

Partnership Report - Spring 2009

Water for Life hits 100 in Benin

The Jan/Feb 09 GAIN trip to Benin, West Africa was long anticipated and included a major milestone for the 4 year old project. Thanks to God's direction and favour and the participation of caring partners, GAIN Canada has drilled the 100th water well in Benin, and it was time to pause and celebrate! In Africa, the phrase "water is life" is commonly expressed, but is said with a sobering remembrance. People routinely do go without easy access to water, and that water is most often ridden with diseases from unseen bacteria or parasites or contaminated by toxins through its exposure to traffic: animals, machines, and people. What a privilege and a joy it was for us to be part of a ceremony in Benin with the Beninese Ambassador to Canada and the Beninese Minister of Water and Energy, celebrating

the 100th well. One hundred wells means that up to 100 000 people now have close access to fresh, clean water! On that day, we and the Beninese could say with joy and relief, "Water is Life!"

As is typical for GAIN project trips, though, the team had much more to do than participate in an official ceremony! A group of medical professionals from a church in Detroit were part of this trip, and had come to offer medical and dental treatment to people in villages with GAIN-drilled water wells. Under the coordination of Patrice, our in-country GAIN manager and Dr. Rogatien, our partnering Beninese doctor, in one week the team set up five clinics in five villages. They estimated that the numbers of people that actually came in to receive

medical or dental treatment came from as many as 15 villages surrounding the area! Unless there's a serious problem, most people in rural Benin rarely ever see a doctor or a dentist, because of a financial strain or deep fears that accompany voodoo beliefs. The atmosphere in the villages the team visited was mixed. Many people were happy and grateful to see the team and to be offered help, but in the villages where the voodoo priest brought a strong voodoo presence, people were wary and fearful, but became bolder and more relaxed as they saw people receive needed help. One woman was suffering from painful abdominal swelling, according to Dr. Rogatien, due to built-up fluid that needed to be drained. She had been to 3 hospitals, but none would help her because she was unable to pay for treatment. Through GAIN and Dr. Rogatien, she was able to receive treatment and relief. Both she and her adult son were deeply touched by the loving help, words, and attitude of the GAIN team, including our Beninese partners, and decided to turn from following voodoo beliefs to following Jesus Christ.



In one village where a well had recently been drilled, one woman shared how this water had made a big difference in village life:

"Before we had this well, we had to walk far to get water that was brown and dirty, and sometimes there was no water at all. We knew drinking this water made us sick, but we had no choice. Water from our new GAIN well is easy to get, is always clean, and brings us health!"

We continue to drill water wells in Benin, and will be adding a third drilling rig to expand our drilling schedule! Because of compassionate partners like you, people can have close access to fresh water, more time to raise their families and earn a living, more water to raise crops, and hope and health. "Thank-you", on behalf of those who have nothing to give in return but their gratitude.

Water is Life! Click here to join us and help bring it to villages in Benin, Tanzania, Togo, and Southern Sudan!



A Historic Moment - Celebrating GAIN's 100th water well in Benin

In photo: Beninese Ambassador to Canada, Bill Blaney, Patrice Lavagnon (Mgr. GAIN Benin), Beninese Minister of Water & Energy, GAIN Benin Drill Rig Team

Water for Life hits 100 in Benin - Winter 2009 Trip in Pictures



ALERT medical intervention in Benin villages

Left - medical attention is worth the wait

Right - No more toothache!



Left - Hygiene training

Right - Installing a "tippy tap" handwashing station

Gateway to the Middle East (article on page 7)



Faces of Need in Israel

Left - returning Jews from outside Israel

Right: Sudanese refugees



Compassionate Help

Left - clothing and blankets for distribution

Right - making food packages to demonstrate God's love to the needy

Turning Desert Sand into Water for Life!

