

# Food-for-Peace Success Story

## Amalima Improves Water Sanitation and Hygiene Situation at Health Care Facilities in Gwanda



Ms. Thembelihle Dube,  
Environmental Health Technician at  
Simbumbu Clinic showing the new  
latrines and handwashing stations.  
Behind her are the toilets that were  
there before the program.

*“As a clinic we were failing to meet required health standards and basic sanitary needs of men and women in our community.” - Thembelihle Dube*

*“When I delivered in 2015, I went home immediately despite the midwife advising me to stay until the following day. It was impossible to keep myself clean without water in the maternity ward” - Woman who gave birth at Simbumbumbu*

*“Amalima has left us a legacy. We plan to engage our community health committees so that we start income generating activities to raise necessary funds for maintenance of these facilities.” - Thembelihle Dube*

Many health care facilities in Zimbabwe lack essential water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services to prevent and control the spread of infections and provide quality health care. Simbumbumbu Community clinic, serving a community population of approximately 3445 people in Gwanda district, has benefitted from the Amalima Program. Amalima connects WASH in health care facilities with community WASH, focusing on infrastructure and behaviour change, improving access to clean water, latrines, and handwashing stations for pregnant women, new mothers, caregivers, and children targeted by the program.

Thembelihle Dube, Environmental Health Technician at Simbumbumbu Clinic presented a series of issues they faced before, highlighting common WASH problems, including the absence of facilities and equipment to practice hand hygiene. *“In the past we literally did not have water supply. Patients had to bring their own water. When a baby is born in an environment without adequate water, sanitation and hygiene, the risk of infection and death for both the mother and the baby is high. So, though we do not allow pregnant women to deliver at home, because of the water situation then at Simbumbumbu Clinic, women were reluctant to come to the clinic and as a result, the number of home births remained high.”*

Amalima’s priorities in 2016 were to improve the WASH situation at Simbumbumbu Clinic. By working closely with the community, the Rural District Council, clinic staff, and the Health Centre Committee, Amalima installed a solar-powered sand abstraction water pump to pull water from Machecha river, provided water stations consisting of a 10000-litre tank and installed one drinking water and two handwashing stations at the clinic. Through Amalima’s Food for Assets activity, community members constructed four new latrines. Workers were compensated with 60 kg of sorghum and 4 kg of lentils for every 15 days of work.

According to Ms Dube, *“Ever since the solar water pumping system was installed, we have never faced any water challenges. These facilities have transformed the working environment, the health of patients and the morale of staff. Moreover, the numbers of women giving birth at the clinic instead of home has increased.”* She attributed the declining cases of waterborne diseases at the clinic to the work of Amalima Community Health Clubs, which strengthen awareness of proper sanitation and hygiene and encourage members to make improvements within their homes and communities through constructing latrines and key hygiene-enabling facilities.