

IN PARTNERSHIP

September 2022



Lives Changed through WASH Projects in Bangladesh



Tubewell at Happy Hill Village, Bangladesh

GMP relief and development partner, Community Advancement Forum (CAF), establish Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) projects in Bangladesh.

CAF helps Mru communities in the remote areas of the Bandarban Hills install latrines, learn good hygiene practices and gain safe access to water. Vana Bawm, Project Director, reports that since the Community Sustainability Project began in January 2021, they have installed 120 toilets throughout the villages. “The sanitation program among the Mru has brought great change,” Vana said.

Of the 120 toilets installed, ten were in Bagun Village. Paring, a recipient, is happy with his new toilet because he had never used a toilet before. He is used to defecating in the bushes. “We used to go to the outsides and to the open spaces,” he said. “This was causing disease and suffering.” Paring is thankful to CAF for “providing hygienic toilet[s] which is very much helpful for our community”. He can now defecate in private and is looking forward to the health improvements it will bring.

Likewise, Mendon from Mrulawng Village was also unfamiliar with using a toilet. “We do not practice having a toilet in our village.” Having no prior knowledge of toilet etiquette, Mendon appreciated the hygiene

training provided by CAF when the toilets were installed. “Not just giving construction [of a toilet], but [information] on how to maintain a toilet,” he said. The training gave him confidence. Twenty families received sanitation and hygiene training in Mrulawng Village.

Along with the installation of toilets and hygiene training, CAF also provides households with equipment like a toilet brush, toilet cleaners, soap and a bucket. Mendon was thrilled to receive the equipment. “It [will] help us,” he explained. “It is [now] much safer. We hope this will be a practice for our lifetime.”

When people have access to functional and clean toilets, sickness is reduced. The risk of drinking water becoming contaminated by faeces is lower. The possibility of bacteria spreading and causing outbreaks of diarrhoea and cholera is reduced. People need access to running water, soap, or sanitiser, otherwise, it’s almost impossible to stop the spread of germs and preventable diseases. As Vana shares, “A toilet is valuable”.

Paring is thankful for the provision of a toilet, the training and the equipment. “We are very much happy for them [CAF] providing hygienic toilet[s] which is very much helpful for our community,” he said.

By donating to Safe Water September, you help people like Paring and Mendon gain access to toilet installation, hygiene training and equipment that will help improve not only their livelihood and health but that of their entire village as well.

Give now to provide life-changing sanitation and hygiene training and equipment.

Visit www.safewaterseptember.org.au for more information.

Bangladesh CAF - Community Sustainability Program is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

Help change lives for the better!

Everyone deserves the health, dignity and safety that safe water solutions can give. This September you can support safe water, hygiene and sanitation projects in Zimbabwe, Bangladesh and Vanuatu. Visit www.safewaterseptember.org.au to learn about the impact of safe water, read stories on the blog, access further resources and donate.

News & Events

Happy Father's Day,

Happy Father's Day from all staff and partners at GMP! "I cannot express the joy I have to become a father after eight years of marriage. All the medical science and treatments failed, but God was very faithful to us. He blessed us with a very beautiful daughter, Keziah. Fatherhood is an absolute blessing and a great responsibility." - Danny Gaikwad, Hosanna Ministries, India

Farewell to the Garlett Family

In October we will be saying a sad, but deeply thankful, farewell to Brendon and Amy Garlett and family as they conclude their incredible ministry in Dareton and take up a new role leading the Indigenous Community Church in Nowra, NSW. Please join us in praying for a smooth transition for the whole family and for God to bless the faithful work of sharing his good news to the Indigenous communities of the Sunraysia region.

Micah Australia - Help Fight Famines

Help Fight Famine is a unified call, from community and humanitarian organisations, for urgent action from the Australian Government to do our part in responding to the global hunger crisis. Act today www.fightfamine.com.au

The Norseman Story

The story of the Churches of Christ Norseman Mission and the Norseman Church of Christ has been written at the request of the Norseman Aboriginal people. This colourful book has 250 pages and 360 photos costing \$30 plus postage.

Contact Avon and Deslee Moyle to order your copy.
Call 0419 907 931 or email avon.deslee@westnet.com.au

For more news and updates, follow us on Facebook or Instagram @gmpaustralia

The Unchanging Love of Christ

Up until March 2020, I described myself as a 'seasoned traveller'.