At 60, Albert Martens knows what it means to live with purpose and what strategic efforts it requires. But what makes it fulfilling is the extreme joy he has in what he does. Over 27 years, he's run just over 4300 km in marathon races. This year Albert and two fellow runners, Dale Wohlgemuth and Walter Unrau, will run one of the most gruelling marathons on earth, the famous "Marathon Des Sables" in Morocco, to turn desert sand into pure, clean water through Global Aid Network's (GAIN) Water for Life initiative.

The "Marathon Des Sables" (Marathon of the Sands) is a 7 day, 230 km race through the deep south-Moroccan part of the Sahara desert (http://www.darbaroud.com/index_uk.php). This year from March 26 – Apr. 6th., 2009 marks the 24th time that runners from all over the globe will run this race. Last year 801 runners from 32 countries competed. The physical conditions are extreme and the mental stress is intense...50 of these amazing athletes could not complete the course and dropped out of the race. In a recent interview, Albert helped us understand what running this marathon means.

How do you keep going?

"Mental challenge is crucial & preparation is important—it

makes or breaks the race for you. Mental strength is difficult but necessary to prepare beforehand. You have to have a plan for each stage, based on the question, "How will I handle the different stages?" Taking each stage at one time, thinking positively and hanging on to your motivation for the race will keep you going.

Marathon Conditions

- Running on sand...no tracks or roads
- Extreme distances, up to 80 km each day
- Huge sand dunes - Day 3 is 15-20 km of dunes, hundreds of metres high, passable only on foot.
- Runners must be self sufficient, carrying food in backpacks for the duration of the race.
- 9 litres of water per day provided at checkpoints that runners must find as they run.
- A compass helps navigate the course, and at day's end runners sleep in native tents pitched on the sand and stones.

"Mental challenge is crucial & preparation is important—it makes or breaks the race. Thousands of thoughts go through your mind when you're in the wilderness, running through this brutal area. Sandstorms can be very rough."

Why do you do this? What are your goals?

"Yes, why go through pain & suffering and pay to do it? One of my main reasons is to raise funds to help people in poverty. I've seen

poverty and the importance of water in Africa for people and livestock. Athletes in Action, partnering with GAIN Canada and compassionate partners, can help transform people's lives by bringing something as simple as fresh clean water. GAIN's Water for Life initiative has already drilled 140 water wells in Africa and up to 140,000 people are drinking pure, clean water! This year we runners want to raise funds to provide 3 water wells through GAIN Canada. Knowing that these wells will provide water for up to 3,000 people for generations will be incredible motivation for us to endure the difficult conditions."

Is the suffering worth it?

"I think about the blistered feet... we'll have blistered, bloody feet that will be pushed to the limit. That's a little bit of suffering, but



it's so temporary, compared to the suffering of children in Africa. Such sweet children, through no fault of their own, suffer long term. Our blisters will heal in 2 or 3 days, but that's nothing compared to the suffering of sickness that African children endure every day from drinking disease-ridden water."

How can people help you?

"Please join us to fund water wells by donating to GAIN Canada. One well will serve up to 1000 people for generations. A donation of \$13.33 will help underwrite our marathon expenses and provide fresh, clean water for one person for life! We want to raise funds for 3 wells, bringing fresh water, life, and hope to 3000 people. With the 3 of us running, compassionate people contributing donations, and GAIN drilling water wells, I'm confident that together we will make a difference in bringing pure, clean water, health, and hope to African children!"

Click here to join us and Albert, Dale and Walter in turning desert sand into pure, clean water for suffering children!

Water for Life News:

Country	Wells, as of Mar 1, 2009
Benin	100
Southern Sudan	33
Tanzania	8
Togo	- signed MOU with the Togolese government, - drilling rig purchased - in process of hiring local GAIN staff!



