Helping villagers have access to safe drinking water

Financially disadvantaged communities in Indonesia are highly susceptible to diarrhoeal and other waterborne diseases because their well or spring water is unsafe or because they boil the banded water to store it in dirty pots. The lack of proper sanitation and hygiene is also a common problem. For instance, in Sarangan Village, Pacitan, East Java, the water is close to a septic pit. “We only use the well water for washing clothes, while we use the treated water for cooking and drinking,” said the village leader.

To change their drinking behaviour, the government is working to improve access to safe drinking water. Currently, 15 million villages are served by water from ground water sources, while 10 million are supplied with drinking water from rivers and the mountains are served with rainwater. The government’s objective is to improve access to safe drinking water to 90% of the population by the end of 2019. By 2030, it will be 95%.

Raising awareness: Mothers attend a teaching session about the importance of consuming safe drinking water in Darmo subdistrict of Malang, East Java.

The government is integrating access to safe drinking water with health and nutrition. According to the Ministry of Health, 50 days of life are lost in Indonesia each year due to unhygienic food practices in community partnerships. For more information, contact the Jakarta Post’s Community Partnerships Program at: supplements@jakartapost.com.

Scheduling: Mothers learn about foiling time: “before I changed my habit, the children used to come home from school and ask for water. But today, they do not.”

Tuning to safe drinking water

Lidded two options, a glass of boiled water or a glass of filtered water. This is how the community in Pacitan, East Java, chose between the two options. “I will, without doubt, take the latter,” said Pak R, who runs a small factory. “The water is free of bacteria and consuming filtered water allows me to be more economical!”

He said his wife used to spend Rp 500 per five liters of water on gas to boil the purchased water once in every two days. “It has turned out that I am okay after drinking it [...] it has no side effects.”

To keep the filter functioning well, she said, she cleaned it by using the replacement candles which proves to be useful because she has to use them being sold, which is very good and useful.

Meanwhile, a director of a local non-profit organisation said that what is innovative about the Banjarmasin Project is that for the first time in Indonesia, nutrition and access to safe drinking water is combined within one project. “Most projects focusing on nutrition and water health have not been able to implement these two components in tandem,” she said.

To date, the company serves 250,000 people through more than 220 safe water entrepreneurs in Indonesia, as well as in other African and Asian countries.

Sustainability

The Water and Health Foundation estimated that 50 percent of people in developing countries worldwide were associated with repeating diarrhoea and dysentery; the latter is a leading cause of childhood deaths. In some countries, 20 percent of the population suffers from diarrhea, which is one of the leading causes of childhood deaths. In some countries, 20 percent of the population suffers from diarrhea, which is one of the leading causes of childhood deaths.

Indonesia’s child mortality rate has decreased from 80 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 32 per 1,000 in 2015. “We estimate that if the country were to reach sustained declines in health outcomes, 80 percent of children under 5 would have access to safe drinking water,” she said.

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