

THIS IS EXCELLENT

/ Summer 2016

**An ancient idea
A sustainable future**

Excellent Development is a UK registered charity that supports some of the world's poorest people to transform their own lives.

We support communities in rural drylands to build sand dams, which provide safe water for life for just £10 per person.

Our goal is to enable millions of the world's poorest people to transform their own lives with sand dams.

www.excellent.org.uk

WHAT'S INSIDE?



News from southern Africa

Find out about our latest exciting initiative to bring more sand dams to Zimbabwe and Mozambique



Jane's story

How Jane Kisulu's community ensured that their families would no longer endure a lack of water



A marathon effort

A truly fantastic effort by one of our wonderful supporters, Simon Bibby



Excellent worker

Stephen Musyoka from ASDF explains how monitoring and evaluation shapes everything we do

EXCELLENT NEWS

Sand dams in southern Africa

2016 started with a bang at Excellent Development, as we received news from the Isle of Man and Jersey governments that they will be supporting us to develop our dam building programmes in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

In partnership with Dabane Trust, who work with rural communities in Zimbabwe to develop simple and appropriate water extraction systems, we will enable the construction of two sand dams in Zimbabwe, and one in Mozambique, in 2016-17.

Dabane Trust currently builds five sand dams a year and, together with its expertise in monitoring and evaluation, it has a strong foundation on which to develop its dam building programme in future years.

Southern Africa encompasses many diverse geographies and cultures. But common to all regions is a pattern of variable and unreliable rainfall, contributing to water scarcity and

worsening vulnerability to drought, especially for poor people living in rural areas.

Extreme poverty has become prevalent in the region's dryland areas. About 70% of the population lives below the international poverty line of \$2 (U.S.) per day and 35% of under-five mortality is attributed to malnutrition.

During a site visit in Mozambique, Stephen Hussey, Director of Dabane Trust observed first-hand the level of need in Tete, where fewer than 5% of households have piped water:

"I haven't seen poverty like that in 20 years. It was quite an eye opener... there is a crying need to create sustainable water sources."

There are some key differences in the topography and climatic patterns in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, which will present some interesting adaptations from the model that ASDF uses in Kenya; for example, river banks are generally lower and flatter in southern Africa, and there is only one rainy season, as opposed to two in Kenya.

By strengthening the capacity of Dabane Trust to work with marginalised communities and to use sand dam technology, we will enable more people living below the international poverty line to break free of the stranglehold of water scarcity.



Matambo dam, Mozambique



**Sign up for monthly news at:
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EXCELLENT WORKER

Stephen Musyoka

Our partner organisation, Africa Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF), is based in the Ukambani region, south-east Kenya. They work with self help groups (organised community groups who are registered with the social services) in Makueni, Machakos and Kitui counties, enabling them to build their own water solutions and adopt sustainable agriculture.

Here, Stephen Musyoka talks about the vital role that monitoring and evaluation plays in delivering lasting change.

“Currently ASDF is working with 80 self help groups. We have worked with 99 self help groups in total over the past five years, supporting them to improve their own lives.

“Monitoring data is collected annually through focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews. Each month, self help group committees collect data on the progress and implementation of the projects. They pass it on to the ASDF field officer, who reports it during monthly reviews to the monitoring department, for the assessment of success and challenges faced that month.

“We are trying to understand how life has changed as a result of being involved in the project, using real life measures such as access to food, water and security of income. We also want to hear what more needs to be done to improve their lives

and what challenges remain as they continue to implement the projects. This is important as it helps ensure our solutions are the most relevant and effective for the people we work with, it helps inform decision-making for improved project management and keeps the interests, needs and aspirations of the community at the core of everything we do, ensuring their continued engagement throughout the project life cycle.

“I met Ulaani self help group in 2012 and their story was one of desperation and hopelessness. Having to travel each day 12 kilometres to fetch water meant they were demoralised and depended heavily on relief aid as frequent droughts affected food production. The farms were heavily eroded and a sombre mood engulfed the first meeting.

