



ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

Canadians have such ready access to clean, fresh water that we sometimes forget how precious a resource it is. As a country we use a lot of water. Statistics show our average consumption rate to be about 65% higher than the average of other developed countries. While this can be somewhat explained by high volume industrial users (about 80%), residential use is high as well. Daily use for domestic purposes averages almost 330 litres. Compare this against the 7.5 – 15 litres per day needed to meet basic human needs (drinking, basic hygiene and cooking).

WHEN CLEAN WATER IS SCARCE

According to the United Nations, about 1 billion people lack a safe source of water. When there is no ready access to clean water, people in developing countries turn to water sources that can be distant, inadequate and often unsafe. They may rely on water holes—shallow, hand dug pits that collect groundwater. These are often used for both drinking and bathing, and are left uncovered, resulting in further contamination. Rainwater is sometimes collected, but often only a limited supply can be stored, and rain cannot be relied upon to come when needed. Rivers, streams or ponds are a third source. The quality of this water varies depending on upstream contamination, the number of animals sharing the water, water levels and more. It is not



surprising, then, that water-borne, bacterial diseases such as cholera, dysentery and typhoid are leading causes of death in many developing countries. According to the World Health Organization, two million children a year die from diarrhea.

HOW CLWR IS RESPONDING

Access to safe water is an integral part of most community development projects being undertaken by Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) in India, Mozambique and Zambia. Under the umbrella of CLWR's current five-year development agreement with the Canadian

International Development Agency (CIDA), 156 communities in these three countries will benefit from programming designed to provide more ready sources of clean water, as well as improved sanitation and hygiene practices. This programming is being carried out in partnership with the Lutheran World Federation.

Between 2008 and 2013, CLWR plans call for 63 of these communities to receive new covered wells. Community wells advance development in a number of ways. First and foremost, they provide a reliable water source in both dry and



rainy seasons because they tap into stable supplies of naturally filtered groundwater. Second, they save immense amounts of time and energy, as much as four hours per day, spent mostly by women and children trekking to distant water sources. Lastly, community wells strengthen economies. Families save money by not having to buy medicine for water-borne illnesses, and they are more productive by being in a better state of health. Their children—especially girls—have a better future by being able to go to school instead of walking for water each day. Increased crop production can translate into surplus yields that can be sold.

CLWR's five year program plan will also endeavour to sensitize 80% of the households in these 156 communities to the need for higher standards of hygiene for collection, storage and use of water. New or improved latrines will be constructed for close to 60% of the households.

HOW MUCH WILL THIS COST

The amount needed to complete all of these water-related projects in India, Mozambique and Zambia over the five-year period is \$207,000. Of this total, CIDA will contribute up to 75%, matching every dollar given by CLWR supporters with three of its own. CLWR must contribute \$51,750 to fulfill all the project goals.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Consider raising funds for CLWR safe water projects at your church or school using one of these ideas:

- Have congregation members tithe their water bills. A 10% tithe for the average urban Canadian household is \$35.
- Make a “wishing well” out of a pail, carton or papier mâché and place it where people can drop in their spare change.
- Challenge your congregation to “dig a well with dollars.” The cost of digging a well is based on a variety of factors but on average, it takes about \$1750. Draw a well with a shaft and fill it in metre by

metre as donations are made, until water reaches the people at the wellhead. An average well is about 20 meters deep.

All donations can be forwarded directly to CLWR at 302-393 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 3H6. High resolution photographs and stories about your fundraising efforts are always welcomed.

FOLLOWING UP

When constructing wells, CLWR follows standards set by UNICEF or the Sphere Project. You can learn more about the Sphere project guidelines at www.sphereproject.org.