



## Chilile Primary School, Zambia

### New Beginnings: Access to Safe Water and Toilets Empowers Students in the Classroom

“The situation was not only difficult, it was also affecting learning,” Mr. Ziak Banda, headteacher of Chilile Primary School, said.

Over 600 students shared one toilet, which was in poor condition. Many students avoided using the latrine altogether because of the smell and how broken down the facility was. For girls, this reality meant that they had no private place to manage their periods when they came.

“Many [girls] would stay home from school several days a month,” Mr. Banda said. “We worried because we saw how this affected their attendance and performance.”

After a piped system was installed on the school’s grounds, as well as separate latrines for boys and girls, everything changed.

When Living Water staff emphasized the importance of maintaining the new water system, community members embraced the responsibility. During a parent-teacher committee, parents raised funds to go toward the maintenance of the facilities—including the employment of two community members to clean and maintain the latrines daily.

Mr. Banda gratefully said, “When I look at our children today, I see students who can focus on their education instead of worrying about where to find water or whether there is a safe toilet to use. Our children now come to school with dignity, and that is something we will continue to protect for generations to come.”



With separate latrines for girls and boys, girls can attend school with greater confidence during their periods.



A girl washes her hands after using the latrine, grateful to have easy access to safe water.