Partnership Overview

Bring clean water to God’s thirsty children at your mission site.

March 2015
The Water Woman System

A unique HWTS (Household Water Treatment and Storage) model.
Human, powered by the Heart.
Sustainable for years to come.
Successful around the world: Mother Culture is the same in every culture and country!

Because of this model,
WWB was selected in 2014 by the Pan American Health Organization for the Clarence H. Moore Award for Excellence in Volunteer Organization.
A Conversation with Potential Mission Partners

Hello! We hear that you are interested in partnering with us to bring clean water to God’s thirsty children at your mission site. Blessings for that!

We have years of successful and sustainable program experience with a variety of partners, so we can anticipate many of your questions. Let the conversation begin…

Just what is Water With Blessings?
WWB is a unique water program that combines “state of the art” technology with “state of the heart” programming. In a nutshell, we work with partners to put filters into the hands of mothers. Mothers are the “state of the heart” secret of our success!

Mothers? Why mothers?
When mothers (and other mothering women) are selected from among candidates who understand and really want to serve in the WWB ministry, we get women who are “the cream of the crop”: passionate about health for their children, dedicated, determined, openhearted, and generous in spirit… could there be any better collaborators?

What’s the heart part?
Rather than requesting some payment from families in dire poverty, we ask mothers for a more meaningful form of compensation: filtering water for at least three other families for at least six months. The mothers (or mothering women) in our program call themselves Water Women. The result of their dedication: immediate and sustainable improvements in health outcomes for their families and communities.
Lots of programs claim to be “sustainable”. What do you mean by “sustainable”? We want to see those filters bringing clean water to children and their communities for a long, long time. We want to see local women take on lasting roles that will change the health outcomes in their communities.

In reality, we have collaborating mothers who have continued their service for over six years. Water Women love being agents of compassion and change for the children and families around them. They faithfully maintain their filters, knowing that with care they have a lifetime of clean water ahead of them. Without a trained mother, a filter is nearly worthless.

OK, got it: mothers + filters = clean water… what’s this about empowering women?
Water Women in our program are empowered not only for health, but for leadership as well. God has put smart, dynamic women in every corner of the planet, no matter how remote and dark. Our training materials are carefully designed so that local women can serve as our program leaders and trainers for their own communities. Our manuals (nearly any language available) guide them with all the technical and spiritual content needed for a complete training experience. Just one or two literate women can implement and guide Water With Blessings in a community, even if they have no other training in health matters. And when you tap into God’s smart, dynamic women, just step back for a great fountain of joyful energy!

How about the guys?
We don’t want to alienate them…
Men matter too, yes they do. Every project can be enriched by the collaboration of caring, supportive and respectful men. We call these kinds of guys our Water Brothers, and they can serve in many ways. But you’ve likely witnessed how women are often waiting for a way to share their own gifts, while men’s gifts are unquestioned. This program will open the way… or enrich the efforts that you have already made to help women gain dignity and respect.
How about training? What does that look like?
In one training session (three to four hours) the trainers cover all aspects of the program: spiritual foundations for the Water Woman Ministry and their commitment to service; water-related health education; the filter itself, assembly of the system, filter maintenance, even decoration of the bucket and/or pouches. The entire process is enlivened with prayer, song, even bucket drums! At the end, the new Water Women and their filter systems are blessed and sent forth for a ministry that will change their children’s lives, and many more lives around them.

Is there any follow up?
Local program leaders ensure that new Water Women attend monthly sessions for at least six months during their term of service. Together, they are able to review and reinforce what they have learned, while they support and encourage one another in their ministry. As often as you return to your mission site, you can conduct additional follow up activities.

State of the Art Technology?
The Sawyer filter is small but extremely durable, and is guaranteed to provide over one million gallons of safe water. We have used it at our first site for over 6 years, and the results are highly satisfactory. The filter, amazingly, removes over 99.999% of biological contaminants, using the same technology that serves for kidney dialysis. That means mothers can use it to provide clean water from nearly any source: rivers, ponds, creeks, contaminated piped sources, etc. In the US, we frequently demonstrate the filter ourselves, dramatically drinking water from highly polluted sources. No problems! (Sadly, chemical or mineral contamination is too much for any simple filter—that requires very expensive reverse osmosis.)

Guaranteed for one million gallons? How can one filter last for years? The unique and intelligent Sawyer design allows for backflushing. Of course, long life depends on an additional, critical factor: a well-trained mother.
Here’s a great detail: **as long as water is coming out of the filter, the water is safe.** No filter to replace, no chemicals or minerals to add, no power source except gravity, nothing to wear out...so simple, so effective that it’s nearly unbelievable.

