



Photo: Caritas Australia

**Toefuata'iga**, (*Toy-foo-ah-tah-ing-ah*) is a 13-year-old 8th grade primary school student in **Samoa**. Her primary school in Upolu, Samoa, grappled with severe water scarcity that disrupted education and jeopardised students' health.

Toefuata'iga and her classmates often faced frequent early dismissals and missed lessons due to a lack of clean water. Teachers often had to leave the school to fetch water from nearby homes, adding strain to the staff and local community. The absence of a reliable water source also led to compromised hygiene, increasing the risk of dehydration and waterborne diseases, which affected students' health.

The situation changed dramatically when Caritas Samoa, a partner of Caritas Australia, installed a 10,000 litre water tank at the school. This new water source enabled the school to maintain regular class schedules, improving both educational outcomes and student health. Attendance and enrolment numbers surged, as parents no longer worried about sending their children to a school without access to clean water.

***"Now that we have the water tank, things are so much better,"*** said Toefuata'iga. ***"We can stay at school all day, and I get to spend more time learning and playing with my friends. I'm happy that we don't have to go home early anymore."***

THE **BIG** WATER  
WALK 



# Thandolwayo

## Zimbabwe



Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Life in her village in north-western **Zimbabwe** wasn't easy for 12-year-old **Thandolwayo**. Every morning Thandolwayo would walk **7 kilometres** and risk being attacked by crocodiles as she collected contaminated water for her family. She'd then go to school feeling exhausted.

Thandolwayo's hope to be a nurse seemed almost impossible to realise, until Caritas Hwange helped the village to install two solar powered pumps and two 10,000 litre water storage tanks. The pumps draw the water up from the river to the storage tanks. Thanks to Caritas' support, water is now on tap in the village, benefitting the whole community - and Thandolwayo can concentrate on her education.

***"Now I can bathe every day, the distance to collect water for the family has been reduced,"*** Thandolwayo says. ***"We now drink clean, safe water and diseases are no longer affecting us."***

The plentiful water supply has also triggered new ventures. Water is being used to mould bricks for building houses and to pound maize to sell. Plans are underway to establish a community garden and a fish pond, to generate a better income.





# THE BIG WATER WALK



## Oliva Tanzania



Photo: Photo: August Lucky

**Oliva** lives in northern **Tanzania** with her husband and four children. Oliva runs a kiosk, selling grocery products and serving tea and snacks. To make ends meet, she also works as a casual labourer on local onion farms.

Oliva and her community did not have easy access to clean water. They needed to travel **10 kilometres** to fetch water from unprotected wells in the village.

With the support of Caritas Australia's local partner organisation, Diocese of Mbulu Development Department (DMDD), a water pump was installed in the community so families have water closer to their homes.

*"Improved access to safe and clean water plays the greatest role in improving my family's life as we are now able to fetch water at a short distance of 500 metres. Close access to water has also led me to save time for doing other economic activities inside and outside the household,"* says Oliva.

Improved access to irrigation infrastructure has also increased food production, improving food security for families.





Photo: August Lucky

**Maria** lives in a village in northern **Tanzania**, in a region with long-term food and water insecurity. With little way of earning a sustainable income, it was a daily struggle for Maria and her husband to feed their young family. Maria had to walk a **4 kilometre round trip** to fetch water her household.

With the support of Caritas Australia's local partner, Diocese of Mbulu Development Department (DMDD), Maria's community was able to install a new borehole closer to the village so that they no longer have to walk long distances to access safe, clean water.

Improved irrigation also boosted food production, enabling Maria's family to have enough to eat all year round, as well as increasing their income.

***"We have increased happiness in our family as we are able to fulfil basic needs,"*** Maria says. ***"In the future, I would like have a dairy cow, to build a good house and I want my children to do well in school so they can get good jobs and have a good future."***





Photo: Neil Nua

**Margret** teaches students who are deaf at a vocational school in the **Solomon Islands**. Margret was born deaf herself, so she knows the challenges many of her students face in pursuing their education and employment.

An ongoing challenge for students at her school was sourcing water. The school's four small tanks always ran out of water during the dry season. This meant that the school had a shortage of water for half the year.

Students and teachers had to walk off campus, **twice every day, to collect water**.

With Caritas Australia's support, Margret's school was able to install water tanks, repair school property and help to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Now, the school can maintain its own water supply and is also boosting food security by increasing its agricultural production.

***"Water is always available now for drinking, washing, bathing, gardening. Water is so important for our life, our music and our culture,"*** Margret said.



Photo: Caritas Australia

29-year-old **Salin** is a mother and a principal of a primary school in rural **Cambodia**. Like many families in her village, Salin faced constant water shortages which made it difficult to provide safe drinking water for her daughter.

Salin's family struggled to regularly access clean drinking water, with the nearest water well over **1.5 kilometres** from their village. Children at her school also regularly missed school because of waterborne diseases.

With the support of Caritas Australia's local partners in Cambodia, Salin and her community constructed a water station near her school to supply clean water to people in her community. Children at her school are healthier and less likely to miss school because they can access clean water, handwash, and toilet facilities. Salin's community voted her to be the chairperson of her village's water station committee and she is now leading her community to ensure clean water for all.

*"I am proud that I can help the community have access to water,"* Salin said.