

# IN PARTNERSHIP

September 2019



## The Every Day Danger of Gathering Water



In rural Zimbabwe, getting water isn't easy. People living in one village walk seven kilometres to the Ngezi River to fetch water. The water in the river is not clean, but it is the only source available. They fill heavy 20 litre buckets to carry back home.

Marisa has grown up with this hazardous walk as a part of her everyday life. But now that she is older, her age has made the walk a struggle. When she makes the long journey, she can feel pain in her chest. She can only manage to carry five litres of water back with her. She can't manage the trip any longer.

She has no choice but to send her children down to the river. While they are gone, Marisa is anxious. She is afraid that they may not come back alive. Along the walk, there are many wild animals they could encounter, and the river is home to crocodiles and hippos. This journey to the river must be made every day.

Last year, Marisa became sick. She was rushed to the hospital and was told she had cholera, which was caused from drinking river water.

The doctors told her that she should not drink the water without boiling it first. Her worries grew – she was scared that her children would be so thirsty that they would not wait to boil the water. She was scared that they would get sick, and not be as lucky as she was to recover.

But now, Marisa's fears are being eased. Just 500 metres from her home, a borehole has been drilled. There will be safe, clean drinking water for her community. She smiles brightly as she says, "We are very happy and thankful that we have clean drinking water which will also be enjoyed by our grandchildren."

"Even if I send my grandkids with the cart as they used to, I can get more water easily," she says. "And even start a small vegetable garden. I will not starve again as we now have water on our doorstep."

The borehole is being dug because generous people like you have supported Safe Water September. Because of the money raised, Showers of Blessings have been able to provide seven boreholes for villages

like Marisa's. Statistics show that one in nine people still live without access to safe water close to home (WHO, 2017). We want those people's lives to be changed like Marisa's was.

"As we speak, I have even sent my grandchildren to go and get a bucket," she says with a smile. "So we can be first to taste the water."

### Also in the Issue

News and Events.....	2
Recovering and Rebuilding Amata on Santo.....	2-3
A Thirst For More Than Water.....	4
Safe Water September so far.....	4

For even more of the latest news, check out our website or follow us on facebook.



[www.gmp.org.au](http://www.gmp.org.au)



[facebook.com/gmpaustralia](https://facebook.com/gmpaustralia)

## News & Events

### Safe Water September 2019



Around Australia, people are now undertaking the Safe Water September challenge. One in nine people around the world don't have access to clean water close to home. You can help change this!

To get updates on how the challenge is going, or to make a donation, go to [SafeWaterSeptember.org.au](http://SafeWaterSeptember.org.au)

### Partnering Together for Stronger Communities

November 5-7, Churches  
of Christ Office QLD

How does helping the poor fit with preaching the gospel? How can I help people who are poor without hurting them? What does a well-managed project that hasn't lost its human touch look like? If these questions are on your mind, you need to be here! For more details, and to book your place, contact **Jan Bayliss** on 02 8573 6013 or at [Jbayliss@gmp.org.au](mailto:Jbayliss@gmp.org.au)



### The Justice Conference November 15-16, Melbourne

The Justice Conference is a global movement, uniting followers of Christ as they pursue justice in their contexts. We bring together the local church to be equipped and encouraged as they hear from leading theologians, practitioners and artists. Will you join us? Find out more or register online at [www.thejusticeconference.com.au/](http://www.thejusticeconference.com.au/)



Paul Aguar, pastor of the Amata Church

## Recovering and Rebuilding Amata on Santo

Over the last two years, the people of Ambae, Vanuatu, have lived in a state of upheaval. When Manaro Voui volcano erupted they were forced to evacuate. When they returned, their communities had been damaged by ash fall and acid rain, and had been abandoned for months. Soon after there was a second evacuation, causing further disruption. After months in evacuation camps on other islands, residents were advised to establish 'second homes' on these nearby islands. While the volcanic activity has calmed down, it's uncertain whether living on Ambae without further evacuations will be possible.

Paul Aguar is the pastor of the Amata Church, and a leader in his community. He, his family, and some others from his community, moved to Santo following the impact of the volcano on their village.

It took a long time to secure land on Santo for the people from Amata. Despite being safer, they were leaving behind their home. Their new land was uncleared bush. There were no gardens to grow food in or shelters to live in. They had no access to water. Everything had to be started from scratch.

Water was one of the most urgent needs. Without ways to collect

water, people like Paul relied on whatever water they could find. They collected rain in small containers, found unused bores supplied by former missionaries, or in some cases, made use of salt water from the ocean. They had no choice but to travel to collect water wherever it was available – regardless of its quality.

