

In honor of tomorrow’s World Water Day:

Clean drinking water for Senegalese children

Wallisellen-Zürich, Switzerland; March 21, 2007 – **Thousands of children die each year from ingesting contaminated drinking water. Education about the dangers that could exist in water and how to correctly treat water could save many children. That fact was recognized by the French development agency ACV (“Améliorations des Conditions de Vie,” or Foundation for the Improvement of Living Conditions”), which together with the Wallisellen community and Katadyn is directing a development project in the Fimela region of Senegal. Proven Katadyn water filters are being put to use there, and they serve to reduce the risks of diarrhea diseases by nearly two-thirds.**

As of tomorrow’s World Water Day, numerous hospitals and schools are already using the so-called Drip Filter. This alone gives more than 3,000 children access to clean drinking water. In the first phase, Katadyn itself will ship filters there, but after that independent local manufacturers will take over the production of filter containers. “That not only allows the creation of local jobs, but the expertise will also be transferred to Senegal,” says Adrian Schmassmann, Chairman of the Katadyn Group.

More than 50 percent of the people in Senegal have no access to clean drinking water, and the country has given the drinking water problem no priority. In addition, there is a lack of aid organizations locally. The project “Drinking Water for Children” gains particular importance not only with these facts in mind but also based on the dramatic rate of population growth. This was recognized by the Wallisellen community and Katadyn. The most important challenge of development aid is thus to teach the people about water, which allows them to make the demands a natural part of their daily lives. These steps are based on the Chinese proverb, “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” Adrian Schmassmann, Chairman of Katadyn Products Inc., notes: “Such a transfer of knowledge functions most successfully with children because they quickly learn how to handle water in school and can then explain the process and demands at home.”

A study that was published in the Cochran Review in 2003 showed that selecting the right method of water treatment was the key to fighting many diseases in developing countries. The so-called Drip Filter was shown to be the best choice compared to the use of an African Sari cloth (too uncertain), boiling (too expensive due to the lack of firewood), and chlorine (not suited for regular use as a purification agent). The Drip Filter mechanically retains bacteria (e-coli, salmonella, cholera) and protozoan (amoeba, giardia). One single Drip Filter can treat up to 150,000 liters of water.

More Information

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