Water for Life, Southern Sudan – Gifts of Life in Tense Times

The current count of water wells drilled in Southern Sudan by our in-country partners is 33. This means that up to 33 000 people are now in close access to fresh, clean water! For these people, there is no more tension about the water supply. People become healthier, have excess water to raise crops with, and can spend needed time earning a living and raising their families. In addition to providing water, people are being helped holistically, with food and clothing and ALERT trauma counseling. Additionally, since 2006, 10 000 people are also being fed GAIN-provided dried soup mix, soy-rice casserole and other food. People are grateful for these food distributions, which help them through periods of drought and see their crops mature to harvest, instead of being eaten in hungry desperation before they're ripe, also consuming any chance of having seed for next year's planting. As well, subsequent ALERT seminars were conducted during the Dec. 2008 trip, and several changes made which will help the students use this material and receive certification after completing all of the seminar modules. GAIN has the happy privilege of Dr. George Rhoades designing and constructing these modules specifically for use in GAIN projects. Compassionate Sudanese lay-people and local church workers who have already attended several A.L.E.R.T. trauma counseling training seminars, are using their new skills together with their empathy in reaching out to offer healing to their neighbours, as everyone has endured violence during the previous decades of war. While these give opportunity for people to experience God's love through deeds, also during the December 2008 trip, a team from DRIME (Disciples Ready

In Mobile Evangelism) travelled with the GAIN team to teach local Sudanese how to use drama to help express the words of Christ's love and offer spiritual healing.

The light in these people's faces shows their thanks and gives them hope for physical, emotional, and spiritual healing, but yet there is trouble gathering, as can be concluded after reading international news about Sudan. Security has always been an issue, even in this remote area, but up until now our partners had not been victims. In January 2009, we received word that our in-country partner's well drilling team had been attacked by thieves as they were on their way in between villages. A jeep with seven of them was travelling when it drove through an ambush where gunmen on the roadsides mercilessly peppered them with bullets. The driver continued to drive past them even faster, and drove over a simple barricade that the thieves had erected to stop vehicles. When they drove over the fence, one of the team members fell out of the jeep. Fortunately, he wasn't seriously hurt, and the dust raised by the car gave him cover from being shot at. After the gunmen realized that someone had fallen, then began to run towards the jeep and shoot. By this time, the fallen team member had run after and boarded the jeep again, and they drove on to their destination. They arrived without further incident and reported everything to the police, but were quite shaken up by the attack. We thank God that neither any of the team nor the jeep tires were shot at all, but it's a solemn reminder that times are becoming more violent. A GAIN trip scheduled originally for March 2009 has been postponed to June, in hopes of better stability.



Above - full stomachs help smiles

Right - Sudan DRIME team in training

Below - clean water helps smiles, too



The news from Darfur is still strife-ridden. In late February, two Sudanese staff of a French NGO were killed in Darfur by a group of bandits, and UN sources say that their peacekeeping resources are stretched to the limits. GAIN is continuing to work through in-country partners to provide supplemental rations of cooking oil, sorghum, lentils, and beans to 10 000 people living on the outskirts of IDP camps.

We are thankful for the dedication and perseverance of our in-country partners to continue working, demonstrating God's love in

in Darfur and Southern Sudan. These desperate people are also experiencing God's love thanks to your compassion and faithful partnership with us.

Click here to become part of this demonstration of God's love and hope to needy men, women, and children in Southern Sudan and Darfur.

Tanzania – Hard Ground, Hard Work, Good Work

After nine months of drilling through hard red clay, there are now 8 productive GAIN water wells in Tanzania's Linde region, a coastal area with self-proclaimed "forgotten" people. Government resources are limited here, giving us little data to use in determining the most likely spots to drill successfully for water. Life here is extremely difficult, without the basic utilities that would allow for modern conveniences that we enjoy every day. In this rural Muslim area, people are poor, malnourished, and have little chance for basic education. When the drill teams drive into villages for the first time, these isolated people are extremely happy to see them, and even more grateful to hear the promise of good water. Malaria and other sicknesses are common in this region, and a few times our drilling teams have been hit hard enough to have to interrupt their work in order to rest and recover to full health. These faithful men continue to persevere in the hard work, also working hard to stay encouraged and focused on the goal of bringing clean water to those with none.

