Partnering to meet global water needs: Bringing clean water to Liberia

BACKGROUND

Liberian Context
- Approximately **4 million residents**
  - **54%** in poverty
  - **45%** experience food poverty
  - **70%** has access to clean water within 30 minutes of residence
  - **60%** rural vs. **80%** urban have access to clean water

Effects of diarrhea
- **6th** leading cause of death for Liberian children under 5 (560 deaths per 100,000)
- Closely associated with malnutrition and stunting

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals
- Goal 3: Good health and well-being
- Goal 5: Clean water and sanitation
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals

Figure 1: Progress of project, September 2018
(Source: https://thelastwell.org)

- Completed & Certified
- Completed
- Funded
- Scheduled

THE PROCESS: LOGISTICS, BENEFITS, AND CHALLENGES

This project seeks to ensure all Liberians have access to safe drinking water by 2020 by distributing Sawyer Point One water filters to all households in Liberia who do not have access to safe water within a 15 minute walk from their residence.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
SAWYER INTERNATIONAL
- Provides the Point One filters
- Trains partners on filter use
- Trains partners on data collection

THE LAST WELL
- Oversees filter distribution and data collection
- Serves as project lead for other NGOs

CALVIN COLLEGE
- Cleans and analyzes collected data
- Disseminates findings and discusses implications

BENEFITS
- High levels of community trust by engaging Liberians and Liberian NGOs
- Multidisciplinary expertise
- Capacity-building through training of Liberians and college students
- Increased ability to achieve goals by involving multiple sectors
- Utilizes a results-driven approach

CHALLENGES
- Logistical challenges (e.g. rainy season, hard-to-access villages, unique trackable filters IDs)
- Communication challenges
  - Different ways of communicating due to professional background
  - Limitations of phone/e-mail
  - Different time zones
- Differing priorities
- Varying output needs (e.g. marketing materials vs. academic journal articles)

Table 1: Project goals and priorities

Primary Goal: All Liberians will have access to safe drinking water by 2020.		
Sawyer International	**The Last Well**	**Calvin College**
Expand global market	Bring clean water and the gospel to all Liberians	Promote student research opportunities
Develop relationships with NGOs and aid organizations	Build church networks	Participate as agents of renewal in God's world through scholarship

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IMPACT

Findings are drawn from 24,600 Liberian households who completed surveys at baseline, 2 weeks, and 8 weeks between November 2017 and July 2018.

Preliminary findings suggest between baseline and 8 weeks the odds of contracting diarrhea were reduced significantly.
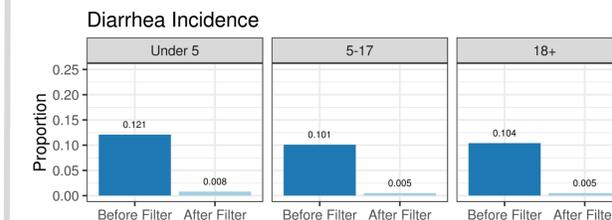
Table 2: Changes in diarrhea incidence

Table 3: Sample characteristics: Age and age by household

Group	Mean	Median	Total
Under 5	0.72	0	38084
5-17	2.08	2	109857
18 and older	3.04	3	160186

CONCLUSIONS

Multi-sectoral partnerships have the potential to accomplish global health goals. It is critical for these partnerships to develop a clear plan, define the structure, and find ways to balance intra- and inter-organizational goals. These partnerships, when fully committed, can provide comprehensive expertise and mechanisms for accountability leading to greater health and well-being for all.

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