

The Madagascar Water Project Phase VII Drilling Program July – November 2019

MWP80 Antsiranamihanina Sponsor: IDEA Universal / Hayri Dagli



Yours truly and the first Phase VII Program well. It was drilled in July as part of our work with IDEA Universal. It's a replacement for a broken well shown in the background.

IDEA Universal documented two of our projects for Turkish TV. It looks like we will have to wait for the reruns before we get to see them.

MWP104 Andranotsara Dedicated to: John Rittelmeyer



Andranotsara South is a small village of 100 people from the same extended family. We spend a lot of time there waiting for the ferry. The man on the right made a convincing pitch to build the well. Since they had tried several times to dig their own well and a lot of people were suffering from water-borne disease, our decision to build a well there was not difficult. One part of our strategy going forward is to put wells in smaller villages, in our core area, that were passed over in earlier programs.

MWP105 Ambarimalemy Sponsor: Paul Rittelmeyer



Ambarimalemy is over a kilometer from the Pangalana and they were totally dependent on two old and dirty bucket wells. This well adds clean water to their resources and will clearly have a positive impact on the health and quality of life of the Villagers.

We first started working in the area south of Vatomandry last year when we drilled wells in Marosiky and Nierenana. This was one of two focus areas for the Phase VII Program (Nosy Varika being the other) and the universal reception we received was one of "thank God they're finally here". Our work in this area was delayed because the Pangalana Channel is over-grown with vegetation and difficult to navigate. It's still over-grown; we just decided to take on the challenge.

There is still much to do but we have done a lot to mitigate the problem.

MWP106 Ambilabe Sponsors: Jim and Carol Rittelmeyer



Ambilabe is a medium-sized village stretching out over 500+ meters. It's located between the Pangalana Channel and the Indian Ocean and is very isolated. Prior to our well, a single bucket well was their only source of water.

The Village Elders had a key role in the well planning. They supervised our work, talking among themselves frequently. They were friendly but seemed to be taking a stance of "I'll believe it when I see it". When we delivered, they were our biggest fans.

This is a construction photo. By the time we dedicated the well, it was completely enclosed.

MWP107 Ambodisakoana Sponsors: The Green Family / Finn Green



The Green Family's contribution was used to drill three wells in the village of Ambodisakoana. It's a large, up-and-coming village and a lack of clean water was one of their biggest impediments to development moving forward.

Our reception was more than enthusiastic. When we moved from one location to another, Villagers turned out in-masse to move our stuff. They built small houses around each well, and their commitment to manage and maintain their wells is clear.

MWP108 Ambodisakoana Sponsors: The Green Family / Bill & Sharon Green



Photo above of the dedication ceremony for all three wells. All the Elders and Village Officials turned up. Their response to our work was outstanding and we know we are working with the right people when we see this. It was clear to the Villagers and to us that the wells have improved their quality of life overnight.

The Villagers often give us a small gift at the dedication ceremony. It can be straw hats or mats or hand bags, but it is most often chickens. Of the 75+ ceremonies we have conducted so far, we received the largest ever – two chickens and a duck!

I have a lot of hats, bags and mats from these ceremonies. If you are a contributor and would like one, please let me know. They are all authentic.

MWP109 Ambodisakoana Sponsor: The Green Family / Dylan Green



This is the third well in the village. The wells are equally spaced about 300 meters apart, making water accessible to everyone in the village. It was great working with the Village Chief and Elders. They planned with vision and without bias.

MWP110 Seranandavitra Sponsor: Bob Blanz



Seranandavitra is just down the road from Ambodisakoana. It too is a progressive village with clean water being one of the biggest impediments to its development. They were getting all their water from a water hole near the Pangalana.

The village came together to manage the well placement as an infrastructure project, placing them in locations to maximize their utility and best serve the village. The village Chief and Elders were ever-present, discussing our work among themselves while we worked. My impression was they were skeptical, not believing it was going to happen even as we worked. Once the slab was poured and the pumps permanently installed, shelters were built over the wells within an hour. The Villager's appreciation for their wells was enthusiastic and genuine.

MWP111 Seranandavitra Sponsor: Bob Blanz



The photo above shows the Village Elders. They are a formidable group. Along with being old, they have a certain wisdom and appear to be interested in the greater good rather than personal benefit.

Bob Blanz sponsored a well last year in the village of Ambodiharina. After he saw how well they took care of it and heard from me how much they appreciated it, he sponsored two more wells in the Phase VII Program.

One of my commitments as the Director of The Madagascar Water Project is to our Contributors, to use your contributions wisely, prudently and ethically to accomplish our stated goals. Indeed, my goal is to add value through my own work, and with the experience I bring from five years drilling water wells and working as a professional Geologist for forty years.

I also want to share the success and celebration of our work with those that make it possible. The benefits are a two-way street. The Villagers get the benefits of clean water and have a significant resource to improve their quality of life. The Contributors can be sure they have improved the quality of life for many others, that they have made a difference. I believe it adds more relevance to our lives.

