

IN PARTNERSHIP

September 2020



Keeping Clean with Tippy Taps

Since its emergence late last year, the coronavirus has spread to every continent with cases rising daily in Africa, the Americas and Europe. Zimbabwe has not been spared, with cases increasing.

As of August 28, the country's cases of those who have tested positive for COVID-19 was 6,292 with 189 deaths.

With more and more people catching the coronavirus daily, it has become important for everyone to protect themselves, and others around them. We are doing this by taking appropriate precautions stipulated by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Concerned about the rising cases, Zimbabwe's President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, led the nation in prayer and fasting as the country sought divine answers to a disease that has turned lives upside down and wrecked economies worldwide.

The villagers in Neta, Mberengwa – a district in the Midlands province – are well aware of this pandemic and its effects. They have taken it upon themselves to protect themselves and their loved ones against this deadly virus.

One of the WHO recommended precautions for reducing the spread of COVID-19 is regularly washing and

cleaning hands with soap and water – and this is exactly what the villagers are doing. The villagers have erected 'Tippy Taps' outside their homes for use by them as well as visitors.

Tippy Taps are made using sticks, bottles and five litre containers. A piece of string lets them operate the tap with a foot, tipping it to start the flow of water. As only the soap is touched with the hands, the device is very hygienic.

But for the taps to function fully, they need a constant supply of water. Fortunately for the Neta community, they have a new borehole which surely could not have been installed at a better time. So, their taps will never run dry, thanks to Showers of Blessings.

One villager, Mrs. Mzeziwa, said she felt safer because of the new borehole, which is enabling people to successfully run their Tippy Taps. Before the borehole was installed, they were not able to practice good hygiene as it was difficult to access the water.

"The borehole has been quite a relief as it's improved our sanitation. With the Tippy Taps, it's now easy to encourage our children to regularly sanitise because you don't have to keep telling them to wash their hands. They now do it on their own as they enjoy using the Tippy Taps," said Mrs. Mzeziwa.

She said through the Tippy Taps, villagers are now able to safely wash their hands with running water that they will have collected from the borehole. Before the borehole was installed, women and children had to walk long distances but now, that is a thing of the past.

"Children no longer have the burden of walking long distances, increasing their chances of catching the virus, as the borehole is close by."

But there are many more communities in Zimbabwe that don't have boreholes that supply water. Women and children still put themselves at risk to gather water that might not be clean. With so little water, and no guarantee of sanitary water, proper handwashing becomes impossible.

By taking part in Safe Water September, you can help make a difference in the lives of people like Mrs. Mzeziwa. There are many people just like her, who are still in desperate need of safe water.

You can find out more, sign up to take the challenge or donate to the cause at www.safewaterseptember.org.au

Boniface Mpofo
Showers of Blessings
Projects Director

News & Events

Lebanon Emergency Appeal



Churches of Christ Overseas Aid is partnering with the Action by Churches Together Alliance (ACT) in raising support to provide immediate assistance to those most affected by the Beirut Port warehouse disaster in Lebanon. You can give to this appeal on the GMP website.

gmp.org.au/lebanonemergency

Safe Water September (SWS)

SWS has begun! You can still get involved, or donate to someone participating in the challenge. Visit safewaterseptember.org.au for more information and follow along with stories and videos on Facebook, Instagram and the embody blog.

safewaterseptember.org.au

Responding with Resilience to COVID-19

GMP partners are responding with resilience in this difficult situation, by continuing their projects as far as possible and by making adjustments. Some partners have started emergency projects to support vulnerable groups who are under additional threat from COVID. The situation is constantly changing as rates of infection and restrictions by governments change. At GMP, we are giving our partners all the flexibility we can, so that they can respond quickly and effectively. You can support GMP partners and get more information on the GMP website.

www.gmp.org.au/Covid19

The GMP VIC office has moved!

Our new postal address for GMP Vic is 184 Surrey Road Blackburn 3130. Due to the current restrictions in Victoria, the team are currently working from home so direct urgent mail to PO Box 341 TORRENSVILLE PLAZA, SA 5031.



