

WfK's largest ever project is completed in Kamaila, Zambia



KAMAILA VILLAGE

Kamaila is situated 50 km from Lusaka (the capital city) and 11 km of the journey is on a rough track. Charcoal burners established the village in 1963. Since then the population has risen to over 4,000 and has spread over a wide area, the village is 4km long. Most of the

villagers live in traditional houses made of mud bricks, with grass roofs. There is no health facility in the area; the nearest clinic is 18 km away.

Why WfK got involved

When WfK trustees Natasha Franklin and Barrie Whitehead first visited Kamaila in September 2003, they were told that diarrhoea ranked number three in the top ten causes of morbidity and mortality in the district. This was because of poor access to clean and safe water supply.

At that time most people in Kamaila drew their water from unprotected shallow wells situated throughout the village. There was a long queue of women with buckets waiting to draw water from a well next to the site of the first meeting with the villagers to discuss the WfK project. The well was covered by only a few logs across its opening and one of the very few houses with a pit latrine was less than ten metres from this well, it was at risk of contamination by both human and animal pathogens.

The water committee

The village established a Water Committee in the early days, to oversee the project; it consisted of 50% women. They met regularly with Delphin Kinkese, the ZIEH Executive Member who managed most of the water installation in Kamaila. The Water Committee now looks after the installation on behalf of the village.

Six Well Minders were trained in March 2006 to maintain the boreholes and hand pumps and to educate others about the safe use of water. They are still members of the Water Committee.



Clean water in Kamaila

In July 2005 two new boreholes funded by Water for Kids, were drilled in Kamaila village and fitted with hand pumps. These provided a constant supply of clean water replacing the contaminated well water previously used by the villagers.

A vote of thanks

The villagers gave a vote of thanks to Water for Kids, during visit by trustees Natasha Franklin and Sara Emanuel in May 2006, stating:

“This is a rare and splendid occasion which must be cherished, on behalf of Kamaila village, we are thanking you for this generous donation of boreholes to this area. Water has been our major problem

for a lot of projects. Your coming to our aid has come at a right time, especially that our government is trying to diversify from copper production to agriculture.

We're promising to safeguard these bore holes so that even our children will come and appreciate these facilities."

These thanks are to all of you who have generously donated to the project."



Water close to home

With only two water points in the village villagers often had to queue at the pumps and many still had to walk a long way to fetch water. A few continued to use unsafe water from shallow wells. So the aim of Phase 2 was to provide a tap within 250 metres of every home, the World Health Organization standard.

The villagers dug an extensive network of trenches for pipes to supply water to 25 standpipes. A stand was erected for the two 5,000 litre water tanks and solar panels connected to the submersible pump to elevate the water from the borehole to the tanks. The villagers also built a house for the caretaker. Since May 2007 practically all members of the community now live within five minutes walk of a standpipe and those from outlying areas come to Kamaila as it is the nearest place they can get safe water.

A small fee is paid by each household to pay the caretakers who maintain and ensure the security of the new installation.

The Handover Celebration

On 31st October 2007 the Kamaila water installation was officially handed over by ZIEH/WfK to the Kamaila Village Water Committee. Those on the first WfK Study Tour to Zambia were there to enjoy the music, dancing and a short drama provided by the local children and the many speeches of appreciation.

The ZIEH Newsletter of June 2008 reported:

"The project is the first of its kind in Zambia as there is no village which has piped water anywhere in Zambia. It was smiles on the faces of the Kamaila residents when WfK and ZIEH handed over the water project to them. The handover was attended by WfK members from UK, ZIEH executive members, the District Education Board Secretary from Chibombo District, headmen from the villages and several residents. The residents confessed that the project had really improved their lives as they were no longer walking long distances to the nearest stream to fetch water."

The speeches made at the handover emphasised how the safe water supply was improving the life of the villagers and they were very grateful. The person representing the local councilor and MP said "Thank you to WfK and ZIEH for this good gesture for us. We have been longing for water for more than 30 years, since this compound was established..... I would like to urge the community to guard jealously this gift we have been given today." Local school children performed a sketch about the importance of hand washing and how it can prevent diseases, including cholera. The Chairman of the village Water Committee said that the president had just launched the "Keep Zambia Clean Campaign", he said "What you have contributed will not only increase cleanliness, it will also improve health". The village headman said that the water system is not something you see in villages in Zambia, but only in towns, and that it is "just the beginning of development".

At the end of the celebration and handover, the traditional gift of thanks was presented to WfK representatives, four live chickens.

After the handover celebration 70 families who had made good progress with their pit latrines, were awarded wash stands. These had been donated by people in the UK as alternative gifts to friends and family for birthdays, Christmas etc. The **wash stands** make handwashing easy, when there is no piped water at hand. You can give a gift of a wash stand for just £20
www.waterforkids.org.uk/pages/gift.htm



Handwashing is the most effective measure to prevent disease and the importance of hand washing is taught to children when they first go to school in Kamaila and they are reminded throughout their education to ensure they practice a good standard of hygiene. However most of the villagers rarely get to use a bar of soap.

A **ventilated pit latrine** is being constructed by each family in Kamaila, under the supervision of the ZIEH project manager. WfK paid for the concrete to build the base of the latrine.

The clean water not only improves the health of the people, but also frees up the time taken in the past to collect water. This time along with the availability of water for construction and farming can help relieve poverty. In addition the availability of clean water has led to the government agreeing to build a clinic in Kamaila. The villagers will no longer have to travel at some expense and inconvenience to go to the clinic 18 km away.

Eight months after the handover in Kamaila one of the solar panels was stolen. When the thief tried to steal a second panel, he was seen. The villagers were able to retrieve both panels but the connections had been broken. Even so they were able to raise the £100 needed and were able to secure the repair. As a result they have employed a second caretaker, to ensure one is always present, and will build a security fence around the solar panels. It's good to hear that Kamaila's Water Committee was able to maintain the installation in the face of adversity.

