



Mavilla Banda Village, Zimbabwe

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Residents of Zimbabwe's Mavilla Banda Village battled a dire water crisis. Sipho Mlanga, a 54-year-old engineer, shared: “There was no place for us to collect safe water. Our main water source was a well we dug ourselves, but this water was greasy, muddy, and tasted bad. Drinking it made us sick, but we had no choice. Our only alternative was hand-dug wells shared with animals and local wildlife. During times of drought, water was extremely scarce, and the wells would run dry. Life was very hard. Because of this, fights would break out between community members over water access.”

Relying on this water meant that residents were continuously exposed to waterborne diseases such as diarrhea, vomiting, and skin infections. Coping with ongoing illness drove rising absenteeism, as students struggled to focus during class and often opted to stay home altogether. This was particularly the case for young girls, who had no means to safely manage menstruation at school. Similarly, when symptoms became severe, adults had no choice but to miss work—sacrificing income that was essential to their families' well-being.

While community leaders knew that their fellow residents were remarkably resilient, they also knew things couldn't go on like this forever. The moment they heard about Living Water International's work in the area, they reached out. Living Water Zimbabwe drilled a borehole and installed a hand pump only a short walk from residents' homes. “This hand pump will make our lives so much better. Women will no longer have to travel long distances for water. Most of all, the water we will drink is safe and won't harm us,” Sipho concluded.



The Living Water staff drills 50 meters to reach a safe, underground aquifer. After treating and testing the water for safety, they manually install PVC piping and a new hand pump.



Elected by their peers, these residents form the water committee, which is tasked with ensuring well's sustainability by collecting small, voluntary fees.