

# blessings

OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL

MAR 2017

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A mountain village is refreshed in more ways than one!

# OPERATION BLESSING HAPPENINGS



## TANZANIA

Mary undergoes treatment for bilateral clubfoot. After over a year of casting, she was referred to a clubfoot clinic run by Operation Blessing partner MiracleFeet where she received surgery and a brace. She can now run and even enjoys playing soccer!



## HONDURAS

Joel has his growth checked at an Operation Blessing community health program in the mountains of Honduras.

## HAITI

Children learn critical thinking and problem solving skills at a chess competition at Operation Blessing's ENLA school in Haiti.



## VIRGINIA, USA

Operation Blessing staff and volunteers pause for a photo in the midst of packing care packages and grocery bags for seniors in need.



## WEST BANK

Operation Blessing volunteers work to complete a new kitchen for the Holy Family Church in the West Bank. OBI supplied industrial kitchen equipment that will be used to feed the poor in this community.





## Mountain Safety Research

has developed an incredible table-top chlorine generator known as the SE200. Small enough to fit in a tiny briefcase, the SE200 runs off a 12-volt battery or conventional wall plug. In five minutes, this unit produces enough chlorine to disinfect 50 gallons of water.

An early contributor to the development of this product by field testing it, Operation Blessing was also the first organization to purchase the unit.

We are now using it in 14 countries to bring safe water solutions to communities in need! One of the first places we used the SE200 was rural Cuba, where there was access to water, but it was not safe to drink. We have also brought the SE200 to Zambia, where we trained locals in the use and operation so families can be guaranteed safe water. This is only the beginning for OBI's use of this handy, effective and useful tool in our safe water toolkit.

**1 IN 9 PEOPLE WORLDWIDE** do not have access to improved sources of drinking water.<sup>1</sup>

Over **3 million** people die each year due to inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.<sup>1</sup>

More than **2.2 million** people die each year from diseases associated with poor water and sanitary conditions.<sup>1</sup>

AT ANY ONE TIME, **HALF OF THE WORLD'S HOSPITAL BEDS** ARE OCCUPIED BY PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM WATER-BORNE DISEASES. <sup>1</sup>

Every day, around 2,200 children die from diarrheal disease.<sup>2</sup>



Water is implicated in **80%** of all sickness and disease worldwide.<sup>3</sup>

**WE ARE WORKING TO CHANGE THESE STATISTICS. WILL YOU JOIN US?**

1. UN 2. CDC 3. WorldWaterCouncil



# Changing the trend

## How safe water technology is changing lives



### Bill's Blog

by **Bill Horan**, President  
Operation Blessing International

Read more from Bill's Blog  
at [ob.org/bill](http://ob.org/bill)

People caught in the midst of famines, wars or shipwrecks often survive for weeks without food, shelter and medical care, but the human body is only equipped to last a few days without water. Although most of us take this precious resource for granted, for many around the world water means life — and a lack of safe drinking water can result in death.

Over 60 percent of the human body consists of water. Every organ and living cell is dependent on a continual supply of water, water which we are constantly losing. Even simple acts like breathing and sweating drain our bodies of water and, unless replenished, dehydration sets in. After two days, the skin begins to turn blue and organs begin to deteriorate. If temperatures are high, humans without water go into a steep spiral and die in 2-3 days.

Since our bodies cannot survive without it, millions of people around the world have no choice

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H2O PURIFIER



SE200



H2OB OASIS



SE200

*Continued from page 9*

but to drink water that they know is likely to make them sick. Children without access to safe water suffer the most. A hospital administrator in the mountains of Haiti told me that half of his hospital beds are filled with children and elderly individuals suffering from water-borne disease. Can you imagine giving your child water that you know is contaminated?

Of all the things that Operation Blessing does to help the poor, I can't think of anything that has greater impact than helping people gain access to safe drinking water. The impact on public health, as we strive to break generational cycles of poverty, is immeasurable. Traditionally, Operation Blessing only drilled wells. But in recent years, ground water aquifers have become contaminated in almost all countries without municipal sanitation sewers.

So we have shifted our strategy, and rather than finding new water by drilling new wells, in many cases we now invest in equipment that turns bad water into safe water. Once we provide safe water equipment, we train pastors and community health workers in how to maintain it. Every time we do this, the community takes a quantum leap

toward better and healthier lives for everyone.

