

USAID WA WASH AQUATAB MARKETING PLAN IN BURKINA FASO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The lack of safe drinking water and basic sanitation services are the major causes of diarrhea and other water borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever. Diarrhea contributes to high mortality rates among children under five years of age in developing countries including Burkina Faso. According to the results of the 2010 health and demographic survey in Burkina Faso, the sources of drinking water used by most households include: boreholes (43% of the households), public taps (16%, and private connections (8%). Other sources of water are hand-dug wells (unprotected), rivers, lakes, and ponds and are used by 33 % of the households. The boreholes and public taps are considered as improved sources of potable water. Although water may be potable from the improved sources, the mode of transport and storage conditions pose contamination risks. Despite the risk, 93% of the households do not use any method of treating drinking water at the household level. This is attributed to a lack of access to modern methods of water treatment.

The primary goal of the USAID West Africa Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene (USAID WA-WASH) Program is to increase sustainable access to safe drinking water, and sanitation, and improve hygiene in Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Niger. In Burkina Faso, the USAID WA-WASH Program through the NGO for social marketing and communication for health program (PROMACO in French), supported safe water handling and storage activities by making available chlorinated tablets (Aquatabs) for treating drinking water, establishing sales outlets for Aquatabs, setting-up of an intensive communication strategy for behavior change, and stimulating demand for Aquatabs in the regions of Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre, and Sud-Ouest. The objectives of the activities under the USAID WA-WASH Program are: (1) to improve access to water treatment products at the point of use (households); (2) to support proper use of drinking water treatment products at the point of use; (3) to improve hygiene practices; (4) to support the implementation of community communication and distribution strategy for behavior change; and (5) to develop a distribution network by establishing sales outlets (distributors and community based vendors) to ensure the availability of the product at an affordable price in each target village. The activities were designed to contribute to the reduction in mortality and morbidity from diarrheal diseases among children under five years and improve the health of the population at-large.

To accomplish the objectives, the Program developed a marketing plan that aimed to reach the following objectives by December 2015: (1) increase by December 2015 the percentage of households (with children of under five years) who treat water at least once from 0% to 60%; (2) increase to 80% the knowledge and perception that the treatment makes water potable; (3) increase the score to 2.5 on the capacity to correctly use of Aquatabs particularly in households with children under five years; and (4) to increase the Aquatabs sold from zero to 225, 800 strips (2,258,000 tablets) of tablet sold. The marketing plan targets the entire intervention area where Aquatabs are distributed in identified points of sale such as provision stores. This avails the household drinking-water treatment products at sustainable costs to approximately 435,550 households in the target area. The marketing plan targets all heads of households in urban and peri-urban areas of the Boucle de Mouhoun, Centre (peri-urban areas of Ouagadougou), and Sud-Ouest regions. However, within the target population, women of between 15 to 49 years of age and particularly mothers with children of under five years of age are the strategic primary target.

The Program conducted an analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the marketing plan. The results showed the strengths of marketing Aquatabs through PROMACO as its extensive experience in social marketing and competent staff who are trained in gender and development issues. The major weakness in marketing Aquatabs is the lack of information on Aquatabs among the target population. The existence of supportive policy on supply of potable water and programs that support access to safe drinking water such as the USAID WA-WASH were identified as opportunities that facilitate the marketing of Aquatabs. The threats to the marketing plan include the existence of ineffective traditional water treatment methods, poverty (low purchasing power), and the lack of drinking water standards in rural areas. The advantages of using Aquatabs for water treatment as compared to other water treatment methods include its affordability; its ease of use, and its effectiveness in treating bacterial micro-organisms in water. The constraints to its uses are that it is not readily available in the rural areas, it is not known among the target population, and the difficulty in measuring 20 liters of water for one tablet. The marketing plan was designed to build on the strengths and opportunities and aims to address the constraints.

PROMACO developed the Aquatabs marketing plan based on the results of the SWOT analysis. The marketing plan capitalizes on the strengths and the opportunities and aims to address the weakness on the lack of knowledge on Aquatab and how it is used. All the factors identified in the SWOT analysis are integrated in the marketing mix. The right marketing mix ensures that the right product is sold at the right price, in the right place using the most suitable promotion approach. The marketing mix, further stipulates that the product has to have the right features for example, it must be presentable and work effectively, the price must be right for the consumers to buy in large numbers for the business to be profitable, the goods must be in the right place at the right time and the target group needs to be made aware of the existence and availability of the product through a promotion.

In the Aquatab marketing mix, the Aquatab tablets are presented in a strip of ten tablets in an illustrated packet indicating the instructions for use. The strip of ten tablets is sold at the price of 65 FCFA to the distributor, 75 FCFA from the distributor to the retailer and community vendors and 100 CFA to the consumers. Promaco established a comprehensive distribution system comprising of the general provision shops, the community based vendors, and a sales team consisting of six facilitators and promoters and one supervisor. In relation to promotion, the USAID WA-WASH Program supports the production of posters and other publicity materials for advertising at the points of sale. In addition, Promaco conducts promotional advertising and interpersonal communication with the target users. Promaco developed a communication plan that relays messages through the radio, TV, flyers, and in mass campaign meetings. To facilitate the evaluation of the developed marketing strategy, Promaco identified five themes for baseline research namely: (1) to evaluate the rate of coverage; (2) to evaluate the willingness to pay by the households; (3) to assess the popularity of Aquatab; (4) to determine the percentage number of households with the capacity to correctly use Aquatabs; and (5) to assess the effectiveness of the mass media campaigns. Promaco developed an action plan and a budget for the implementation of the marketing plan.

The full report is available (in French) upon request via our website. For more details about our program activities and other reports please visit <http://wawash.fiu.edu/>.

This publication was funded by the people of the United States through the Agency for International Development (USAID) within the framework of the West Africa Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (USAID WA-WASH) Program. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Agency for International Development of the United States Government.