

06 Bio-Sand Filter Pot – A Community Project

I hope that this series of articles has got you interested in bio-sand filters for your community. There are a variety of ways in which different communities have adopted these filters. This article mentions some of our experiences in Uganda. These ideas may help you to introduce bio-sand filters to your community.

Hospital Based Project

A rural hospital in Uganda was concerned about a typhoid epidemic from which many people in the surrounding villages were falling ill and some dying. In partnership with village churches they sent small teams into the villages to tell them about bio-sand filters. They bought factory made concrete filter pots from the nearby town and installed them in the most seriously affected areas.

Local Potter

A local potter was then engaged to make large clay pots which were much cheaper than the factory made pots. More people could afford to buy these pots, but transport costs were high so they were still too expensive for many communities.

Self-Made concrete pots

We worked out how to make pots as described in part 3 of this series. Church and community groups then started to run training sessions to train people how to make their own pots. Many more people were able to afford these pots which cost about the same as a second-hand jerry can.

Womens Groups

The women were usually the keenest to have bio-sand filters and they formed groups to educate the community about the dangers of drinking unfiltered water and the benefits of bio-sand filters. They

performed dramas and ran training events and even started making pots themselves.

Community Project

Many people found it difficult to make their own pots – perhaps they were elderly, or sick or unable to take the time from their farming to learn how to make their own. So in many communities the village council, or a church or some other community group would ask a group of two or more people to make pots for those who could not make their own. Volunteers would help to gather the sand and stones and they would have a collection to buy the cement and the hose.

Village Business

In other communities one or two people have learnt about the filters and set up their own business making filter pots or even producing complete bio-sand filters. They then tell people about the benefits and sell their pots.

No doubt there are many other ways in which these life-saving filters could be brought into a community. I hope that this series of articles inspires you to see what a difference you can make by enabling people to have safe drinking water.