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Product Trials: Bringing the Consumer to the Table

A Formative Research Tool to Ensure Consumer Preferences in the PoU Marketing Plan

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Key aspects to consider for successful and sustainable PoU uptake

- Efficacy of Products (*it works in the "lab"*)
- Market Feasibility – turns "beneficiaries" into consumers
- Consumer Acceptability – households "like" the products
- Household Effectiveness – users are able to successfully treat their water under "normal" conditions

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Formative Research Objectives

Collect and incorporate data into the point-of-use focused hygiene promotion strategy

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Formative Research Objectives

- To understand consumer (community) knowledge & perception of diarrheal risk related to water, characteristics of “clean” and “dirty water”; current purification practices
- Explore overall concept and value of water disinfection
- Determine the perceived benefits, costs, challenges, perceived effectiveness of various purification techniques
- Assess value/ willingness to pay
- Invite modifications to make methods easier [negotiation of improved behaviors]
- Measure actual effectiveness

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Product Trials – Nepal

Examine Categories of Products, NOT Specific Products

- Filtration (CS filter)
- Chlorination (Blinded WaterGuard)
- Boiling
- Solar Disinfection (SODIS)
- BioSand Filter

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Methodology

Women asked to:

- discuss use of treatment methods over time;
- compare methods by different characteristics;
- modify use…

…while testing for effectiveness.

All field work managed by Solutions Consultant
Linked to representative survey

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Methodology

- 30 day trial
- 3 home visits during 30 day trial period
  - Day 1
  - Day 3
  - Day 30 (ish)
- Women with kids under 5 from four study districts
  - Kapilvastu,
  - Parsa
  - Dang
  - Panchthar
- Total 80 participants
  - 20 tried each method
  - 5 each per district

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Confirmed larger study findings about characteristics of water considered "fit to drink"

- Crystal clear "*sanglo pani*"
- Free of turbidity, visible dirt and/or sand

and to a lesser extent:

- Free of bugs and insects
- Absence of (objectionable) smell
- Cool water temperature was also a highly desired attribute, though not necessarily tied to water that was "fit" to drink.

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Got the concept of disinfection when explained, but didn't find their water "unfit"

- Virtually no one expressed any sense of "microbial" or bacterial contamination
- When researchers explained the concept, participants appeared to grasp this concept of "contamination by germs"
- Valued the benefit of making the water "healthier & germ-free" for their family
- Repeated this benefit throughout the interviews

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Low to no perception of risk, but quite willing to try disinfection

- Few felt their water was contaminated
- Unfit referred to turbidity and physical attributes
- Despite this, all recruits willing to try a method of disinfection, needed little convincing
- Learned steps to using/maintaining methods quite easily, correctly

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- Most all kept with the method for the entire study period

  ... but also drank other (regular) water, didn't exclusively use disinfected H2O

- Made few alterations, although invited

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Overall acceptability, *without considering cost*

- CS filter the favorite
- Chlorination “second”
- SODIS and boiling both acceptable, but considered less desirable options

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Acceptability of different water treatment methods

- Taste, smell, appearance, color, temperature
- Effort, convenience, maintenance
- Perceived effectiveness
- Acceptability to family members
- Willingness to pay

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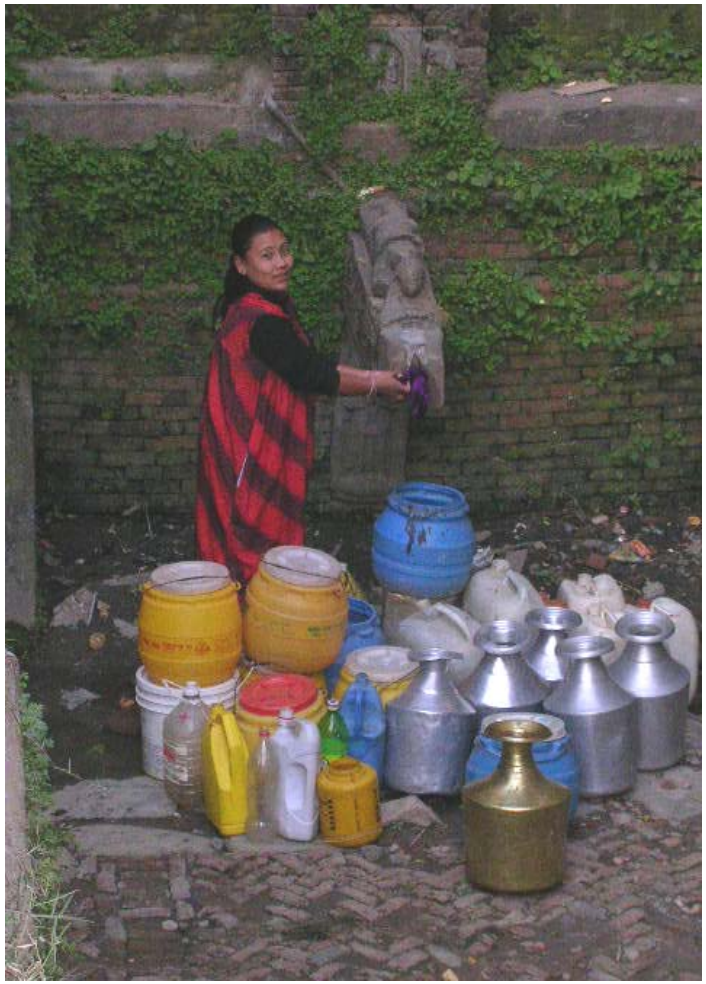
Receptacles



