



South Asia Pure Water Initiative Inc. Client, India

Before Michael Lipman, founder of South Asia Pure Water Initiative, attended a biosand filter workshop in Calgary in June 2005, he had already envisioned a filter distribution program for the Kolar District near Bangalore, India. Michael spent time in Kolar previously as a member of the U.S. Peace Corps. After planning for several months, he and his wife Cathy Forsberg traveled to India from their home in the United States to identify an organization that could build, install and maintain filters full-time. Shortly after arrival a keen group from Kolar, headed by Ramachandre Gowda, stepped forward to begin construction on the production facility.

CAWST's International Technical Advisor for South Asia, Bryan Fofonoff, visited the South Asia Pure Water Initiative project in May of 2006. "Their facility is without a doubt one of the most professional biosand filter manufacturing projects on earth. The dedication and meticulous attention to detail are obvious in the superior finish of the filters," says Bryan. "Mike and Cathy play a pivotal role in the project but are only able to visit for a few weeks each spring and fall. They were the driving force, and continue to aid in fundraising and technical aspects."

Ramachandre's team of technicians installed 300 biosand filters in the first six months and plan to sell 1,200 more to households and schools over the coming year. They also hope to become a regional centre of expertise in water treatment and sanitation. Cathy and Michael send regular e-mails to CAWST on the challenges and successes of their project – which they expect to span 10 years, supplying improved water to more than 150,000 people.