I had a routine, and it enabled me to travel with minimal stress. A few weeks ago, though, I awoke at night, stressed about an upcoming visit to our Fijian partners, a place and people I knew well. This was unusual.

I realised that my past coping mechanisms – based on the idea that things would not change dramatically – weren't holding up in the environment of traveling in a COVID-19 setting. Long story, short – all went well, with new experiences of travel obstacles successfully hurdled.

Fiji was different, too. Nadi and Sigatoka both had many stores that were empty and up for lease. Some services I knew had shut down, and a taxi driver I spoke to had been let go by his previous place of employment after 17 years due to the lack of tourism.

However, there was something that hadn't changed. It was the importance of relationships. I saw new ones emerge and I revelled in dropping back into old ones that had matured in my absence. The relational nature of GMP, based on the value that Christ places on people, was no different. We still valued knowing the locals, and the locals, knowing us.

So, we paused to listen and not just plough through the curriculum, as people shared their hurts and the hurts of their communities. They shared personal stories of pain and of pride in what their churches were achieving, and they embraced new learnings. The solid rock of respect and mutuality still underpinned our relationships.

In Hebrews 13:8, the writer announces wonderful news about Jesus: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. No matter how our circumstances change – and the pandemic has altered so much – the compassion, the love, the faithfulness and the grace of Jesus is still the same as it ever was.

I don't know what is different for you now – maybe things or people that you thought would always be there aren't any more. Maybe you've changed radically. At GMP, we are facing one of the biggest changes in the past 15 years when our Executive Officer, John Gilmore, retires at the end of November. Things will not be the same, but our values will.

It is my hope that, whatever is going on for you, the unchanging love of Christ touches you.

Craig Brown,
Deputy Executive Officer and
ICP Director

Double your Impact!

Investing Donations are a great way for people or church groups to support life-changing water projects and encourage the passionate people taking the challenge.

Nominate a once-off gift of any specific amount over \$1000 to match donations during the Safe Water September campaign. When your gift is live (matching donations), every time someone donates, another donation of the same amount will be made from you. You can choose to be named as the Investing Donor, or to remain

anonymous. Every challenge taker who receives a donation, will find a second donation on their profile. This is a huge encouragement to challenge takers, and it will encourage others to give towards life-changing projects.

Your Investing Donation can motivate young people who are advocating for safe water through the challenge. The impact of your gift will go twice as far and, as a result, more lives can be transformed with safe water. To become an investing donor contact Mitch at mitch@gmp.org.au.



Latrine installed in Happy Hills Village, Bangladesh

Safe Water September

Safe Water September is a challenge to drink nothing but water all September. Challenge-takers raise funds for safe water, sanitation and hygiene projects in Zimbabwe, Vanuatu, and Bangladesh through GMP's Relief and Development partners.

The challenge is also an opportunity to explore a deeper and broader vision of the Kingdom of God at work across national borders. It builds knowledge, empathy, and deep solidarity with communities experiencing insecure access to safe water. Safe Water September shows the impact that people can have when we collaborate and participate in God's Kingdom vision for the world.

This year Eliza and her grandfather, David, are part of the national community of people of all ages taking the Safe Water September challenge. Eliza is 10 years old, plays netball and enjoys reading any books that have horses in them. During the 2021 COVID lockdown, Eliza decided to take the Safe Water September challenge with David. It was a challenge because Eliza loves hot chocolate and Fanta! But it is a worthy challenge to give more people better access to safe water.

"At first I was like, 'I'm not gonna survive a day!'" Eliza shared. "But then once I got into the rhythm, I'm like, I actually don't need the special drinks like hot chocolate and Fanta and stuff like that as much as I think I do."

In 2022, challenge-takers like Eliza are aiming to raise a total of \$160,000 together, through the

Safe Water September challenge. This will help transform up to 6,400 lives through improved access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

This means kids will be able to go to school, child and maternal deaths will drop, waterborne diseases and sickness will reduce, collecting water and using a toilet will become safe for women, and families will have clean water to drink, cook and wash.

This is possible with the support of people like you.

GMP Relief and Development partner, the Conference of Churches of Christ in Vanuatu (CCCV), partners with local communities to install water tanks and pipe systems, as well as conducting hygiene training.

