

Meet Jane



Jane is 11 years old, and goes to Simango Basic School, Zambia.

She lives with her younger brother, Valetine, and her grandparents in Inonge village, which is a 6 kilometre walk from Simango Basic School. Jane's favourite subject is English, and she would like to be a doctor when she grows up, so she can cure people of diseases.

At home, Jane helps with washing plates, cooking and watering the garden, which is not easy because there are no taps to provide running water in her house.

Every morning, she wakes up at 5am to light the fire and warm some water for bathing. After bathing she puts on her school uniform and has Chibwantu for breakfast, which is a drink made of corn porridge and root crops boiled together, before walking to school.

Simango Basic School has no running water, so Jane and the other pupils have to go to collect heavy buckets of water from the nearby river, to use for drinking and cleaning.

Jane is always very tired after her 6 kilometre walk to school, and collecting water takes a long time, and causes pain in her back and neck.

"I go to the river three times in a day, and I get very tired. It is hard to lift and put the bucket of water on the head - sometimes you have to ask someone to help you," said Jane.

Cows and other animals go to the toilet in the river, and Jane describes the water as brown and smelly.

Jane also says that pupils aren't able to wash their hands after using the toilet because there is no water at the school. There usually isn't time to run to the river, as pupils need to rush back to class so they don't miss out on lessons.

"I don't feel good using these toilets - they are almost full and they smell. They are not clean because of lack of water," she adds.

WaterAid are going to be installing taps and toilets at Simango Basic School this year, so the pupils won't have to go to the river anymore. Jane is very excited:

"I can feel very happy if someone helped us with a borehole because we will be drinking water easily and we can wash our hands after using the toilet."