I believe that in order to have the greatest impact on the alleviation of water-borne suffering, we need to be aware of the very latest technology that enables us to filter or disinfect drinking water, both with and without electricity, in a manner that empowers locals to continue the purification of their drinking water without outside intervention. Much of the water purification equipment used in humanitarian efforts around the world today is ineffective, and the options that work are too expensive and difficult to maintain in remote areas. Sadly, the good intentions of many organizations fail to provide safe water in a sustainable manner.

Operation Blessing is changing that trend. We have transitioned to using technology like the SE200, H2gO, Sanilac-6 and a product named OASIS that we are developing in partnership with one of the world's most respected water experts. Our investments in leading edge technologies and equipment is paying off in a big way, and we are able to impact far more people than in years past. We need your continued support in our safe water efforts to change even more lives! ♦



SANILAC-6



COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS



KOHLER CLARITY

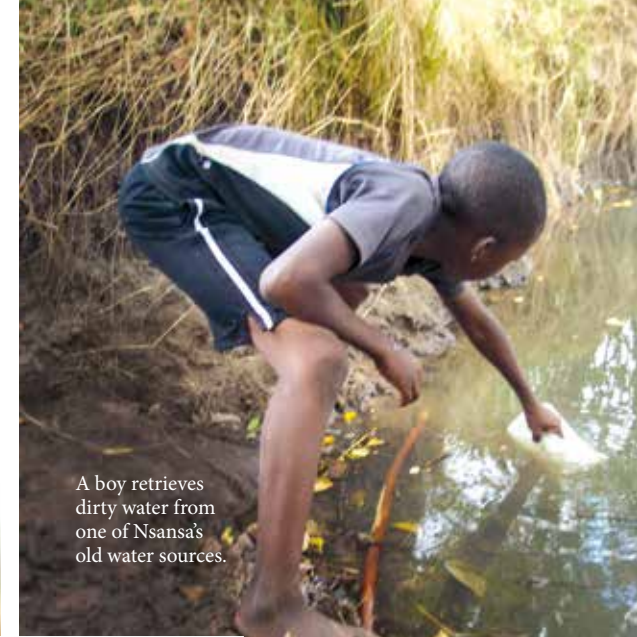
# A C O M M U N I T Y TRANSFORMED

About an hour and a half outside Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, lies Nsansa Village, a rural community with a thousand or so residents who earn their livings with traditional trades like farming, making charcoal or hunting. Nsansa means “happiness” or “joy” in the native Bemba language, but for many years the people here have faced a crippling struggle — the lack of safe water.

With no alternatives, residents were forced to walk long distances to open ponds and pits to retrieve sandy, polluted water that they then had to haul back to their homes. Not only did the dirty water cause health problems, but the daily labor of retrieving and transporting it was a heavy burden for the impoverished people to bear.

After at least seven attempts to drill wells for the village all came up dry, the people’s hope of having their own safe water source had become faint. Operation Blessing learned of the village’s plight through involvement with a local non-governmental organization called the Nsansa Village Community Development Mission. The mission works to

*Continued on page 15*



A boy retrieves dirty water from one of Nsansa’s old water sources.



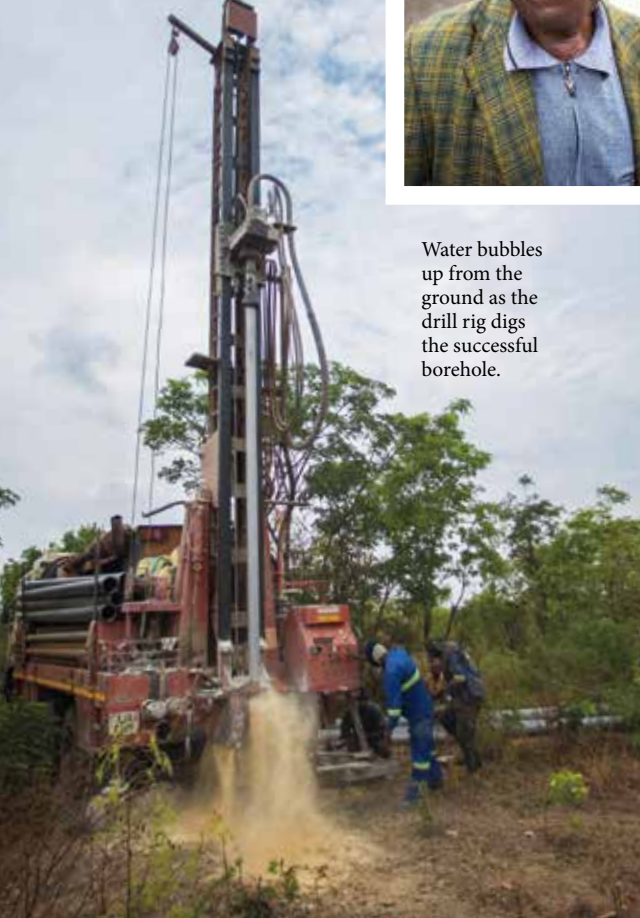
Filling up a glass with safe water!



