



Assembly Buildings

Chanyanya

The Chanyanya Assembly is an example of dedication to God's work in the face of immense personal challenges. It is remarkable to see how the provision of a boat by SHAREAfrica in 2022 has allowed them to spread the Gospel to the island community that lies 2 kilometres away in the centre of the Kafue River. The impact is clear, as evidenced by the increasing numbers that are ferried to the assembly every Sunday.

Consequently, the need for a larger assembly hall has become urgent. It is encouraging to know that the brethren are willing to do the work if they had the materials, but sadly they don't have the money to buy what's needed.

SHAREAfrica have stepped in to support them in their efforts to expand their building, which will be done by widening the structure by 3.0 metres and extending it by 3-metres. The extension will accommodate the growing numbers which we pray will add to this thriving Gospel witness.



Musosha, Mumba, Chibesa, Amos, Mwewa, Kunda, Chanda in yellow and Mulenga squatting with white shirt

The fragile fishing situation

The Chanyanya believers are fishermen who rely on the vast Kafue River for their livelihood. However, recent droughts have severely impacted fish stocks, forcing them to venture further into perilous waters in search of better fishing grounds. We pray for their safety.

Nyimba



In the December newsletter, we reported on the small assembly in Nyimba and their need for a meeting place. They had begun construction but lacked the funds to complete it. In response, SHAREAfrica agreed to finance the project in two stages, first to complete the structure up to the roof level, which has now been done, and second to build and fit the roof. The roof is currently being fabricated and should be fitted as soon as the rains subside.

Speaking of the rains, a few weeks ago, heavy downpours and strong winds destroyed the small temporary structure. However, the brethren came together, salvaged what they could, and successfully rebuilt it. The two pictures show the damage and the temporary reconstruction.

Currently, attendance remains around twenty-five, but when the hall is finished they anticipate an increase in numbers.



SHAREAfrica allocates a portion of its income for church buildings. While the reserve may be modest, we consistently strive to have at least one project underway at any given time.

Mission Ministry



Kelvin Banda



Kenneth Muloji

The Apostle Paul's exhortation to "bear one another's burden, and so fulfil the law of Christ lies at the heart of SAZ social responsibility. It is from this background that SAZ plans to create a fund for mission outreach through the systematic teaching of the Bible to the local elders. Initially, this will be confined to the Eastern Province where the SAZ have their out-grower scheme.

Many young assemblies in the Eastern Province are led by elders who have come from other denominations where systematic teaching is not high on the agenda. Therefore their shallow grasp of church doctrine leads to inconsistency in practice causing criticism from the more established assemblies. While all assemblies are committed to Gospel outreach, and numbers are growing, guidance from elders who are more mature in the faith will help strengthen the testimony of the young assemblies.

Background of outreach in the Province

Unlike the provinces in the Northwest where the 'brethren' influence goes back many decades, the Christian outreach in the Eastern Province came from Catholic, Adventist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Pentecostal missionaries whose teaching form the practice within these churches today. It is these same churches that have a heavy presence in the province, many of them built alongside the brethren assemblies.

In the late 1990s, Mr Peter Daka who had then retired, decided to return to his home village Mcaca, (pronounced as Mchacha), to serve the Lord through church planting. Mr Daka was a fervent speaker and very zealous in church planting. Before his passing in 2014, Mr Daka had by the grace of God managed to plant about 20 brethren assemblies within the region. Due to the mammoth task involved coupled with insufficient funds to support the outreach work, Mr. Daka failed to fully nurture the growth of these assemblies hence many have remained immature

in their understanding of church doctrine and practice.

For the past 10 years while SAZ has supported the assemblies by providing bibles, hymn books, building materials, as well as farming inputs and relief assistance.

This new exercise aims to increase our support by reaching out to the assembly elders to help in the systematic teaching of God's Word. The objective is to build on the foundation that was laid by the late Brother Daka so that these assemblies differentiate themselves from the more 'secular' ministries of other churches.

Bearing in mind the low levels of education and literacy in the region, willing Bible teachers must understand the local language, as well as the culture and practices that prevail in the region so they can contextualise the scripture to make it relevant. The objective is not to impose tradition but rather that these assemblies will be a place where God is pleased to dwell.

Two elders from Chipata Central Assembly have volunteered to spearhead this ministry. Brother Kenneth Muloji (62) is a retired soldier together with Bro Kelvin Banda (55) a former immigration officer both sound bible teachers who are well known in the area and will lead in the ministry. The teaching will take place at various local assemblies with elders from neighbouring assemblies invited to join.

How the program will be administered

Share Africa will fund this ministry through SHARE Africa Zambia (SAZ). The brothers involved will be part-time workers who will give several days a month to 'the work'. Both have their small farms which they will continue to tend during the growing season.

