



Give Water, Life and Hope

Jane Adisu, regional representative of CAFOD's Southern Africa programme, tells how we can make a real difference

Try to imagine what it is like to share your water supply with animals. Or how it feels to walk for miles to fetch water, only to find the well has dried up. What would you do if your child was weak with thirst, but the nearest water supply was contaminated?

For thousands of people in Zimbabwe who do not have access to safe water, this is what life is like – a daily struggle for survival. Zimbabwe's poorest communities rely on boreholes and wells for their water. But an ongoing drought combined with poor water systems means that reserves are at an all time low.

This lack of water, coming on top of the country's severe economic crisis, is having crippling consequences. The majority of people in Zimbabwe are subsistence farmers. Without water to nourish their crops, they face a future of failed harvests, hunger and ill health.

Some communities have even been forced to drink unsafe water from streams and rivers, leading to the spread of diseases such as cholera and putting the country's limited health services under increased strain.

Queuing for water

Long queues at the dwindling number of water points that do still function have become a common sight, with people – usually women and children – queuing from dusk until dawn. Under these conditions a trip to fetch water can take a whole day, leaving little time for school, work or the family.

In a rural village in Zimbabwe's Chivi district, 40 year-old Netsai Moyo sets out

on the start of a four-hour round trip to get just a day's supply of water. It is an added burden on her already difficult life. Since Netsai's sister died, she has looked after her four nieces and nephews singlehandedly. But with Netsai away from home for hours every day, they are often forced to fend for themselves.

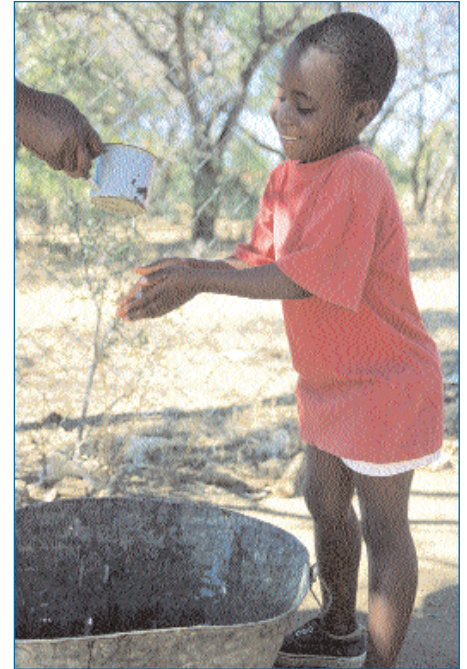
Without water there is little hope of a better life for people such as Netsai. That is why we are so thrilled that the Catenian Association is launching this international centenary appeal to bring water – and hope – to some of the poorest people in the world.

The 'Give water, life and hope' appeal, which launches in May, will help provide life-giving and life-changing clean water in southern Africa – especially in Zimbabwe where the need is immense.

What better way to mark your centenary year than to come together to raise money for such an important cause?

The Catenian Association will be supported by CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, who will co-ordinate the aid generated by the appeal. As a leading member of Caritas International, the global network of Catholic relief and development agencies, CAFOD works with local partners across the world, supporting long-term development and emergency relief work.

Working at the heart of Caritas International gives CAFOD access to countries that would otherwise be difficult to reach. We have more than 30 years' experience of working in partnership with trusted organisations on the ground in Zimbabwe – many of which are church-based.



The appeal will bring water to those in urgent need (Photo: Annie Bungeroth)

Making pipe dreams a reality

CAFOD is already working on water and sanitation projects in Zimbabwe, bringing safe water to those in desperate need. But with the help of the Catenians worldwide, this vital work can be extended.

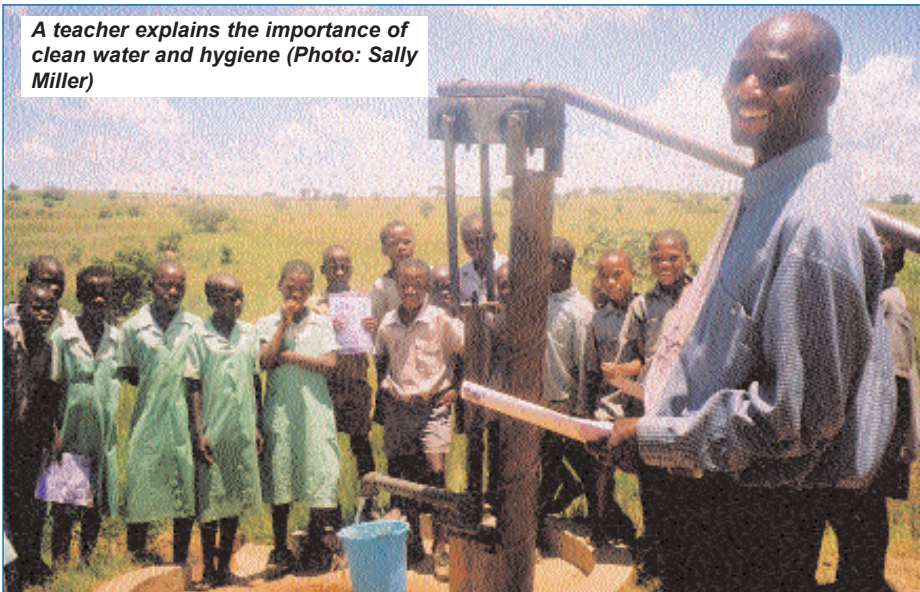
Your funds will help to build and repair boreholes, dams, wells, irrigation schemes and sanitation facilities, ensuring safe water reaches communities that are experiencing some of the worst shortages.

