SAFE DRINKING WATER CAMPAIGN

In partnership with Antenna Technologies, ECCA works to promote a cost-effective, high-impact and scalable solution for producing safe drinking water for the most vulnerable communities throughout Nepal.

ECCA, WATASOL and The Lalit Kalyan Kendra Lower Secondary School
Kathmandu, Nepal
Many water supply systems throughout Nepal were destroyed during the civil war. Not having been repaired, they are no longer in operation. Therefore, people are compelled to walk long distances for clean water, even if it results in collecting water from unsafe sources like gorges, ponds, rivers and lakes. The pervading uncertainty about the political situation and the nation’s future has paralyzed any initiatives from both local authorities and village communities. It is only gradually that a feeling of security and social cohesion is returning, along with the wish to improve the quality of people’s lives.

– Antenna/ECCA
Nepal is ranked among the countries with the poorest health profile in the world. Lack of safe drinking water supply and sanitation facilities have resulted in worsening public health conditions, deteriorating quality of life and increased economic costs. The high incidence of water-related diseases has contributed significantly to low productivity in Nepal.

Official statistics in 1996 show that less than 35% of the people residing in urban centers other than Kathmandu have access to piped water supply, and systematic solid waste management has yet to be established even in the largest metropolitan areas.


Before the lunch break, a schoolgirl at the Lalit Kalyan Kendra Lower Secondary School washes her face and hands with WATASOL-treated water.
In July 2008, ECCA and ANTENNA TECHNOLOGIES launched a joint project to implement WATASOL in schools in various rural and isolated areas. The partnership aims to provide safe drinking water to communities and improve access to decent sanitation. The primary objectives of the collaboration and the basis of ECCA’s Safe Drinking Water Campaign are to:

- Promote access to safe drinking water in schools and prevent water-borne diseases
- Improve school attendance rates and enrollment
- Undertake hygiene education through schoolchildren

The average number of recorded deaths due to diarrhea in Nepal are 10,500 per year.

ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPS FOR CONSERVATION AWARENESS (ECCA) was established in 1987 in Nepal to improve living conditions by building community awareness. Its programs promote the responsible use of local resources and renewable energy technologies. Its primary objective is to provide youths and children with innovative environmental programs aimed at educating them about the need for sound resource management and community-based conservation practices.
In order to cover the basic needs of the most vulnerable populations, it is essential to innovate and simplify certain technologies so that they can be made available and adapted to the socio-cultural conditions of these populations. Source: Antenna Technologies

ANTENNA TECHNOLOGIES was founded on this premise in 1989. They are a non-governmental organization based in Geneva, Switzerland. It is primarily a network of scientists, researchers and engineers working in tandem with a communications & coordination team who partner with NGOs and international organizations.
Relying on ECCA’s ability to mobilize and educate communities throughout Nepal, the most vulnerable, typically the rural poor, are able to locally produce safe drinking water. WATASOL – an active chlorine (sodium hypochlorite) – is used for drinking water chlorination or as a disinfectant for use in households, hospitals or community clinics.
ECCA has partnered with the Lalit Kalyan Kendra Lower Secondary School of Lalitpur in Kathmandu Valley to train the teachers and students on the WATASOL production and sales process, basic hygiene, the wide-spread impacts of water-borne diseases and the need to collectively conserve a vital supply of clean water.
Pictured here is the leadership of the ECCA-supported, 110-member strong Nature Club, who initiate small community-based advocacy and education programs through ECCA’s highly-effective program model. These students are trained in the production of the chlorine concentrate (WATASOL) using Antenna Technologies’ Mini-WATA device. Once produced, 50ml and 200ml refillable bottles will be sold to the student body.
A Mini-WATA® device at work at the Lalit Kalyan Kendra Lower Secondary School. A WATA® device requires water, salt and electricity. When immersed, and connected to a reliable source of electricity, a process of electrolysis takes place, converting the saline solution (sodium chloride) - with 25 grams of salt per litre - into active chlorine (sodium hypochlorite). Source: Antenna Technologies
The President of the Nature Club (Lalit Kalyan Kendra Lower Secondary School) inserts a Mini-WATA® into 1 litre of untreated, clear, salted water. Taking up to 8 hours to transform into an active chlorine, it will have the ability to disinfect 4,000 litres of impure water. The Club produces 10-12 litres of WATASOL a month.
Producing potable water requires an efficient, safe and economical quality control.

As part of ECCA’s Nature Club’s training in the production and dissemination of WATASOL and to effectively run all local chlorine-selling businesses, teachers and Club members learn about the World Health Organization’s (WHO) strict standards regarding the concentration of residual chlorine in drinking water.

Antenna’s WataTest™ is a low-cost and non-toxic reagent, affordable to people of any income to test this concentration. Source: Antenna Technologies

Photo: ECCA’s Nature Club conducting a WataTest™.
WATASOL is sold to students through ECCA’s Nature Club at the Lalit Kalyan Kendra Lower Secondary School. A school-supported, student-led social business that cultivates entrepreneurship, environmental conservation awareness and leadership within the school, the community and the home.
Worldwide, approximately 442 million school days are lost each year due to water-related illnesses. Millions of women and children spend several hours each day collecting water from distant, often polluted water sources. Source: http://www.water.org

Through the efforts of ECCA and its local partners, the production, use and sale of WATASOL is empowering communities in Nepal to control the spread of water-borne diseases and to responsibly manage local resources. Through its partnerships with schools, this results in a significant reduction in missed school days due to preventable illnesses.
Water Conservation Pledge

I Pledge To Conserve Water And To Use Water Wisely. I Pledge To Take Shorter Showers, To Use A Broom To Sweep Sidewalks, To Use Less Water In The Bathtub, To Turn Off The Hose While Washing The Bike/Car And To Use Water Carefully In The Garden. I Pledge To Remind Others To Use Water Wisely If They Are Wasting It. I Pledge To Continue My Water-Saving Habits Because I Know That Water Is Life And Kathmandu Valley Does Not Have Enough Water To Waste.

Signature

Human Values-based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education

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