

Report

**Focus Group Discussions  
on KAPP Study on  
Drinking Water and  
Water Purifying Tablets**

**Final Report**

**Submitted to:  
Social Marketing Company  
(SMC)**

**Submitted by:  
Org-Quest Research Ltd.**



**Social Marketing Company (SMC)  
SMC Tower,  
33 Banani Commercial Area,  
Dhaka-1213**

**June 02, 2010**

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**Submitted to :**

Social Marketing Company (SMC)  
SMC Tower, 33 Banani C/A,  
Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.

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June 02, 2010

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### **Focus Group Discussions on KAPP Study on Drinking Water and Water Purifying Tablets**

Dear Mr. Rahman,

Please find attached 11 copies of final report on the above. We hope you will find everything in order.

We take this opportunity to thank you for entrusting us with the assignment of carrying out such an important study.

Assuring you our full cooperation at all times.

Kind regards,



Monzurul Haque  
Chairman & Managing Director





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Social Marketing Company (SMC) is the largest privately managed social marketing organization in the world for a single country. SMC's mission is to improve the quality of lives of vulnerable and less privileged populations primarily in public health through sustainable social marketing efforts in collaboration with national and international governments and donors. The concept of social marketing came to Bangladesh in 1974 when the social marketing project was initiated to challenge rapid population growth through BCC/IEC program and by making contraceptive products widely accessible at a price affordable to the general people.

Water and sanitation systems are important indicators of overall health status in the community. Water is a major conduit for transmission of diseases including cholera, typhoid, hepatitis, poliomyelitis, dysentery etc. Several studies revealed that the children are more prone to diarrhoeal and other water born diseases. Globally diarrhoeal disease accounts for about 20% of child mortality and 80% of diarrhea can be prevented by improvements in water quality, sanitation and hygiene behaviors.

To address the issue relating safe drinking water, SMC plans to introduce a water purification tablet that will be convenient to use, effective and affordable to all socio economic segments of people of Bangladesh. Before launching the product, SMC wanted to conduct a KAPP study to get relevant information, which will be utilized, for developing its program strategies. To this end, SMC engaged Org – Quest Research Limited (OrQuest) to conduct a qualitative survey in all the divisions of Bangladesh and to carryout a research on the existing knowledge, attitude, perception and practice (KAPP) on drinking water and water purifying tablets vis a vis their sense of safety and preservation of safe drinking water.

The overall objectives of the study are to assess the current status of Knowledge, Attitude, Perception and Practice on drinking water and water purifying tablets of the people of Bangladesh. The following information was also covered by the study:

- Assessment of perception & knowledge level of people about safe drinking water
- Investigation of perception & knowledge about the relationship of safe drinking water and water borne diseases
- Investigation of knowledge and practice level of water purification tablets
- Knowing of behavior of the people on safe drinking water
- Determination of the intention to buy and intention to use water purification tablets;
- Assessment of the perceived advantage and disadvantage of the product
- Assessment of the willingness to pay for the product



During the study various aspects of drinking water, right from its method of collection, container used, preservation, drinking, possible sources of contamination and protective measures usually adopted etc. had been discussed with the participants of the group discussions. The more elaborate topics were:

- Source of water for different purposes,
- Source for drinking water - collection method, container, treatment, preservation, any concern with source, collection method, container, preservation, possible source of contamination, protective measures taken
- Meaning of safe drinking water
- Sources of safe drinking water
- How to get safe drinking water or how to make it safe for drinking
- What if drinking water is not safe
- Diseases that occur from unsafe drinking water
- Awareness of water purifying tablet
- Incidence of using water purifying tablet, source, experience, convenience/inconvenience
- Perceived advantages and disadvantages
- Intention to use, why/why not, regularly or occasions, what occasions/moments
- Willingness to buy, reasons
- Prices willing to pay

Since the basic objective is to have an in-depth understanding of Attitude, Perception and Practice (KAPP) on drinking water and water purifying tablets, and not to make any estimates qualitative technique through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used to conduct the study.

Since KAPP on drinking water and water purifying tablets (WPT) may vary by area, representation were ensured from:

- All the six divisions
- Both urban and rural areas
- All socio-economic classes

Since males, especially in the lower SEC, are purchase decision makers and buyers of this type of products and females are involved in usage of the product, both males and females were included in the study. Besides, due to possible variation between younger and older generations, both younger and older groups were taken separately.

Group discussions were carried out in Dhaka (Urban and Rural), Chittagong (Urban and Rural), Rajshahi (Urban and Rural), Khulna (Urban and Rural), Sylhet (Urban and Rural) and Barisal (Urban and Rural). Respondents consisted of male and female. In each area representation were ensures from different socio-economic categories like A, B, C, D. SEC categories were selected based on their education, occupation and disposable monthly family income.



