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action against poverty
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Children are our Hope and Future: Let the Children Live

Special Project Talk 2017-18

Slide One

Warm greetings from Christian World Service. Thank you for fundraising for the Special Project. Together we are making big changes happen in communities that will help people better face an uncertain future.

In 2015-6, you gave \$14,783.03 for Developers in the Philippines, the majority of their \$25,000 annual grant from CWS. You have helped families badly affected by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 restore livelihoods. With the money you gave six *barangay* or villages planted an amazing 49,540 trees and root crops – they planned to plant 12,000! Villagers set up a local committee to build and run a successful local farmer's market, cutting out middlemen, earning more money for families and strengthening the local economy. They have learned how to make new foods to sell like muffins and banana chips, and 208 leaders in two *barangays* have completed more disaster response training and participated in drills.

Last year you donated your time and resources to help young people dealing with poverty, violence and mental health challenges in Nicaragua. Like Oneyda (pictured on the right), they benefit from training provided by CEPAD, the Council of Protestant Churches. CEPAD trained 124 young people who also gave talks in schools, churches and youth groups. They also supported 196 children and young people needing community based care. Thank you.

Slide Two

Children are the focus of this year's Special Project. Southwest Uganda where they live has had three years of drought. Children who should be in school are spending long hours collecting water. We are raising funds this year, so these HIV and AIDS orphans can have water on tap.

Making links from our story to yours

Let us spend a moment thinking about water. Safe, clean and adequate water is an issue everywhere.

Many people in Aotearoa New Zealand are concerned about water. Take a few moments to share the water issues in your community or share stories about a day when the tap went dry...

Slide Three

Uganda has been devastated by HIV and AIDS. According to the UN in 2015 an estimated 1.5 million people live with the virus out of a population of around 40 million people – 96,000 children under 15 years old. 660,000 children under age 18 were orphaned by the virus.

Elizabeth (*pictured*) lost five children to HIV and AIDS – who are buried in the ground behind her new water tank. Other relatives took in some of the children. Those she took in are now caring for her. The local association of which she is a member decided this family needed a water tank before others.

Grandmothers or other relatives have taken in many of the orphans. No longer able to tend crops, many are struggling to provide for them.

A shortage of water at home means children have to make long journeys to collect water that not be clean. They miss school and are often sick and unclean.

A new water tank transforms their lives, improving their health, allowing children to attend school and freeing their time so they can improve the family's income.

Slide Four

Isingiro District is in the dry, southwest of the country. Weather patterns are changing making it much harder for these small farmers to support their families. Close to 98% of its residents rely on agriculture for their livelihoods – many have plots of less than five acres or two hectares. The district is known for banana production, most farmers have one or more acres planted with banana trees.

The Centre for Community Solidarity supports 25 local associations of caregivers. A group of 15 volunteers and two staff members with a variety of skills, train the caregivers. They teach members about HIV and AIDS, hygiene, sanitation, better agricultural techniques and finances. CCS manufactures and sells affordable water filters for the tanks.

At each meeting members contribute to a joint savings scheme, which will pay half the costs of a rainwater tank. The Special Project is raising funds for the other half. Some are able to build larger tanks using other savings.

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19.7% or one fifth of Ugandans live below the poverty line – 6.7 million in “absolute poverty”.

When children spend all day waiting in queue at the water hole for heavily mineralised and undrinkable water or take the long trek to a water hole or the River Kagera, they have no time for school or chores. The journey to the river can be dangerous – wild animals including crocodiles or sexual attack. After three years of drought many of the waterholes have dried up and it takes longer to pump enough water for their most urgent needs.

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When the local association has enough funds, the group decides who most needs a tank or they hold a ballot. CCS organises the building of the tank and the caregivers help with labour. After seven days of building, the tank is ready to receive water through new gutters.

The caregivers learn how to do simple repairs and maintain the tank, using the locally made water filters. At the end of the dry season, tank owners are advised to disconnect the gutters and use the first rain to flush dirt and bird droppings from the system. Each tank has a lock, to make sure no water is wasted.

