



Dear all,

I have a Christian friend locally who uses the word 'joy' in circumstances where 'joy' would seem to be a quite inappropriate term. But Psalm 30:5 (KJV) tells us 'weeping may endure for a night,

but JOY comes in the morning'. The Message paraphrases that as 'the nights of crying your eyes out give way to days of laughter'.



This verse sums up our visit to Burkina Faso - an intensely emotional experience.

The ultimate rollercoaster. Great sadness one minute – great joy the next. People who seldom weep shed many tears. Others who seldom get excited about anything find themselves compelled to rejoice.

*In January, we were moved to tears at a centre for the blind, where there is a need for water but only a few would benefit. To drill a well there would deprive an entire village somewhere of their well. **(But you could sponsor this if you wish)**. On the other hand, when we visited Ouadaradou, where the memory of children drinking filthy water from a drying up-river still etches our memories, it was 'pure joy' to see how a village can be transformed by a well.*

We appreciate all you do to help, and look forward to your continued support. Where we have contact details, we try to make sure that gifts are acknowledged. If you have given anonymously, we hope that you will see this as our grateful thanks now.

As always, we give God the glory for His wonderful provision and help in finding water.

Visit to Burkina Faso in January 2020

Three of Myra's Wells trustees were able to visit Burkina Faso during January. This was a time of blessing with a number of wells being visited, together with some other places where wells are being requested.

Wells



Figure 1 Busy well as Yagma

Visits to wells took us to a number of places around Ouagadougou and to the south west area, around the town of Gaoua. Despite not advertising our itinerary in advance, we found a welcome at each of the places we went. Many of them were places where wells had been provided during November and December 2019. We saw people (usually ladies or children) who had previously had to walk over 4km, there and back, to fetch water – now with clean water much closer. There were places where they had been forced to drink dirty water from rivers, ponds and marshes – now able to enjoy good clean water freely available.

At Yagma, a township on the edge of Ouagadougou, we arrived about 10:45 in the morning. At many wells, the morning rush is over by then. Here, though, we found a gathering of ladies waiting for their turn to fill their containers. There were over 200 containers at the well all waiting to be filled. It will have taken most of the day for that to happen.

Ouadaradou

We want to single out Ouadaradou. We arrived wanting to find two particular boys. In January 2019,

the trustees had taken photos of them drinking water from a dirty river. Amazingly, we found them straight away and we were able to take photos of them both enjoying water from the lovely new well.



We held a small well blessing service here so that we could tell them about the loving God who had provided the well for them. Many of the people from the village heard the Gospel.

The well blessing was also an opportunity for Jeremy (our newest trustee and former missionary in Burkina Faso) to distribute Luke's Gospel in French to anyone who was able to read – mainly the children and young people who have been able to go to school. It was good to see them sit down and start reading it straight away.



Well requests



Inevitably, we went to see places where wells have been requested. This can be a distressing experience. It is sometimes difficult to walk away and leave people who have to use dirty water for drinking, cooking, washing etc. Some of the places we saw will be at the top of the list when we plan drilling for the next drilling season in October. Some places have a need for water, but the situation in their village is less drastic than in other villages. It is difficult having to explain this to people who live there. We have about 60 places on the "approved" list and another 60 still waiting for additional information before being

approved. This picture shows a place near Gaoua where an open well serves 900 people.

People

It was good to see Christine and Michel again. In the mirror charity Myra's Wells (Burkina Faso), there are 7 trustees and most of them were able to come to the meeting that we had arranged for them. We talked about some of administrative procedures that need to be given attention.

One important event was Eddie being awarded an honour by the Burkina Faso government. It seems that the work of Myra's Wells has reached the ears of people in high places there.

Churches

During the visit, we were taken to speak at a number of services. This is real privilege. People are so attentive and keen to hear the Scriptures. There is a desire to learn. In some of the services, we know that people came for the first time.

At villages where wells have been drilled, we heard the same story over and over. Since the well has been drilled, churches have grown with many being converted.

There was one exception to this. In another – very Muslim - township on the edge of Ouagadougou, the pastor is very enthusiastic in evangelism, but the response is slow. This picture shows a text on the side of the well there. If your French is good, you will recognize Acts 16:31. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."



