



SIEMENS WATER TECHNOLOGIES WORLD WATER DAY PROJECT 2009 in TIBET

BACKGROUND:

Following on from the success of the SWT World Water Day projects in Timor Leste in 2008, Siemens Water Technologies (SWT) dollar matched SWT employees donations to support a further two safe water projects for World Water Day 2009.

The funds donated and matched by SWT are sufficient for two safe water treatment systems. The first project, commissioned in August 2009 is in a remote, rural area in Tibet – 1000 kms from the capital Lhasa. Due to delays in transport and poor weather in Tibet the first project took longer than planned, therefore the second project in rural China has been delayed until the end September.

The generous donations by SWT and SWT employees was sufficient to provide two SkyHydrant water purification units, two SkyTower tank stands, wash stations and freight to China and Tibet. The SkyJuice Foundation's in-country partners, the Asia Water Foundation, were able to provide water tanks, project management and local labour for installation and deployment.

WHY DID WE SELECT TIBET?

Despite China's increasing prosperity, poverty continues to plague the majority of Tibetans living under its authority. According to the UN Development Index, Tibet is the poorest and least developed region of China with a human development index of only 0.39 placing it within the bottom 12 of a list of the world's 49 officially recognized "least developed countries".

Official data shows that Tibet ranked last in improved access to clean drinking water in rural China. As a consequence of poor water supply dysentery is the most common ailment for Tibetan children and the single greatest cause of infant mortality in rural regions. (www.ilhr.org/ilhr/regional/tibet/children)

THE NEED - Tibetan Home of Hope

Tibetan Home of Hope is a school and orphanage for children who would otherwise be abandoned – a home in the deepest sense of the word, where young people receive loving care, food, shelter, medical attention, modern and traditional Tibetan education, as well as the practical skills needed for them to mature into independent adults.



SkyHydrant - SkyStation



Tibetan Home of Hope occupies a spectacular location along the banks of the Yellow River in the Amdo region of Tibet, 1,000 miles east of Lhasa. Although there is plenty of water available from the river, it is not potable and the school children were plagued by diarrhoea and dysentery.

THE SOLUTION:

The SkyJuice water purification unit (SkyHydrant) removes turbidity, bacteria and pathogens from polluted water, which are the contaminants which cause diarrhoea and dysentery. The SkyHydrant can be easily transported, installed, operated and serviced with minimal training and operator interventions. As the SkyHydrant does not require chemicals or power for the purification process, there are virtually no ongoing costs. Unlike other water treatment systems, the special Siemens filtration module located inside the SkyHydrant doesn't need replacing; it simply relies on a regular clean. The SkyTower tank stand includes a wash station, bubblers, self closing taps and an area where large water containers can be refilled.

Notionally, the SkyHydrant can produce up to 1000 litres of clean water per hour, which will be plentiful for the school and orphanage. As this exceeds the school's needs, they have offered the local surrounding community access to the free, safe water.

The staff will be responsible for continued operation of the SkyJuice system however; the SkyJuice Foundation will be available to provide ongoing support if required. To ensure the success of the project the children and staff at Tibetan Home of Hope were instructed in water hygiene education. Although the children and staff can't thank you personally, I think the photos communicate their appreciation and enthusiasm.

SUMMARY:

The cycle of poverty resulting in poor health, lower incomes and lack of education cannot be broken without improving access to basic needs - safe water being fundamental among them. The Tibetan Home of Hope now enjoys access to continual free safe water thanks to the donations by SWT and SWT employees for World Water Day 2009. Thank you to every individual contributor.

This project demonstrates that essential services such as the provision of safe water can be achieved by the collective efforts of corporations, employees, partner organisations such as SkyJuice Foundation and cost effective appropriate technology.

This safe water project also shows that a simple initiative undertaken by generous and committed individuals can enhance our human spirit and make a real difference. Most importantly, the concept that global neighbours can care for each other is exemplified by these successful projects. Well done SWT and everyone who contributed to this World Water Day project 2009.

Tibetan Home of Hope children enjoying the SkyJuice Safe Water System

