



Keys to Successful Fundraising

by

Mike Navolio

The following is what I have learned about fund raising for the BP MS 150 from 2007 – 2011 and for Child Legacy's Annual Clean Water Climb from 2011 to the present. You will want to prepare a fund raising letter and consider using as many, if not all, of the following points in your preparations and drafting of the letter as well as your fundraising campaign:

1. A fundamental key to fundraising is persistence. Persistence comes from passion. Passion comes from knowledge. So start by learning everything you can about Child Legacy and about the problem of lack of clean drinking water, develop your passion, and you will become persistent naturally.
2. Make a list of everyone you can think of to send your fundraising letter to (family, business colleges, neighbors, church friends, community group friends, new friends, etc).
3. Tell everyone where you are going and why you are doing this. Tell them "I am going to do the hardest thing I have ever done, climb Mt. Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa. Tell them it's an event to raise awareness and funds for clean water in Malawi, Africa. Then, when finished you will go to Malawi to help repair some broken hand pump water wells that have been funded by them and other donors. Tell them you are looking forward to helping with the repairs, sharing the gospel with the villagers, and for how God will be speaking to your heart as you reflect on a trip of this magnitude. Tell them your own unique story of what has led you to do this.
4. Feel free to use my name as the person leading the trip who has led people multiple times to Malawi since 2009 to repair wells and share the gospel and who also founded and has led Child Legacy's Annual Mt. Kilimanjaro Clean Water Climbs since 2011. Assure them you will be safe.
5. Tell them the name of the organization you are raising these funds for (Child Legacy, International) and give them their website: www.childlegacy.org. But to make a donation they must use www.cleanwaterclimb.net/meet-the-climbers/ where they will find you.
6. Tell them that Child Legacy has been given a 4-Star rating by Charity Navigator! This is huge! A 4-Star rating is the highest rating a charity can receive by CN. It means that the organization is highly efficient with the funds they receive (low overhead) and they are highly transparent with how they manage the charitable contributions they receive. Give them Charity Navigators website for Child Legacy: <http://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=search.summary&orgid=14068>
7. Read some fundraising letters others have written in the past at www.cleanwaterclimb.net/backpack/.
8. Put your heart **and passion** into your letter - do not hold back!
9. Set a reasonable fundraising goal - something higher than the minimum we each are responsible to raise (>\$5000). If you have a big network, set a big goal. If you have a small network set a small goal. For the 2011 Clean Water Climb my goal was \$10,000 and I raised \$23,000! In 2012 my goal was \$50,000 and raised nearly \$60,000. In 2013 my goal was

\$75,000 and I raised \$90,000. In 2014 my goal was \$100,000 and I raised \$120,000. In 2015 my goal was \$150,000 and I raised \$172,000. Many people will be very generous when they see a legitimate cause that saves lives!

