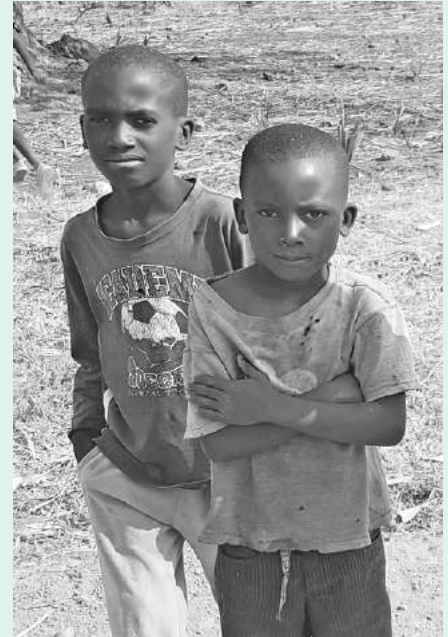




**November
2019**



*Please sponsor a child
Many need help.*

POVERTY IN ZAMBIA

60 percent of people live below the poverty line (living on less than £1.60 per day) and 42 percent are classified as extremely poor (living on less than £1 per day). Poverty rates are highest for female-headed households, with extreme poverty levels of more than 60 percent in rural areas and 15 percent in urban areas. The effects of poverty are seen in children's development. Around 15 percent of children in Zambia are underweight, and 40 percent are stunted. *(The Borgen Project)*

HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US

After Samuel spoke these words and named the place Ebenezer, he raised a stone of remembrance in recognition of what the Lord had done. Share Africa Zambia (SAZ) could also claim that they have reach a milestone in their journey towards sustainability, for which we too must thank God for His gracious provision.

One of our main goals was to make the Seed Farm and Food Factory self-sustaining. In the last quarter we are delighted to have reached that milestone. The profits are very small, but at least the jobs of the people employed are more secure. Our aim is to continue to increase the capacity of the profitable ventures so that more help can be given to other activities.

The Seed Farm and Factory play a key role in achieving our objectives. The improvement in yields for the farmers on the Outgrowers Programme by using quality seed has been remarkable. Furthermore, the linkage with the food factory enables us to buy back grain at above market prices which further improves the farmers income.

We will continue to develop the profitable activities, believing that these should eventually become the main source of help for the other activities. This is 'sustainability in action', making the organisation less dependent on outside help. We have some way to go but we believe we are on the right track.

Significant credit must go to our people in Zambia, particularly three brethren who have worked tirelessly to get us to where we are. Eddie Kasongo who has overall responsibility for SAZ, Mwewa Mwindula who is responsible for the farming activities in Chipata, and Musa Tembo who manages the seed farm. They are all elders in their respective assemblies. Please pray that the Lord will preserve and bless them in their responsibilities. All are married with young families.



Mwewa and Memory



Eddie and Loveness



Musa and Cecilia

The Orphan Programme needs more Sponsors

Everywhere people are asking for help with orphans. At present we have 187 sponsored children, which is about the same number we had 5 years ago. The queue who are registered and waiting for sponsorship is now 89. We have had to stop registering new children until we find sponsors for those in the queue.

When visiting assemblies, the need for support is obvious. Recently we visited two assemblies in Lusaka where you might think the need is less than in rural areas, but families, especially widows with young children are finding it difficult to cope. Providing clothing and other essentials for school is often beyond their means which results in children becoming malnourished and failing in their education. Fellow believers and close relatives help where they can, but life is tough in the suburbs - as you will see from the photo.

Chunga, was one place we visited. It is perched on one of the highest spots in Lusaka with panoramic views across the city. The location is rough; where every square metre is used to build shelters which people believe will eventually become their home.

The assembly was established in 2010. About 45 attend with 23 in fellowship. The elders were welcoming and spoke enthusiastically about their outreach work. They said there were another 8 assemblies in the Zone A district of Lusaka. (They explained that there were 5 zones in Lusaka with a total of over 40 assemblies throughout the capital city). It was encouraging to hear how the 8 assemblies in their Zone work together in helping each other.

The structure where they meet is basic. The wall foundations are in place along with a few flimsy poles. They may or may not have title for the land, nevertheless, building a hall on the site will be quite a challenge.



The purpose of the visit was to meet some of the children on the programme. In the picture is Lybia Chabala, a widow of 4 years who has 4 children, 2 of

whom are on the programme. James, the older boy is being moved to another school because of the poor standards at the school he attends. Lydia, his mother, sells fish which she gets from an aunt who lives about 400 miles away in the Luapula Province. Selling fish is her main income.



We also met Katherine Ketebe, the Sunday School teacher and caretaker. She is a widow of 5 years and has 4 children. Two of her children are on the waiting list. She sells vegetables at a street market. The appearance of both her and her children left us in no doubt that this family were struggling.

These are 'little children' and it touches us to see how circumstances beyond their control has brought them into such an environment. There are tens of thousands like them, and when we think of our welfare and education system, the contrast is surreal. This is the world we live in, yet with a little sacrifice it is possible to change the prospects of a few.

