

# IN PARTNERSHIP

August 2024



## Resilience and Transformation in Zimbabwe

*Image: The church in Murarezi*



**John Lamerton,**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

In June, I had the privilege of visiting our partners in Zimbabwe, and it was a rewarding time with the Associated Churches of Christ Zimbabwe (ACCZ), Showers of Blessing (OSBT) and Khayelihle Children's Village (KCV).

Zimbabwe is facing economic and environmental challenges, and our partners are carefully navigating them. The country's inflation rate rose to 57% in April, and 90% of the population is out of work. Combined with the recent drought, which has been a reality for many since October last year, this worsens the situation. This was the backdrop for my visit, and many locals expressed their frustration and desperation.

On the first Sunday we were there, we travelled a few hours south of Zvishavane to a small village called Murarezi. Only a few hundred people live there, and due to their sense of hopelessness, many of the men out of work have sadly turned to alcohol. But ACCZ hadn't given up on this community. Since October, we have been visiting to share the gospel and hold Sunday services in the community hall.

When we visited, about 100 people filed into the service, joyfully singing, dancing and clapping. This was a surprising response from a community confronted with so much hardship. We participated in worship, Bible readings and communion and the youth acted out Bible stories (mainly in Shona and with little English). After preaching, we had a time of prayer and asked God to heal people who had suffered from bad dreams, injuries and strokes. Excitingly, two men chose to follow Jesus that day!

As we shared lunch with the village Chief, I was informed that the two men who responded to Jesus were considered the "town drunks" and that 74 other people had been baptised there over the past nine months. He cried at the transformation he was seeing in the lives of his community.

Of course, our partner's work is both spiritual and physical. ACCZ works hand-in-hand with Showers of Blessing who dig boreholes and provide clean water to remote villages and communities. To date, they have dug 280 "bush pumps" (hand-held cranks that draw the water).

A highlight for me was seeing the transformation in the community of Gewmvurachena, where OSBT has introduced solar-powered boreholes. These are gravity-fed into large water tanks (10,000 litres), allowing even more people to access water and to utilise this for growing vegetables in a cooperative garden and watering livestock. There are also future plans for a community laundry. The joy among the people here was clearly evident and overwhelming as they shared stories of how this project had dramatically changed their lives.

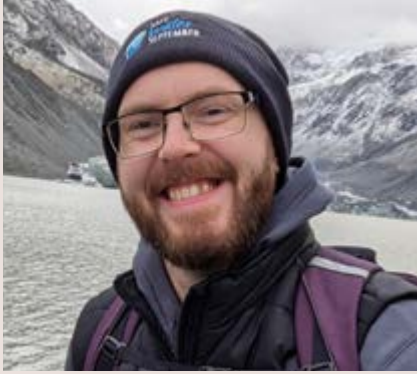
All this is thanks to the leadership of our partners and the unwavering generosity of our supporters. Your contributions have made these life-changing projects possible, and we are deeply grateful for your continued support.

May God continue to bless the work of our hands, whether it be preaching, digging or giving! We all play our part in God's big transformation project.

John Lamerton,  
Chief Executive Officer

## News & Events

### Meet Mitch Salmon



Mitch is the National NextGen Lead for Global Mission Partners. You may already know him from his role with embody. Mitch is passionate about supporting young people—kids, youth, young adults—to follow Jesus’s transformational call to be a sign, witness, and foretaste of the Kingdom. He loves working with local churches to disciple youth in mission. He’d love to visit your church or youth group and share about the impact young people can have on the world. Now is a great opportunity to invite Mitch to your church to learn more about the Safe Water September challenge! Get in touch with him at [mitch@gmp.org.au](mailto:mitch@gmp.org.au).

### Safe Water September

One month to go! Take the Safe Water September challenge and give better futures to people living in poverty through life-saving water programs! Give up your favourite drinks for one month and raise money to fund desperately needed water, sanitation and hygiene programs. Find out more and sign up at [www.safewaterseptember.org.au](http://www.safewaterseptember.org.au)

### End of Financial Year Appeal Update

Together, we raised over \$187,000 to invest in projects that lift people out of poverty. Thank you for your generosity!

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



# Empowering Youth with Computer Training



Vaishali is a member of a marginalised tribal community. As she was growing up, her parents encouraged her to attend school while her brothers worked as labourers. Vaishali is the only one among her siblings who has completed high school.

When Vaishali started looking for a job, she soon realised she needed computer skills.

In her home village, she had no opportunity to learn how to use computers. She did not have the resources to enrol in a class because her parents’ employment was unstable. “Our financial situation was very low,” she shared.

Determined, Vaishali wanted to use her education to make a better future for herself.

Vaishali found a free vocational training course run by our Relief and Development partner, Hosanna Ministries. “I wanted to do the [computer] course because it would enable me to get a job,” she said.

Vaishali attended the Saksham Vocational Training Centre in Lasina, where she learned basic computer skills like typing and using MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. This is a government-accredited course; students take an official exam and receive a certificate when they pass.

With the computer skills she acquired, Vaishali could find a job. Her income improved, and it gave her the confidence to teach others.

Vaishali now works for the government in a small village. She teaches children how to use computers. “Ever since I had my computer training, I have enjoyed working with computers and children,” she explained. She has become a catalyst for change in her community, helping the children to access technology early in life.

August 12 is International Youth Day. This year’s theme centres on Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development. Our partner, Hosanna Ministries, helps young people access computer training and increase their digital literacy.

Many of these people live in poverty, so without this support, they couldn’t access digital training. Computer skills training provides opportunities for them to earn a sustainable income and gives them hope for the future.