MWP112 Ambodivoangy Sponsor: Bill Pollert



Ambodivoangy is beyond the end of the road. It lies between the Indian Ocean and the Pangalana Channel, where it is overgrown with water lilies, making it nearly inaccessible. The well was the best thing to happen to them in a long while.

Bill keeps track of his village, Ampasimbe being his first. Although it is home to several hundred people, Ambodivoangy may not be on the map. In this business, it's a nice place to be.

MWP112 Ambodivoangy Sponsor: Bill Pollert: First Flow



This photo shows the admiration the children have for our local Drill Team. It's inspirational, providing role models to children as they see Madagascar build its future. This is one of the serendipitous achievements of our work, and one that shouldn't be underestimated.

MWP113 Ampanalana Sponsor: James Vlahos



Ampanalana is a medium-size village on the road between Vatomandry and Maintinandry. It has several ageing bucket wells, and this well provides a significant improvement in the quality of their water. The support and reception for this well was enthusiastic and will benefit hundreds.

MWP114 Itampolo Sponsor: Rachel Mayer



Itampolo is off the beaten path between Vatomandry and Maintinandry. They have one broken Indian pump, never used because it was saline, and a very dirty bucket well. This well significantly improves the quality of their water supply and will provide health benefits to everyone.

We rarely encounter saline water, but when we do, we take mitigating steps to keep the water fresh. Since fresh water “floats” over denser saline sea water, we keep the intake filter shallow to improve the probability it will remain fresh year-round. The well is fresh now and will likely remain so.

MWP115 Maintinandry Sponsor: Tori Rittelmeyer



Prior to drilling MWP-115, the nearest water source of any kind was 300 meters away. They now have the best water in town.

Maintinandry was one of my biggest surprises. In our early meetings with village officials, my impression was negative, that they didn't seem to care. I even wrote an essay on it but didn't post it because it was too negative. I discussed my thoughts with our Community Relations Liaison, Hilaire, and he countered that the feelings of the people were quite different, they were excited.

We were both right. The officials didn't show up to the dedications and the people had a party. There are lots of smiles there. The other dedication, shown below, was even bigger.

MWP116 Maintinandry Sponsor: Bill and Young-Suk Rittelmeyer



This well replaces a broken-down and cracked bucket well. They are separated from the rest of the village by a school and soccer field, and there are no other sources of water. No village officials showed up for the dedication ceremony, so it was informal. We had a great time! After the well was opened, it didn't stop flowing for over an hour. They have been waiting for this well for years.

The boy in the red T-shirt, in the arms of a young woman on the left side of the photo above, shadowed me the entire time. It feels great to be welcomed into this group.

MWP117 Manakambahiny Sponsor: The K.P. & Phoebe Tsolainos Foundation



This is the second well in the Village of Manakambahiny, which is a medium-sized village on the Pangalana north of Vatomandry. Solo and the Drill Crew took the boat and drilled this well, while Hilaire and I participated in numerous dedication ceremonies to the south. The Villagers took care of their first well diligently, but it suffered from a downhole mechanical failure, the kind we can't fix. Clean water is now flowing again.

As I have said several times, once we drill a well, we remain committed to the village to keep the water flowing. The help doesn't end when the well is drilled, it's just the beginning of a long, healthy relationship.

Elaine Jansen has supported our work for years, and she brought in the support of The K.P. & Phoebe Tsolainos Foundation for our most recent drilling program.

MWP118 Kalomalala Sponsor: Debra Bryant



This well is a replacement for one of our early wells drilled in 2016. The downhole filter, called a well point, failed. As part of our continuous improvement efforts, we now use a different well point that improves filtration and minimizes failures.

We used a lot of PVC materials – pipe and well points – in our early wells. Two years ago, we adopted an all-steel design and have reduced the number of drilling and completion failures to near zero. This is a clear case of spending more up-front, saving money in the long term.

The well is sponsored by Debra Bryant, my wife of forty-one years. Without her strong support, this work would not be possible.

Andovoranto School, James Hartzell

There is still one well yet to be drilled as part of the Phase VII Program. It will be a new well to replace the well in the Andovoranto school yard, which had to be shut down after the village put a latrine facility next to it. It will show James Hartzell as the Sponsor.

MWP96 Ambohitsara Sponsor: Mike Heneghan



Mike is an energetic Supporter of The Madagascar Water Project and has brought many more people into our support group. His participation corresponds with an upward inflection in our growth. He has been a game-changer. Thanks!

Ambohitsara was featured in our Phase VII fund raising campaign. The well we drilled not only brought water into the village, it significantly improved the water quality. It went from brown and smelly, to clear, clean and better-tasting.

The Drill Team



Over the past five years, these guys have drilled almost every Madagascar Water Project Well. From left: Dimanche, Sedera, and Solofo. They are a great Team and we are fortunate to have them.