



Spring 2015

Newsletter



In this issue:

Kazoor Emmanuel's Story | Our Latrine Pilot Project | The ACTS Water Bash



Message from the Executive Director

Greetings, ACTS supporters!

As we move into the last month of our fiscal year, I'm grateful for what has been a challenging but fruitful year of transition for ACTS. It's been amazing to feel so supported in the midst of these changes. I've received encouraging notes or emails from some of you, phone calls from others, and even a few stories and encouragements shared over coffee. On the fundraising front, we had one of our best giving seasons ever, and are within reach of our best fundraising year yet. This is a blessing which would not be possible without your generous support, so thank you!

One year into my personal journey as ACTS' Executive Director, I feel both humbled and blessed by the opportunity to lead ACTS in its renewed mission **to free Ugandans from disease and needless labour through access to clean water.**

We are making excellent progress on our current major water project, which will serve 20,000 people in the communities of Rwera and Kintu. Water sources have been secured, reservoirs constructed, pipelines laid and tap stands installed. **Already, the lives of hundreds of families have been changed.** Instead of spending hours walking up to 6 kms per day for water, women are growing food, generating income and caring for their families. Children — and particularly girls — are in school, learning and gaining skills instead of fetching water or lying in bed sick from waterborne disease. Water is giving people their freedom!

As we look forward to a new fiscal year, we do so with great hope. We're excited about completing

our 14th major water system in March 2016, and the new opportunities that it will bring to 20,000 Ugandans in the area. And we're already looking toward the future: we have four new water projects identified, designed and ready to go. We have a skilled, motivated Ugandan team ready to take on the next project challenge. **We have a deep passion for bringing more water to more people, and for giving them the freedom that clean water makes possible.**

Each water system we build, all of the pipes, reservoirs and tap stands, is useless without a healthy, dependable flow of water to draw from. In the same way, the ACTS Source Fund — with which we hire and keep talented staff, promote our mission to a wider audience, and find new sources of funding for water projects — can only support the work in Uganda if there is an adequate reservoir of funds. **Without the important work of the ACTS team over the past 20 years, funded generously by donors like you, 130,000 Ugandans would not have access to clean water today!**

Thank you so much for your support in the past, we cannot do this work without you! Know that by partnering with us, you are playing an essential part in a story that's changing lives.

Blessings,

Nate Lepp
Executive Director



Source Supporter Launch

At ACTS, we build water systems to supply rural villages with clean, accessible water. Water means freedom from stolen time, from dangerous treks, and from waterborne disease. Water means freedom to go to school, to grow food, and to generate income. For the communities we serve, the source means everything. If the source isn't protected and the flow of water stops, all the pipelines, reservoirs and tap stands below become meaningless. In the same way, ACTS depends on a reliable source to

continue all of our life-giving work. Only through a steady flow of support can we employ talented staff, reach out to new support networks, and build our own capacity to be the best at what we do. That's why we're asking you to become a Source Supporter. When you become a Source Supporter, you're freeing ACTS to focus our energy where it's needed most — delivering clean water to communities.

THERE ARE TWO VERY SIMPLE WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

- 1. Give a one-time donation before March 31st.** Help us reach our January-March fundraising goal of \$36,000 in Source Fund donations.
- 2. Become a Source Supporter.** Give monthly, and join a very special group of people helping ACTS ensure a stable, predictable flow of funding that will enable us to pursue our mission with greater freedom and confidence.

If each person who receives this newsletter donates \$36 right now, we will meet our Source Fund goal by the 31st of March. Protect the Source. Become an ACTS Source Supporter today.

