

WHEN WATER ISN'T JUST WATER



Esther from Emoneni village in Malawi stands proudly at the village's new water pump.

Water is essential to life and yet the World Health Organisation estimates that, globally, at least 2 billion people are still drinking from a water source contaminated with faeces.

In the Manyamula region of Malawi, we have been working with communities for years to support families to improve their farming techniques. Now we are building on this work using the health and sanitation knowledge of Health Poverty Action. Together we are working with rural communities to build toilets, educate on the spread of disease and drill wells to provide entire communities with clean, safe water.

We're doing this together because water isn't just water; it impacts people's lives in many different ways. Water becomes a hygiene issue when drinking unclean water leads to illnesses such as dysentery, typhoid and diarrhoea – the cause of 1 in 5 deaths of children under five in Malawi. It becomes an education and gender issue when girls are too embarrassed to go to school during their periods because they don't have appropriate toilets and hygiene facilities. And it becomes a nutrition issue when there isn't enough water for crops and livestock – almost 80% of people in Malawi rely on farming to feed their families.

Together Find Your Feet and Health Poverty Action will continue to tackle all of the factors that impact on health and wellbeing, including sanitation, nutrition, education and water.

We enable poor rural families in Asia and Africa to grow enough food so they don't have to go hungry, to strengthen their voice so they can speak out against injustice and to earn enough money so they can find their feet.

SPOTLIGHT ON... Esther Mumba

Just a few months ago, the remote village of Emoneni, in Manyamula, only had one water source – a stagnant, natural well filled with a few centimetres of milky water. The water was unsafe to drink, but it was often the only choice that local people like Esther Mumba had.

Esther lives in Emoneni with her husband and children. She was thrilled when the village was identified as part of the Manyamula water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) project.

“Since I married into the village in 1972, the Village Headman has been trying to get help for water, but no one came. In the rainy season, the village can collect rainwater in buckets, but the rest of the year they use the water from the natural well, where the water is white and stagnant. As water is a problem in the area, it was decided that the water from the natural well would only be used for the households. The women had to walk further to the river (10km away) to collect water for their livestock, and there was never any for irrigating crops.”

In November 2017, Find Your Feet drilled a new well in the village, with an easy-to-maintain pump to bring fresh water up from the ground. Now the village has a clean source of water just a few metres away which is benefiting the 500 residents of Emoneni.

“Before we had diarrhoea and dysentery. From the new well, the water seems safe, which will reduce diseases. Now we have the new well, we can use this for the household and use the old one for livestock and irrigation.”



“I am extremely happy as we have been provided with a deep well. On behalf of the entire community, we feel the same way. The problem of water has now been solved.”

Esther Mumba

Below: Esther crouches at the edge of the murky pool that used to be the village’s only water source.



It costs around £750 to drill a well like the one in Emoneni, to provide communities with a clean and safe source of water.

LIFE IN... Mpangavisoti

In the nearby vilage of Mpangavisoti, the impact of clean water and sanitation is just as clear. Until recently the village had no toilets, and local people would use the nearby forest. As a result of inadequate education on the spread of disease, and a lack of hand washing facilities, people often found themselves unwell from preventable diseases, and were unable to tend to their crops and livestock.

In Mpangavisoti, we supported the community to repair a water pump which had fallen into disrepair. This pump now provides clean water for the whole village, immediately reducing cases of waterborne illnesses such as diarrhoea and dysentery.

We're also working with local people to construct their own toilets which turn waste into compost. All the demonstration toilets also have hand-washing facilities outside to prevent the spread of harmful bacteria.

Despite these improvements, fresh water and toilets alone are not enough to ensure permanent, long-term change. Education on how disease is spread is also being rolled out across the community to emphasise the importance of good hygiene practices.

Ensuring the durability of the pumps is equally important to the self-sufficiency of these projects. Rhoda Nyirenda, a local mother, was selected by her community to be the chairperson of the Water Point Committee who are responsible for the repaired pump in Mpangavisoti.

Each household in the village pays 200 kwacha per month (about 20 pence) to contribute to the maintenance of the pump, meaning that everyone feels a sense of ownership over their water source.



Rhoda has also received training so that she can keep the pump in good condition, fix it when it breaks, and replace any missing parts as necessary using the maintenance fund. This means the community never has to rely on outside help to keep their clean water flowing.

"I'm very happy to have been chosen as the chairperson. Now I have more skills and knowledge and I am more respected in the village."

Rhoda Nyirenda



It costs around £160 to construct a demonstration toilet with hand washing facilities.



GET INVOLVED...

We have lots of exciting events coming up - find out how you can support Find Your Feet and Health Poverty Action in 2018!



Curry for Change is back for 2018!

Do you fancy spicing up your supper? By bringing people together for the love of curry, you can help families grow more food so they don't go hungry, earn an income so they can provide for their families, and access vital information on nutrition and health.

Ways to get involved:

- Host a curry night – Create a feast for your friends or, even better, have a bring and share! Everyone can just donate the cost of a takeaway.
- Supper clubs – Our foody supporters are spicing things up with special events. Find them using #curryforchange or host your own.
- Visit a restaurant – You can contribute simply by treating yourself at one of our partner restaurants. Find participating restaurants at curryforchange.org.uk/

restaurants

Let us know your plans by contacting Lindsay on fyf@fyf.org.uk and make sure you shout about your night using #curryforchange!

Did you get your ticket to ride?

Sporting season is in full swing with runners, ramblers, and cyclists hitting the pavements and trails. You still have time to sign up for a new year challenge, and we will support you every step of the way.

Why not join our British 10k team running through the heart of London on 15th July?

Or if running's not your thing you could even bag one of our few remaining places for Ride London-Surrey 100 on 29th July. Just email fyf@fyf.org.uk for an application form or visit

find-your-feet.org/get-involved/cycle

Leaving a Legacy

Leaving a gift to Find Your Feet in your will is a truly meaningful way of improving the future health of the world's poorest people. If you're considering leaving a legacy to support the causes closest to your heart, and would like more information, please contact Abigail on **020 7840 3762** or abigail@fyf.org.uk

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