Municipal supply (WASA) water in urban areas and tube well water in rural areas are almost the only source of water for all purposes. To urban people, municipal supply (WASA) water is another name for unsafe water, or even polluted water containing visible dirt and even worms. In contrast, tube well water is well trusted to be safe and free from such serious contamination. As such in rural areas, tube well water is generally not treated before drinking.

Drinking water is treated in urban areas by boiling municipal supply (WASA) water for about one to one and half hours and then cooling it. There is a tremendous faith in this time-trusted and proven process as an "adequate method" of treating water. The housewives, being personally involved in the entire boiling-cooling-preserving cycle also feel comfortable because they know that by drinking water which they themselves have boiled (or supervised), their children and the family are safe from sicknesses like *diarrhea*, *cholera*, *skin diseases*, *jaundice/hepatitis*, *stomach problems*, *vomiting*, etc., all of which are known to be caused by unsafe water.

The core activities in the boiling cycle are cleaning the containers in which water is obtained and stored through to collection of water, boiling for one to one and half hours and then cooling and then again back to cleaning the containers onwards before the running stock ends (please refer to illustration of the process in the main body of the report).

Treated water obtained from commercial sources in plastic containers, also known as mineral water, a relatively recent phenomenon in urban areas, is trusted to be safe and taken without any treatment. However, as a safety measure, water from the first five/six pumps are let go before collection to avoid water that might be contaminated with air borne pollutants. Additional safety is practiced by filtering the pumped water with a piece of cloth tied around the nozzle of the tube well.

Regardless of source, prevention of contamination of water begins in rural and urban households alike, immediately after it is collected and stored either on a *Kolshi* (traditional earthen water vase or pitcher) or on a pan or on any other containers. The *Kolshi* or the container is kept covered to prevent contamination from air borne dust within the household. The same practice holds for water stored on containers after boiling. Similarly top openings of underground and overhead water tanks/reservoirs are kept covered to prevent contamination from not only air borne dust but also from other possible contaminants. In rural areas prevention of contamination of tube well water before collection is practiced by keeping the top of the tube well covered with a rag to prevent air borne dust or other pollutants (e.g., bird dropping) from falling inside the tube well through the opening on the top,

*Therefore, keeping stored water covered is a well-adopted practice of prevention of contamination whether in containers or in reservoirs.*

Safe water is primarily judged by treatment process but also very importantly by physical properties. If water is boiled it is safe, but even after boiling if the water is not clear, if it is dirty, if it was not kept covered, or if it is smelly, then it is not safe.



Although it is recognized that boiling causes drainage of gas energy resource in urban areas, it is not seen as an expense. This is because of flat rate billing system regardless of volume of gas used. The housewives do however recognize that they have to put in a lot of time and efforts for boiling and cooling but they unfortunately fail to impute a value on their labour probably because housewives' efforts are taken for granted and traditionally not economically valued.

There is very little awareness about water purifying tablets (WPT) and even less knowledge about how to use it. For the few who are aware, WPT is a flood-time use product when safe drinking water is not available.

### 'AQUATAB'

A priori acceptability of Aquatab concept was marked with lack of sufficient enthusiasm towards the concept. Soon, acceptability became subject to apprehensions about whether it will have other adverse effects on water, for example, will it make the water smelly or will it negatively affect the taste of water?

Amongst urban people the main concern about Aquatab revolves around a fundamental question - can Aquatab really decontaminate water effectively? The latent question here is can Aquatab be as effective as boiling? Aquatab is positioning itself as a replacement of the boiling process, which enjoys time immemorial trust and proven performance at no additional perceived cost. Although the housewives clearly understand that the boiling process is a continuous drudgery for them, there is a deep rooted belief that the effectiveness of the boiling process is also ensured by the time and efforts they personally spend behind the process. They are not prepared to believe that Aquatab can be that simple solution to the elaborate boiling process which provides the essential safety of the entire family from sicknesses caused by impure water.

Amongst rural households who use tube well water, Aquatab or for that matter Water Purifying Tablets are not necessary because there is no need felt to purify tube well water. Therefore, the current practice since years is to drink it straight from tube well without any treatment.

Given the above a strong attitudinal resistance should be expected from the urban housewives who have since long learnt to trust boiling water as the only time tested proven method of treating drinking water. Resistance should likewise be expected from rural households because of their similar trust on tube well water which is taken without boiling or any other treatment. Therefore, to them water purifying tablets or Aquatab is unnecessary except possibly during flood.

A few other deterrents to acceptance of Aquatab or for that matter WPT could be the 24 hours time limit of using treated water. Although some feel that the 24 hours time limit is sufficient, others feel it isn't. The latter group places a condition that they will try Aquatab only if the time limit is increased. Another barrier to acceptance of Aquatab amongst the urban people is the feeling that Aquatab is only relevant for rural people.