Active Empathy and Hope

There are various sayings directing us to have empathy for another. There is the American saying (said in several ways), "You can't understand someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes." Another is, "I think we all have empathy. We may not have enough courage to display it" which was said by American poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou.

What about this quote? "We don't have a priest who is out of touch with reality. He's been through weakness and testing, experienced it all – all but the sin." Hebrews 4:15 (The Message). This is the ultimate statement of empathy – Jesus, our high priest who has experienced our reality and our journey in life, yet without sin.

These statements have a similar point to make. Empathy is demonstrated in what we do and how we engage with the other. To be empathetic is to take a deliberate risk, to walk in their shoes, to stand out and to experience the life of the other. Empathy is linked to an action and an outcome.

Making a decision in September to limit our drinks to water is a commitment to active empathy and hope. The empathy gives us a means of focusing for a set period of time on the experience of others by drinking water – and nothing else! In fact, given our situation in Australia, this is also a statement of our desired outcome for others – the freedom to drink safe water.

Many people in the world do not have safe water. Their water is polluted, scarce or hard to access. What we take for granted, they desire and celebrate when they have it. Safe water is one of the ways whole communities are transformed. People's health improves, as does their quality of life, along with their food and in many situations their income. All due to water!

Safe Water September could be thought of as empathy month. Our committed and demonstrated empathy is focused on those who have little or no access to available safe water. We sacrifice what is our choice (all other drinks) and for a month focus on the desired experience of others – access to safe water. When we do this, and we generate income, we open possibilities for communities in Zimbabwe and Vanuatu to have water that gives and sustains life. How about joining us and celebrating our abundance by limiting ourselves to safe water in September?

John Gilmore,
Executive Officer



Left: Building Boreholes in Zimbabwe. Right: At a Ground Well in Vanuatu

Safe Water for Zimbabwe and Vanuatu

When you take part in Safe Water September, you are helping give safe water to people who desperately need it in Vanuatu and Zimbabwe. All money raised from Safe Water September will be distributed through COCOA to our partner organisations. In Zimbabwe, we partner with Showers of Blessings and in Vanuatu, we partner with the Churches of Christ Conference Vanuatu.

Since the last Safe Water September challenge, Tropical Cyclone Harold struck Vanuatu. With wind speeds peaking at over 300km per hour, it was one of the strongest storms ever recorded.

Many communities were devastated, including ones that had only started to rebuild after relocating to Santo from Ambae. The flow of emergency aid in the wake of Cyclone Harold has been curtailed due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, so there is still a great need for projects that will transform communities. Therefore, this year Safe Water September will be supporting communities in Vanuatu to rebuild critical infrastructure. This includes water tanks necessary for people to be able to store clean water and guttering on buildings and changes to roofing material, essential for collecting rainwater.

In Zimbabwe, many people still don't have access to safe, clean water close to home. But even those who do, share their boreholes with many other people. In the face of COVID-19 this sharing is now a greater risk. Many people, especially those living in rural areas, are also facing food shortages. The economy is collapsing and the cost of living is rising rapidly. Many people are still walking long distances to access water – and it might not even be safe to drink. In areas suffering water shortages, there have been instances of contaminated water causing sickness, and even death. Without a source of clean water,

proper hand-washing and sanitation is not possible, making it hard to avoid transmission of COVID-19. Safe Water September is continuing to support Showers of Blessings in their work installing boreholes in communities without access to safe water.

When you participate in the Safe Water September challenge, donate, or even spread the word, you are helping to make a difference in the lives and communities of people living in Zimbabwe and Vanuatu.