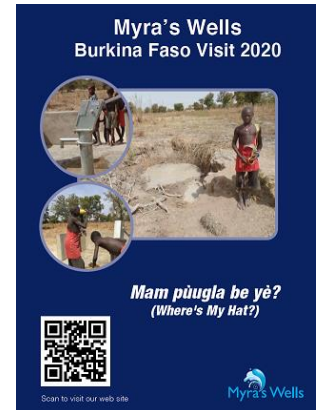
Security



Although we felt at ease in Burkina Faso, we were always aware that the security situation is deteriorating. When we were there, the security map on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office web site showed "Advise against all travel" for the North, East and West. The areas we went to were marked as "Advise against for but essential travel". Shortly after we arrived home, it changed so the advice is to not go anywhere except Ouagadougou. Please pray for the safety of the Christians, and especially those who help us so much. Coronavirus is also making life difficult in Burkina Faso, as it is here.

Diary 2020 is available!

Has the above whetted your appetite to know more about the trip? We have produced a diary which is available for a minimum donation of £5 (which will go towards wells as the trustees have met the cost of printing the diary). Stephen Gillham, who works with Bible Educational Services was in Ouagadougou at the same time and has contributed to the diary. There are 100 A5 pages in total. We can also supply the PDF via email which can be read on computers, phones and tablets. Please contact us if you would like a copy (or copies for others as well).



Drilling news

Wells since the beginning of the year



Following the blessing of 15 new wells in the autumn, we thank God for more wells over the last three months. There have been 4 in the area around the town of Kaya, about 60 miles north east of Ouagadougou; 2 near to Tougan near the border with Mali in the north west; 2 about half way up the road from Ouagadougou towards Tougan and then one more in the Yagma area (the same area as the well we visited in January).

At one of the wells, water was too deep to use with the normal hand pump. It was just too heavy. There was a danger that the people would stop using it and return to using the river. Christine asked if we would consider installing a solar powered pump. This is now done and there is a small water tank kept topped up by the new pump, with a **TAP!** What a luxury to have **one tap in the village!**



Figure 2 Tap in the village!

Of these 9 wells, 8 are in areas which were considered unsafe at the time. The ones at Tougan were near a place where an IED had blown up a minibus in January. 14 people were killed, including 7 children returning to a Christian school in Tougan. We were so pleased that the surveyors, drilling contractors and builders were all willing to go there and help us to provide water for people there in desperate need.

Kassan

In February, we asked you to pray about a village called Kassan where we had had two negative boreholes. Thank you for praying. Sadly, we had to leave without finding water as the third borehole was also negative.

Repairs

During the visit in January, we heard about a well (not one of ours) which had fallen into disrepair and was not functioning. It had been well used in the past and children at a school nearby were having to



cross the road to another well. The pastor there had obtained a quotation from a local mechanic to repair it. Although this was only about £320, this was beyond the means to the local people. So, we agreed to pay for the repair. This has now been done. We will set up a well management committee at this place near Diebouyou. There are plenty of people now using this well again.

Then we also heard about a problem at a well and water tower at a children's centre in Ouagadougou being run by the Christian charity "Compassion". One of our trustees sponsors a young girl at this orphanage. After talking to **Compassion** in the UK and the local people at the centre, we were able to arrange for the pump and water tower to be repaired.

New leaflet



Our new leaflet is available! Supplies of the leaflet we have used for about 4 years are just about exhausted and the content needed to be updated. It mentioned the number of wells was 71. It is now over a hundred more. We would like to send you a supply to use for your church or societies, personal use etc., please get in touch and let us know how many to send.



No longer Wonderful!

We have received a disappointing email from Wonderful.org. **The service is being discontinued.** The reason cited is that they are unable to cope with the effects of coronavirus. All donations that have been made will be paid in full to us, but no new donations can be made. We are sad about this as it has been a good service. It was unfortunate that this email arrived 2 days after the new leaflets had been printed. It was, though, just in time for us to be able to adjust the insert that goes with them.



Other online services that we use are Virgin Money Giving, CAF and Stewardship (give.net). It is also easy to set up standing orders for regular giving. Please ask for details if you would like to help in this way.

Finally...

Thank you, again, for your support in prayer and material ways. We pray that you will know God's blessing and protection at this difficult and unprecedented time.

Myra's Wells trustees.

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