

2024 Annual Trip Report

Our trip in 2024 was very special for a couple reasons. First, we were joined by our friend and very generous supporter Ed Johnson for the third time AND he brought along his son Jed Johnson who had very meaningful experience as a pipefitter to share in many of the elements of our projects. Jed was also an instant celebrity everywhere we went based on his positive attitude and engaging style of interaction. Second, we had Board Member Barbara Loken join us. Barbara has been a very valuable member of our marketing and communications team since joining the Board. This trip allowed her to see first-hand the issues we are working to address. She had excellent feedback and input during the trip on changes we should consider for improvements moving forward. Barbara is also a GREAT photographer and captured some excellent pictures and videos we will be using in some of our communications and social media!

Meeting with New Contractor

We met with our new contractor and his lead engineer who worked on the project in the Village of Chipanga. They did a great job and implemented new designs for the reservoir and distribution points (DPs) to enhance the quality and double the amount of water that can be distributed in the same amount of time at each DP! As with any new relationship there will always be procedures, processes and communications that can be improved to help streamline future projects. We agreed on several changes that will enhance our future interaction.

Meeting with Government Officials (RUWASA)

We met with the government group who is responsible for oversight and ongoing management of all rural water projects implemented in Tanzania, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA). This agency is relatively new and is just beginning to engage with groups like ours to establish good relationships and agree on the best methods to partner effectively moving forward. One of the key opportunities for us is to potentially get some level of support for our projects from RUWASA that could reduce some of the overall costs. We will work with them on our next project to build a good working relationship and collaborate on the best use of resources to improve the implementation and sustainability of these projects.

Potential Use of Solar Solutions

We had several groups recommend we consider using solar systems in our future projects rather than the very reliable diesel engine and electrical designs we've used for years. We are investigating a number of villages who have installed solar systems and reaching out to a group from Engineers Without Borders who have worked on such systems in the area for several years. If the results of our research prove promising, we may consider using a solar system on one of our next villages!

Chitope

We visited the village to see the positive changes that have occurred after the WASH training and implementation of WASH Clubs and competitions in the schools. This included improved latrines and more use of handwashing stations throughout the village. We also observed and discussed the progress on the lines going out to the schools and dispensary.

Chipanga

We visited this village of over 8,900 to celebrate the completion of their water project. They were extremely happy and very thankful for the new sustainable clean water right in their village. As one young woman said, "It was as if hope itself had arrived!" They enjoyed showing us the new beautiful 15-meter-high reservoir and the active distribution points throughout the village. It was exciting to see so many smiles and the joy within the community. We enjoyed singing, dancing and exchanging gifts.

Ikombolinga

We visited this village to discuss the findings of the annual Monitoring and Evaluation report we provided them. We wanted to understand what has been working well and what they could do to improve things even more. We visited a school to hear the value WASH training and competitions have had in changing the health habits of the entire community. We spent time with the local water committee and people who run the water project to discuss challenges they've had due to poor quality of pipe used in one section of the project. We committed to replace the pipe and are implementing special quality tests on all materials used in future projects to reduce/eliminate this type of problem. Our reputation is extremely important, and we want to be certain the villages are set up for success to sustainably maintain these projects on their own.

Bahi Makulu

We visited this village of over 6,300 people as one of the potential candidate villages for a water project. The villagers were very enthusiastic and showed us first-hand the challenges they deal with in everyday life. They committed to being great partners and doing what's required to ensure the project's successful completion and ongoing operation.

TLP (T) Board Meeting

We had the privilege to participate in the TLP(T) Board meeting during our visit. Topics covered included project updates, financials, and ways for TLP(T) to leverage their Board more in the future. We discussed the proposed changes in our process that would engage RUWASA in future projects. We also reviewed the positive impact changes in communication between TLP(USA) and TLP(T) have had over the past year thanks to the great efforts of the TLP(T) team.