The fund will include the cost of motorbikes, fuel, food, and allowance to purchase Bibles and other literature, as well as a personal allowance for both brethren. The fund will be managed by SAZ as a 'trust' within the SAZ accounting system. A budget will be agreed and used as the basis for withdrawing funds. The corresponding expenses will be recorded and published in the SAZ accounts.

The brethren will report on how the teaching is being received by local elders and how it is being accepted by their congregations. Teaching conferences may be included if considered beneficial.

A small fund has been set up to cover 2025. This is a new venture for SAZ but one that we hope will expand to other areas.

Insight

Zambia continues to lead the world in Christians per head of population, with churches growing in both number and attendance. Among these are the 'brethren' assemblies, often referred to as CMML—a label originating from the 1940s when American believers established medical clinics and assemblies in the Northwest. In Zambia today most assemblies are known as Christian Brethren, nondenominational churches like those in the UK.

However, while their faith and doctrines are similar, their circumstances are not. Beyond cultural and language differences, the financial position of most families is starkly different with most incomes barely enough to buy food.

Wealth, materialism, and modernity may have stifled the progress of the Gospel in the UK and other developed countries, but in Zambia where most of the population is poor, new assemblies are being planted, and congregations are growing. It may be that the Gospel appeals more to the poor -- a trend echoed throughout church history -- nevertheless, despite the opinion that prosperity may hinder the Gospel, and handouts encourage false professions, it remains our responsibility to help our fellow believers who have a genuine need.

The following articles are about three assemblies in Lusaka that SAZ visits. It gives insight into the conditions and challenges brought about by poverty and how it affects the most vulnerable.

Poverty is also reflected in assembly offerings which barely cover expenses, leaving the elders with no money to help the needy or to maintain the building. The following examples are typical of a widespread need which is being amplified by growing numbers.

Soweto Assembly

This assembly is in a district of Lusaka about a kilometre away from Mungwi road and 20km from SAZ offices. The SAZ factory makes Corn Soya Blend (CSB) and delivers 75 x 5kg CSB every other month for distribution among widows, children and the elderly.

The church has grown in recent years from 50 to over 200. The church has also been instrumental in planting another church at the Apollo military camp, and zealously continue their efforts in evangelical outreach.

Most believers at Soweto are poor, and the elders say it is a struggle to support those in need. The provision by SAZ of a roof for their building has been a blessing, but fitting windows, doors, and concreting the floor is an expense beyond what they can afford. When it rains the inside becomes

wet and muddy - yet, when asked about priorities they requested Bibles and materials for evangelism.

As for the food distribution they said *"We are grateful for the CSB you deliver to our assembly; many of our members are being helped but the need is huge as most are living in extreme poverty. Please continue to deliver food so we can feed the Sunday school children, orphans and widows."*



Soweto hall and the four elders



A few children from Soweto Sunday School

Makeni Central Assembly

Makeni Central Assembly is in Makeni Villa about 11 kilometers from the SAZ offices. It is a densely populated area which becomes water-logged, during the rainy season with many houses being flooded.

An assembly was started in April 2019 to accommodate believers who previously travelled 8 km to Kanyama – very few have cars and transport was unaffordable. The solution was to use a tent as a temporary structure until they raised the money to buy land and build a structure, however, most believers are poor and after 5 years they still meet in the tent – except when it floods they rent a school room.

The assembly has 60 adults plus 40 children and continues to grow.



Some the believers and children I outside the tent



Noah Chinyimba, Gabriel Chatulika, Vincent Kalichi, Nickson Muwowo, Elders at Makeni Central. The picture is taken at the school where they meet when its raining.

SAZ delivers food for the elders to distribute to the children and those who need it most.

Chazanga Assembly

Chazanga Assembly is located about 5 km from the National Hero's Stadium off Great North Road and 29km from the SAZ offices. The Assembly was started in 2000 and has a congregation of around 120.

Sunday attendance is usually about 120 but sometimes as low as 70 due to work and sickness. Occasionally people have to trade on Sundays, which is a busy time on the streets, so that they can earn money for food for their families. Poverty has been affecting people's spiritual journey, with some not attending meetings because they are humbled by their lack of resources.

The average weekly offering can vary from 50 to 300 Zambian Kwacha, from £1.50 to £9

The elders said, *"The small offering is a true reflection of people's financial status, most of these people come to church on empty stomachs and not knowing where the next meal will come from. We are so thankful for the donation of CSB that we receive from SAZ and our humble request is that you continue to send the help."*



The Chazanga assembly elders

These three examples are typical of most of the sixty plus assemblies in Lusaka. We will continue to do what we can to help those in greatest need.

Small things make a big difference

Report from Prince Mwanza



Dorothy with Prince

We successfully delivered a wheelchair to Dorothy Nkhoma of Chimwala Assembly. Dorothy, a disabled woman from Chimwala Village, had been attending church services by crawling from her home, which is approximately 300 meters from the Chimwala Assembly Hall. Upon hearing her touching story, a sister in the UK generously donated funds to purchase a wheelchair for her.

