

Changing lives with clean water

IN

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF CONGO

WATER
AMBASSADORS
CANADA

www.waterambassadorscanada.org



Roger, a local nursing graduate, studied the quality of the only drinking water available for his graduate thesis. The city of Bunia provides the only water option through the water system taps. One of those taps is located next to the hospital. Roger sent samples of water from a number of taps in for laboratory testing and evaluation. The results of his thesis confirmed that the city water was not fit for consumption as it carries diseases. Roger, pictured above with Barry and Heather felt so passionately about the water problem that he sold his bicycle in order to pay for the sample testing and also the publishing of his thesis.

Water is Life.

In December 2009, Barry Hart and his wife Heather Alloway departed for Bunia, a large city of approximately 110,000 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They transported suitcases full of 'Point One' filters and two NLI purifiers with them to assist with the desperate need for clean drinking water. This trip is of special significance because it is the first Water Ambassadors Canada trip to the African Continent and also the first time that Sawyer Filters and the NLI purifiers have been introduced to the Congo.

Water Ambassadors Canada has been aware of the need to provide clean drinking water to the Centre Medicale Evangelique Hospital located in Bunia for several years. The staff and patients of the hospital have been consuming the only water they had available to them even though it was not safe to drink. Nancy Wood, a Canadian doctor and her husband Doctor Philip Wood have been in Africa all of their professional lives and they had informed us that the local water is contaminated and **every week at least three people die in the hospital** from typhoid and other water-borne diseases. The hospital sees many patients whose lives could be saved just by having clean drinking water.



For the past 6 years Water Ambassadors Canada has been helping to provide clean drinking water in developing countries by drilling new wells and repairing old wells but these solutions are often not workable in larger urban centres. We didn't have the answer for areas where there was an abundance of water that was not healthy to drink. Our recently formed relationships with both Sawyer Products and EDGE have made available two excellent technologies that vastly improve the quality of available water.



Sawyer PointONE Filter

We first met Amy Reed of Sawyer Products and saw a demonstration of the 'PointONE' Filters at a conference booth. We realized right away that Sawyer Filters are a cost effective portable solution to filter out bacteria. The MUSACA community group is our first large-scale test of the filters' effectiveness. The health co-op in the hospital neighborhood set up educational training and distribution of the Sawyer filters. The local Bunia people were delighted to receive the filters.

The fact that immediate results were noticed to the taste and clarity of the water helped to convince the locals of the benefits of sharing their filter with others and thereby increasing the number of families that could be blessed. Our hosts Doctor Nancy and Doctor Philip are already seeing a reduction of disease cases at their hospital.



NLI Purifier

Water Ambassadors Canada was also able to install a NLI Purifier system in the hospital that is now providing staff and patients with their first clean drinkable water. The NLI Purifier is an inexpensive, easily transported kit that generates chlorine gas from simple table salt using a 12volt battery. The chlorine gas is then passed through the contaminated water to sterilize the water and make it potable (safe to drink). The system is economical, using a small amount of table salt to provide up to 55 gallons of pure water per minute. The NLI Purifier is also efficient; each unit can provide pure water to thousands every day. The system is also versatile and was easily connected to the hospital water source. Water Ambassadors Canada was also able to modify the unit to run a plumbing water line through the hospital wall to the outside and install a community tap for the neighborhood around the hospital.

Water Ambassadors Canada made contact with a local private girls Catholic school. The Sisters serve their 1,300 students well, but are dealing with the same water issues as the hospital. Staff and students are drinking bad water from city taps. We are planning to return in 2010 to the DR of Congo and install purifiers and distribute more filters, to this school and other hospitals around Bunia.

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