YOUR SUPPORT GOES SO FAR IN HELPING BRING CLEAN WATER TO PEOPLE ALL OVER UGANDA. GIVE TODAY TO MAKE YOUR IMPACT. [GIVE ONLINE AT ACTS.CA](https://www.acts.ca)



Kazoora Emmanue (Far Left) and his family

Kazoora Emmanuel's Story

I am Kazoora Emmanuel, and I am 72 years old. I live with my wife (I remarried recently after being widowed for a very long time) and two granddaughters in Nyakabungo. I am a farmer who depends on my small banana plantation for all my family's needs. I have eight adult children from my first wife: five boys and three girls. Most of them are in the same financial situation as me. I have 27 biological grandchildren and at any given point, I look after a minimum of five grandchildren.

I am better off than most families in the village and have been able to take care of my two granddaughters' well-being and scholastic needs, both of whom are now in secondary school.

"I used to walk very long distances to collect water from the spring, sometimes the dam. It would take me almost two hours to go and come back home."

Our family's primary source of water has for a very long time been an unprotected spring, an hour and a half away from our home. My school-going grandchildren always had to go to school late since they first had to fetch water for

the day's use. Other than being late, they always complained that when they reached school they were already tired and could not properly concentrate on their studies. They also had to carry water after school, which would often be late at night. We always worried that our girls would be sexually assaulted as they were coming home. Thank God, it never happened.

We are very grateful for having tap water near our home, it has helped in so many ways. Just last week, my son who works as a guard in Kampala lost a child. We buried this child in my compound, and I am glad that the water used during the funeral was so close to our home. For a gathering of almost 400 people, you need thousands of litres of water. Imagine if you had to carry all that water on your head. We are eternally grateful for this gift; our grandchildren do not have to wake up so early in the morning or go to the spring late at night. Any time somebody needs water, they just walk a matter of minutes to the tap and back. We also no longer have diseases because of drinking dirty water — no flu, diarrhea, or dysentery.

My granddaughter Rhoda can talk about her experiences:

"I used to walk very long distances to collect water from the spring, sometimes the dam. It would take me almost two hours to go and come back home. I would get backaches, muscle pains and my neck would be hurting from carrying heavy jerry cans on my head for so long."

"On the way back from the spring late in the evening, we were always afraid of being raped by strangers. Once I was knocked over by a speeding bicycle on my way from

the swamp late at night. The rider didn't see me, and the incident left me bruised."

"There is now a big change in our home. We no longer have to carry heavy jerry cans on our heads for long distances. We can even fetch water at night with no fear of anything happening to us."

As told to Albert Tinamukama, Water Department Manager for ACTS partner, the Diocese of Ankole.



Ampaire Rhoda, Kazoora's grand daughter



THANKS TO DONORS LIKE YOU, KAZOORA AND HIS FAMILY NOW HAVE:



The ability to attend school and receive valuable education



A healthy family, free from diseases like dysentery and diarrhea



A short walk to retrieve water, with less chance of dangerous attacks



More time to spend on the family farm, preparing for the future



Become a Source Supporter and help hundreds more people, just like Kazoora.

To find out more about joining the Source Supporter monthly giving club, [see page 3](#)

Taking Care of Business

Our Latrine Pilot Project

Let's talk about poop. It's not really something we like to talk or think about too much in Canada. We hide it away — and while this is easy for us to do and culturally ingrained, there are many parts of the world where open defecation happens regularly. Uganda is one of those places, one of 46 countries in the world where “less than half of the population has access to an improved sanitation facility.”¹

This practice causes huge problems, perpetuating a cycle of disease and poverty. “Those countries where open defecation is most widely practised have the highest numbers of deaths of children under the age of five, as well as high levels of undernutrition, high levels of poverty and large disparities between the rich and poor. There are also strong gender impacts: lack of safe, private toilets makes women and girls vulnerable to violence and is an impediment to girls' education.”²

With these important facts in mind, ACTS — with funding generously provided by Urban Systems Foundation — is carrying out a pilot project to build six latrines in Nyakyera and Kinyamufura, two past water project communities. Three schools are each receiving two 5-stance latrines, so that children and especially

girls have access to this basic necessity. Two schools have already received latrines, and the third will be completed by the end of March.

