



Who We Are

The Bawa Health Initiative (BHI) grew out of the expressed needs of the people of Bawa, a remote village in Cameroon, West Africa, to have safe drinking water and improved health.

Created in May 2005, BHI is a dynamic 501- c (3), not for profit based in Wallingford, Connecticut. BHI is a dedicated group of health care professionals, educators, students, and other interested community members. We work in conjunction with our Cameroonian based sister organization, Bawa Health Initiative–Cameroon (BHI-C), and in partnership with the Albert Schweitzer Institute at Quinnipiac University.

Our Mission

The mission of Bawa Health Initiative is to improve the health of Bawa citizens and people in surrounding areas. We are committed to creating global partnerships, building local capacity, and implementing sustainable development that respects the environment, cultural values, and religious practices of the people whom the project serves. BHI also is committed to creating greater awareness and understanding of the health care issues and culture in Africa, through information, education and communication targeting the general public in the developed world.

Our Goals

Consistent with the goal of the Cameroonian Ministry of Health, **the overall goal of BHI is to improve the health of Bawa citizens and people in the surrounding areas.** In order to achieve our goal, BHI will establish a sustainable primary care clinic and educational resource center in Bawa, which will also provide the infrastructure for the expansion of BHI's work in Cameroon. **BHI's specific goals target:**

Safe drinking water: BHI will improve access to safe drinking water and reduce water-borne diseases.

Malaria: BHI will increase access to insecticide-treated bednets; especially for pregnant women and children under five. BHI will also improve access to anti-malarial treatment and reduce the prevalence of malarial disease.

HIV/AIDS: BHI will raise awareness regarding HIV/AIDS prevention and transmission, especially among youth.

Helminth Control: BHI will increase access to antihelmintics, and will reduce the prevalence and morbidity of helminth diseases.

Health Education: BHI will increase understanding of the health, hygiene and sanitary practices that promote improved health.

Immunization: BHI will improve access to immunizations against all major childhood disease and will immunize pregnant women.

Nutrition: BHI will increase access to ready- to- use therapeutic food (RUTF) for malnourished children.

Strategies to Reach Our Goals

BHI will: 1) develop diverse and viable partnerships and, 2) strengthen local capacity to participate in the improvement of their health status through education and training. BHI will develop strategies with the people of Bawa, local leaders, and representatives from the Ministry of Health and other government and nongovernmental agencies to sustain and expand the BHI initiative to other areas throughout Cameroon.

Accomplishments and Work in Progress

While BHI is a young organization, we are proud of our initial accomplishments. Our partnerships are growing and currently include the Kiwanis Club, First Congregational Church of Wallingford, Quinnipiac University, Gardner Engineering, Brooks Accounting, and many other dedicated and committed community members. To date, BHI has accomplished the following:

- Established a strong Board of Directors with leaders of diverse qualifications and experience.
- Developed an initial program proposal.
- Hired a part time Executive Director.
- Lead numerous informational sessions for the general public and potential funders about the Bawa Health Initiative via community forums, television, newspaper and radio.
- Established the Bawahealth.org website to inform the public about our mission.
- Lead successful community fund raising events to support initial planned activities.
- Engaged college students who mobilized to create a student run organization of volunteers who raise funds to support BHI.
- Received training in low cost water filtration technology.

Our resources:

BHI began raising funds in September 2005. Current funding is \$4,600.00 and this money has been earmarked for the water and sanitation component of the program to support training, water filtration materials and transportation costs. BHI is working hard to secure more substantial funding from foundations, private donors, and other sources in order to successfully accomplish other planned actions.

In-kind contributions are significant and include numerous hours of legal and accounting assistance, Web-site graphics design support, technical assistance in water filter planning and the construction of aluminum molds used to make Bio-sand filters.

Upcoming Planned Activities: Spring 2006

- General health and parasite survey. This research will provide baseline data needed for program implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
- Training of community outreach workers who will mobilize community members about BHI. The outreach workers will be trained to serve as health, hygiene and sanitation educators and will play an important role throughout the life of the project in raising community health awareness.
- Provision and distribution of bed-nets, particularly to school children and women, to decrease the risk of malaria transmission.
- Mass treatment program with albendazole to control helminth infections.
- Construction of Bio-sand filters to provide safe water.