

Let Justice Flow: Thirsting for Justice World Development Appeal 2011

UGANDA

George and Sarah's Story

George lives in the village of Nyabyumba with his wife Maria and their five children including daughter Caroline and baby Maria.

Like Confidence he grows potatoes and other crops both to eat and to sell on the several plots of land he farms, one close to his house, one down in the fertile valley floor and several elsewhere on the hillside.

He also keeps two pigs and generally is able to provide for his wife and family.

Together with other leaders in his community George saw the benefits that a good supply of fresh clean water has brought to nearby villages like the one where Confidence lives and so they developed a proposal for a water and sanitation programme.

But such are the numbers of proposals made to the Kigezi Diocese Project it was eight years before their application was accepted and work began.

With no springs to tap the best way to provide a water supply was to harvest rainwater from roofs and run the water along guttering into tanks that would be built at individual homes.

For Sarah the installation of a tank has put an end to the long tiring walks to fetch water and she has more time to spend with her children Issac (3) and baby Precious (10 months).

While her husband Denis is involved in installing water tanks, Sarah is responsible for growing the crops and looking after the animals where the ready access to water has made a noticeable difference.

A major benefit of water on tap has allowed Sarah to keep a cow. She uses a technique called zero grazing which means that food and water is brought to the cow rather than it roaming free to eat valuable crops.

Before it would have been impossible to carry enough water for both her family and the cow but now with water just a few meters away the cow can be well watered.

She is also able to spray the cow to keep it healthy and its daily supply of milk now provides a valuable source of nutrition for her growing family.

However there is more to a water and sanitation programme than just a supply of water and alongside building the tanks and laying pipes there has been an education programme to show the importance of proper toilet facilities, regular hand washing and the need to clean cooking, drinking and eating utensils.

As part of the programme homes provided with water tanks also have to construct latrines and bath sheds.

Outside each latrine hand washing facilities have been cleverly made using a modified water carrier together with a foot-operated mechanism which provides running water to rinse soapy hands.

The programme is proving effective and cases of children with illnesses caused by water borne infections have almost been totally eradicated.

So far over 150 households in George's community are benefitting from something we take for granted, clean clear water to a tap near us.