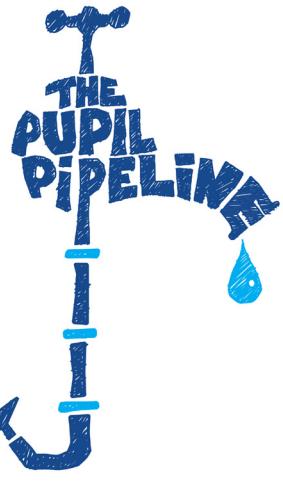


Welcome to Simango Basic School



Simango Basic School is in a valley in the south of Zambia, Africa. It sits on the banks of the Ngwezi River and is near lots of small villages.

The houses in the villages are made from mud and poles, with grass thatched roofs. There is usually only one door in the house, and very small windows. None of the houses have running water, and the kitchens and toilets are outside.

At dawn and dusk, as people warm themselves or make their meals using charcoal or firewood, it is common to see smoke rising from the grass thatched roof tops. Many people depend on firewood for their fuel and do not have electricity in their houses.

Most people use ox-drawn carts for transport in Simango. There are lots of shrubs and large trees along the road to Simango, and the soil is sandy, making it difficult for vehicles to drive through.

Simango Basic School is 70 years old. It has never had its own water supply.

Xavier Mwiinga, the Deputy Head teacher, explained that not having a water supply is very dangerous for the school children. Pupils at Simango have to collect water from a nearby river when they are thirsty:

“Pupils go to the riverbed, dig out small holes in the sand and then scoop some water from there to fill up the bucket and then bring to the school for various uses which includes drinking.”

He explained that the pupils were sharing water with animals like cows, and that the water from the river was not good for people to drink.

Floridah, 12, agreed, explaining that the water at the river did not taste good and had a smell as a result of the many animals which drank from it.

“Sometimes we find animals at the river, so we just have to chase them so that we have a chance to drink.”

Simango Basic School also only has 9 toilets for over 800 pupils – this is almost 100 pupils per toilet.