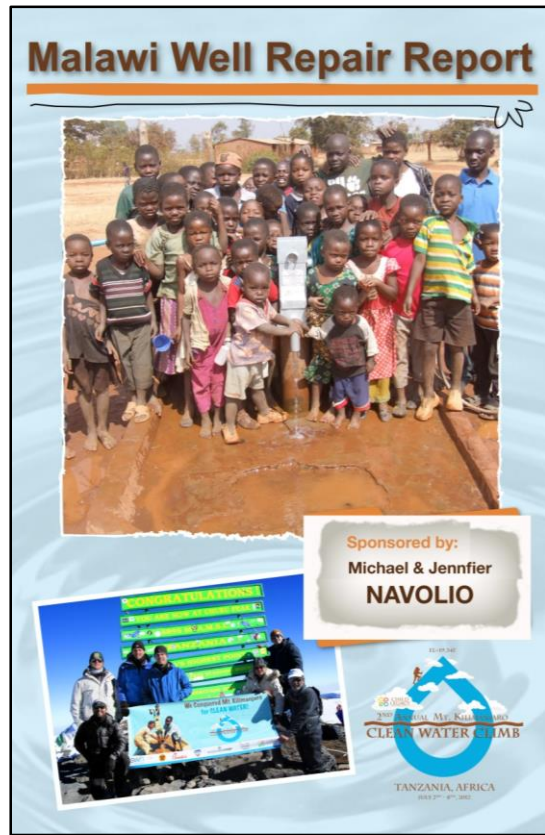
10. Tell people that to reach your goal, you need X number of \$1000 donations, Y number of \$500 donations, Z number of \$250 donations, and so on. Obviously tailor this to your goal. This helps people visualize in a tangible way how they can be a part of you attaining your goal.
11. Tell people that, on average, it costs \$1250 to repair each well in Malawi. Include the latest well repair map of Malawi in your letter or as a separate document.
12. Tell people that, on average, each well repair benefits ~2100 people in the villages and schools of rural Malawi.
13. Be sure to mention in your letter that if they donate \$1250 they will receive an online (new in 2016) well report for the village or school that the well was repaired for, especially prepared for them (see sample well report). Send/give them a copy of a water well repair report.
14. Remind them that if they donate \$150 or more they will receive a Clean Water Climb water bottle and for \$250 they will receive a Clean Water Climb hat. If they donate \$300 or more they will receive a polo shirt commemorating the climb. Available in men and women styles.
15. People love to see their money leveraged. If you are willing to donate yourself, tell people you will match a certain amount of their donations with your own contribution. In 2011 I told everyone that I would match \$1 for every \$1 I received, up to a match on \$10,000. In 2012 I told everyone that I would match 50 cents for every \$1 I received, up to a match on \$50,000. In 2013 I told everyone that I would match 33 1/3 cents on every \$1 I received, up to a match on \$75,000. In 2014 I told everyone that I would match 25 cents for every \$1 I received, up to a match on \$100,000. Think about this, pray about this, and step out in faith about this. The fact that you put some financial skin (as well as climb skin) in this fund raiser goes a long way with people. People like to see their giving leveraged even further if you are giving as well. If \$1 for \$1 match scares you go for something lower like 50 cents on the dollar or less or up to some maximum you could give. You set the match depending on how much you can throw into the pot. There are an infinite number of variations on this.
16. Add some photos from villages and schools where wells have been repaired by Child Legacy. I have many uploaded many photos to albums at www.facebook.com/clean.water.climb. There are also photos on www.cleanwaterclimb.net. Feel free to download any of them. Use high quality, sharp, in focus photos, not copies of copies!
17. If you want, consider mentioning in your letter somewhere that we are looking for corporate sponsors to help defray some of the costs of putting the climb on. For a \$1000 minimum corporate sponsorship, the donor company's logo will be Child Legacy's web site for 1 year, be on the Clean Water Climb banner that we unfold at the top of the mountain in a photo with all of us holding it (they will receive a copy of the photo), and finally be on the back of all the T-shirts printed up for the event. They can then show this photo at their office as a way of them advertising their concern about clean water.
18. Towards the end of your letter please ask people to pray for the safety of everyone on the trip - both in Malawi and while climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro. Ask them to pray that you will have success in reaching or exceeding your fund raising goal. Thank them in advance of their prayers.
19. Some employers match their employee's donations to 501c3 organizations. Be sure to ask anyone who donates if their company has a matching program, and if they do would they be

willing to submit a matching request. I know that Southwestern Energy and BHP Billiton have company match programs.

