

Lia-tatoli

THE TIMOR-LESTE JESUIT FEATURE



The New Water Facility in Matata Supplies Clean Water to 180 Households

On December 30th, 2019, the community of Matata and the Jesuit Social Service (JSS) inaugurated the newly established water facility that was constructed through close collaboration between the people in the community themselves and the JSS team. The residents of Matata were very enthusiastic on that day to welcome the local authorities and the Director of JSS, Father Albino Gonçalves, SJ that was there also to bless the facility. Indeed, it was a celebration of contentment for the community to have clean water available near their houses, which means a life changing and a solution to 180 households that in the past had been struggling in getting clean water for their daily needs.



Before the establishment of the water facility, each and every household in the area struggled and found it very difficult to get clean water for their daily needs. For several years, the community of Matata did not have access to clean water supply. Also, given the long dry season, the community struggled so much in getting water for their needs. Many water sources and streams dried out and all the households could only get water from the stream down at the bottom of the hill that is far from their houses. One could not imagine how hard it was for all the houses to go and fetch water from only one source. Many elders, children, women and men had to line up every day to fill up their water containers to bring home for cooking and washing.



But now that they have the facility, things become much easier for them since water is a basic need and essential for many activities of every person. The impact of this facility is tremendous because now that water is easily accessed by each household, children, women, and men can wash, cook, and shower at home and do not have to spend hours of walk to fetch water. The main tank, which is 7200 liters in capacity, will distribute clean water to three other small tanks, and each tank can hold up to 2000 liters of water to be channeled to 180 households. Hence, families from these households can easily get clean water from these tanks.





For Lusía Exposto Martins, this water facility helps her and her family in many ways. This 30-year-old mother of three children had to walk everyday to fetch water from down the hill to be able to cook and wash everyday. But now that the water facility is close to their house, her family can use the water to shower, cook, wash, and also to water their plants. “Now that we have water near our house our children do not have to wake up at 4 AM to fetch water from the stream down the bottom of the hill. They can now take showers before going to school and in the evening they can study because they do not have to fetch water in the afternoon anymore. We have also planned to plant vegetables as well instead of just corns and cassava”, said Lusía.

Hercio Salsinha, a resident of Matata, was proud not only of the newly established water facility but also of the solid collaboration of the residents in Matata. “As a resident of Matata I am proud of what we have accomplished today. I personally admire the voluntary work from men and women of our community. Even though it took months, each and everyone of us worked together with JSS to establish this water facility. I think building this water facility has brought unity to our

community and the collaboration between us is incredible”.





Jose da Conceição Trindade, the Chief of the Village of Matata, is very happy to finally see the joy of his community that had struggled so much in the past without a clean water facility for a few years. He is also proud of the voluntary contribution from each of the member of his community that had worked together in groups to facilitate JSS and the donors in establishing the facility.

“Channeling the pipes through a steep slope from down the hill to the top of the hill was not an easy task. But thanks to JSS and especially the community of Matata that have worked together since the start until completion. This water facility is our Christmas gift from the donors through JSS”, said Jose.



The community's hope for the future is to equip and organize themselves with knowledge and commitment on how to maintain the condition of the water facility. It is important for them to take care of the pipes, tanks, and the pumps and the overall condition of the facility so that they can use them for many years. The community has planned to organize a meeting this month in order to ask for the contribution from each household to maintain the facility. "Our plan is for each household to contribute \$2 dollars per month so that the accumulation of this money can be used to buy additional materials needed for the facility and also to employ one or two people that can regularly look after and control the water supply system", explained Jose the chief of the Matata village.



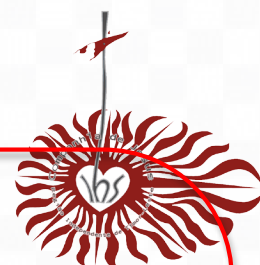
The Director of JSS, Fr. Albino Gonçalves, SJ, urged the community of Matata to continue collaborate with JSS in the future and especially in maintaining the water facility that they now have. Father albino also advised the community to utilize the water with care and take the opportunity to plant vegetables, plant more trees, raise animals, and take care of their environment because these are very important for now and the generations to come.





This facility is truly a dream comes true for the community and for the supporters of this project. However, even though this water facility is established, the community of Matata needs to plan an integrated sustainability plan which means giving them more training on how to control and maintain the facility but especially to facilitate them

in taking care of their environment as well through proper hygiene and sanitation and also agriculture. Hence, continued support from each and every one of us will bring more fruits in the rural communities especially in a far-flung village like Matata.



About the title:

“lia-tatoli” means:

Before Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, he **“entrusted the message”** (*lia-tatoli*) to mankind in order to bring it into the worship and comfort of peoples. “You go to convey My word”. The Jesuits Region in Timor-Leste calls us all to channel the responsibility and give each other a close look at Jesus. **“The message entrusted to us”** (*lia-tatoli*) wants to be a conduit to connect all of us who are friends on the journey of Jesus and who share the mission of Jesus Christ. **“lia-tatoli”** now becomes the official newsletter of the East Timor Region.

Support Our Work :

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