Note: The Backgrounder includes more information about the building process.

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With a safe supply of clean water, families of HIV and AIDS orphans have time and energy for new projects. Children learn to use the gray water on new gardens. Some families sell food snacks or expand their banana plantations. CCS runs a plant nursery to meet local demand.

In 2013, CWS was able to fund CCS to buy 240 piglets as part of the project. Each recipient passes on one of the first litter to another member – so the programme keeps on giving. Muslim families trade piglets for goats. The money raised from the sale of the animals has already paid school fees, contributed to their savings for a water tank and helped them through the drought.

Slide Eight

Joy (*pictured at the top*) has found hope after losing her husband, two children from HIV and AIDS, and then two grandchildren from typhoid and cholera. With money saved by having a

water tank, she has been able to build a bathroom for her family of five grandchildren. She sold the pig she received from CCS and with the proceeds bought four chickens and three goats.

Topist (*pictured below right*) is a member of an ambitious local association. When they have funds, they make bricks for a set of shops they are building on the side of the road. You can read more in the Summer Story, **We have plans**.

Copies are available from CWS or at

https://www.cws.org.nz/sites/default/files/CWS_Summer%20story_WEB_1.pdf

Slide Nine

There is little in the way of outside entertainment in Isingiro so everyone is keen to help on special days. CCS uses community gatherings like World Refugee Day to spread the message of clean water. Refugees from Congo, Burundi, Eritrea, Rwanda and Sudan have all resettled in nearby Oruchinga settlement. CCS shared a popular drama to show how problems disappeared with a water tank. Orphans sang and danced in celebration of the water already provided by support from the CWS Christmas Appeal and Gifted.

By purchasing a card (printed or email) through our [Gifted](#) programme, you can support this programme directly.

Charles regularly shares stories with CWS, which we share through our email newsletter [CWS Update](#). Please [let us know](#) if you would like to be on the mailing list.

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Coordinator Charles Rwabambari (*pictured bottom right with a local association*) is a retired government agriculture adviser. He has provided the skills and inspiration for the programme. The caregivers value his support and advice in breaking the downward cycle of poverty and misery. He has laid the foundation so the associations can improve the lives of everyone and support each other.

Thanks to Charles' advice, as an HIV orphan Bruce (pictured above) learned carpentry skills and set up a joinery. He takes on other orphans as apprentices and is a secretary of the local association where his grandmother is a member.

Building rainwater tanks is the key to this project – a key that unlocks hope for small, isolated communities that were trapped in poverty, HIV and AIDS infection, changing weather patterns and limited opportunities.

Your support for the Special Project will make sure Ugandan children will flourish. Thank you.

Slide Eleven

Warm greetings from Isingiro Communities. Our hearts were filled with joy and happiness when we received good news from CWS that you are considering to raise funds for CCS in near future to help the needy OVCs in Isingiro District, Uganda. The Centre for Community Solidarity (CCS) has been working with CWS New Zealand since 2008.

Isingiro is located in the driest zone of Uganda that is very water stressed. Women and children bear the burden of walking long distances to fetch water in addition to other domestic chores. This has terribly increased poverty leaving people to live under God's mercy.

Again sometime back, this area was badly affected by a civil war. Women and girl children were grossly abused and tortured. This culminated in the spread of HIV that still has a lasting and profound negative impact on these communities. HIV/ AIDS has claimed many lives of productive age leaving behind listless number of miserable orphans

Therefore, your generous contributions to CWS for CCS will be a God blessed wonderful supplemental support. This will enable us to reach many un-served needy, sad and miserable children in their struggle for survival. This will help to improve their conditions of living, create hope for their future and increase love for their merciful God

We thank you in advance for choosing CCS. May God reward you for your kindness, care, love and the concern you have for these people. We also pray for you that you good intention become a success.

Extend our greetings full of love and thanks to all Methodist and Presbyterian Church members in New Zealand

May God bless you all!!

Warmest Regards, Charles Rwabambari