Commenting on the Catenian Centenary Appeal, CAFOD's director, Chris Bain, says: "With sanitation and clean water, people are better able to fend off disease. Without disease, children can attend school, and families find work and support themselves. This benefits the economy and encourages development."

Elias Phiri, CAFOD's water expert in Zimbabwe, works with communities who have limited access to clean water. "They often use the same water source for drinking, watering livestock, and washing clothes and dishes," he says. "In some cases one borehole is shared between 200 households. This makes life unbearably hard."

Elias has witnessed the benefits that a safe, reliable water supply can bring. When CAFOD started working in Zimbabwe's Binga district, less than five per cent of households had a toilet and there were outbreaks of cholera every year. Since then, CAFOD has provided over a third of houses with access to latrines.

A teacher explains the importance of clean water and hygiene (Photo: Sally Miller)





“This year, there were no cases of cholera,” says Elias. “Imagine how many lives will be saved over time as a result of this sanitation work?”

Through your ‘Give water, life and hope’ appeal, we will have the opportunity to transform the lives of people living in poverty in Zimbabwe and across southern Africa. Thank you, in advance, for your generosity.

Life source

Mudiwa Makoni, 32, lives in Zimbabwe’s Chivi district. Suffering from ill health, the two-hour walk she used to make to the nearest borehole was an exhausting ordeal.

But that was before CAFOD funded a well in Mudiwa’s village, just a stone’s throw from her home. With no need to walk miles for water, Mudiwa’s strength is returning. She has joined a farming association and grows vegetables and herbs.

Thanks to CAFOD’s water programme, Mudiwa’s health has improved. She says: “I know I am sick but I think I will live longer now I have access to clean water.”

Fresh hope

Saimona Muchimba, 55, and his family live in a mountainous village in Zimbabwe’s Binga district.

Until last year, they faced a three-hour walk to fetch water from an open stream which is also used to water livestock. The family couldn’t afford sanitation facilities, so they used bush land as a toilet.

This year, thanks to funding from CAFOD, the family has a toilet in their home and a nearby pump provides them with safe water.

“I’m very grateful for this help,” says Saimona. “I’ve even managed to extend my orchard as water is no longer a problem.”



Collecting water from a borehole which is also used by livestock (Photo: Michael Begg)

What your money can buy

- £65 can provide enough cement (five bags) to build one latrine
- £250 can buy an elephant pump - a pedal-powered pump maintainable by local people
- £400 is sufficient to deepen an already existing family well and install an elephant pump
- £5,000 sets up a fully functioning borehole

SIX WAYS YOU (AND YOUR FAMILY) CAN SWELL THE FUND

1. As an incoming President (or Chairman) adopt the Catenian Centenary Appeal as your President’s Charity. (See Grand President’s letter to you in November.)
2. If you have already committed yourself to another charity, consider splitting the proceeds, or at least pledge your Circle to organise one additional major fund raising event to raise funds for the Centenary Appeal.
3. As a Catenian couple organise a fund-raising event in your own home: coffee-morning, ‘at home’, barbecue, bring-and-buy etc?
4. As a group of Catenians attending the same church, organise a fund raising event in your parish: quiz night, bingo, charity supper etc. (Liaise with the CAFOD representative if there is one.)
5. Encourage your children or grandchildren to support the fund with some fund raising initiative of their own: car wash, sponsored silence etc.
6. Think of your own bright idea!




Grand President Phil Gidman, left, with Chris Bain, Director of CAFOD, at the launch of the Centenary Appeal

By involving the wider community we will:

- demonstrate our concern for others
- promote the Catenians
- develop opportunities for recruitment
- and - above all - increase the amount we can raise to provide dependable clean water supplies to those in desperate need.

Best advice is being obtained to ensure that the maximum benefit can be obtained from Gift Aid or similar tax schemes if available in other countries. These will be publicised in good time. Full details of how to pass on funds as they are raised will be provided before the launch of the Centenary Appeal at the Manchester Conference. There will be an audit trail to record each Circle’s total. Meantime address any queries to the Senior Administrator Jai Milward at Head Office in Coventry.

**GIVE WATER
LIFE & HOPE**

100 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP
1908  2008
THROUGH SHARED FAITH

The Catenians
**CENTENARY
APPEAL**
Working with CAFOD and Caritas