Please visit our web site for more details on how to sponsor a child. Alternatively, if you call us we would be happy to explain what to do further.

Have you any Fish?

The Chanyanya assembly, situated on the banks of the river Kafue, was established in 1989 when fishermen from the Luapula Province migrated south in search of new fishing grounds.

When we met with them one Sunday in September, the number gathered including children, was about 250 with about 50 attending the Lord's Supper. The hall is well built with an iron sheet roof, in contrast to their own houses which resemble the structures of a typical African rural village. The people are poor by any standard, yet they seemed to be content with their lot. On appearance it seemed a very happy thriving fellowship of believers.



It was different to other places we visited in that the children appeared healthy. During the services they sat on the floor at the front listening intently and singing along with the congregation. Perhaps their behaviour had something to do with the visitor; this was the first time a 'white man' had come to meet them.

The sisters kindly prepared a meal and, having eaten chicken most days, we were looking forward to fish; sadly we were disappointed. The Kafue river, which at that point is about half a mile wide, was low and fishing was poor, which was apparently normal for that time of year. Water levels depend on the rains, which begin in November and continue until March.

During our discussion we learned of many widows and orphans in the assembly. They said that 15 men in recent years had been drowned while fishing in the river. The small wooden boats are fragile and none of the fishermen wear life jackets. They said that when the wind blows the boats can easily capsize.

We went to the river to see the type of boats they were using and they certainly looked unstable. To our

amazement we saw several women who had attended the meeting earlier getting into a boat, one with a baby on her back. They were canoeing across to the island where they live – apparently there is also another small assembly on that island. They could have taken a small ferry, but word is that it isn't safe, and the fare is too expensive.



The ideal boats for fishing they said were banana boats, but they cannot afford to hire them. The canoes they use are rented for the equivalent of 80 pence a day, whereas a banana boat is £4 a day. It is a difficult life, yet fishing is their trade, and that's how they feed their families.

Before leaving, the elders requested help with a few things. Firstly, support for their single orphans who live with their widowed mothers (we describe a single orphan as a child whose father has died leaving the mother to cope on her own). They also asked if we could help with bibles, hymnbooks, life jackets, and an adult literacy programme. The needs are great, yet relatively not as bad as those we have seen elsewhere.

Every such visit is humbling, leaving you with a feeling of helplessness, or even guilt. When saying goodbye, you drive off in a vehicle they can only dream of, and know they are well aware we are going home to a full plate, a comfortable bed, and luxuries they have never known. You wonder what they think of us. Sadly, this is the feeling we get when visiting most places, nevertheless we rejoice that they are the Lord's and He will provide according to His good will. We left a small token of fellowship and promised to return soon. Our visit was a great spiritual encouragement to us and hopefully of some benefit to them.

Musa at risk on his motorbike

Earlier this year Musa our farm manager suffered a serious accident with his motorbike in what are very treacherous roads. He has recovered but is concerned not only about crashing but of the risk of being robbed and the motorbike stolen when he is travelling in the bush. We will try and source a small pickup which will greatly benefit his work as well as being a much safer way to travel.

Nampundwe and Sichoobo - Basic Human Need

There are times when it is difficult to envisage a solution to on-going suffering, yet when the Lord sent His disciples in Mark 10, His encouraging words were simple; 'HAVE FAITH IN GOD'. Since it is the Lord's Work, then He will provide according to their need.

This is the second time in recent months we have delivered food supplements to this area. The provisions were mainly for malnourished children who are on our Orphan Programme, but we are able to meet other needs as supplies allowed.

The lack of rain at the beginning of the year killed all their crops resulting in acute food shortage. This will continue until the next harvest around May 2020. Many are suffering, especially the elderly and sick.

In addition to the food shortage, the hall at Sichoobo is cracked, crumbling and unsafe. It would be a sad place to visit if it wasn't for the hearty singing and the warm welcome we receive from the believers.

The two assemblies, Sichoobo and Nampundwe, are about 5 miles apart, so it is easy to double up a visit. Although Nampundwe has a better hall, Sichoobo has more in fellowship.

The elders in both assemblies are faithful but weak, and many in fellowship can't read. There is also an unusually high number of blind people. There is some suspicion that water pollution from a nearby mine might be the cause.

The condition of certain individuals was touching. There was a boy with a serious fungal infection on his face. He was so embarrassed he kept his face covered with a cap. When brother Eddie saw it, he called a doctor at a hospital in Lusaka and sent a picture of the boy. When the doctor saw it he said the boy should come to the hospital so that the infection can be properly diagnosed. SAZ arranged transport and the boy has now commenced a lengthy period of treatment.



The second case was a girl of 3 who could neither sit nor walk and who cried continually. The mother was distraught, not knowing what to do. She had taken the girl to the local clinic who advised that she take her to hospital in Lusaka but she could not afford the bus-fare. The girl is now in hospital but we have had no further update on her condition. Please pray for this needy area and these children in particular.

Finally, at Nampundwe we met Hilda Musole. She is HIV positive and has been a widow for 5 years. She lives alone with 3 children and earns money washing people's clothes. She is so frail it is difficult to imagine how she has the strength to work. After some discussion brother Eddie said that SAZ would support her by providing a monthly ration of high energy food and peanut butter. We will monitor her progress. Please remember Hilda and her family in prayer also.

