

Chiredzi Rural District Council

RUPANGWANA PIPED WATER SCHEME BETTERS LIVES IN WARD 3 AND 4



Taking a leaf from the great Lao Tzu, “nothing is softer or more flexible than water, yet nothing can resist it”. It is however undisputable that water is central in every aspect of life. With their proximity to the river Save, ward 3 and 4 have had many cholera cases and other hygiene related diseases recorded emanating from the consumption of contaminated water from the river. Apart from the consumption of contaminated water, many villagers also relied on their unprotected wells for drinking water, thus the inevitability of hygiene related diseases.

In a bid to reduce such cases, the community members implored for the resuscitation of boreholes in the community. In 2012, Chiredzi Rural District Council in conjunction with Rural WASH however responded and two water tanks were installed at Rupangwana clinic aimed at supplying safe water to the clinics, schools and the communities. Hence Rupangwana Piped Water Scheme emerged as the brainchild of UNICEF.

The project has UNICEF in the forefront and Christian Care as an implementing partner. The District Water and Sanitation Sub Committee (DWSSC) in conjunction with Chiredzi Rural District Council proved to be highly instrumental through their close monitoring. In 2014, German Agro Action, took part in the installation of two water tanks at Rupangwana and each tank having the capacity of 5000 litres. Simultaneously, the

District Development Fund (DDF) provided a diesel water pump and the whole system was supposed to cater for Masekesa, Jekero, Chikate and Rupangwana. The pump eventually developed a technical fault and it was in a condition that attracted finances for it to be repaired. In 2016 the engine completely went off and the community members failed to mobilise funds to repair or to replace the pump.

In September 2017, the project reached its peak when Pump Systems Africa was contracted by Christian Care to rehabilitate and upgrade the Piped Water Scheme, with more water tanks being installed around Rupangwana. The diesel engine was replaced by a new submersible solar pump system (Lorentz 5.4 HP). There was a huge expansion in the pipes

with many villages being provided with safe drinking water. The whole system was upgraded and a metre to monitor the consumption of water was put in place. Initially, the consumers were being affected in times of pipe burst since it forced the whole system to be blocked due to shortages of control valves.

However this project saw many lives around Rupangwana and other areas in ward 2 and 3 being saved. Cholera cases have been reduced and only one case of cholera was recorded in 2017, unlike 10 recorded in 2016. With most of the African communities being patriarchal, the women suffer most as they travel long distances to get water for the families.

In some villages around Rupangwana, many people had to walk long distances of about

1.5 km for them to get water, chiefly from Save river. However the Piped Water Scheme made their lives easier as they can get safe water from the taps installed in their villages. Jekero Primary School also benefited from the project and the school now has a double tap where they can get safe water anytime they need it. In addition, as a result of the Piped Water Scheme, the community members have planned to start a nutritional garden as a means to sustain their families. In interviews with some villagers, they vividly explained that they have initiated money making projects like vegetable production targeting Rupangwana business centre.

Amos Mashamba is one of the villagers in Rupangwana who finds his life

positively changed through the Piped Water Scheme. He explains that since money is very hard to come by in the rural areas, through the nutritional garden it is very easy for them to be making



money. *Pupils at Jekero School fetching water at a new tap*