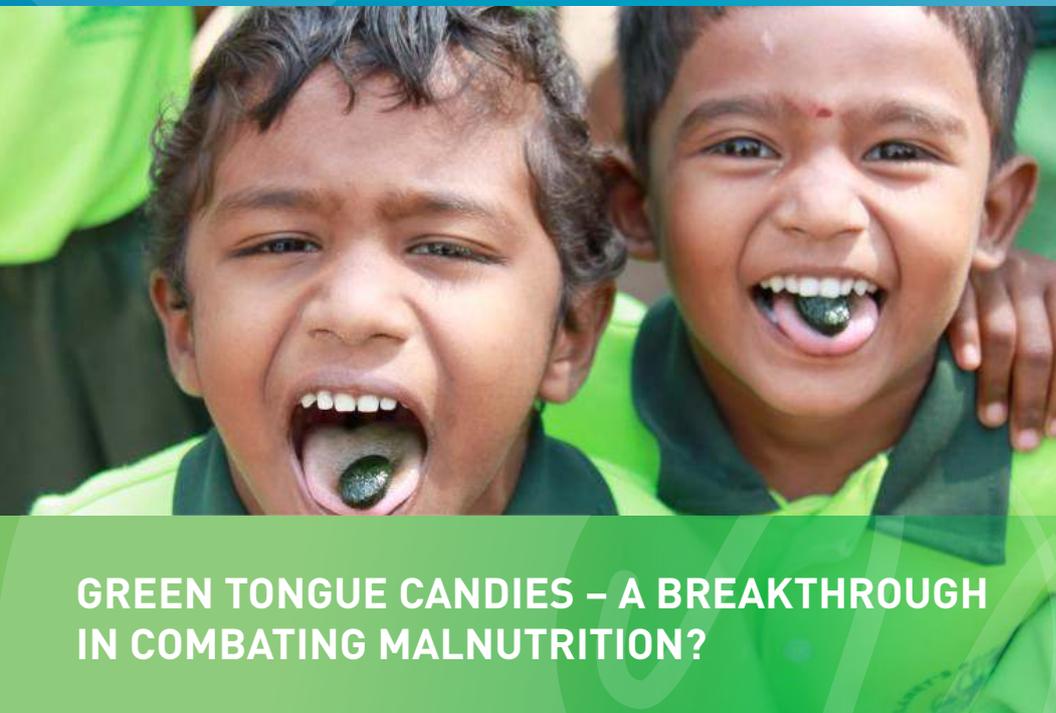


ANTENNA NEWS

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2010



GREEN TONGUE CANDIES – A BREAKTHROUGH IN COMBATING MALNUTRITION?



There are no easy answers to combating malnutrition, but the recently-developed «Green Tongue» candies priced at just one Rupee (CHF 0.025) could become a sustainable solution.

A marketing company for spirulina products has been created in Madurai under the name of **ANTENNA NUTRITECH**, a social enterprise under Section 25 of the Indian Company Act. In 2009, it sold spirulina products for 1.5 million Rupees in 2009 (CHF 38,000) and was good for another 1.5 million Rupees in the first 6 months of 2010.

While some of the products are designed for the up-market to buy at a good profit margin, Antenna Nutritech has also been extremely successful in the social markets. Already 60 % of turnover comes from three social products:

- a) **Green Tongue - the spirulina candies**
- b) **SpiruPower - a small bottle with 60 spirulina tablets for 99 Rupees (~2 CHF)**
- c) **SpiruPower - a flask with 180 tablets of 750 mg spirulina, especially used for HIV/AIDS-affected persons.**

The company will soon break even and finance all its costs sustainably. Antenna Nutritech has made great progress with the development of the «One Rupee» candy: it contains half a gram of spirulina and comes in three flavours: vanilla, mango and herbs, very appreciated by Indian children. The pricing was especially designed to reach the so-called «base of the pyramid» (BOP) customers and includes a 30 paisa margin for women vendors.

The sales are closely linked to **ANTENNA INDIA'S** micro-finance programme and there is a lot of interest among women participating in Self-Help Groups to sell it to their neighbours. Children are also buying the candies with their pocket money during school-breaks.

COOPERATION HAS STARTED WITH CHILD FUND INDIA – a large child development NGO catering to over 70,000 children –and will lead to large scaling-up programmes. So far, over 1 million candies have been sold.

