



SHARE

africa
March 2016

OUTGROWERS SCHEME

Helping to alleviate the extreme poverty suffered by many of our fellow believers remains our key objective.

Three years ago we commenced an initiative in the Eastern Province of Zambia where we assisted subsistence farmers with groundnut seed and agreed to buy back their crops at a fair market price. Although the project has been reasonably successful it hasn't quite met our expectations due to a combination of sporadic rainfall, inexperience and poor management.

Lead Farmers:

This year, instead of supporting several hundred farmers with very small plots, we decided to select farmers who could allocate at least 2 acres of land to grow groundnuts. We also chose 8 Lead Farmers who would each support and train 10 additional farmers. Although it means there are less people on the programme, the combined acreage will be the same as last year. The Lead Farmers will also be responsible for coordinating the harvest including shelling, sorting and bagging. The farms owned by the Lead Farmers will become the hubs for collecting and distributing the grain.

Better Seed:

Last year the Share Africa Zambia farm successfully produced groundnut seed which is different from the normal grain used by farmers in previous years. Seed crops are grown under special conditions and have to be certified by the department of agriculture. The



Weeding



Mr and Mrs Banda



Masauso and Martha Banda

benefit is that this year we have had our own stock of quality seed to issue to the farmers which, with good management and normal rains, should yield a better harvest. In previous years quality seed was scarce and expensive and farmers had to use old grain from earlier harvests.

Better Training:

In December training courses were held to instruct farmers in disease prevention, better planting methods and the importance of routine weeding. Then, after the first rains in December, they proceeded to plant their fields. The new planting methods should allow more moisture to be retained in the soil. In some cases agrochemicals were used - at the time of harvest we will evaluate the benefits.

IF RAINS CONTINUE THE HARVEST THIS YEAR WILL BE DOUBLE LAST YEAR

This amounts to 80 tonnes which is more than double what was produced from the same acreage last year. This equates to about £500 for each farmer for their year's labour. It doesn't seem much but it is more cash than they have ever received in the past. Since their only expenses is hired labour then most of the money is disposable income.

Challenge:

If we could buy more grain (peanuts) more farmers would benefit. Presently we have enough space to store upwards of 200 tonnes. So if, for example, we could buy 200 tonnes of grain and hold it for 3 to 4 months and then sell it at a slight profit, the farmers would get a double bonus; more cash up front because we can buy more groundnuts and then an added bonus 4 months later when we sell the stock.

Encouraging News!

Latest reports indicate that all seed has germinated and crops are looking good. If the rains continue into March then each farmer should expect to produce about 1 tonne of groundnuts.

For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; 2 Cor 9:12

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EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF



In 2015 certain parts of the Eastern Province experienced draught resulting in many farmers losing their crops. Consequently the food stocks that normally last till the next season have run out. Those seriously affected are single mothers, the elderly, and the sick. They have no money to buy food so have to rely on the generosity of friends and neighbours who are willing to share their meagre supplies.

In late December the brethren in the area sent a request for help. Following a quick assessment the number of those most vulnerable came to about 500. In February SHARE began distributing basic supplies - all 500 have now received one 25kg bag of maize meal. Further supplies will be needed to sustain them through till April when the first vegetables will be ready.

There are no roads in the villages therefore vehicle access during the rain season (which lasts from December till early May) is difficult. Supplies of maize are scarce and soaring prices have added to the challenge.



Ellen Banda

Ellen, a 43 year old sister in Chitandika Assembly, was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 2015. Her marriage was dissolved after her husband became mentally retarded leaving her to fend for her six children. Mary, her oldest daughter, stopped school after she fell pregnant; she also has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and is now undergoing treatment.

Ellen's blood count is now so low that she has no energy to work. She has no money for food or for her children's school fees. When the family were visited they were surviving on mangos and leaves; later we heard that even the mangos had run out.

Ellen and her family have now received food.



Higher Education

Gladys, now aged 21, has been on the orphan programme since her primary school days and, having done very well at school, has now enrolled at the Evelyn Hone College in Lusaka to pursue a diploma programme in Journalism.



Gladys Nyirenda

She is a Christian in fellowship and active among the young people in Chawama Main assembly. Her widowed mother Silvia lives in Chawama where she has, under very difficult circumstances and without a regular source of income, raised her five children.

Gladys is the first in her family to enter college and her aspiration, after completing her Journalism studies, is to be employed by the Zambia National Broadcasting Services, the country's public broadcaster.

This has been made possible by the sponsorship she received on the orphan program, and the establishment of the Further and Higher Education Fund.

Idah is a 19 year old Christian, also in fellowship at Chawama Main assembly. She is the fourth in a family of five who have been brought up by their mother, Justina, after their father deserted them some years ago. Both Idah and her mother are very committed to the work of the Lord in the assembly, in which Idah works with the children in Sunday school.



Idah Lengwe

Idah has been accepted on a diploma course in Human Resource Management at the National Institute of Public Administration in Lusaka. Justina has tried to support her family by market fish trading but her business has now collapsed. Consequently we have agreed to support Idah in her studies by means of the Further and Higher Education Fund.

Being successful in this course will provide employment opportunities for Idah who, in turn, will then be able to assist her mother and other members of the family.

Assembly Outreach and Support

Buildings

As reported in the last newsletter we have recently built a new assembly hall in Mgawa, Eastern Province. We also reported assistance given, using ear-marked gifts, to provide building materials for the new hall in Lilongwe, Malawi.

