

**Akale Aziwana Village, Chief Mnkhanya, Luangwa Valley.
S13°16'7.35" E31°56'47.07" Sponsors – Schulprojekte Sambia, May 2021**

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 8,000 people live in the villages of Mnkhanya Chiefdom and the population is rapidly growing. It has doubled in the last 20 years and continues to grow year on year. The communities are mixed, most of them farming close to subsistence level depending on growing their own food, mainly maize and sorghum. There are just a few employment opportunities at the safari lodges, at Tribal Textiles and at the airport and banks.

The area is thickly forested and fertile, but there are more cattle people arriving from the plateaus of Zambia now which is not good news for the forests of Mnkhanya so it is very important to work in collaboration with the Chief, conservationists and planners to ensure we only put water where it is sensible.

Akale Aziwana Village is quite a remote area East of Mfuwe Airport. It is a relatively new village and whereas we don't usually consider new settlements because we don't want to encourage encroachment, it is in an area that has been allocated for development under the REDD Forest Protection plan and Chief Mnkhanya is keen to have a borehole there.

Headman Joseph Tembo oversees Akale Aziwana which consists of 12 households. There are nearby settlements of Aston Village - 7 households, Petros Village – 10 households, Kondwani Village - 5 households and Edward Village - 12 households. - 46 households in total.



Currently the residents of Akale Aziwana and neighbouring villages must walk 3km (round trip of 6km) to Matula Lagoon for water (starred in yellow on left of picture). This has been particularly dangerous over the last two years as there is a man-eating lion in the area. It has killed and eaten 6 people in the surrounding areas and attacked and injured 4 more plus taking domestic stock. Of course, efforts have been made to control this unusual and rogue lion, but they have, as yet, failed.

The villagers are sometimes assisted by young men who push a trailer with a tank along to the well, but this is an onerous task and takes a long time. (See film footage of young men working at the well which is very deep and a long way from the Village.)



Drilling underway



Flushing the casing in



Rig and drilling team in action



Residents enjoying the first pump test.



Proud gardener in a nearby Village Community garden which is irrigated with the overflow from the village borehole (in the background) growing green leafy vegetables like rape, spinach, and Chinese leaves. Not only are the dangers of water borne diseases now 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, 1958, Luangwa Valley