

WELL4AFRICA NEWS AND ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Dear brothers and sisters, peace and good to all of you!

Social initiative “Well4Africa” was born as a particular fruit of the 3rd European OFS and YouFra Congress, which took place in Lithuania in 2018. Since the theme of this Congress was *“Whoever believes in me, rivers of living water will flow from within him” (Jn 7:38)*, the initial purpose of this social initiative was to bear concrete fruit ensuring safe drinking water for three communities in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Malawi. After the Congress, seeing serious support from many national fraternities, the CIOFS Presidency decided that “Well4Africa” was to become a permanent project of the whole Secular Franciscan Order, entrusting its management to the National Council of Lithuania.

So far, social initiative of the OFS has fully implemented 6 water projects and has 2 more under way. “Well4Africa” has already completed Namane and St. Lawrence water projects in Malawi, Kihani water project in Uganda, Sibi water project in Ghana, Shisong water project in Cameroon and St. Peter’s well in Masenyane, Zimbabwe. At the moment, “Well4Africa” has Kongo water project in Ghana under way and is starting the initial phase of a new project in Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre, Zimbabwe. Thanks to common efforts of the Franciscan Family and all benefactors, the current financial situation of the “Well4Africa” is as following:

- Total amount collected from the beginning of the social initiative up to 15 December 2020: **EUR 120,887.63**;
- Total amount spent for the projects: **EUR 87,884.63**;
- Amount left for upcoming projects: **EUR 33,003**.

All news and reports of the social initiative are available on well4africa.eu website. We hereby provide the final report on “Well4Africa” projects which have been implemented this year.

St. Lawrence water project in Malawi



St. Lawrence Capuchin parish in Zomba diocese was the place of the second “Well4Africa” water project in Malawi. The first one in Namane was a simple manually pumped borehole. The second project included a solar energy system, electric water pump and water tower.

St. Lawrence of Brindisi parish is situated in the remote area of Zomba diocese, in the outskirts of the municipality of Zomba, Malawi’s old capital city. People around the parish are subsistence farmers growing corn and vegetables for living. St. Lawrence parish with a good number of Secular Franciscans was a justified place for implementation and maintenance of a new water project, since “Well4Africa” usually works with the OFS or other branches of the Franciscan Family and enables local communities to develop water projects themselves, just supporting them with funds and technical suggestions.



St. Lawrence water project included the drilling of the borehole, installing an electric water pump, building a pump house, installing a solar energy system connected with the electric pump, building a supporting frame holding two 5000-liter water tanks and installing an underground pipeline system. The work was implemented by Niho Systems from 4 November 2019 to 10 February 2020. The total amount of the project was **EUR 12,839.44**, which was equivalent to 10,464,143.60 Malawian Kwacha.

The borehole was drilled on 4 November 2019. The contractor drilled 73 meters down into the ground and found a water vein which yields 800 litres of water per hour (this capacity was measured during the driest season of the year). During the rainy season, the locals expect this borehole to yield 1,000 litres per hour or more. A water pump with the capacity of 2,200 litres per hour was installed. A pump house with three solar panels on its roof was built. With the help of these solar

panels, both water tanks are filled in 5 hours. The construction of the supporting frame for water tanks and the laying of underground pipes also went smoothly. A video about the project is available [here](#).

At the moment, around 85 households benefit from St. Lawrence water project. Women and children who are responsible for bringing water to their families benefit the most. Local people report that fresh and clean water has reduced their stress, diseases and suffering, has brought more hygiene, happiness and hope. The community has learnt the spirit of sharing. More than 1,000 people could benefit from the project if the underground pipe system was extended to other villages.

Sibi water project in Ghana

Joyful news has reached us in the middle of the Covid-19 crisis: a water borehole sponsored by “Well4Africa” social initiative was blessed and inaugurated on 9 May, 2020 in Sibi village, Ghana. Only a small part of the community took part in the celebration due to safety reasons.

Sibi is a small village community in the Nkwanta district in the eastern part of Ghana. The village has 320 households who are the beneficiaries of this water project.



Even though most local people are farmers, the village had only one well. During the rainy season, people collected rainwater coming down from their roofs. At other times, women and children were forced to fetch water from a small man-made dam or other sites, where water is stagnant, muddy and not safe to drink.