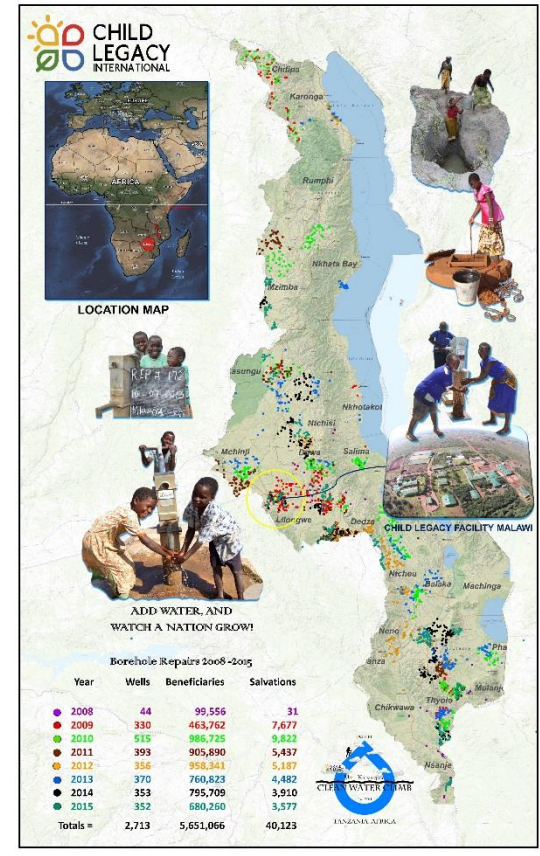
- 20.If you are raising money for the water wells AND some of your expenses, you might tell them that you are paying for all the expenses related to the climb (guide fee, equipment, etc.), but are hoping to raise enough for the trip to Malawi as well as your water well repairs fundraising goal.
- 21.Donations for expenses for the trip should not be raised through the website. That is reserved for the water wells funding only. Donations for expenses should be in the form of checks made out to Child Legacy and sent to me. Be sure to tell them that donations to Child Legacy are 100% tax deductible. But remember every dollar donated for your expenses is a dollar less for clean water!
- 22.Include some statistics about Malawi and contaminated water in general in your letter. This will show people that you have some understanding of the magnitude of the problem even though you have yet to visit first hand. See ***Water: The facts*** document.
- 23.Put together a package of documents in a folder and arrange meetings with people. Tell them what you are planning to do and ask for their support. It may be tough at first, but you will get better. Consider including in the package: Fundraising letter, Child Legacy's Water well repair map, Water Well Report, Factoids, Donor List (partial), Donation Form, & Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope.
- 24.I wouldn't make your letter more than one sheet, double sided letter or legal sized paper. I have provided you mine from the first Clean Water Climb in 2011.
- 25.Provide your bio, 1 photos, and fundraising goal to the team leader. This will be added to the www.cleanwaterclimb.net/meet-the-climbers/ website where they will find you. It is very important to include this link in your letter. Also, be sure to add this link to your email signature, so it is automatically at the bottom of every email you send out. Contact me for samples.
- 26.Use email and Facebook to give people regular updates of your fundraising efforts and a general thank you to all those who have contributed so far. You can do this monthly, bi-weekly, but then weekly as you get closer to leaving for Africa. As one person told me, "Mike the key to your success is that you are persistent, but not pesty." So, give people gentle nudges now and then as your fundraising effort moves ahead. Be sure to join Facebook and friend the team leader and all other members of the team. The team leader will promote your fundraising web page. Please "Like" the Clean Water Climb Facebook Page!
- 27.Very important – send or email a quick thank you note to people as soon as you receive a donation from them. You represent Child Legacy International!
- 28.Very important – when you get back from the trip send a more comprehensive thank you letter with pictures of your trip. Be sure to tell them how much you raised and how much the team raised and how many wells and people that will impact in rural Malawi.
- 29.Plan a surprise gift for your biggest givers. I started a tradition in 2011 of giving an African painting (usually with Kilimanjaro on it) to each of my donors who have sponsored one or more well repairs (it used to be \$1000 or more. Beginning in 2016 it is now \$1250 or more).
- 30.I also made 2 copies of a list of everyone who gave any amount up until the last moment before leaving for Africa, laminated one and hung it on the outside of my backpack, and buried the un-laminated one on top of Kilimanjaro!! I now tell them I do this in my fundraising letter.



If all else fails you may have to resort to extreme measures to reach your goal! For example you could always tell people if you reach your goal before you leave for Africa you will get a Red Mohawk haircut or something similar and wear it to your school or workplace until you leave! It worked for me in 2013, 2014, and 2015!!

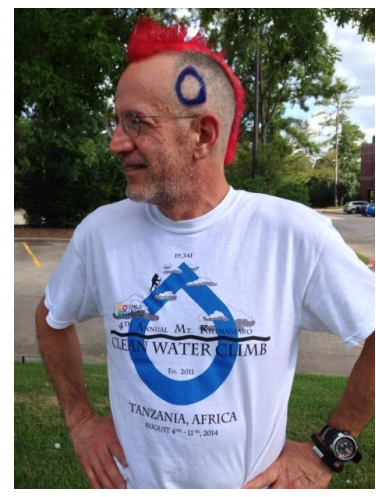


The fundraising suggestions above are not necessarily in the same order that they might be utilized in your letter. We will have donation forms which you should include with your letter which your contributors can fill out and return to you with their check or credit card information. We can give you a spread sheet at any time on how you are doing. All you need to do is ask. <<< Here are what the front page of a sample well report looks like and what the latest well repair map shows >>>



2014 Mohawk raised \$120,000! >>>

<<< 2014 "V" Hawk raised \$182,000!



Websites: childlegacy.org cleanwaterclimb.net facebook.com/Clean.Water.Climb



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