We were in for a surprise when we met with a high-ranking Tanzanian government official in

December. While we had hoped for better results of our drilling in Tanzania, he was only pleased with our 8 wells. He admitted that the Linde region was such a difficult one to drill in that not only other NGOs but the government itself had given up trying to drill sustainable wells there. He was encouraged that we see ourselves as only just beginning this project, despite the challenges, and he well understands the life change for those 8 000 "poorest of the poor" who now have access to clean, pure water. Brian S., associate staff with GAIN, just returned home after living and working with the drilling team for three months, said,

"In this area, people usually follow Muslim or voodoo beliefs, and are very suspicious of outsiders. Not many other groups are allowed by them to come into villages, but because we are coming to demonstrate God's love in word and deed by giving them the gift of water, they allow us to come in and work. When they see that we're keeping our promise to bring them water, their hearts soften and hundreds of these people freely accept us and receive what we have to say. Health-wise, even since my short trip to Tanzania in summer 2008 and my three-month

stay that ended this week (mid March), I've seen a decrease in the number of children showing signs of water-borne diseases in Malungo and Mandwanga, two villages where we've drilled water wells. It's incredible to me that people will walk for miles from other villages, just to get water from these two wells. People know that drinking this clean water will help them be healthy again."

Now up to 8,000 people are rejoicing to have a close source of fresh, sweet water, uncontaminated by ocean salt. This water is going to transform their lives and give them health and hope! That will continue to be GAIN's focus as we continue to drill in Tanzania, with the help of committed, compassionate partners like you. We've also incorporated a strategy of reconditioning existing wells, to maximize our goal of bringing water to needy people.

GAIN's goal is still to drill 100 water wells in the Linde region over the next 2 years. Imagine with us, up to 100 000 men, women, and children with close access to fresh, sweet water and newfound health; people that would know that they are loved by God

because the promise to help has been kept!

Will you join our vision? Click here to help us provide pure, clean water to needy people in Tanzania, demonstrating God's love and showing them that they are not "forgotten"?



Above - their futures can change through clean water

Left - typical water source

Right - enjoying clean, fresh water from a new GAIN water well



Paraguay - Gifts In Kind, Gifts of Hope

Since 2007, GAIN has been sending containers of dried soup mix, dried fruit snacks, canned food, clothing, blankets, medical supplies and equipment, and sports equipment to Asuncion, Paraguay, to help the Compassionate Church Action network (a partner of Power to Change) as they feed impoverished children and their families. Rural life in Paraguay has been so difficult that families have come to the capitol, Asuncion, to find work. The numbers are staggering. Tens of thousands of these families end up squatting on the city outskirts, trying to survive. Currently the Compassionate Church Action network has 156 soup kitchens that reach out to these communities (locally called "zones"), feeding one nutritious meal a day to over 17 000 children every month. In all of the overwhelming numbers, there are people, and each one tells a unique story. Judah, our Power to Change staff member in Asuncion, told us one story about someone who personally benefitted from not food, but something equally life-giving – a wheelchair.

"I met Maria when I first arrived into Paraguay in September 2008, and I believe that it was by divine intervention that God brought us together that day. I had gone to visit one of the soup kitchens that serve 80 kids lunch every day outside of a squatter zone called Trinidad in the capital city of Asuncion. As I was talking to the Pastor who runs the local church that oversees the soup kitchen, he told me of a disabled elderly lady who also received a meal every day from the soup kitchen. However, in her case, one of the volunteers would take food down to her home everyday, as she was confined to her house.