- People LIKED having “extra” bottles from SODIS
- CS filter came with a “dispenser”
- Kettles provided, but not normally available… and still “small,” which adds to “cost”
- BIG issue of having “extra” receptacle for separating out drinking water for disinfection

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Waiting Time

- People have good access overall to water
- Most can get water within 15 minutes
- If you haven't "planned ahead," disinfected water won't be "ready"

- Methods take time
  - SODIS 6 hours to 2 days
  - CS filter – 2.4 to 5.6 liters/hour
  - Chlorination – ½ hour minimum

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Product Effectiveness

- Households were overall successful in using the various techniques to disinfect water
- Exception to this was the CS filter
- Assumed but not proven that water was still testing positive due to secondary contamination

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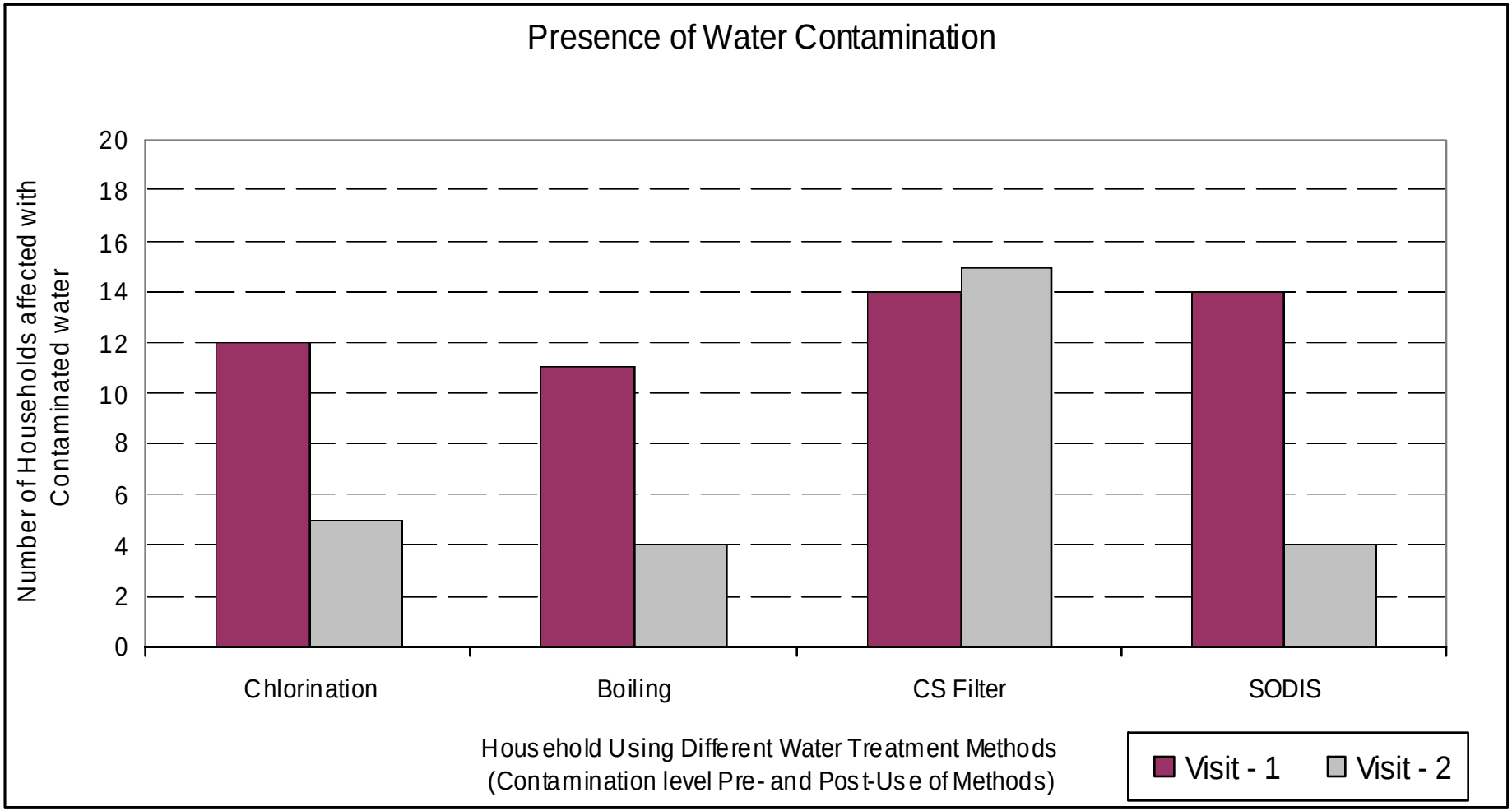

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Challenge of Marketing PoU Disinfection & Safe Water Storage

- Complex behavior to promote, given existing practices
  - Separate out drinking (& cooking) water
  - Not current practice & lack of "spare" vessels
  - Choose method/obtain
  - Disinfect
  - Protect
  - Use always at home and school

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Key Considerations

- No method will be acceptable if it doesn't address turbidity
- Temperature a factor
- Time for disinfection
- Availability of spare receptacle
- PET/PVC bottles not readily available
- Effectiveness and cost of popular CS filter

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On the bright side…

- People were quite willing to try the new technique
- Grasped the mechanics and concepts
- Maintained behavior over time, though not exclusively
- While products didn't provide all characteristics of good, fit water, none of the "negative" product attributes outweighed perceived benefits

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