

WINTER

2018 Newsletter



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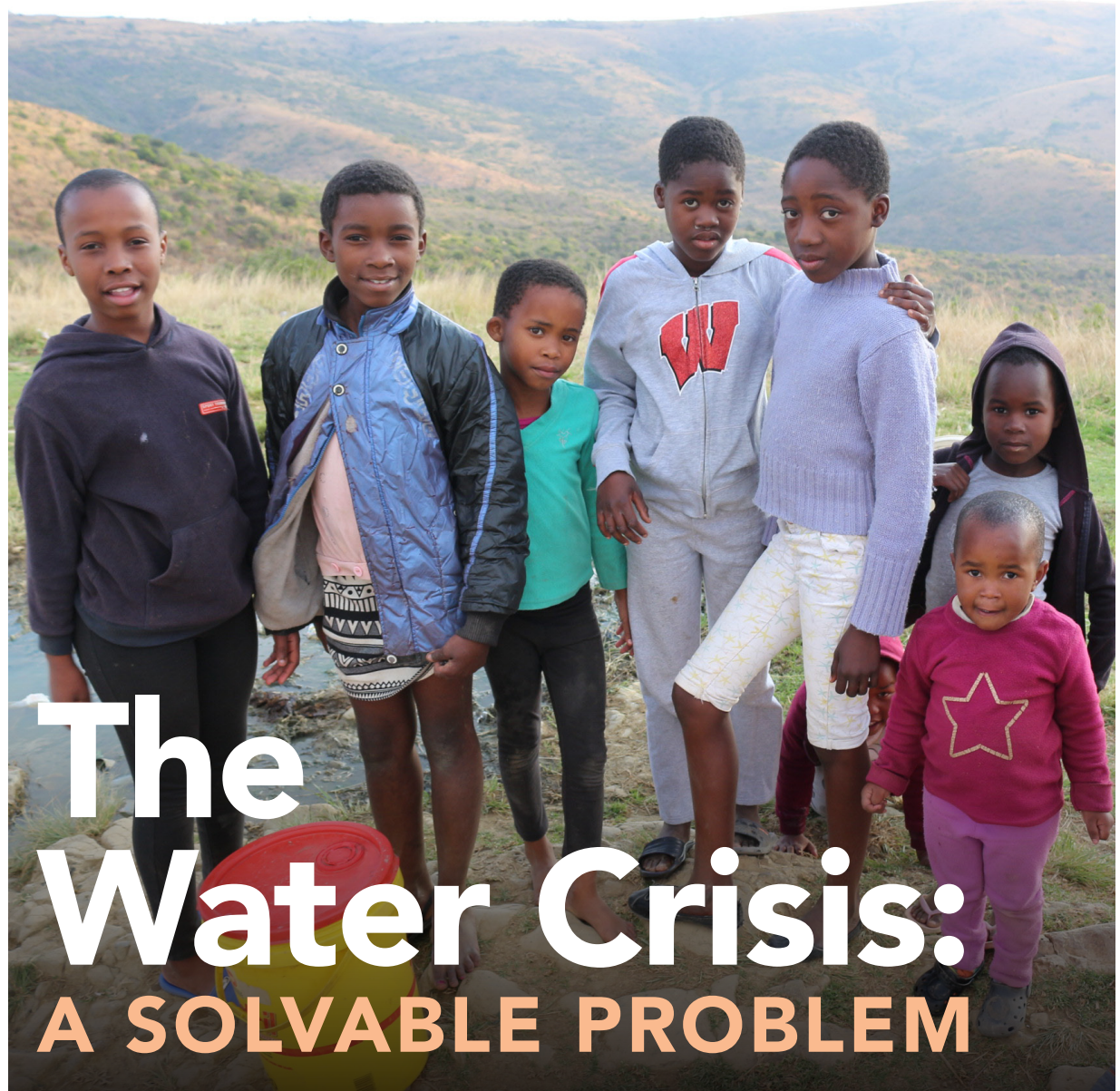
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Imagine a 12-year-old girl from South Africa who is caught in the water crisis. Her family lives on less than \$1 a day. She does not attend school because she and her mother travel three hours a day with large jerry cans strapped to their backs to collect water. The trip there is long, but the return trip seems much longer and is more dangerous with the added 40 pounds on their backs. When they arrive, they stand in line for hours to get water from a dirty pond, the same pond that grazing cattle use as a watering hole. This girl knows that she will have to drink this water — the same water that gave her baby sister cholera just last week — because there is no other choice.