"We then went to visit Maria at her home. It was a short hike away, and we followed the Pastor down a rough trail on the side of a steep embankment. We found Maria in a small hut made of a mixture of cardboard and scrap wood. It was barely big enough to hold a single bed and a small chair in the corner where Maria sat. Her wrinkled face and hands told a story of a life full of many hardships. She was so grateful for having visitors; although she was sorry she had no food she could offer us. As I talked with Maria, I found out that she had been confined to her room for three full years. Maria told me how she had become ill and eventually

completely disabled. Since then, she had no longer been able to get out of her house; not even to the main road only a short distance away. Before leaving that day, I promised I would be back, but the next time I visited her I would have a wheelchair with me. She was so excited and said she would pray for me until I returned.

"On December 22, we received a container of aid from GAIN Canada containing dehydrated soup mix, new clothing, canned food, and what I'd been waiting for, Maria's wheelchair. Although the wheelchair was at the far back of the container - and it was the last day of work before Christmas break - six volunteers worked all afternoon to unload the container and find Maria her chair. That very afternoon, a small group of us headed back to the small hut on the side of the embankment. As we expected, we found Maria sitting in her chair beside her bed looking towards the city. It was a moment of tears and laughter for all of us as we seated her in her wheelchair. She now had mobility. We had wrapped the chair with a red ribbon as a Christmas gift, and it was the best gift she could have ever received. Before we left, Maria prayed for us in her native tongue of Guarani, and she thanked God for answering her many prayers."

It is a joy and a privilege to know that we can make such a difference in people's lives by demonstrating God's love in a simple, tangible way! There is a list of waiting Asuncion churches who would like to begin their own soup kitchens and add to the current number of 156, to reach out to even more desperate families.

Click here to join us and impact the lives of people like Maria and thousands of others in Asuncion through networks of compassionate in-country partners!

Top - Judah and helpers assemble Maria's wheelchair

Middle - This is home for Maria. These are typical conditions for rural families who live in squatter zones around Asuncion.

Bottom - Through your compassion and the loving hands of our in-country partners, Maria knows that God loves her.



Gateway to the Middle East

Ongoing conflict has damaged infrastructure and hindered trade, transportation and economic growth in Israel. During these uncertain times, the number of new immigrants continues to rise. Most of these are responding to God's call to the Jewish remnant to return to Israel. They often come only with the bare minimum, and are all trying to set up new homes, find jobs, and raise families. Many people cannot provide for even their basic needs. In addition to this, 250,000 holocaust survivors live in Israel, 33% of them under the poverty line. According to an Israeli government institute, about 1.6 million Israelis and every third child live below the poverty line. As well, up to 60,000 holocaust survivors are in need of some level of nursing, as 73 percent of them are over age 76. While minimal increases in pensions for all holocaust survivors have been

made, most of them still have to choose between buying medicine or food. Budget cuts are cited to be the reason for this shortfall. The reality is that funds are being diverted from social programs to the national defense budget, in light of the continuing conflicts against Israel by surrounding countries.

In addition, many Holocaust survivors, after having lived through unspeakable terrors of labour camps, are once again in a state of suffering. During a trip in February 2008, GAIN Staff were led through the city of Nazareth Illit by members of the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) to see living conditions of Holocaust survivors. Most of the time, they live in small group homes or alone. In one home, 5 survivors and a home supervisor live together. One is blind, and another bed-ridden due to health problems. The furnishings are

sparse and their rooms are cold. Both the supervisor and residents were wearing warm coats inside.

One woman, Bratislavi, is 83, almost deaf, and apathetic. She was 18 when the war started, worked in a labour camp for 3 years, and fled to Russia where she worked as a nurse for 45 years. She continued to work after she immigrated to Israel. Now she only wants health. There are no extra government funds for prescriptions, so income is spent on medications before it is spent on utilities. Utilities are cut off if people can't afford to pay for them.