“Flash forward to 2015, I meet Faith Mwende of the Ulaani self help group, a symbol of female empowerment. As I go through the survey with her I am amazed by the transformation she describes. She remarks that she is now the bread winner of her family through fruit selling. She has grown over 200 fruit trees, papaya and mango trees, which have drastically changed her income levels for the community. She has been trained on tree planting and has become a contact person for the community in terms of offering technical advice on farming. She is a more respected person in the community and, now that her husband trusts her knowledge, has become the farm manager of their 6 acre farm.”



Stephen Musyoka, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, ASDF



Jane Kisulu, Tukille self help group

JANE'S STORY

Moving on up: from surviving to thriving

Jane Kisulu is a member of the Tukille self help group in south-east Kenya. As a mother, as a woman and as a farmer, water shortages have made each and every part of her life a struggle for as long as she can remember.

Reliant on subsistence farming as the only way to support her family, Jane has seen crops fail and trees dying because of erratic rainfall and drought. And the effects of climate change are making life as a dryland farmer ever more challenging.

Jane desperately wants her children to progress in their education, but she often had to ask them to sacrifice their schooling in order to collect water, an hour's walk away from home. She simply had no choice. And because Jane and her children together could only carry so much water back home, she and the other farmers would often have to forego bathing after a long, hot day working in the field. There just was not enough water to go round.

In late 2015, following a presentation in their local market by Excellent's partners, Africa Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF), Jane and her community were introduced to the idea of a local sand dam's potential to provide a permanent water supply close to home. Together they agreed it was the solution they needed, and they approached ASDF for support in building one.



Tukille self help group members

Now things are very different for Jane and her family. She explains just how much life has changed:

"I walk five minutes from my home to get to our sand dam and clean water. My children have more time for work and school, and the community women feel more happy because their hygiene at home has improved."

Now Jane's crops, fruit trees and grevillea trees (a fast-growing evergreen used for timber) are no longer dying; they are thriving. It's a complete turnaround - for Jane, her family, and the entire community.



WHEN WE HEARD ABOUT SAND DAMS WE GOT INTERESTED, BECAUSE WE HAD SUFFERED FOR A LONG TIME DUE TO LACK OF WATER.

Jane Kisulu
Tukille self help group



EXCELLENT SUPPORTER

Simon Bibby goes the extra mile

In April 2015, aged 60, Simon Bibby, set himself the tremendous challenge of running the London Marathon, raising a fantastic £2,286 for the communities who we support. Here is his account of the day:

"It was great! The crowds were amazing... I nervously wait with all the many heroines and heroes with their amazing, inspiring stories, near the back of the very last red pen #9... it takes about 20 minutes to cross the start line and I'm off into my 'high five shuffle', slow but sure, feeding desperately off the crowd's encouragement, high fiving all the way (including an unfortunate high five with a surprised man handing out globs of Vaseline... which is a bit messy). At half way I'm only beaten by one rhino, I think! Although the shark gobbles me up and probably the T-Rex too!

I feel pretty good as I surge up and over Tower Bridge for hugs, encouragement and a banana from family and friends... who tell me I'm "on track for 5 hours!". This is before (like Apollo 13) I disappear off the screen and they have an agonising wait as I wobble through the East End of London.

As everyone will tell you afterwards with the endorphins still sending you skywards - the marathon itself is fantastic... the people shout your name, which just keeps picking you up and throwing you forward another 100 yards

(that and my wife's request that we got home before Poldark! And before the dustcart sweeps me up).

I was starting to wobble through the Isle of Dogs because I was forgetting to engage with the crowd - but the drummers, the choirs and the bands give you hope and then family are there again at the 18 mile mark telling me it's not far to go (they are not fooling anyone). And yes, I'm through Canary Wharf and onto the Embankment and the people who have been waiting for hours don't know me, but it doesn't stop them shouting "Come on Simon" and I'm no longer shuffling, I'm running... Well, sort of. There's Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and I'm actually overtaking people... now where's that rhino?

I'm on the Mall and there's the finish - I've high fived my way round in 5 hours 19 minutes which means I come 31,721 out of 37,541 - 20,829 out of 23,188 in the men only and 443 out of 521 in the 60 to 64 category. And only one rhino (I think!). I'm told it's good to set a 'personal best' which presents a reasonable target for your next outing... did I just say 'next outing'? Who am I kidding!"

