

Improving hygiene

Luka Frank is a Water Point Committee member for a new borehole drilled by the **Salima Solar** project in rural Malawi.

At eighteen, Luka is one of the youngest members of the newly formed Chishasha village borehole Water Point Committee. The Committee is responsible for the management and maintenance of a new borehole drilled close to the 60MWac Salima Solar plant in Malawi.

Salima Solar was co-developed by PIDG company InfraCo Africa and JCM Power. The companies recognised the challenges experienced by local communities in accessing clean water, leveraging PIDG Technical Assistance match funding to enable JCM to drill ten boreholes in the area, "Before the borehole was drilled, my mother had to walk three kilometres twice each day to fetch water from Mazengera village." Luka continued, "The owners of the borehole were taking too much, and we had to endure their ridicule and insults when we wanted water. It was not easy. During the rainy season, the road to the borehole could become impassable.

We could only collect one container at a time and so we had to use the water sparingly. This affected our hygiene." The water itself was of poor quality, "It was very salty and during the rainy season, the borehole water used to turn reddish like the gravel soil."

The family now use five containers of water per day, paying a small fee towards borehole maintenance and Luka says, "There have been improvements in hygiene and sanitation. I used to wash my face and legs only to go to school without bathing my whole body. This is history now."

The new borehole also enables Luka to take responsibility for fetching water, "When I want to wash clothes or bathe, I don't wait for anyone to fetch water for me. I just go to the borehole myself. I bath more than two times in a day. I feel fresh."