Our in-country partners currently network with both the Israeli Government and influential NGOs so that their distribution and importation of humanitarian aid can be made more effective and with reduced import taxes. This good news means that the hundreds of Holocaust survivors, new Jewish immigrants and refugees from countries like Sudan will be able

to continue to have God's love demonstrated to them in word and deed through the distribution of food and clothing. Since 2007, GAIN and compassionate partners like you have been reaching out and doing this by working together with international GAIN offices & in-country partners. Much needed humanitarian aid has been received and distributed through 30 centres in-country who offer aid to Israel's poor and needy. In the last two years, over \$1.5 million worth of baby food, diapers, food, shoes, clothing, blankets, medical supplies, mattresses, beds, desks & school supplies has been received & been distributed. These goods are tangible reminders of God's love to needy people - in their homes, institutions for the disabled & the elderly, schools, welfare centers, & retirement homes for single elderly immigrants. When interviewed, the grateful people receiving this aid say that they don't know how they would live without it.

israel some facts

Pop. density –
316 people/km²

Immigration since 2006 –
48,081

28.3% of people are 0-14 yrs

\$432 per month is the maximum income of people living below the poverty line in Israel (2008).

22.7% of Israelis (1,630,400 people); every third child live below the poverty line (2009)

250 000 Holocaust survivors are living in Israel and an estimated 33% of them live below the poverty line (2008)



Above - Holocaust survivors must endure suffering again, even now in their twilight years

Right top - Sudanese refugees rejoice over much needed food gifts

Right bottom - Holocaust survivors receive food rations.



Thank-you for your compassionate partnership in this project. Because of you, the needy in Israel are experiencing God's love in word and deed during this period of political tensions and strained resources.



Please click [here](#) to partner with us, helping us to fill the caring hands of our in-country partners with needed food and clothing, demonstrating God's ongoing love to thousands of Jews and Gentiles in Israel.

GAIN is committed to compassionately providing immediate, practical relief & development aid to hurting & needy people around the world; to restoring hope & dignity. Our key focus covers:

Water for Life - Every 20 seconds, a child dies from a preventable disease associated with lack of clean water.* Water is life. Providing clean water through drilling capped water wells helps end this cycle of suffering and death.

Humanitarian Aid - Long after the initial crisis is over, we strive to keep help coming to people when they need it, including our A.L.E.R.T. (Acts of Love Emergency Response Team) medical services offered to people benefiting from GAIN projects.

Children - We are committed to helping to meet the needs of children and alleviate their suffering, and where possible, helping families to live in healthier community.

Disaster Response - We stand ready to mobilize resources to provide food, clothing, and shelter, in response to natural disaster, calamities or conflicts.

Partnership - Our partnership with you is maximized by good relationships with government leaders and key decision makers in-country. The effect is catalytic; it boosts the flow of progress & increases effectiveness of short term relief & long term development.

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Funds are still needed for ongoing projects in Benin, Paraguay, Tanzania, Darfur & Southern Sudan, and Uganda. GAIN continues to offer help to meet people's ongoing needs long after their crises are no longer in the news. Please consider giving to these ongoing projects, our operations needs, Myanmar Cyclone Relief, the A.L.E.R.T. medical intervention program, or to the new Water for Life project in Togo.

Give online at: www.globalaid.net

Director's Outlook

When people are doing something that makes a difference in the lives of others, the more significant the difference is, the more opposition you'll see to the work going on. Even as we celebrate drilling of 100 water wells in Benin, we are seeing increasing opposition in all of our Water for Life project countries. Some of this is because local influential people see a loss of control and power over others. Demonstrating God's love in word and deed always results in freedom for people. When the goodness of the fulfilled promise to bring water in Jesus' name gives freedom to people that local influencers can no longer control, the stakes are raised and tensions grow as they fight to hang onto their control, rather than take part in the real power, goodness and freedom that is made accessible to everyone. With the new freedom for people comes opposition against them, and naturally also, increased opposition to the work we're doing. There is MUCH more going on like this than we can share in this issue. Please email us @ info@globalaid.net to learn more specific stories from Water for Life countries. On behalf of all our staff, thank-you for your compassionate, faithful partnership with us. Together, we're stronger, and we're making a bigger difference in the lives of thousands of people in our projects worldwide.



William (Bill) Blaney
CEO, GAIN Canada