“Well4Africa” well was drilled on a donated site, which is conveniently accessible to the local community. Its care and maintenance is entrusted to the Capuchin Friars of Sibi and the local group of Franciscan Youth who initiated this



water project. The amount donated to the project was **EUR 3,804**. The work was implemented by Global Tech Boreholes Limited from 3 March to 1 May 2020.

St. Peter's well in Masenyane, Zimbabwe

Initially, the “Well4Africa” project was supposed to be implemented in the eastern region of Zimbabwe: Manicaland (Nehumambi, Murambinda), but it was discontinued due to land issues in Murambinda. In June 2019, the National Council of the OFS Zimbabwe decided to change the location from Manicaland to Matebeland (the western region). St. Michael's Masenyane, one of the out centres of Our Lady of Fatima Mission, was selected as an appropriate place for the “Well4Africa” water project to be implemented.

Masenyane is situated 180 km from Bulawayo (second largest city in Zimbabwe) and belongs to the diocese of Hwange. The diocese of Hwange falls in the 5th agricultural region (the driest area in Zimbabwe) where rainfall is very low and temperatures are very high. Community members of Masenyane village used to walk more than 10 km for water, often using unprotected water sources shared by both people and animals.

St. Michael's Masenyane, served by the Capuchin Friars, is one of the centres where OFS has the highest number of the professed members. Capuchin Friars have offered a land site within the church premises for a

“Well4Africa” borehole open to all people (OFS members, Catholics and all other people). Due to the Covid-19 situation, with all the travelling restrictions, it took a longer time than expected to see this project brought to reality. “Well4Africa” has funded the installation of a manually-operated water borehole, a fence and a garden around the well. On 15 July 2020, the drilling down to 75 metres was



completed. The project included full casing of the borehole, flashing and installation of the hand pump. According to the national health statutes of Zimbabwe, bush pump boreholes should be secured and protected from animals because of various diseases. Therefore, on 11 August, the feast of St. Clare of Assisi, a fence was built around the borehole. The people of Masenyane showed their unity and the whole community came forward to help. Beside

the borehole, the local Franciscan community is going to plant a little garden for the OFS to promote the care of the environment in this area. A video about the project is available [here](#).

On 28 August, the well was blessed and dedicated to St. Peter with the presence of Our Lady of Fatima parish priest, Capuchin Friars, OFS members from St. Michael's Masenyane. The project was implemented from 4 June to 28 August 2020 by Shiloh Borehole Drillers. The total amount of the project was **USD 10,620.40**. The sustainable water supply for the Masenyane people will increase availability, accessibility and hygiene in this area.

Shisong water project in Cameroon

Another “Well4Africa” project was implemented in Shisong village in the North-West region of Cameroon. Shisong water project was implemented in the Secular Franciscan community of St. Anthony of Padua. On 1 November 2020 (solemnity of All Saints), the Shisong water borehole sponsored by “Well4Africa” social initiative was blessed with the presence of fr. Andrew Ngah Soli, bishop's delegate, and fr. Francis Bongajum Dor OFM Cap, general spiritual assistant.



The present socio-political crisis in Cameroon has resulted in a difficult water access situation in this part of the country and a delay of the water project implementation. The ongoing war in two English regions of Cameroon rendered building and electrical materials very expensive because of the constant blockage of the roads. Import of cheaper materials has also been suspended due to the ongoing war and the Covid-19 pandemic. Most workers had difficulties moving due to the constant blocks on the roads.

The work was carried out from February to October 2020 by two companies: Nkor Destiny Construction (for construction: rings of the borehole and building of the tank) and Est Francis And Bros Ltd (for the general electricity and plumbing works). The amount donated to the project was **EUR 8,429.50**.

The project consisted of drilling a reinforced water borehole and equipping it with both electric and hand pumps as well as a water storage facility of 6,000 litres. The depth of the borehole is 12,5 metres.

The electric pump supplies water to an elevated water tank from where it is distributed to various parts of the house and made available to the public through a stand-pipe. The hand pump is simply made and is far more useful considering the constant shortage of electrical supply, which sometimes is cut for months. In the future, the community intends to install solar panels to run the electric pump. From the funds received, a small stand-by generator was purchased to compensate for the electricity shortage. The OFS local fraternity remains the general supervisor of the Shisong well. The plan is to constitute a committee with representatives of regular user families and to establish contribution rates for the regular maintenance of the well. The estimated annual contribution per family per year is 1200 CFA francs (about 2 Euros).