Antenna Nutritech now faces a shortage of spirulina. Production must be raised fast and Antenna plans to create an investment fund for spirulina tanks to be leased out to women for production. We intend to open a (revolving) investment fund of CHF 100,000 to build 200 tanks in 2011 and produce some 6 tons of spirulina, good for making 12 million candies. Antenna Nutritech will then buy the spirulina and market it.

This development has been made possible thanks to initial funding from the Georg and Emily von Opel Foundation.



EDITO

YET MORE HUNGER. NO MORE HUNGER!

If one thing is excessively clear to us all, it is that food shortages are spreading in the world. More than one billion souls – and bodies – are under-nourished. The spectre of food riots is revisiting us, as in Mozambique in early September. Climatic extremes are ever more destructive of harvests and soils. All this represents a real threat to people living in dire poverty. The dysfunctions of the agricultural markets are well known. So too are the steps to take. Yet, what can we do :

- without the political will of a State in withdrawal, if not denial ?
- when wheat prices on international markets soar by 70% between 2009 and 2010 ?
- when food security depends on import ?
- when governments make no priority investment in food production ?

The answers, for Antenna, are clear. We need to develop technologies which are accessible to local communities, and we have thus decided to invest in these fields:

- micro-irrigation
- micro-gardens/ kitchen gardens/ seed selection
- bio-pesticides and bio-fertilisers

Our role is to respond to the needs of millions of small farmers who, with such techniques at hand, will be able to grow their own food, affordably. True, these techniques exist already but they need to be improved, produced at low cost and made accessible through micro-credit. Antenna is currently undertaking much research and testing, with validation in the field before engaging in wide-scale dissemination. Today, we see growing interest in our work from the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), UNICEF, foundations and many NGOs.

We would warmly welcome a re-orientation, on the part of universities and research centres, of their work towards innovations which deal with the basic needs of the extremely poor. Surely they can allow some mere morsels (or more) of their budgets to be used in this way. Surely?

Denis von der Weid



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SPIRULINA FARMS IN AFRICA



In Niger, Madagascar, the Central African Republic and in Cameroon, the Antenna Foundation is working on a range of spirulina programmes, managed by Antenna France.

NIGER

in Dogondoutchi, some 300 km east of Niamey, the project with Tarbiyya Tatali, a Nigerien association for local development, has recently entered its fourth year. Following expansion of its production tanks to 450 m², the spirulina farm is now financially autonomous. This year's production should pass 600 kg, and the bulk of its humanitarian distribution goes to the renutrition centre at Dogondoutchi hospital

MADAGASCAR

The first nutrition centre was opened in Antsirabé in March 2010, with funding support from the Antenna Foundation. The centre has three goals:

- providing children with a daily balanced and varied meal, with added spirulina.
- nutrition education and training of the children's mothers with regard to essential nutrients, and demonstrations of how to composed varied meals at minimum cost.
- giving basic hygiene education to the children.

The annual operating expenses of € 10,000 meet the costs of the organiser, the cook and the meals. This works out at less than € 1 per meal per child.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Antenna has been working in CAR for some 15 years. Its extensive needs, in particular in the western region of Berberati, have led us to build up a partnership with the local Kenose-Antenna group. Early in 2010, the «SOS BERBERATI» campaign was launched to provide free spirulina to malnourished children. Thus far, almost 5,000 children have been receiving spirulina treatment in the health centres of Saint Anne, Saint François and Be-Ngote. With demand rising, we have decided to expand existing projects and to create two new production centres – at present, funding is being sought.

CAMEROUN

As we go to press, the technical director of **ANTENNA FRANCE** is on a mission to review a small spirulina project recently launched in the far northern town of Maroua. He will also identify and assess other potential projects, with key prospects in Yaoundé and in and around Maroua, in Mouda and Mokolo. Project proposals are being drafted for submission to partners and funders in the very near future.



MAKE A DONATION

Thank you for your precious help and generosity.

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PAKISTAN FLOODS – EMERGENCY SDC DEPLOYMENT OF 100 WATA KITS

In response to the worst floods in Pakistan for 80 years, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) took immediate steps to ramp up aid to victims by installing disinfection facilities for drinking water in several regions. The UN is deeply concerned about the spread of water-borne diseases, with 3.5 million children at great risk. The SDC identified local production of chlorine with Antenna's WATA devices as an appropriate, low-cost solution for disinfecting water and pre-empting a cholera epidemic. They quickly deployed 100 WATA kits and 70+ training sessions have been held on chlorine production and chlorination of wells. By all accounts, local authorities are highly satisfied with this equipment. After a time of fast thinking and faster action, the WATA team is planning to enhance its rapid response capacity on a more permanent basis.