

Mwezi Village, Chief Kakumbi, Mfuwe, Zambia

Sponsors – Schulprojekte Sambia. Completed drilling – November 2019

The Challenge – to bring clean, safe water to the villages and schools of the Luangwa Valley in a way that enables them to avoid human/wildlife conflict and ensures that the communities benefit from and engage with wildlife conservation as well as improving health, school attendance, productivity, all round well-being and quality of life.

Around 25,000 people live in the villages of Kakumbi Chieftom and the population is rapidly growing. It has doubled in the last 20 years and continues to grow year on year. It is one of the most mixed communities in the Eastern Province. There are many long term residents who live in villages that have been established for at least two hundred years still relying on traditional methods of subsistence farming. But with the success of the safari industry there has been quite an influx of new residents.

One of these newer settlements is Mwezi Village on the banks of the Matezye River. It is situated on the opposite bank to Mikael Village about 2km from the main tar road in Mfuwe. Mwezi means ‘someone who welcomes and cares for people’. Headman Isaac Phiri, born nearby, has recently retired back here after a working lifetime in the mines of Zimbabwe. He is a Chief’s Nduna (advisor and senior person).

Mwezi is situated between two large villages – Musaope and Lubeba, it is not yet a fully recognised village in its own right but Headman Phiri is working towards its recognition. A borehole of their own will help this process.

There are around 20 households in Mwezi approaching 200 residents. Currently they are collecting water in the Matezye river bed or from the already over-subscribed Musaope Village borehole over 1km away. The new Mwezi borehole is not far away as the crow flies, but once the Matezye starts flowing - it is unreachable.



Going down to the river to dig shallow riverbed wells for water collection



Headman explaining problems of waterborne illnesses to Mr. Carr – children are particularly vulnerable



Drilling in action



Installing the casing



Enjoying the pump testing



Everyone happy trying the borehole for the first time



The finished Mwezi Village borehole



Nearby completed boreholes with productive vegetable gardens.

Not only will the dangers of water borne diseases now be things of the past, but now the women and children have more time for education, sports, farming and other pastimes. The communities in which we install our boreholes create productive vegetable gardens which produce more than enough for their own needs and dramatically improve nutrition. The excess is sold locally providing a useful cash income and adding to food security.

Each borehole means that a community of at least 200 men, women and children, instead of travelling miles to dangerous rivers or scooping dirty water from shallow wells, can access to clean, safe water - for life.

UNICEF millennium development goal.

'In order for children and families to benefit from clean water and sanitation, water points and sanitation facilities must be accessible. Distance is critical because the shorter the distance to clean water, the more consistently it will be utilised. Furthermore, as fetching water is a task most commonly assigned to girls and women, shortening the distance between households and water supply is essential to reduce the time girls spend in fetching water, which in turn will provide them with more time to attend school.'

"One of the most important aspects of wildlife conservation is to get the co-operation of the local community. It has been shown that this is not possible unless they can receive material benefit from their wildlife."

Norman Carr (father of Adrian Carr), 1958, Luangwa Valley