Shisong has suffered without water for the past several years. With the digging of a new well everyone is presently a beneficiary of this water project. The Shisong project provides regular potable water to 50 families in the area of about 1 km radius. Other beneficiaries include internally-displaced persons due to the political crises as well as to numerous patients and visitors who come to the nearby Shisong general hospital. There is a tap installed by the roadside whereby everyone passing by can have free access to water and enjoy the fruits of the “Well4Africa” project. This regular source of potable water is of great necessity in the area especially in the dry season when water is most scarce due to absence of rain and when other sources are dry. A video about the project is available [here](#).

Ongoing and new water projects

The implementation of the second “Well4Africa” water project in Ghana, Kongo village at Nabdam district has started. It involves drilling a borehole and installing an electric pump, two large water tanks and a pipe system, so that safe drinking water is conveniently accessible to the local community and thousands of pilgrims which come to Marian Grotto and Spiritual Renewal Centre run by Capuchin Friars. The amount donated to the project is EUR 5,092. In November we received news on completed drilling of the borehole at Kongo and plenty of good and clean water. Now the rest of the work must be carried out to complete the project.

The new “Well4Africa” water project is about to start in Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre which is situated in Mashonaland, in the eastern province of Zimbabwe. The Centre is supported by the John Bradburne Memorial Society, founded in memory of the OFS brother from the United Kingdom. The beatification case of John Bradburne OFS who took care of leprosy patients and was killed during Zimbabwe independence war is under way. Since this organisation is based on our common Franciscan charism, “Well4Africa” decided to fund the water project in the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre and to ensure stable supply of clean water to the community.



“Well4Africa” has recently received new requests from Kenya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and is ready to accept new applications from English, French and Portuguese speaking countries in Africa. The aim of “Well4Africa” social initiative is to install wells in African areas where Secular Franciscan Order is present in order to bring *sister water* to thirsty people and provide the local population with clean and fresh water, which would allow women and children to avoid walking long distances to bring this important and essential resource from sources which, in a large number of cases, are poor, scarce and contaminated. “Well4Africa” application criteria and guidelines are available [here](#).

Updates in “Well4Africa” coordination

We would like to inform you that this year some changes in “Well4Africa” coordination have been made. The current international Coordination Team consists of the following members: Virginija Mickute OFS (Lithuania), main coordinator of the social initiative; Attilio Galimberti OFS (Italy), coordinator of the technical implementation of the projects; Jennifer Harrington OFS (South Africa), responsible for communication with English speaking countries in Africa; Michel Janian OFS (Lebanon), responsible for communication with French speaking countries in Africa; Nadia Rudolf von Rohr OFS (Switzerland), coordinator of multilingual translations.

Some of the OFS national fraternities have assigned their “Well4Africa” contacts by countries. The contact list is available [here](#). We kindly ask you to revise it and confirm concerning the data (indicated person and email) representing your national fraternity. New contact persons by countries are very welcome to join our team in order we could continue fundraising for this important mission.

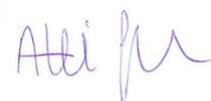
Finally, we would like to express our gratefulness for your fraternal collaboration at this social initiative which goes in one Spirit with the whole Catholic Church. After having read the document [Aqua fons vitae: Orientations on water, symbol of the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth](#) released in 2020 by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, in May we wrote to the Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery, asking for his blessing and patronage to “Well4Africa”, a social initiative of the OFS. His Eminence Cardinal Turkson was so kind to answer us, as letter states, expressing his encouragement to this beautiful Franciscan commitment and his thanks to all “Well4Africa” benefactors, as well as suggesting, when appropriate, to involve local Church through their bishops, in the context of “Well4Africa” water projects. It is a great step to the social initiative “Well4Africa” which opens us a way to a more active cooperation with local churches throughout the continent of Africa. Thanks be to God!

Dear brothers and sisters, in the Bible, a well is the place where one finds more than water. *Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (John 4:6-7).* A well is the place where Christ comes to meet every human being. It is He who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus seeks and thirsts us! God thirsts that each of us may thirst for Him. Let us thirst for Jesus with all our heart and let us give Him a drink with our prayers and concrete acts of love.

Fraternally,



Virginija Mickute OFS
National minister and international councilor of the OFS in Lithuania



Attilio Galimberti OFS
CIOFS Presidency Councilor

Lithuania, 17 December, 2020