**How can you enhance that?**
Water With Blessings adds a number of practical features that improve the filter’s durability for a truly sustainable impact. These include special quick-connect hardware to facilitate more frequent maintenance, along with protective devices to prevent breakage of the backflushing syringe and the filter casing. And then there’s the matter of buckets...

**Uh-oh... buckets. We have no idea where we can get the right buckets...**
Yes, we know and understand those challenges! The filter is more convenient when attached to a bucket, but safe food-grade buckets are often difficult to secure and transport to mission sites. That’s why we include two food-safe and durable water storage pouches for each woman, with a special adapter cap that allows the filter to be attached to the pouch if appropriate buckets prove to be a problem.

**We have never done anything like this...**
We’ve got you covered! As our program partner, you will receive training and guidance to successfully implement the program. As your program grows, you will always receive plenty of new materials, including upgraded manuals that address new features of the technology and program. We will soon pilot new and exciting materials for related health education during first six months of the mother’s participation, for under $5 per participant. (Available September 2014.) These materials will empower mothers to serve as the first and best health teachers of their children...more blessings!

A unique feature of our Latin American and Haitian programs: our Leadership Boards in Honduras and Haiti are available to inform, train and support your on-site project leaders and trainers, usually via video conference or phone. Our mission was born in Honduras, under the guidance and wisdom of the very people who first received the program in a marginal community of Tegucigalpa. We have multiple sites in both countries. Our leaders are very willing and eager to share their experience and competency.
It can be such a challenge to choose who gets chosen…

Yes, we’ve seen it too: envy, resentment, and power plays caused by aid programs bring destruction of relationships and communities. Our process for the selection of Water Woman candidates may seem unusual, but it makes all the difference. You will begin with a simple process to educate the community and interested mothers, then follow with applications to prequalify the candidates. At the point of selection the community gathers for prayer, after which names of candidates are drawn by a child from a bucket. In Latin America, this is known as “the innocent hand.” We also call it “trusting the Spirit…” because we want to avoid the terrible irony of “helping” while destroying communities.

We also have Mission Partners who focus on established women’s groups or mothers of at-risk children. But any time there are more mothers than sponsorships for Water Women, we work with our partners to trust the Spirit and the innocent hand.

What does the program cost?

For a fee of $60 per participating mother, we assemble a program package of filters, hardware, storage pouches (which can also serve in place of buckets if need be), training manuals, other training materials ... everything you need to implement the program except the buckets, and we reimburse your purchase of those. (If you have a shipping arrangement, we can provide buckets to send from the US.) We have recently added several special upgrade features that greatly improve the durability of the basic Sawyer system. That’s a lot of value for a one-time $60 cost per mother.

Typically, our partners seek sponsors for “Water Women” from among their own communities, friends and funders. We provide a customized reproducible flyer with one blank side for your own material. We are also happy to help with presentation guidance, demo kits, logo clip art, photos, etc... whatever helps you get out the good news about your Water With Blessings project. The best thing you can do is share the story of God’s thirsty children, and then demonstrate the solution by filtering dirty water and drinking it! You will find it is very easy to raise funds for this project when your constituents see (and taste!) the results.

For pilot projects, we are usually able to provide matching sponsorships from our direct funders who are unaffiliated with any particular project. The ratio of match to paid sponsorships depends on the available funding and demand, at the discretion of our staff.
OK…can we get a rundown of what you would expect from us?

1) Participate in our WWB Partner Training.
2) Commit to a full and faithful program implementation, per the covenant of partnership.
3) Raise up sponsors for mothers, through your home community and other friends and funders.
4) Introduce the program to the leadership and community at your mission site, with complete transparency and openness.
5) Transport the materials (apart from buckets, your WWB mission kit of filter systems and training materials for 20 mothers weighs less than 16 pounds, and will fit in a large suitcase.)
6) Collaborate with local leaders at the mission site community to ensure a full and faithful program implementation. Providing child care and activities is one of the best things your team can do to improve the training process!
7) Record and report the names of Water Women, through our online reporting system.
8) Take pictures and share the story in your home community… in hopes of growing your WWB project for as long as the need exists!

And the results?

Real and lasting good in a good and lasting way…
That’s going to be the good blessing for your team, your friends and funders.

Mothers empowered to bring health to their families and communities…
That’s the even better blessing of the Water Woman Ministry.

Women empowered as agents of compassion for their communities…
As they model and practice servant leadership.

Clean water, safe water…
That’s the best blessing of all… for God’s thirsty children!

Thanks for hanging in with us through this conversation. We know you appreciate that effective aid projects require time and attention! We look forward to more conversation… all to bring clean water to God’s thirsty children!

Learn more at WaterWithBlessings.org
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