SHAREAfrica receives many requests for assistance in building and renovating assembly buildings – far more than we are able to satisfy. However we would like to do more, particularly in helping those believers who are already taking the initiative and commencing the work. In the past we have funded new buildings but our experience has shown that when believers take responsibility and are willing to contribute time labour and money then it binds the fellowship and results in a building they can truly call their own.



Surfacing the hall at Kafue

In future our support will be to provide help in purchasing specific materials – cement, roofing sheets, timber etc. The assembly hall in Lilongwe is a case in point – they still need plastering and glazing materials to complete their hall. It is a great encouragement to witness the evangelistic work of these dear believers, despite difficult circumstances, and the Lord is blessing in salvation and establishment of new assemblies. Their desire then to build a hall for assembly gatherings which usually far excels their own houses is to their credit. As funds permit we would like to help these dear believers and will endeavour to feature case studies in future newsletters to keep you informed of progress.

Bibles

Many of our fellow believers don't have a Bible in their native language. Past experience has taught us that the best way of distributing Bibles is to sell them at a subsidised price, rather than giving them away. We then know that they will be prized and read. The demand is particularly high for Nyanja Bibles but we also need some in Bemba, Lunda and Luvale. The distribution is mainly carried out by Samuel Kapanji who has informed us that the Bible fund he uses is now depleted. We have some ear-marked gifts to send to help replenish his fund but would ask the Lord's people to be exercised about this vital work. It's hard to imagine what it must be like, as a believer, to be without a Bible.

Samuel and Jennifer Kapanji



We have been pleased over the years to use your gifts to help support our brother Samuel Kapanji and are grateful for the assistance he, in turn, has been to SHAREAfrica, particularly in the orphan programme which he helped to instigate. Samuel, who is commended from the Lilanda assembly in Lusaka, is very active in evangelism and Bible teaching, particularly in the Eastern Province and, more recently, in Lilongwe, Malawi. He is helped in his evangelistic efforts by other brothers from Lilanda, in particular Richard M'hone, Peter Chola, Phallany Kabesha and Flyson Manda.

Samuel also undertakes a radio ministry on Zambian national radio, prison visitation work and distribution of second hand clothes to needy believers.

He has specifically asked for prayer for the following:

- Sustained health and wisdom and the help of the Lord in providing strength and resources to enable us reach the areas we have been invited for conferences like elders' conference in Kabompo and general conference in Angola.
- The expansion of the work in Lilongwe and Malawi at large, despite the country being predominantly Muslim. Pray that the Lord raises gospel preachers to these areas, for renewed partnership with the Lilongwe brethren in gospel work and that resources to complete the outstanding building works may be provided in 2016.
- That the Lord raises more teachers of the word to establish the believers in a number of local churches that are not upholding sound doctrine.
- For evangelistic efforts to Central, Eastern and Southern provinces, encouraging the believers in their walk of faith in the Lord.
- Thank God that Petauke assembly has its building plot approved after ten years and that interest to build may start in 2016.

The Factory

Sales of peanut butter have now reached a level that covers the basic operating cost. Whilst we believe we are on the right track, there is a considerable way to go before the factory will be fully self funded.

Electricity supply: Power is only available from 06.00 to 14.00 or 13.00 to 22.00 each day. Although we have a standby generator, the price of diesel makes it too costly to run for extended periods. The factory workers have agreed to work flexible hours but this greatly inconveniences those with small children. The power shortage stems from a problem at the Kariba Dam and, although it has been ongoing for 5 months, no date has been published as to when it will be fixed.

Toilets and wash rooms: The factory has failed to meet food safety and security standards due to inadequate toilets and washrooms. There is also a problem with both the water tanks; one is leaking beyond repair and another is about to burst. Plans have been prepared for new toilets and estimates have been prepared to replace both tanks. These are priorities that, unless dealt with, could jeopardise the whole operation.

Marketing: The factory has the potential to produce 50% more peanut butter. Failure to achieve these sales is down to a combination of poor marketing and the need for additional products. For supermarkets to take us a serious we must improve our advertising and invest in new products.

Our aim is to make the factory profitable so we can support more farmers, employ more people, and fund assembly outreach and buildings. NOTE: the factory is a 'not for profit' business. All profits are used to secure and grow an income stream that will help those in need as well as support Assembly work.



Some of the factory workers at Makeni. In all 14 people are employed at the site including drivers and administrative staff.

Employment is life changing



Meet Justina Njovu one of our factory staff.

Justina has been with SHARE Africa Zambia since 2013. Her story is typical of others employed at our small factory.

"After finishing my grade 12 education I couldn't find a job and so got into an early marriage. Unfortunately my husband started ill-treating me until he divorced me to go and marry another woman. I then went back with my 2 children to live with my parents. I wrote several applications but without success until eventually getting a job at SHARE Africa Zambia. I started as a trainee and now I am a skilled in-house machine operator.

Before I was employed by SHARE Africa Zambia I had many struggles in life; no food, no decent clothes, failing health due to poor diet at my home, I couldn't send my children to school, I couldn't even assist my elderly parent with money for home needs. But now that I am employed I am able to have at least 3 meals per day, send my children to school, support my parents and buy for myself some basic needs.

I am greatly humbled by SHARE giving me a job. My gratitude goes to my God for helping me through life and for empowering me with a job in food processing. God bless everyone for your very good works.Justina.

Justina is a professed believer.

Zambian Economy

Inflation Rate in Zambia is expected to be over 23% by the end of this quarter, with a food inflation rate of around 26% (www.tradingeconomics.com). Those with low incomes are worst affected and those fortunate enough to have a job have seen little increase in pay. A large proportion of food is imported from South Africa so when Zambia's exchange rate falls food prices automatically rise. This underlines the importance of promoting local produce.