The World Health Organization estimates that 844 million people are living this way, lacking “basic drinking water service” (i.e. access to safe drinking water within a round trip of 30 minutes). But imagine how their world could change with access to safe drinking water. Access to WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) has profound positive social, economic, and health impacts. Countries would save billions of dollars on healthcare. Children could go to school, empowering them and equipping them to promote further change. Mothers could focus on raising their children or starting a business. Fathers could provide for their families, strengthening the community as a whole.

The water crisis is entirely solvable. Solutions include drilled wells or filtration systems. It has been estimated that bringing water and sanitation to all would cost about half of what the United States spends each year on pet food. Supporting projects that focus on water, sanitation, and hygiene has long-lasting impacts that can change the face of an entire community. We have seen it for ourselves.

South Africa

Project Monitoring

CRWRF collaborates with local Christian partners to design and organize programs and services to meet their specific needs. When the planning is complete, funds are provided to make it a reality. Providing programs and services is not always an easy task. The local organization may first need to build their capacity in financial and project management. They may work in isolated areas or conflict zones or they may be a minority facing persecution. As the obstacles on the ground may be daunting, it is important that CRWRF board members come alongside local partners throughout the process.

Technology has made interactions with people abroad much easier. Even most of the poorest areas of the world now have some access to mobile networks and cell phone technology. CRWRF liaisons rely on these to ensure funding is received and financial and program reports are sent every six months. Throughout the year, project liaisons and partners communicate electronically to share both celebrations and challenges.

Although technology has made walking alongside partners easier, nothing replaces a monitoring visit. Spending time in the project area allows a more authentic learning experience of the local culture, religious practices, and economy. Interaction with staff and volunteers promotes a better understanding of their needs as well as who they are as people with their own lives beyond the project.

CRWRF was pleased to hear that rainfalls were almost back to normal levels this year in South Africa. Our monitoring visit revealed struggles that continue in areas with high levels of corruption. While people in the Mkhweni area are very willing to plant the seedlings provided by CRWRF, they are frustrated in getting them to grow because of a lack of access to water. Only by seeing their circumstances can we assist them in the most effective way.

South Africa

The Borehole in Mkhweni

The hour-long trip from the town of Ulundi in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa to the rural community of Mkhweni is a memorable one (especially in a 15-passenger van). Unpaved and unmarked bumpy roads wind through rocky hills, covered with brightly painted “kraals,” or clusters of huts inhabited by intergenerational families. After a while, the sites become repetitive: another kraal, another cow walking down the street, another mother carrying her child on her back, another group of children carrying water ... and another concrete manhole protruding from the ground. All of this is par for the course in rural South Africa, except for the manholes. They are evidence of an extensive waterline system which was meant to carry water to each kraal in the Mkhweni community, but has never worked. This leaves two options for the people to get water: take a one-hour trek down a rocky valley to a river (if it hasn’t dried up), or a

two-hour walk to the nearest borehole.

CRWRF provides funding for a Home-Based Care (HBC) project in this community. The project is run out of a small house where volunteers meet monthly. Recently the house has stood empty while not in use by HBC. Vandalism and theft often occur as a result. CRWRF, along with our South African partner organization Zisize, are working to drill a borehole on the house property. This location is central to the area of Mkhweni and will make the house a bit of a community center, while meeting an imminent need for water.

Funding for the project comes from an accumulation of one-time donations to CRWRF. This project is exciting because it not only provides water to many people in need, but it also opens the door to installing more boreholes in similar communities. We will keep you informed as to how the project goes.



MKHWENI KRAALS



TRAVELING IN MKHWENI



HOME-BASED CARE LADIES



FRED, THEMBA, KONNIE & LAURIE



CHILDREN IN MKHWENI GATHERING WATER



UNUSABLE WATER PIPES