Perez Bewereire, our Project Officer in Uganda, has coordinated local construction contractors. He has also been meeting with teachers and principals to ensure that along with the new latrines, the children are educated on proper hygiene like hand washing through the use of dramatic presentations and songs. This education ensures that the benefits of the latrines are not lost due to contaminated hands.

“Every Wednesday at 10:30am, it is a general health parade where all pupils are inspected by all the teaching staff members, and health messages are read and memorized for better living. This practice has already shown some positive change.”

- Masheija JP, Headmaster, Nyakyera Primary School

1. World Health Organization & Unicef “Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation (2014 Update)”

2. World Health Organization & Unicef “Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation (2014 Update)”

As each of these schools maintain their new latrines and continue ongoing hygiene education, our intention is to provide additional latrines for the same schools, as well as provide latrines for more schools in the year to come.





The ACTS Water Bash

A Smashing Success!

The ACTS Water Bash was our first fundraising event in Vancouver, our new hometown. The ACTS team started planning the event in early fall without too many lofty expectations, but with the help of Brittany Howarth, a volunteer with experience in event planning, we were able to host a fun evening to connect with our community.

The evening featured some delicious eats from Railtown Catering, along with drinks from Vancouver Urban Winery and Postmark Brewing, and cold pressed juice from Glory Juice Co. We were serenaded by local folk singer Jordan Klassen and his bandmate Jocelyn Price, debuted our new “Every Day” video, and rallied the crowd to complete our Jerry Can Challenge. The Challenge saw countless participants carry a full jerry can of water

across the hall, around the block, and through the crowd for a total distance of six kilometres walked (the same amount the average Ugandan has to walk to collect clean water). In the process we raised \$5,000 through pledged donations.

All in all, the hugely successful event raised \$17,000 in donations. We were blown away by the response of our Vancouver community, from the sponsors who stepped up to provide some great treats, to the pledgers who laid the groundwork for the fundraising, to everyone who bought a ticket and came out to pack Vancouver’s classic Heritage Hall. It was the perfect way to celebrate ACTS’ arrival in Vancouver and begin to grow a community. We feel truly welcomed.

Volunteer Spotlight: Brittany Howarth

It was such a pleasure volunteering with Joel and Nate, helping to coordinate the ACTS Water Bash event in November. These guys are so passionate about what they’re doing and I was really inspired to be a part of helping plan their fundraiser.

In 2007 I was asked to join a missions trip that was en route to South Africa to a place called “Camp Hope,” where they helped counsel children orphaned by AIDS. I saw some pretty disheartening things. I couldn’t believe the reality these kids face every day and how much we take for granted back home.

That trip made me realize I wanted to help people whenever and wherever I can. Over half of the developing world’s primary schools don’t have access to clean water and sanitation. That left me wondering “why?” so I decided to volunteer with ACTS to learn more and get involved. I hope to be a part of more projects to come!

Brittany Howarth works for Penman Properties, a rental property management company in Vancouver, and is studying at UBC’s Sauder School of Business.

“I used to walk very long distances to collect water from the swamp. I would get backaches, muscle pains and have trouble working because of carrying heavy cans on my head for long.”

-KAZOORA, FARMER AND FATHER

THANK YOU

Because of your support, Kazoora is healthy and can work and support his family for years to come.



Upcoming trip

Executive Director Nate Lepp is travelling to Uganda for the month of April to visit projects, strengthen partner relationships and gather storytelling content for the coming year. He'll be accompanied by Britney and Jordan Berner, a pair of talented video producers and photographers from Vancouver. Britney has been instrumental in producing inspiring videos for ACTS over the past six months, and we are thrilled that she and Jordan will be joining Nate in Uganda.



How To Get Involved

Do you know a talented grant writer? We're looking for a volunteer to help us find new sources of funding for our projects.