

82nd World Federation Day: To Know Christ and To Make Him Known

Today 26 October 2021 I Shamiso Winnet Mupara had an opportunity to take part in the World Federation Day commemoration, a movement started in 1939 by Hellen Kim, a Korean woman who saw it fit to have a fellowship of all Methodist women globally.

The screenshot displays a Zoom meeting interface with a grid of 20 participants. The participants listed are: Elizabeth Gwitira, Shamiso Winnet Mupara, NYAMUDZURA Rev Ds, Anesu Mironga, Emily Mudede, T Gurupira, Patricia Mapani, Ethel Tslingano, Evelyn Buba, Tabitha Mushishi, Nancy, Jocelyn Chaibva, Kuda Mukombachoto, Betty Nhachi, Tsitsi Chikonyora, Galaxy A3 Core, Tsitsi Mushiri, Christina's iPhone, Vivian Mungate, B Chiripamberi, Viola, Marian Risinamhodzi, Edna Mangoma, Mbuya P. Chibanda, and Mrs J Zanza. A video thumbnail on the left shows a group of women in a community setting, with a 'clideo.com' watermark. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the date as 26/10/2021 and the time as 18:37.

The purpose of the World Federation is:

- to be a support group for women acting as a catalyst in their faith and actions;
- to promote the interests of women in all areas of life, in spiritual growth, equality, development and peace;
- to work towards the recognition of the equal status of women;
- to facilitate, encourage and actively promote leadership training for women;
- to be a voice for Methodist, United and Uniting Church women.

The highlight for this year's meeting was to share on the **UN SDG6: Clean Water and Sanitation** and how as women we can work together to improve accessibility to Clean water.



Figure 1:SDG6

Facts about SDG6

The latest published information on access to clean water published in 2019 by WHO and UNICEF show that by 2017:

- Globally, more than 785 million people did not have access to at least basic water services*

- more than 884 million people did not have safe water to drink.
- one in three people do not have access to safe drinking water,
- two out of five people do not have a basic hand-washing facility with soap and water,
- more than 673 million people still practice open defecation.



Figure 2: Clean tap water to drink

In the wake of the growing challenge of water scarcity the UN General Assembly launched the Water Action Decade on 22 March 2018 (2018-2028), to mobilize action that will help change how we manage water. Three years into the Water Action Decade and 6 years after SDGs were adopted; millions still do not have access to clean drinkable water. Covid 19 further brought to the forefront the water crisis, as the world was and is still required to wash hands with clean water and soap to help slow down the spread of the disease.

Why is water important to Methodist Women across the Globe?

- Water is mentioned a total of **722 times** in the Bible, more often than faith, hope, prayer, and worship. It shows how vital and important it is to human life.
- Water is Life and Sanitation is Dignity
- Most women especially in third world countries are in constant contact with the natural environment especially water as they do their daily tasks of feeding the family and cleaning.
- Climate induced disasters such as droughts, floods and cyclones are further worsening the waters crisis and more and more women have to walk longer distances to look for water, leaving them with no time to engage in other economic activities. This further marginalises them and widens the poverty gap.



Figure 3: Women in Zimbabwe spending more time looking for water.



Figure 4: Women walking over 5km daily to look for water in Zimbabwe.

As a Zimbabwean, African and Methodist woman, I am honoured to be representing all women from the Global South at the 2021 COP26 in Glasgow to add our voice the Climate change issue and to find global solutions to local water issues we are facing in our communities. As a Manicaland resident I have experienced the climate change induced 1991-1992 and 2002-2003 droughts, the 2001 Cyclone Eline and others such as Idai, Eloise. In each case both too much and too little water/rain all caused massive destruction.



Figure 5: Roads destroyed by cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe



Figure 6: Homes destroyed by Cyclone Idai

The link between environmental and gender issues has always been disturbingly unsettling for me ever since I was younger. I so vividly remember the 1991- 1992 drought that hit our village. I was very young at the time. I

remember seeing our livestock dying, nearby rivers drying up and parents marrying off their young daughters in order to put food on the table.



Figure 7: Cattle dying due to lack of drinking water

In retrospect, I realize that in times of climate change induced water crises, a girl-child can be a mere commodity that can be exchanged (sex-to-currency) for money or a plate of food to feed members of the family.

Hundreds of families in Chipinge and Chimanimani are still living in tents and makeshift structures 3 years after Cyclone Idai caused havoc in Southern Africa, with most children not being able to attend school because most schools failed to rebuild or families can't afford to send children to school after the cyclone.

This coming month, November 2021 I will be attending the 2021 COP26 in Glasgow, the trip which was partly sponsored by the UM Women. I am excited and overwhelmed at the prospect of sitting at such a global forum to address issues that are affecting communities especially in the global south. We hope to convince world leaders this time around to put their action where their mouths are. It's time to act now. Each country must meet its NDCs goals and

most importantly funding and capacity building are key to facilitate adaptation measures.

What can we all do to save water.

1. Avoid water loss by : reducing shower time to at least 2 minutes without diminishing the experience, use a cup to brush your teeth compared to brushing over running water, repair all leaking taps and pipes, recycle all your grey water, use drip irrigation than overhead irrigation
2. Treatment of wastewater to protect natural water bodies from pollution should be mandatory.
3. Plant trees or increase vegetation cover as it helps increase infiltration rates. High infiltration rate ensures that both our surface underground water storages are recharged.
4. Government and other stakeholders to assist with drilling of boreholes in all areas with no tapped water.
5. Rain water harvesting at a household level should be a lifestyle. One can also dig rainwater harvesting pits around their yard to capture all the rainwater.
6. Install Artificial Intelligence to detect burst pipes to reduce water losses in water distribution networks.

Below is a youtube link by Environmental Buddies Zimbabwe Trust following the water crisis in Zimbabwe done in 2021. [Zimbabwe's Water Crisis: 2020 - YouTube](#)