Several bags of Cement were left with the believers at Sichoobo to encourage them to patch up the hall to make it safe temporarily. However in our opinion the only solution is to rebuild. We will continue to assist both assemblies and the believers as they seek to serve the Lord in difficult circumstances.

A Good Year for the Seed Farm and Outgrowers

.Most of our 115 farmers have done well, and so has our Seed Farm. There are just a few tonnes of soybeans remaining to be sorted and bagged before this season concludes and they get ready to prepare for the next. The women in the picture are seated outside our rented office in Chipata sorting soybeans. You may think it would be easier to get equipment to do the sorting, but such equipment is expensive, and we would be denying the women of much needed part time work. The sorting is usually done in the villages but because women in Chipata are looking for work, Mwewa (our manager in Chipata) decided to set up space outside his office. The women have asked that they again be considered for work next year.



The main challenge this year was finding safe storage for the grain and seed. We have rented five separate sheds at different locations across Chipata. Although we are paying people to guard them, there is still a considerable risk of theft or damage. Our aim is to eventually have our own secure storage shed.



Reports from our Farmers

We were particularly encouraged by our visit to **Mr and Mrs Kamanga**, one of our farmers on the programme. When we arrived unannounced, Tasila (Mrs Kamanga) was sitting on her front step reading her Bible and taking notes. She called Levison, her husband, and we began our discussion. They have 8 children, the oldest is 28 who has a learning disability. Levison is an elder in Mphofu assembly where about 50 attend with 22 in fellowship.

This year has been very productive. They grew groundnuts, soya, maize and sunflower. From their income they were able to buy a new bed, a sofa, curtains, some kitchen utensils, an ox cart, and were also able to send their children to school. They both looked very happy and thanked SAZ for the assistance. Levison is now one of our lead farmers who we use to train and manage other farmers.



Our visit to **Mr and Mrs Sakala** was also encouraging. In one of our earlier newsletters we mentioned the need for a borehole for this couple because they have a few cattle and were travelling 5 miles twice a day to take their cattle to the nearest drinking trough. A gift was received to meet this need and in due course a borehole with handpump and cattle trough was installed.

On arrival at the house we found that Mr Sakala had been seriously sick with malaria. Although poorly, he came to greet us and both he and his wife took us to the new well. They are delighted and thanked the Lord for this provision.

They have a field of 20 acres which is ploughed using their own animals. The wife and two elder daughters can plough, and all able bodied in their family of eight work in the field. Having such large families does present its own challenges - but if there were only one or two children then their capacity for farming would be greatly restricted. Therefore extended families grow, and small villages develop to farm the surrounding fields.

Assembly Support

Several things have been mentioned in other articles about the support given to assemblies in emergency food, Bibles, hymnbooks, medical help for children, as well as support for orphans and widows. However it is very apparent that the need is great.

Expanding the Seed Farm and Factory obviously means we can do even more, but we cannot do it without the continued help and exercise of others. As in all things, we continue to look to the Lord for His guidance and support.

We are also keen to teach the Zambian believers to give to the Lord's Work directly, something they have not really been in a position to do in the past. Explaining and encouraging this scriptural principle is a sign of further progress.

Our strategy has always been to help improve livelihoods by creating opportunities for work and earnings. The other support is given where the need is greatest and where the benefits are obvious. However, we also want to see elders who are committed to upholding New Testament teaching as well as encouraging their fellow believers to uphold moral, spiritual, and work centred values – being more like the Lord Jesus who they love and serve.



Lusitu

Other than the needs we are currently addressing there are a few things worth mentioning:

- Cement and blocks for the assembly at Lusitu so they can continue building
- Emergency food supplies in areas where there is hunger, particularly among children and the elderly
- Help to secure the structure at Sichoobo
- Bibles and Hymnbooks in Bemba, Tonga and Chichewa (Nyanja)
- Bicycles for evangelism
- Support for street outreach

Electricity Cuts:

Earlier this year Zambia experienced one of the lowest rainfalls in history. The Victoria Falls has little water and the power station at the Kariba Dam has partly shut down due to the low water level in Lake Kariba. The Kariba power station is the main source of power for both Zambia and Zimbabwe therefore the reduced output has forced the electricity companies to apply lengthy power cuts. In Zambia they have divided the country into zones, with each zone being without power for a fixed time every day.

At our office in Makeni there is no power between 8.00 and 14.30. This has seriously affected our operation. People in the office are working backshift, and colleagues in the factory are working nightshift. We have written to the Zambian Electricity Supply Company (ZESCO) requesting a dedicated power line with priority supply. It will be more expensive but it's the only solution we know.

If you would like to support the work of SHAREAfrica by making a donation you can do this in a number of ways.

1. **BY DEBIT/CREDIT CARD** using our website www.shareafrica.com and selecting 'Donations' from the main menu bar.
2. **BY ELECTRONIC BANK TRANSFER** using either on-line banking or by instructing your local bank branch to make an electronic transfer. The SHAREAfrica banking details are as follows

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