To ensure that a lack of potable water will never again be a problem for the village, Operation Blessing also brought SE200 chlorine generators and trained locals in their use.



After enlisting the help of their teachers to learn shoe sizes, Operation Blessing purchased new shoes and sandals for Nsansa's school children.



Water bubbles up from the ground as the drill rig digs the successful borehole.



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provide orphans and homeless children with the support, care and education they need. The orphans served by the program had to walk miles every day to retrieve filthy water that endangered their health with every drink.

The situation was dire, so Operation Blessing decided to attempt drilling for water in Nsansa once again. The drill rig began probing the ground and, finally, after so many failures, the borehole struck water. At long last, a new water source bubbled up from below.

Operation Blessing wasted no time in installing a pump where villagers could fill containers with precious safe water. An extensive distribution network, complete with a 5,000-gallon reservoir tank, was also constructed to bring water directly to the orphanage and local schools. To ensure that a lack of potable water will never again be a problem for the village, Operation Blessing also brought SE200 chlorine generators and trained locals in their use. But bringing safe water to Nsansa was just the beginning.

After enlisting the help of their teachers to learn shoe sizes, Operation Blessing purchased new shoes and sandals for Nsansa's school children. For the older generations, Operation Blessing brought an optometrist to the village. Three hundred people received free eye exams and glasses, allowing many to see clearly for the first time in decades! With abundant safe water, new shoes for their children and eyeglasses for those in need, Nsansa Village has truly been transformed by the kindness and generosity of Operation Blessing's faithful supporters. ♦



# COOKING UP SUCCESS

Unemployed man starts his own business farming and marketing quail

In a season of unemployment, families must tap into any available resource to earn an income. In a small town in Honduras, that's exactly what Julian did. He had been unemployed for more than a year when he noticed that quail eggs sold for a good profit at his local market; he thought of the four quail he already owned at home and wondered if he could start his own business.

Julian did research into preparing and marketing cooked quail eggs and set to work, beginning with taste testing his product at gatherings with family and friends. After receiving positive feedback, he marketed his own pickled quail eggs to a local bakery.

Achieving moderate success, Julian wanted to expand his business.

He bought more than 200 quail and learned how he could sell the quail eggs, as well as uncooked meat, to local hotels and restaurants. However, the necessary equipment — a food-packaging vacuum system — was too expensive.

Julian was attending an Operation Blessing International bread-making workshop when OBI learned of his efforts to run his own business and of his need for additional equipment in order to continue his success. OBI provided Julian with the necessary food-packaging vacuum system, allowing him to sell his eggs and meat to local establishments! ♦



# The business of **PERSEVERANCE**

A young mom in need of help receives the gift of a lifetime



*“I decided to fight alongside her,” Sonia said. “Lesly is the best thing that ever happened to me.”*

Being a single parent can feel like a never-ending balancing act, as the parent works to provide for every physical and emotional need of the child. Sonia found herself in that position in 2009 when she discovered she was pregnant.

The father had already left Sonia, but she wasn't nervous about providing for the baby. “I had a good job,” she said. “I was very happy to be pregnant.” However, Sonia didn't count on a complicated birth that almost took the life of her daughter, Lesly. The little girl survived, but she was born with spina bifida, a birth defect that occurs when the baby's spinal cord doesn't

develop properly. The condition often causes permanent paralysis, as was the case with Lesly. She would need constant medical care.

Sonia was alone and afraid, but she felt her baby was a treasure from God. “I decided to fight alongside her,” she said. “Lesly is the best thing that ever happened to me.”