Through this period, GMP has been supporting these communities. Earlier this year, Elise Andrews, our Director of Communications, visited Santo and spoke to some of the locals impacted by the evacuation from Ambae.

"Back on the island, we had water from the rain," Paul said, "We built an underground well to store the water. Before the volcano erupted, we had good water in the wells. Clean. But when the volcano erupted, ash fell and our water became dirty. We moved over to Santo – but we had no water on the land that we were allocated."

Access to safe water is vital for any community. For Paul, it means his granddaughter is protected from waterborne diseases like diarrhoea. It means his community can wash their food, making it safe to eat. It means they can wash, bathe, cook and grow their food safely. >>





Amata Community, with their tank from Conference of Churches of Christ in Vanuatu

>> Paul's community was lucky that an old borehole was a few hundred meters from their new community. But even with it close by, the bore's rusty hand pump is difficult to operate, and water is heavy to carry.

"Every day, we had to go and get the water – 100-200 metres to get water from the underground bore," Paul said. "It is hard work for us to get the water. Every day we have to go and get it to use for cooking and washing. Hand pumped, every day."

Because of supporters like you, GMP was able to provide the community on Santo with a water tank on their land, enabling them to gather their own water. You also helped provide a roof extension, giving proper gutters and piping, so the community could effectively harvest rainwater in the tank.

"The coordinator of the relief came and asked us, 'What do you need?' and we said, 'We need water'. We thank you so much for the tank; it has helped us so much. It's easier to get water."

Even with this water tank, there are still challenges for Paul and his community. They still don't have enough water for the community

to be self-sustaining. "With the population here, it's not enough for everything. The tank is only enough for cooking and drinking. We have to get more water somewhere to wash our clothes, bathe, and water our crops."

This year, Safe Water September is supporting communities from Ambae in Vanuatu, like Paul's, that need access to safe water! After the effects of the volcanic disaster has made these communities vulnerable, we hope to partner with them to ensure they have safe water – whether on Ambae or in their second homes.

One in nine people worldwide don't have clean water close to home, and we want to change this. All around Australia, people are drinking nothing but water for the month of September. You can help by making a donation, and encouraging others in your community to get involved too!

With your support this year, Paul and his community can work towards their goals of a more safe and stable life.

"We want to see more water storage, and better shelter for our community.

One day we are going back to Ambae, but here in Santo, we call it our second home."

Your support not only helps provide this vital safe water, it is also incredibly meaningful to these people who have faced two difficult years.

***"Thankyou very much for helping us with the water tank and guttering,"  
"You've done so much for us. You help us much. And we appreciate your help." – Paul Aguar***

You can get more updates on Safe Water September and make a donation at:

 [SafeWaterSeptember.org.au](https://www.SafeWaterSeptember.org.au)





Life-giving water in Zimbabwe

## A Thirst For More Than Water

Jesus asks the woman, “Give me a drink” and opens up a conversation about water – Jesus is the living water. Later in John’s Gospel Jesus again promises that those who thirst will receive living water (7:38). In Matthew’s Gospel, the separation of the “sheep from the goats” is based on physical need (“you did (or did not) give me a drink”).

Thirst describes an inner longing that is fully satisfied in the love, forgiveness and grace found in Jesus. Thirst needs water – only that satisfies us.

Physically when we thirst, we look for water and when we drink, we are satisfied and renewed. When we thirst, the need to find water is urgent and there is nothing better than finding some water to drink. Our race to find water is to a tap, a shop or a bottle.

It is hard for us to comprehend that for many the water may be hundreds of metres away, and the source polluted by animals that also drink from it. Hardly “living water” in a healthy sense.

As the people of Jesus, we are to be generous with water – water that is safe to drink and satisfies the physical thirst, knowing that our spiritual thirst is met in him.

Safe Water September is about providing physical water, and doing so with the prayer that providing safe water will have a spiritual impact. Join us this September in providing safe water.

*John Gilmore,*  
Executive Officer

## Safe Water September so far

WHO HAS SIGNED UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

I'm taking  
the Challenge

**500**  
INDIVIDUALS

**64**  
TEAMS

**\$ 37,641**  
RAISED TOWARDS  
OUR TARGET OF   
**\$ 150,000**

We need your help to meet this goal and provide Safe Water to those who need it most! It costs just \$20 to provide one person with access to clean water close to home. To make a donation, go to [SafeWaterSeptember.org.au](http://SafeWaterSeptember.org.au)