In Bangladesh, GMP Partner Vana Bawm, Project Director for the Community Advancement Forum (CAF), reported that the remote Happy Hills Village is even happier now because they have a new tube well. Over 120 toilets have been installed in remote villages since January 2021, and many families have received hygiene training and equipment for their new toilets.

Water solutions also help businesses grow, start community gardens, and give back time to people for their families and livelihoods! Showers of Blessing in Zimbabwe reported that since a borehole was drilled in 2015 in Kufa Village, further developments have brought water closer to every household. This has improved more than the domestic lives of people in the community. The abundance of water means the



David and Eliza

community now has enough water to make bricks for a new school, household gardens, new home construction and livestock projects.

Everyone deserves the health, dignity and safety that safe water solutions can give.

Because of Safe Water September, communities will be transformed! And this is possible with the support of people like you.

Donate to Safe Water September to give access to safe water, good hygiene, and sanitation. \$25 can be enough to give one person access to life-changing safe water, or improved hygiene and sanitation. Any donation of \$2 or over is tax deductible. You can help change lives for the better.

Not only that, but you can also support young people like Eliza, as they participate in a part of God's Kingdom vision. Eliza says, "It [Safe Water September] gets easier, and it's worth it."

Donate today at www.safewaterseptember.org.au or FreeCall 1800 467 222

Three Years Since Devonport Team Visits Fiji

It had been three years since a team from Devonport Church of Christ, Tasmania, visited with Ps David and Christy Reddy at Lautoka, Fiji. Despite this, there was still a real sense of partnership when Pastor Blake and I visited Fiji in early August.

We began by catching up with Christy and David and their two children, Destiny and Joy. As you would expect we noticed some things have changed! The Reddy's have moved house to a home that is large enough to hold church services; David had an overhaul of his tattoo that he has wanted for many years, which is more reflective of this godly man's life – Faith over Fear; Christy, well she just doesn't change: such a generous and loving heart, and such a great cook! Destiny has graduated with a medical degree and is currently working as an intern in Lautoka Hospital. She is living at home, which is such a blessing for David and Christy. Joy continues in his engineering studies in Suva and is working on being an Electrical Engineer. It was great to have him on mid-semester break while we were there!

The first evening was spent investing in leaders. After discussing what it means to be a leader in the local church, Pastor Blake demonstrated servant leadership by washing Pastor David's feet. What followed was an amazing heartbeat of servanthood as each of the people present took turns washing and drying each other's feet. Putting the teaching into practice was a powerful statement and demonstrated the humility required to serve and lead others.

Over the following days, Blake powered through two outreach events and a Sunday morning sermon. The sharing in prayer, worship and food reignited the partnership in a more personal way than could have been achieved while apart during the pandemic. The Holy Spirit moved amongst the people, and the growth in maturity and faith of the church members was evident.

Once again, I was reminded of the importance of connection and how our God uses proximity of relationship to grow us, sharpen our faith and encourage each other



Dominic, David and Blake



in difficult times. As relationships deepen, the façade of fear drops and real conversations happen, and change can take place.

As I stand in the presence of Jesus, in partnership with Lautoka Church of Christ, I find myself transformed every time.

It was a blessing and honour to return to Fiji. God willing there will not be as much time in between subsequent visits.

Dominic Piscioneri,
Discipleship and Formation Leader
Devonport Church of Christ

Closure of India-Based Child Sponsorship Program

The India-based Child Sponsorship Program operated by GMP is ending.

After more than 100 years being associated with the care of children in the Baramati Boys' and the Shrigonda Girls' homes, this is a very big change. This also includes the Gnyan Sampada School program as well.

The resident girls at Shrigonda have been supported through a process of transition to other schools, homes, or a return to living with their family. The boys at Baramati are continuing to attend local Churches

of Christ schools and return home in the school holidays. The Gnyan Sampada School children have been supported in returning to their village homes and in being enrolled in local schools.

There are various reasons for this decision. The institutionalised care of large numbers of children is not ideal. It ended in Australia many years ago, and the Governments (State and National) in India are making very significant changes in the regulatory environment in which the homes operate, closing those that do not comply.

We have had discussions with our partners in India and have agreed together that this is a necessary step to take. Financial support will end as of 30 June 2023. We would like to thank the many people who have faithfully supported these children over the years. We are inviting those sponsoring children to support children in other settings in Zimbabwe (children at risk program) and South Sudan (school-based education program).

You can find out more about Child Sponsorship at www.gmp.org.au/childsponsorship