Due to Lesly's frequent medical appointments, Sonia lost her steady job cleaning houses. She exhausted many opportunities looking for work, but found herself unemployed due to the attention she had to give Lesly.



Sonia began selling candy on public buses, then shoes from her home. Still, her profit margin was small, and she could not meet her family's basic needs.

In the summer of 2016, Sonia connected with Operation Blessing International via a wheelchair distribution through which Lesly received a new wheelchair that Sonia hadn't been able to afford. After learning

Sonia's story, OBI also set her up with our microenterprise program and helped her grow her business of selling

shoes from her home. “I have a larger business than I could have ever imagined,” Sonia said. With her current income, she can meet basic needs and beyond for herself and her daughter.

Sonia is grateful for Operation Blessing's help in growing her business. She kept her promise to Lesly and has fought alongside her daughter to provide well and remain a source of comfort and strength, giving the two a chance to have a long, healthy life as mother and daughter. ♦

# water *refreshes* a Peruvian school

Nestled high in the Andes Mountains along the Bolivian border, not far from Lake Titicaca, lies the small community of Machacamarca in the Vilque district. At 12,500 feet above sea level, ice is abundant in the area. Water, however, can be hard to come by.

Machacamarca has one school that serves as both preschool and high school, the San Juan de Machacamarca School, which Operation Blessing helped to repair back in 2015. Once the renovation was completed, the need for a source of safe water and new bathrooms for the children became abundantly clear. *Continued on page 22*

Andrea, a preschooler, now has access to fresh, safe water!



Andrea was afraid of falling into the open latrine.



**“We have no water to drink. When we have physical education class on a hot day, we struggle with it, and after class I feel that I cannot concentrate or understand what the teacher is explaining. I feel dehydrated and very thirsty.” – Joel, 13**

The lack of water caused other problems, too. With no way to wash their hands after using the school’s dilapidated old latrine, the children lacked basic hygiene practices. This left them vulnerable to sickness and infection.

“With no lavatories to wash hands, it is impossible to teach our kids they should do it, especially after using the latrines or eating lunch. They spend five hours at the school not being able to wash their hands, and it’s dangerous to their health. Few kids bring bottles of water from home. Most of them do not have access to safe water and that is why they feel tired and dehydrated

all the time, some of them walk thirty minutes to get to school and there’s no water for them to drink.” – Eusebio, preschool teacher

To make matters worse, the school’s 45 high school students, 10 preschoolers and teachers all had to share one dangerous old outhouse. “Once I almost fell down the latrine,” said little Andrea, one of the school’s preschool students.

Determined to bring safe water, new bathrooms and hand washing stations to the school, Operation Blessing Peru formed a partnership with the municipality of Machacmarca and the district of Vilque. Fifty-five parents also volunteered to help with the project, many working daily as bricklayers. OB Peru provided materials and hired an engineer and construction expert to ensure that everything was built correctly.

Construction took three months and when opening day arrived the community celebrated with a feast and

dancing! The school now had three brand new bathrooms, two hand washing stations and, most importantly, a new safe water system. In addition to the school, the water system now provides clean, safe drinking water to the surrounding community of 240 people.

**“What a joy you have brought to our community, Operation Blessing,” exclaimed Machacmarca’s mayor. “You not only built the water system for the school, but thought of us and we now have drinking water in our homes!”**

Thanks to the safe water system and new facilities, Mr. Obed, Mayor of Vilque, announced. “I have some good news for you. The Ministry of Education agreed to declare the San Juan de Machacmarca School as a national school of the district of Vilque, so we will now have their full support. We could not have achieved it without the help of Operation Blessing!”

Not only do the children and teachers of San Juan de Machacmarca now have access to safe drinking water, clean bathrooms and hygiene, but all of the facilities will now be maintained by the Ministry of Education, which will also pay the teachers’ salaries. ♦





# PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS NEED YOUR HELP

In the Middle East, churches are bombed and Christian families flee their homes in the dead of night to escape violence and death. The persecution rivals stories found in the Bible and history books.

Join us in lifting these believers up in prayer throughout this Lenten season. And support hurting families like these with your special gift at:

[operationblessing.org](http://operationblessing.org)



[operationblessing.org](http://operationblessing.org)



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