After receiving the funds, we promptly purchased a wheelchair from a shop in Chapata. On 20th February, we transported the wheelchair by motorbike to Chimwala Village, covering a distance of 69 kilometres. Upon our arrival, we found Dorothy at home with her grandchildren eagerly awaiting our visit. When we unpacked the box, the delight on her face was evident—she had waited years for this moment.

Dorothy expressed her heartfelt gratitude to SAZ and the donor for their generous assistance with the wheelchair, as well as the monthly supply of maize during this challenging period of hunger. She said that the wheelchair would enable her to attend church services more easily, stating, "It took me a lot of time and energy to crawl from home to Assembly Hall every Sunday." The entire community rejoiced at the sight of her receiving help and recounted the struggles Dorothy faced due to her long-term disability. Many well-wishers had promised to assist her with a wheelchair but had never fulfilled their commitments.

We are immensely grateful and humbled that the donor chose to respond in such a compassionate manner to a woman she has never met. May the almighty God bless you!

Emergency Food Relief

February brings the end of the emergency food distribution for farmers. Since September last year, 218 families have received a monthly supply of 50kg bags of food. These families are from assemblies located within a 60-kilometre radius of Chipata town, making the distribution effort particularly challenging, especially in the last two months when the rains have been heavy.



The recipients expressed their gratitude for the support, highlighting the severe impact that last year's drought had on their lives. Fortunately, rainfall has been consistent since January, resulting in promising conditions for soybean and groundnut crops. Soybeans are currently at a critical stage of flowering and pod formation, and we hope the rains will continue until April. The first harvest will commence in May.

Seed Farming

(referred to as SAZ-Agri)

Developing new and improved seed varieties is central to the mission of SAZ-Agri. It builds skills, creates employment, and produces quality seed for hundreds of smallholder farmers in the region. It also raises income through seed sales to the Government and other aid agencies that cover operating costs and generate earnings that allow SAZ-Agri to support many believers and their families.

Last year, we faced significant challenges with drought that almost destroyed all our seed crops, which would have been devastating since it has taken years to develop these new varieties. Fortunately, we salvaged enough to replant this year, and the latest reports from the farm manager indicate that aside from a few acres lost to rain and wind, the crops are doing well.

The investment in irrigation appears promising, although we will not fully know the benefits until we grow a second crop in the same year. We recognise that climate change will affect the region in the coming years; therefore, irrigation is necessary to protect the seed crops. Currently,

less than 10 percent of the farm is equipped with drip lines and rain guns, highlighting the need for further investment.

Growing seed is a specialised type of agriculture that requires more management than traditional grain farming. To address this, we have hired an agronomist, Isaac Ngoma, who is now responsible for overseeing the farms.

Although our seed-growing business is still relatively new, our reputation is growing due to the quality of the seeds we produce. Expanding the operation is our aim, but to do that needs more investment in land, boreholes, storage sheds, and equipment. The value of these investments translates into assisting more farmers with high-quality seeds as well as improving earnings that allows us to increase support for the Lord's work in the region.

Money invested during the growing season is not recovered until the seed is sold, and because government and aid agencies often pay late, it causes cash flow problems at the start of each season. Borrowing from a bank is not an option, so we appreciate the support from believers who have helped us build a reserve to get through the elongated season.

The pictures below show fields of soya, groundnuts, maize and sorghum. We pray for steady rains until April, when the crops should be ready for harvesting .



Assembly Feeding Programme

Heavy rains hindered access to some assemblies however, people still gathered at streets and junctions where we were able to park the van. A total of eight assemblies received large bags of high-protein porridge, which is produced at the SAZ factory.

The electricity supply remains a persistent issue, as we continually receive unfulfilled promises. Additionally, the generator option has been stalled due to a fault in the unit that was shipped from China and had to be returned. Despite these challenges, we still produced 500 bags of food for the feeding program during the limited hours of power available.

People continue to endure poverty, exacerbated by a 17% increase in food prices, marking the highest inflation rate in a decade.

The people who receive the food are extremely grateful - may the Lord be thanked. Here are a few pictures – you will see how difficult it is during heavy rains.



The top two pictures are taken in Lusaka. The bottom picture is Mrs Nkomesha from Lusitu Assembly which is about 40 kilometres south of Lusaka

Orphan Programme

The Orphan Programme continues to expand. We thank everyone who donates monthly to supporting a child. It makes a great difference to the prospects of these children.

School fees were paid in February when it is also the time when the admin team meet head teachers to discuss the progress and wellbeing of each child.

There are touching stories behind most of the children many living in peasant conditions. All of the children are cared for by assembly believers and all attend Sunday School. Here are a few pictures take during visits last month.



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