

Dear Connected To Namibia chairperson, board members, donors and all involved.

Our team just returned from Ombyarundu where we went together with Africa Drilling to try and drill a borehole for water.

Our preparations were well done. Already some months ago I took an earth scientist, Dr Burger Oelofsen to try and trace a suitable spot to drill for water.

Also, Mr Klaas de Wet who is a wellknown friend on Connected to Namibia visited Ombyaromdu and he also has a lot of experience on drilling for water. Both he and Burger Oelofsen and also the drilling operator mr Sas Lubbe pointed to the same spot for drilling.

And yet after drilling 120 meters deep, the borehole seems dry.

Connected to Namibia was willing to sponsor another borehole, but both Burger Oelofsen and Sas Lubbe felt that the risk is too high.

We have to take the following in account:

*The government without informing us also came to drill 2 boreholes. So we had a good example of the earth formation. During the drilling process every few meters, samples were taken to compare e.g. the type of soil, the colour of it and whether it was wet or dry.

So while drilling, we could compare the texture, colour etc of the soil where we drilled with those of the government which was drilled a few weeks before. For up to about 40 meters, the soil was different. after that it became more and more the same as those of the 2 boreholes of the government.

With that in mind, the advice was that we should not drill in that area anymore in the foreseeable future.

*What next?

To be honest, it was a great disappointment. It was costly, took a lot of time and planning and arrangements.

But as I said to several people ; "We are delayed but not defeated."

What are the options?

1. We have to wait for a few weeks. Sometimes it happened that by drilling, underground watercourses can be blocked and open again in due time. While drilling, the soil had wet patches and it can be the case as explained above. We hope that this test can happen soon.

2.As you can remember, the drilling for water was for the preschool in the first place and secondary to assist the surrounding community.

The leader of the village,Mr. Festus Mbwale and his wife Sarah decided to drill a waterhole for their home and gardens about 1 kilometers away from where we drilled.

They already paid the drilling company who drilled for the government to also drill for them before we started drilling but they haven't turn up yet.The equipment is already there and they already paid the contractor. Even against the history of dry boreholes, they cannot withdraw due to their commitment to the drilling company.

We will also wait and see what happened.

3. If all of the above failed, then we will opt for another possibility, that is to get water from a fountain about 3 kilometers away.

For about the costs of a borehole, and the physical help of the community, a pipeline can be laid from the fountain to the premises of the pre -school.

But first we have to get permission from the community to utilise the fountain. Not only is it a place where they can come to fetch water for household purposes but it is also a source of water for the cattle, goats and sheep.

Then we have to test the fountain by pumping water for a couple of days to see how it affects the flow of the fountain. Keep in mind that the school also wants to start gardening to feed the children and personnel, then quite a good flow of water is needed.

Just a reminder that the installation of the pump, solar panels and reservoir and connection for the school is another quotation already quoted for and I believe that it will stay almost the same.

4. If everyone of the above fails, our only option is to lay a pipeline from the Kunene River some 7 -8 kilometers away. That can be costly, but a possibility and is the best sustainable option.

To summarize, we thank all involved who patiently assisted donated and waited during the last couple of months, weeks and days.

As I said, we are delayed, but not defeated.

Blessings,

We are together in fulfilling this challenge!

Jacob Schoeman.

Board member of Connected to Namibia foundation