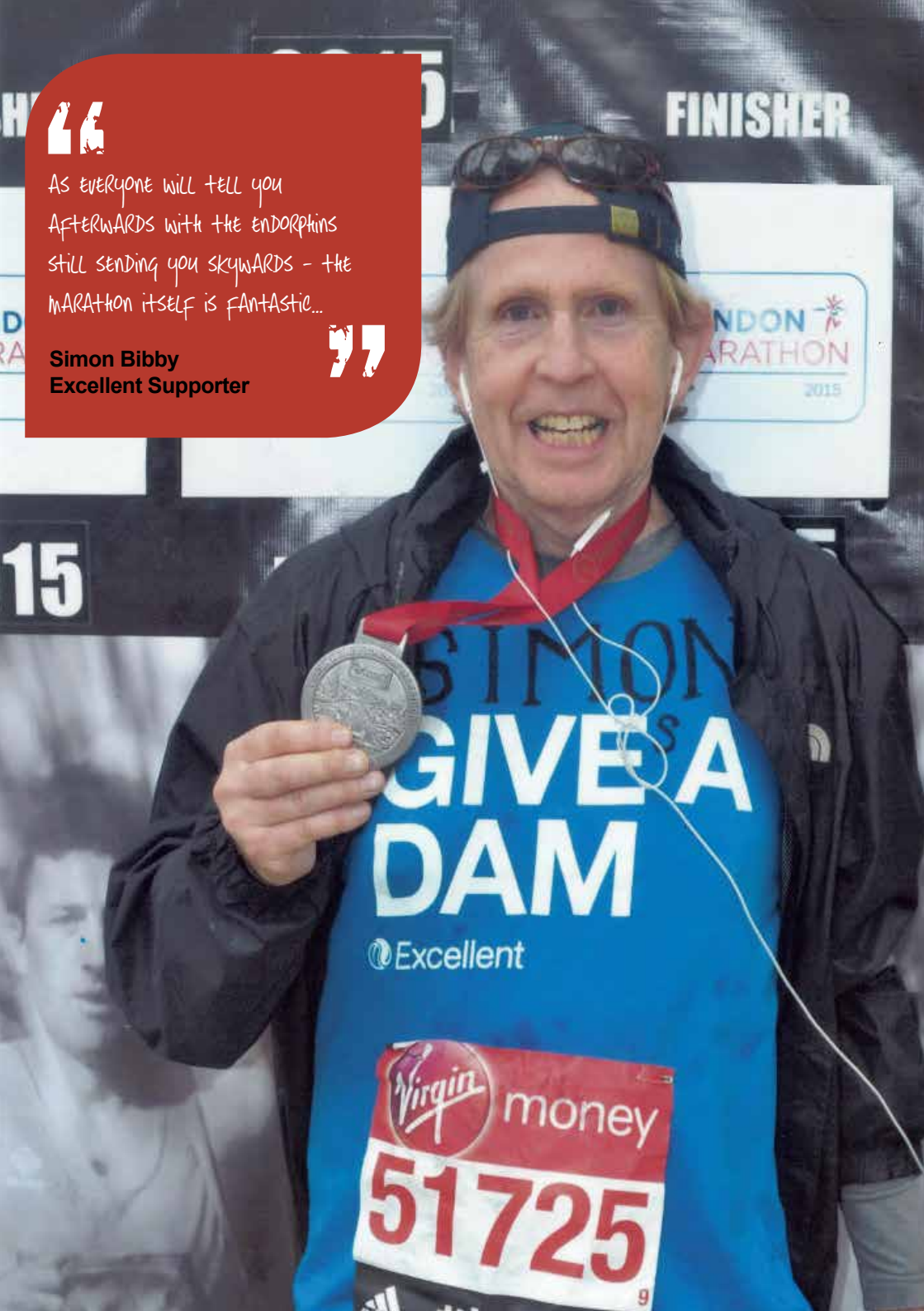
If you'd like to follow in Simon's footsteps and raise money for Excellent Development, please get in touch with chloe@excellent.org.uk

