

# Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage Implementation Case Study: Air RahMat Chlorine

AMAN TITRA, INDONESIA

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## Introduction

Aman Tirta is a public-private partnership that was created to manufacture, promote and distribute a liquid chlorine solution (called Air RahMat) and safe water storage in Indonesia. In an effort to promote safe water, Aman Tirta has also been working with the government of Indonesia to improve the policy and enabling political environment for household water treatment and storage (HWTS) in the country.

Program partners include:

- John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Centre for Communication Programs – overall program management, communication and behaviour change interventions
- CARE International (NGO) – community participation component
- Lowe Worldwide – product promotion and marketing
- PT Tanshia Consumer Products – manufacturing, distribution, marketing and product development
- PT Ultra Salur – exclusive distributor
- Local retail outlets – product sales across the country



Air RahMat, Indonesia  
(Credit: Tirta/JHUCCP)

The program follows two approaches to increase access to safe water:

1. **Stimulating the commercial sector** to manufacture, distribute and market a product that makes water safe to drink through disinfection and appropriate safe storage at the point of use at affordable prices on a national scale; and
2. **Creating demand** through a strategic behaviour change program that effectively promotes and positions the product in the market place and maximizes linkages with Indonesian NGOs to increase its adoption.

Aman Tirta has been working closely with the private company PT Tanshia to prepare for the ultimate transfer of the program to the company after the end of the project.

## Creating Demand

Air RahMat is targeted to middle-low income mothers with children under five. Its promotion and sales were rolled out using a phased approach in various locations across Indonesia over a period of several years – starting with the product launch in Jakarta in 2005.

The aim of the communication and marketing strategy is to raise awareness and get people to try Air RahMat. It promotes Air RahMat as an easy-to-use and affordable option for safe drinking water, endorsed by the Ministry of Health. Education materials and communication methods included posters, leaflets, radio and television spots, and mobile demonstration trucks giving away free water samples.

At the same time, a strong community mobilization effort, led by local NGOs, plays a significant and active role in increasing knowledge and education on safe drinking water. This is done through person-to-

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person communication, community dialogue and action. Mobile sampling 'road shows' were used throughout the country. These road shows provided information, games, quizzes, water samples, interpersonal communication, and dialogue with community members.

Aman Tirta also worked with government institutions in the areas of health and education to expand coverage.

Research and monitoring of advertising and sales trends initially showed that the program was effective at raising awareness of the product, but that people weren't necessarily buying it. This resulted in a change in advertising strategy, to better target mothers (e.g. through advertising in women's tabloid magazines), focusing on the believability of the ads and the product claims, and increasing the mobile sampling teams so people could try the water. Sales increased in the fourth year of the program following these changes and other initiatives.

## Supplying Products and Services

The chlorine product was originally developed as part of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Safe Water System (SWS) program which includes both disinfection and safe storage.

Air RahMat is manufactured and bottled in Indonesia by PT Tanshia. It is distributed extensively through both traditional retail outlets (e.g. stores and kiosks) and non-traditional outlets (e.g. community-based organizations (CBOs), NGOs, micro-credit organizations and community health volunteers). Distribution is managed by PT Ultra Salur, a private company.

Due to Aman Tirta's efforts to expand the market, the number of retail outlets selling Air RahMat went from 8,500 to over 15,000 in the fourth year of the project.

Air RahMat is sold in 100 mL bottles – enough to treat 660 litres of water, or the average amount used in a household in one month. The bottle is sold for Rp 5,000 (about US\$0.50). In 2008, \$597,511 was invested in the program. In the same year, 71,000 bottles and 548,000 sachets of Air RahMat were sold. PT Tanshia also developed a 3 mL one-use sachet, which entered the market in 2008.

## Monitoring and Improvement

The product manufacturer, PT Tanshia, established a laboratory on-site to assist with product quality control and research and development.

A Health and Economic Impact study was completed mid-way through the project. It showed that people's attitudes towards chlorination and their decisions to use Air RahMat were positively impacted through the project activities. It also showed a health impact, observable through a 50% decrease in diarrhea incidence, and safer stored water in the homes of those using Air RahMat and the purchased safe water storage container.

The slower pace of sales than targeted indicated that behaviour change for household water treatment may be slower than anticipated.

## Program Financing

US Agency for International Development (USAID) funded the 6-year program that ran from 2004 to 2010.

## References

Aman Tirta Program:  
[www.airrahmat-indonesia.com](http://www.airrahmat-indonesia.com)

John Hopkins University:  
[www.jhuccp.org/node/755](http://www.jhuccp.org/node/755)

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