



WHO WE ARE

Wells for Zoë is a small, personal, Irish, voluntary organization, working in Northern Malawi since 2005. Our main focus is enabling the rural poor to access clean, safe drinking water, and over 500,000 people in Malawi, and Zambia have clean water as a result.

MISSION

Our mission is to enable the rural poor to access clean, safe drinking water, one pump at a time.

VISION

Our vision is a world where women and girls, everywhere have easy access to clean, safe drinking water, leading to improved health and access to education. A place where all can reach their full potential.

PHILOSOPHY

“Go to the people. Live with them. Learn from them. Love them. Start with what they know. Build with what they have. But when the work is done, enable the people to say we have done this ourselves.”

Lao Tzu (600 BC – 531 BC)

WHAT WE DO

We manufacture a simple plastic hand pump in Mzuzu (main city in Northern Malawi) which can be maintained by village women. Villagers dig wells, provide sand and bricks and all labour. w4z supply pump, pipes and cement, free to communities. This pump can then supply up to **500** people with clean water for life.

Our aim is to have pumps about **1 km** apart and keep the number of users to around **200**.

HOW WE DO IT

This is not the end as we stay with villages to support **Preschools, Adult Education and Sustainable Organic Farming**.

When a well is installed in a village, girls and women spend less time carrying water, health improves and there is a potential to achieve more. Lives change for the better, forever. About 800 million people in the world don't have safe water, but our story is not about numbers. It's about people – each one person – and their potential to flourish and develop to their true potential.



Lack of clean water is regularly their main obstacle and the solution is so simple that it's hard to believe. That it only costs **€5** to give a whole family clean water for life is incredulous.

Wells for Zoë can achieve this because: we have our own, unique pump — the organisation is run by volunteers — 100% of donations get to the projects — we work with Malawians on their personal plans — sustainability is achieved in villages using inspiration, education and challenge so that people can empower themselves.



WHO

Founded by **John and Mary Coyne** from Lucan, Co Dublin, Ireland, it is supported mainly by family and friends and volunteers in Ireland, and more recently so many people all over the world and in so many ways. Our operation runs very much on a shoestring budget – as it should in our opinion – with no Government, and very little corporate, funding; it depends on the generosity of the public for progress. The Coyne's do however continue to pay all administrative expenses including flights to and travel and accommodation while in Malawi; which is now about five months each year. This enables **100%** of all public donations to be spent where they are needed: in Malawi.

The only people paid by Wells for Zoë are our Malawian employees.

WHY

We went to Malawi for the first time at **Easter 2005** and were disturbed by a few things in particular: the sight of women and little girls carrying dirty water on their heads; how shallow the wells needed to be; the huge number of broken pumps or how few were maintained by their original installers.

On returning home, we got our family of five together and discussed spending their inheritance on what appeared to so many as a mad adventure in Malawi. They were all behind us so we e-mailed every organization we could find on the net involved in water. We got few replies and even then they wanted our money.

It wasn't easy, but we eventually found **Richard Carter** – who introduced us to **Richard Cansdale** and his unique pump – brought them to Mzuzu, and with great support from **Br Aidan Clohessy**, (Director of **St John of God Services**; our friend and mentor) set up our base with the SJOG in Mzuzu, which is still our home-away-from-home for about **20 weeks each year**. I suppose the rest is a history of a relationship with the rural villagers we journey with, and our unique relationship with, and support from the SJOG organization. Without them none of this would be possible.

HOW

Wells for Zoë is about **pumps and wells**, but **clean water** in a village **changes everything**, so in a way we enable people to fulfil dreams. Village women pray for clean water and when this obstacle is removed they develop their dreams. They have time to do other work, which enables them to pay for schooling, books, and uniforms. They can afford some medicines and the occasional luxury like a new cooking pot. They get involved in adult education and get a voice. They reclaim a little dignity and start thinking of a better future. Once clean water is in place we journey with women's groups on their plans for **preschools, adult education and conservation farming**. Where women are the drivers the whole community finds its way to move forward. This development begins at the very bottom and with many tiny steps inspiration turns hope into reality.

Regularly it looks as if this is not about wells and pumps at all, but about people and giving them encouragement to be themselves, and achieve a sense of worth. It's about kindling the fire within and watching the take off. Nothing about this bottom-up approach is easy but if an organisation is small, agile and hands-on, like w4z, and always prepared to adapt and rethink, everything becomes a possibility.



OUR APPROACH

Looking at the world of development – the money spent, the strategic planning, the missions and visions that are written about – we had to consider how we might approach our work. We knew our limitations and knew that we needed to keep to what we knew. Having come from two small farms in the west of Ireland, we fully appreciate the value of hard work and education and, in reality, had no difficulty slotting into the poor rural environment that this mad adventure has been chosen for us, with the poorest of the poor subsistence farmers; God's own people, like the people who made us what we are.