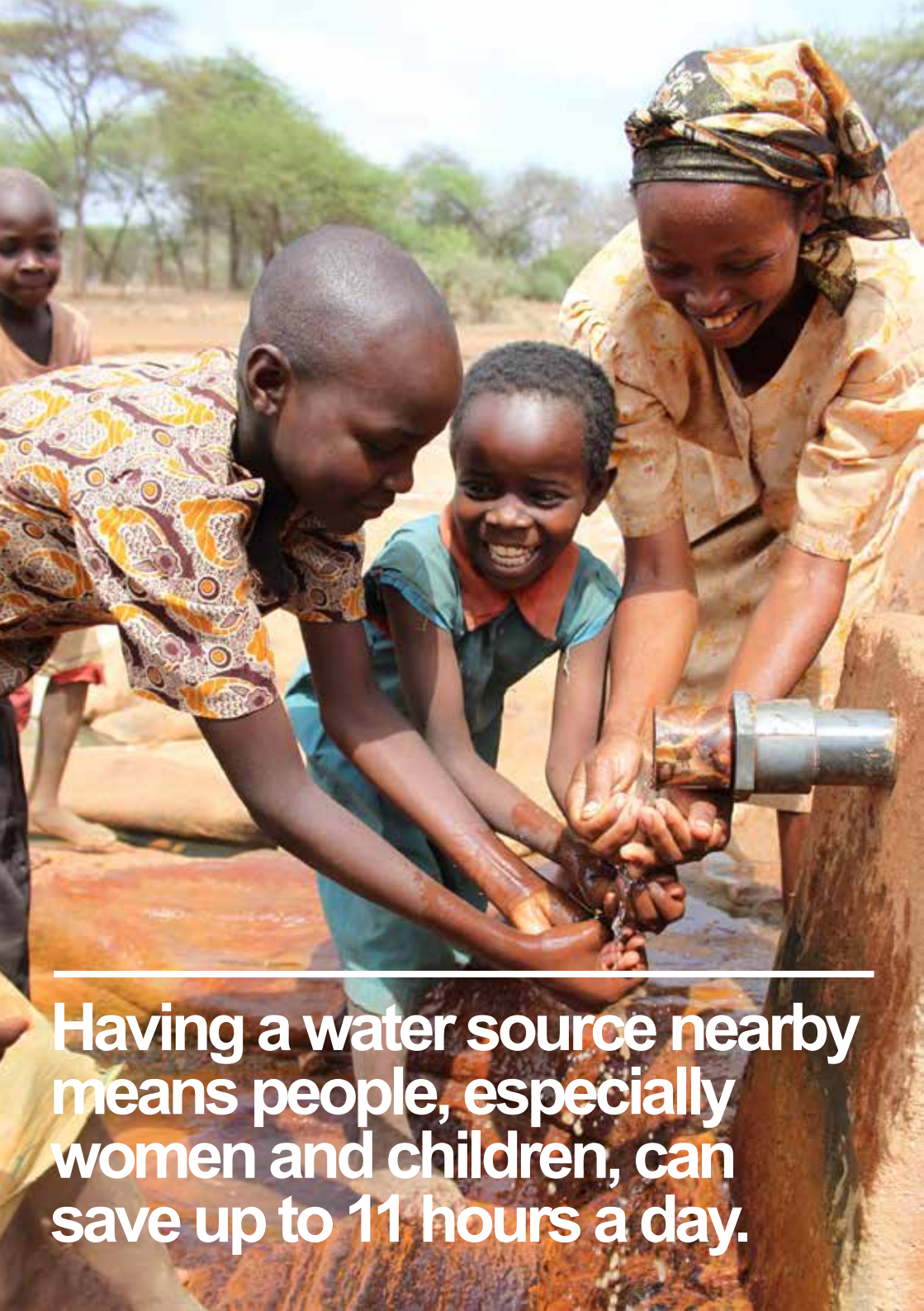
“

AS EVERYONE WILL TELL YOU
AFTERWARDS WITH THE ENDORPHINS
STILL SENDING YOU SKYWARDS - THE
MARATHON ITSELF IS FANTASTIC...

”

Simon Bibby
Excellent Supporter





Having a water source nearby means people, especially women and children, can save up to 11 hours a day.

PLEASE DONATE.

Regular donations create opportunity and hope for families where there is otherwise none. **£10 a month could support one person every month to have safe water for life.**

Regular donation	£
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Frequency (please circle)	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually
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Starting from date	
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Name and address of your bank/building society:

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Please pay CAF re Excellent Development Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction, subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand this instruction may remain with CAF re Excellent Development and, if so, details may be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

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