



The road to Safe and Affordable Drinking Water, Arkay Plastics and SAFI

Studies indicate that consistent use of Household Water Treatment Systems (HWTS) products and practices reduce the risk of contracting waterborne diseases, by as much as 50%. Yet despite the compelling benefits for personal health, approximately 67% of Malawian households do not treat their drinking water adequately.

As the Government and its partners continue to prioritize the provision of clean, safe and potable drinking water to all as per the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation), the private sector is also playing a key role in the promotion of water treatment products as a way of ensuring clean water and sanitation to households in Malawi.

With support from the Malawi Innovation Challenge Fund (MICF), Arkay Plastics Limited and its partner,



The new product has been a clear indication of Malawian firms' ability to develop innovate ideas and carry the associated risks whilst ensuring the inclusive nature of the project by involving female entrepreneurs as part of its marketing and sales program.

SAFI Water Treatment Solutions, started locally manufacturing a Household Water Treatment and Storage Unit that aims to provide a simple yet effective “point of use” solution to the challenges of poor quality drinking water that plague many parts of the country.

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households do not treat their drinking water adequately.

The Water Treatment and Storage Unit which is the first of its kind to be produced in the country aims to ensure access to clean and potable water to 50,000 households across Malawi.

The water treatment and storage units are seen as an important step for MICF in support of the country's private sector development and poverty alleviation goals.

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innovate ideas, and bear the associated risks whilst also ensuring the targeting nature of the project by involving female entrepreneurs in both its marketing and sales programs.

The HWTS product targets households in semi-urban and rural Malawi who do not have access to a regular water supply or in-house connection.

The project helps interested retail customers to procure a high quality, affordable water treatment product, as well as targeting vulnerable groups such as mothers, HIV/AIDS patients, school pupils

and other groups that are assisted through NGO and governmental health programs.

Arkay Plastics and its partner, SAFI, have positioned the Water Filter devices as an attractive Malawian commodity to local households by making it relatively inexpensive to purchase at a price which is 60% lower than the price for similar imported filters, making it more affordable for low income families.

To ensure that the Water Treatment and Storage Units are marketed effectively, Arkay and SAFI have trained frontline staff handling the sales and have also engaged specialized sales agents to help to identify the correct channels of distribution of the product to reach the mass-market.

The project which commenced implementation in January 2015 created more than 50 new jobs and seeks to trigger behavioral change in water, hygiene and sanitation among its target customers for long term sustainability.

Arkay Plastics is one of the 19 private sector firms currently leading the implementation



of various agribusiness, manufacturing and logistics projects with support from MICF, aimed at strengthening the private sector's ability to serve as the engine of economic growth.

MICF is a competitive, transparent mechanism that provides grant finance to innovative projects and inclusive business models proposed by the private sector active in Malawi's agricultural, manufacturing and logistics sectors.

It is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department for International Development (UKAid), the German Development Bank (KfW) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).



Benefits of the HWTs

- Increased access to quality, lower cost table top filters targeting 50,000 Malawian households leading to health benefits.
- Improved health translates to improved economic productivity. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that every \$1 invested in hygiene and sanitation results in \$9 in economic benefits.
- Economic savings made through import substitution, especially of foreign exchange.
- Additional foreign exchange earnings through export of Malawian products to the region.
- Increased economic opportunities to resellers of the filters, especially female entrepreneurs using a "Tupperware" business model.

Project Building Blocks

Design and production of a mould for the manufacturing of a HWTS water filtration system in Malawi



Training of 300 sales staff on sales and marketing of new water filter system. Female entrepreneurs selected, trained and receive microloans to sell filters



Filtration units sold to low income consumers at a 60% reduction from 2014 price, in Malawi and the region

Increased income of at least US\$ 400 per entrepreneur across the distribution network
Creation of new jobs for the manufacturing of the water filter



More than 50,000 households access safe water through use of water filters



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