



INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENT
AND WATER MANAGEMENT

IEWM

Kibera field visit report



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Organized by Institute of Environment and Water Management (IEWM)

For a visiting European water foundation



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Background

In 2010, Solvatten AB and IEWM launched the joint project *Enhancing capacity for adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change in Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya - Piloting technology transfer for secure access to safe drinking water in a changing climate while reducing greenhouse gas emissions*, supported by the Nordic Climate Facility (NCF). The project was successfully concluded in 2012, having reached a total of 2500 families and more than 14.000 beneficiaries. This field trip served to present the visiting water foundation to users and sellers of Solvatten for the purpose of an evaluation of the long term impact of the technology.

Participants

- 3 representatives from the visiting European water foundation
- Don Agiro – Communications Officer, IEWM
- Annabell Waititu- Executive Director, IEWM

Proceedings

The field visit is what can be described as “a success story” as one of the visiting guests quoted after listening to what one of the families with a Solvatten unit had to say concerning the impact this unit brought to his family’s life.

The day started at IEWM with a brief meeting between IEWM and the water foundation team where we shared information about each other’s development work. IEWM provided a detailed overview of the Solvatten project, coverage, social, economic, adaptive and mitigation benefits of the project. After this meeting, the team broke for lunch before proceeding to the field. During lunch we had an opportunity to discuss more about the foundations’ work not only in Kenya but beyond. They noted that they are currently supporting research on development of new water purification technologies.



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Field Visits

1. The Kandola Self-help Group

The first group to be visited was The Kandola self-help Group. 10 members (3males and 7 females) were present for the meeting. They illustrated the different community projects they have been working on and provided a detailed explanation of their experience with Solvatten. They noted that Solvatten enabled their access to safe water for drinking and domestic use. This, they noted has led to a notable decrease in WASH diseases, household costs in terms of energy use and medical costs. They noted that the project has also enabled them to take an active role in educating the community on the need to ensure they use safe water and that they observe hygienic practices. They did not fail to note the great demand for Solvatten in Kibera by the many individuals and families who have witnessed the positive impact it has brought on the lives of the current users of this device.

2. Tom Samson Elavuna

Next we visited Tom Samson Elavuna who made quite an impressive presentation on the Solvatten device and how it changed his life greatly when it came to the supply of healthy drinking water for his family's use in Nairobi and their rural home. Samson is a proud user of the Solvatten unit. He was quick to pick up his Solvatten labeled t-shirt to demonstrate how he has become an educator of the need for safe water. He keeps his Solvatten very safely and protects it from damage and filth. He eloquently explained how water in Kibera is contaminated during distribution because of the poor quality of pipes that easily break allowing wastewater into the pipes, considering the lack of proper sewerage system. He also gave a detailed overview of how the Solvatten is used and the benefits he derives from its use. He didn't fail to note that its' portability makes it easy for him to carry it along his different journeys and uses it for bathing and drinking water which he also shares with strangers he encounters along the way (this markets the Solvatten device indirectly and increases its popularity). He also talked about the economic benefits he is currently experiencing from using the device such as reduction of fuel costs, electricity cost and amount of time he has managed to save which allows him to embark on different activities with ease.



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3. Fridah Muhonja

Fridah Muhonja stated how Solvatten has helped reshape her life and the positive impact it brought to her whole family in general. She uses the unit for heating bathing water and purifying drinking water. As a result the unit has enhanced access to safe drinking water, but economically the unit has also helped in the generation of savings. She stated similar experiences as Tom Samson Elavuna, but a unique point is her suggestion of having a large water storage unit with features similar to the regular Solvatten device that could be used to supply a whole community at fair prices, considering not all the individuals could raise enough money to purchase a device for their personal homes. She also said that she would donate a piece of land in case a project such as this could be approved.

In summary, the guests enjoyed the field experience in Kibera, which was rich with information about Solvatten and its practical applications on different lives. This trip also helped us note the huge demand for Solvatten devices. Erik noted that the project is great and should attract more funding given the impact that has been narrated. We are hoping that the project can attract some resources for scaling up.

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