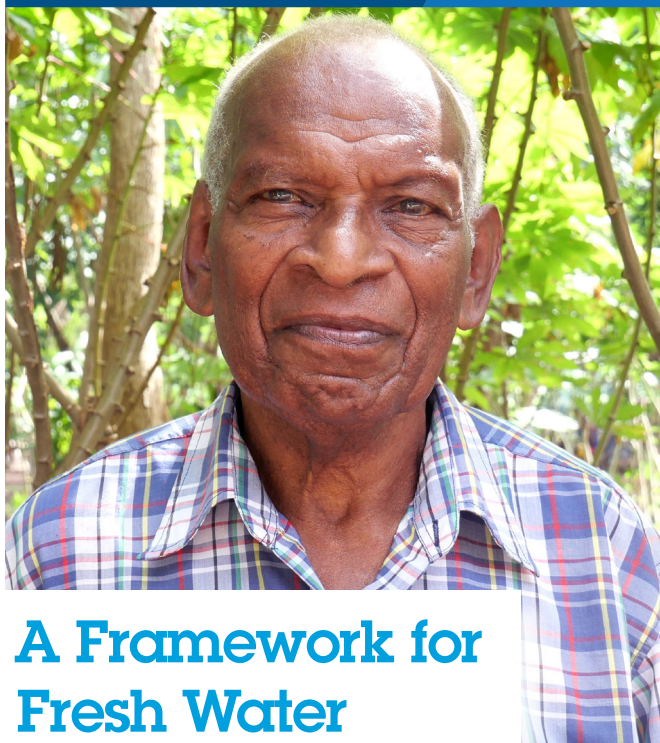
COCOA is accredited by the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), the peak Council for Australian not-for-profit aid and development organisations working to eradicate extreme poverty. Both Showers of Blessings and the Vanuatu Partnership Community Project are supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



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The impact of Cyclone Harold:
Ranwadi Chapel, Vanuatu (2020)



A Framework for Fresh Water

Amon, a man from Navuti Community who evacuated Ambae after the volcanic eruption, sits in the community building constructed in their new home on Esperitu Santo. The framework of the building is also the necessary framework for clean, safe water for their community. The building isn't complete yet, but they have plans for it.

Amon says, "When we came here, the first couple of weeks, of course there was no water on the site. So, we had to travel about 30 minutes' walk. We would have buckets, biscuit containers, water containers. So, we used those, we were able to carry them with water. If people had the money, they could hire transport, to bring the water up for them."

This continued until the Vanuatu Government installed two water tanks in neighbouring villages, "We still have to travel 5-10 minutes (to the neighbouring village) to fetch the water every day."

Thanks to the supporters like you, Amon's community received their own water tank. "We've had this 1,100-litre water tank sitting here, which has been donated," Amon says.

"So we really appreciate that, it makes life easier. Of course, we use the water tank that has been donated for drinking, we catch the rainwater from the roof. The water pumped up from the ground to the two tanks, we use that for washing and cooking."

Amon looks over his shoulder, and gestures behind him, "What you see here, this is half of the building. We want to convert this building into a multi-purpose building. We would fund the completion of this building."

"The other half, I would like to do a proposal. This is my own personal thinking, maybe we would include a water tank, so we can collect rainwater from the roof, down the spout into the water tank. The two builders, I've asked them to do a quotation for the half-building, so I can have the proposal written."

Amon's proposal includes a larger, in-ground water tank – big enough that it would fill the needs of the community. They would no longer have to travel to the nearby village for any of their water needs.

"If we have the building completed, we have the other half completed, we have the gutters on both sides, there are no problems. During the rainy season, we'd have no problem filling the water tank we are going to build."

Before they had this half-building, Navuti could only collect water from five sheets of iron roofing. This was less efficient, and took a lot longer to fill their water needs. With the new framework they are building, their need for safe water will be met.

"Having water on site will make it easy for vulnerable groups," says Amon. "You can get it in small quantities, easy access."

When you take part in Safe Water September this year, you are helping people like Amon build up the framework of their communities. You are giving them the resources they need to have safe water close to home.

"I would like to say thank you, to GMP, COCOA, for all the assistance that has been given."

Meet Penny and Noah

Mum, Penny, and son Noah are repeat Safe Water September challenge takers, and part of the Ringwood Church of Christ squad in Victoria. They are raising money as a family team for safe water projects, and sharing the Safe Water September story with family, friends and schoolmates. Noah delivered a presentation about the challenge at his school assembly. Giving up drinkable treats is never fun, but Penny and Noah tell us, "We want to challenge ourselves, and be reminded of some things we can take for granted."

