhoid and cholera and high infant mortality.

Family and Community Water filters continue to leave our factory and provide clean water



where it is most needed. Many of these are sponsored by small charities who are supporting individual villages all over the world. Filters also go to new charities and often we get repeat requests following a small field trial. Our new locations this year have included Yemen with SOS Yemen, Mozambique following the cyclone, and new sites in both Nepal and Sierra Leone.

Alan Mitchel from Christian Engineers for Development forwarded this comment from a satisfied user in Sierra Leone *'I appreciate the simplicity and durability of the Family Filter'*

One of the first sites to receive filters was Mpraeso in Ghana 12 years ago. A big thank you to Fred and Rebecca, our partners based there and all the many volunteers who have taken filters out when they have gone to volunteer. Emma Hodgkin went as a volunteer and then set up the Helen Hodgkin Trust in 2013 to provide clean water in this area of Ghana. Every year since, the Trust has sent filters including this year with 20 Community and 20 Family, providing 11,000 people with clean water for at least 6 years.

Our new improved Mark 5 Family Filter which is now going into production has a more compact shape and is easier for the user with a simpler backflush system. In addition there is an improved clean water tap that prevents cross contamination from the users. The filters have received certification for efficient removal of bacteria and viruses (WHO standard) and positive feedback from users in field trials in Cameroon and Iraq by 2 large international Charities. *If you would like to replace your demonstration filter please let me know.*

The two Rotary Charities Aquabox and Water Survival Box continue to have a very valuable role distributing filters mainly to locations following a natural disaster. Aquabox assemble their own filters, under licence and support from us and Water Survival Box buy filters from us. Together they send out around 2,000 Family filters a year funded from donations they receive.

We have moved into a larger and better equipped factory also in Washington. We have already enjoyed showing a few groups how filters are assembled followed by coffee and a general discussion. Please get in touch if you would like to come and visit.

We do not underestimate the importance of our many supporters who donate, fundraise and volunteer with us. We estimate that together we have provided clean water for around half a million people, saving lives and improving health and the quality of life. For example, two churches in Sunderland, St Bedes Church, raised £4000, and Our Lady Queen of Peace, £1000 - both by collecting small change at the entrance to their church. Thanks go to Roger Grant, our Trustee and Volunteer at the Factory, through whom we have been nominated as the Charity of the Year at Houghton Methodist Church which raised £1250 and Roger also forged the link to more fundraising with Rotakids at East Rainton School.



It is already nearly a year since John and I visited Haiti. We had sent 600 Family filters following the hurricane, and 100 Community Filters which were Canadian Red Cross sponsored. We went to help in the distribution and also mend some of the broken original filters. It was a very successful visit. Back home we raised money for 10 Community filters for schools in this area. Thank you to everyone who donated money but unfortunately they have not yet been sent as Haiti has had more internal conflict and our partners have advised us to wait until the situation improves.

We are always careful to ensure that the filters we send arrive with the intended recipients and do not get held up in customs or in the wrong hands. We have not yet felt it safe to send the second 100 Family filters to the Somali Refugees in Uganda. We know that the first batch are being used and appreciated but the NGO worker has left and we are waiting until another reliable local person is in place.

As you may know your more recent donations are to send filters to Democratic Republic of Congo, a very troubled country with Typhoid, Cholera and Ebola. We have sent filters before and are working with 2 Pastors, who have already collected small contributions from 50 users desperate for filters and clean water. The filters have now arrived in Rwanda and our plane tickets have been booked (from our personal money). With our long-standing partners and friends, Rob and Jan Hoy, we will meet the Pastors at the border and hand over the 144 filters. We are then going on to Uganda to visit a project where Colin Watson has helped, by distributing filters, to reduce the infant mortality from over 40% to less than 10%.

Read updates of our adventure on our Facebook page !

Our New Year Appeal is to help small charities send more filters to their projects. Thank you for your continued support, together we can make a difference.

Gill and John