This International Youth Day, we celebrate the impactful work of Hosanna Ministries, which transforms the lives of people like Vaishali. Now, Vaishali is continuing to help others through her training.

Thank you for your support of Hosanna Ministries and for making this possible.



*Hosanna Ministries’ Vocational Training Project is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).*



## Seeing a Borehole Firsthand is “Awesome”

Seven Safe Water September challenge takers embarked on a life-changing journey to Zimbabwe in May. Driven by the profound impact of Safe Water September in rural villages, the team was eager to witness it firsthand.

Global Mission Partners’ National NextGen Lead, Mitch Salmon, organised the Discovery Visit. Mitch travelled with Caleb, Rachel, Suzie, Sienna, Melinda, and Violet to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, to see firsthand the impact that supporters like you have on people’s lives through safe water!

The team met with our relief and development partner, Showers of Blessing members Boniface and Ntando and visited the rural communities around Zvishavane, where Showers of Blessing works.

Zimbabwe has been in the grip of a terrible drought for many years, and it seems to be getting worse due to climate change. Mitch reported, “We passed field after field of failed crops. A lack of water meant the maize never flourished, and the families relying on those fields will have to find other ways to make ends meet this season.”

However, in the areas where bores have been installed, there is a tangible sense of joy, excitement, and hope that is truly uplifting!

The group visited Gwemvurchena village, where the people used to walk to collect water from a river contaminated with cyanide and asbestos from mining activities. Since installing solar-powered bore and water tanks, the community has planted an incredible community garden. In one of the driest parts of a country wracked by drought, there’s an oasis of green growing because of the support of people like you!

Rachel, one of the Discovery Visit team members from Victoria, shared that she has 18 taps in her house. “When I turn on a tap, I have as much clean water as I want,” she said. When Rachel met the people in the villages and saw their daily struggle for water, she began to understand their challenges more deeply.

“I saw how women had to spend hours each day carrying water. I heard how there is conflict between neighbours. I heard about contamination by mining, cattle, and human waste. And I also saw how determined people are to provide for their families and to find a way out of poverty.” Rachel shared.

Mitch felt the difference it makes, “We met so many people excited about the ways their lives and communities have been transformed since the installation of a borehole nearby.”

The report from Zimbabwe is positive, but there’s still much more to do!

The Safe Water September challenge wants to bring this life-changing impact of water projects to more communities in Zimbabwe, Vanuatu, and Bangladesh.

Taking the Safe Water September challenge is one way Rachel knows she can help. “The global lack of access to safe water is a HUGE problem, but it is no longer overwhelming. I know exactly where to start and how I can make a difference,” she explains. Rachel has seen the difference that one borehole makes to hundreds of people’s lives.

But Safe Water September needs your help, too! You can make a difference by taking the Safe Water September challenge this year or by donating to those like Rachel who are taking it up.

Mitch says, “We will share reflections from the Safe Water September squaddies who travelled to Zimbabwe throughout August and September.”

[Read more reflections or sign up now at SafeWaterSeptember.org.au](https://www.SafeWaterSeptember.org.au)



**Nick Wight,**  
National IMA  
Manager  
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## Meeting in the River

I've just got back from another incredible IMA Cultural Immersion trip with the dhiyaan community out at their property in Dalby, QLD.

dhiyaan is an Aboriginal-led and owned community group committed to transformation, relationships, and hope. They provide retreats at their property, Bethel, to journey with young people on their path to restoration, healing, and wholeness.

For this trip, Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA) was able to connect a secondary school group from the western suburbs of Melbourne, plus a few extras, to the trip. dhiyaan also

brought together an Elders group from Brisbane's north and a group of Indigenous secondary students they mentor.

Over twenty of us, including the group of eight students and two teachers from Melbourne, slept in swags over the three days of cultural programs, horseriding, art workshops, and more. It was a brilliant and tangible expression of reconciliation, with non-Indigenous and Indigenous students joining together to share, learn, and connect.

A highlight was meeting at the river, which framed our cultural discussions

over the few days. A river and two riverbanks represent how two cultures can affirm each other's diversity yet still create new and creative places to meet (in the middle!).

Other highlights included seeing the Indigenous young people and students from Melbourne connecting during the 'downtime' between program activities – it was generous, vulnerable, and healing.

IMA is planning further immersion trips for late 2024. If you're interested in joining us on one of the trips, get in touch with me.

## An Active Chaplain

Londua Technical College in Vanuatu has been doing well since returning to Ambae Island in 2021. It has established an excellent reputation for high standards of vocational training. The school's vision goes beyond being the best technical education and business management school to offering a holistic Christian education to the students.

Owen Bani, Secretary-General of the CCCV, exclaimed, "The Chaplain, Ps Freddie Bani from Nanako Village, has been performing exceptionally well, which is why the school board has decided to retain his services for another year."

Ps. Freddie's spiritual leadership has been a true blessing for the school.

His efforts focus on planning and executing various spiritual activities throughout the year, including preaching and coordinating Sunday communion worship services. He also leads the Friday Christian Fellowship, where he trains students in Bible study.

His influence has been instrumental in the spiritual growth of the school community, including the baptisms of nine students this year.

He engages in activities outside the school, such as joining the West Ambae Area Council's monthly combined programs. He also attends youth talent nights that local churches occasionally organise. The youth often sing in the choir and perform skits. The leaders of West Ambae



*Ps Freddie Bani, Chaplain,  
Londua Technical College*

have appreciated the involvement of Londua Technical College students in these activities.

Because of your partnership, Pastor Freddie can continue to share the love of Jesus with the youth. Please pray for him as he prepares the weekly studies for the students and leads them in various activities.