We now work in villages, mainly with women who have developed Self Help Clusters, under the guidance, and support of St John of God Services, looking at community needs. We work with whole communities on their plans, where they have identified clean water, preschools, adult education and nutrition as their primary needs.

We work with people of all religions and none, enabling them to empower themselves to break what appears to be a never-ending cycle of poverty.

We realised early on that this was the road less travelled.

We give no handouts, we pay no allowances or expenses (our funding is too small).

We only work with communities who have made a beginning themselves.

Regularly it's two steps forward and one step back, but its progress.

We don't do pretence. We have our failures, we admit them and move on, learning in the process, so that we don't repeat mistakes

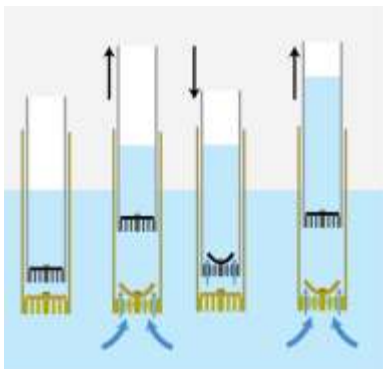
Our promise is to deliver 100% of all donations to our projects.

Corruption is difficult to cope with, not alone because it is wrong, but it is such an injustice to the poor who would have benefited from the funding that was denied them.

OUR PUMP

The **Zoë (Canzee) Pump** is a direct action hand pump, manufactured by Wells for Zoë in Mzuzu, Malawi, for the past 8 years. It is a modified version of the Canzee pump designed by Owen Jones in New Zealand with development from Richard Cansdale in the UK.

The pump has an ingeniously simple pumping principle which eliminates the need for close fitting piston seals; one of the main wearing parts in conventional piston pumps. Instead, this pump utilizes two non-return valves each with a circular rubber disc which can be easily cut from an old tyre inner tube. The pump is corrosion resistant since it consists entirely of strong plastic and stainless steel. If any part wears it is easily replaced, so the pump is infinitely repairable.



Below ground the pump consists of two concentric pipes placed one inside the other. The outer pipe remains fixed and attached to the pump body while the inner pipe, the plunger is attached to the handle by a stainless steel rod and moved up and down. When in use these two PVC pipes – a 40mm one inside a 50mm one that slide inside each other – have a fine film of water between them, which provides lubrication so there is no wear. Each pipe has a simple non-return valve fitted at the end in the water.

All materials are made in Malawi, except for the stainless steel rod, which is attached to a wooden handle.



PUMP FEATURES

Manufacturer: Wells for Zoë

Depth of lift: 23 meters (thus far)

Fitting: A steel coupler is set into the concrete well cover and the pump is screwed in.

Flow rate: 20 to 30 liters per minute.

Usage: Generally 200 to 250 people.

Special Features: Can be maintained by village women, after little training, using three 100mm nails and negligible cost; parts supplied with the pump.

Needs no lubrication.

It is almost fully recyclable.

Even small children can use it.

If the water table drops, we can just dig the well deeper and extend the length of the two (down the well) pipes.

The pump is so light that it can be carried on a bicycle, or on a bus, anywhere, with a minimum of fuss and at very low cost.

Wells for Zoë also manufacture a similar hand pump for irrigation. It can reach the same depth of 23 meters and can simultaneously deliver water to a height of over nine meters into a tank or dam.

PUMP GUARANTEE

Because we are confident of the pumps reliability we are prepared to give a guarantee for 5 years, so long as the users undergo training and there is no vandalism or abuse.

We believe that once a pump is installed that it should work at all times, so we must have problems sorted within 24 hours. Since our policy is to have pumps within 1000 meters of each other disruption will be minimal. With proper training, we rarely have any need to call back.

When possible, we work with Self Help Clusters. They invite us, they plan, they dig wells, make and build bricks and make the cover and supply all labour. We can supply the complete pump and cement, FREE OF CHARGE to communities.

Over the years we have partnered with Global Concern (Australia), Cara Malawi (Ireland), St John of God Services (Malawi), Ungweru (Malawi), Lifeline Zambia (Denmark), Kiltteegan Fathers (Ireland).

The well must be 1.5 meters diameter and have at least 1.5 meters of water when the water table is at its lowest.

At times we sell pumps to individuals and organisations, negotiating a price which reflects need and ability to pay, but most of our pumps are free and many make no profit for w4z. Naturally any profit that is made goes back into this voluntary organisation.