



Survive and Revive

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, constant in prayer. (Romans 12:12)

Hope outlives every tribulation.

In response to the devastating effects of drought reported in our last newsletter, food relief for farmers in the Eastern Province and for the widows and vulnerable in Lusaka has continued thanks to the financial support received from fellow believers in the UK. The food relief will continue in the Eastern Province until February 2025 while in Lusaka it will continue indefinitely.

Latest from the Farming Communities

Food Distribution: 218 families from various assemblies continue to receive support. These families average 8 dependants, meaning about 2,000 people have been given food each month since September. This support will continue until March 2025, when some early maturing varieties of maize will be ready to harvest.

The food is delivered to assembly buildings which are used as collection points. The distribution is well-organised, and the believers are grateful for the support with many expressions of thanks. Mrs. Jassiel Phiri said, *"The maize relief has saved many lives in the Mchacha Assembly. It is not easy, and it takes people with a generous heart. We are indeed thankful for the support. God bless you."*

In November, when we visited the Mchacha assembly, the people gathered to show their appreciation. Hearing about their struggles was humbling, yet they sang with gusto, praising God for His blessings. (The adjacent picture was taken on a Tuesday afternoon. They said that on Lord's Days the hall is overflowing.)

Seed Distribution: Because the farmers had nothing to sell last season, they had no money to buy seed for this planting season. Share Africa Zambia (SAZ) has, therefore, provided maize, groundnut, soya, and sunflower seeds for them to plant this year. The distribution has been well-organized, with 208 farmers receiving quantities according to the size of their farms.

The first heavy rains arrived on the 16th of November, softening the soil and preparing it for cultivation and planting. At the time of writing, most farmers have planted and are now praying for steady rains until March or April next year. However, as with all rainfed crops, the risks are high. There can be dry spells when crops are flowering, or flooding when the crops are young, both of which can cause loss.

Grants not Loans: While farming has always relied on weather conditions, the increasing effects of climate change seriously affect those who have contributed the least to the problem. The change in policy by most governments to give loans instead of grants is supposed to encourage investment. However, with high inflation, a weak currency, and high interest rates, very few small companies can afford to take loans.

The SAZ model, which is based on both donations and investments, has received many commendations because it is driven by improving the livelihoods of the poor rather than profits for SAZ. Yet it is still fundamentally a work and reward model.

Income from seed and food sales covers the operating cost of seed development and food production with any excess used to support other assembly needs.



Mchacha Assembly



Unloading food

Kariba Dam

Darkness and Light Daily Power Cuts

The term "Darkest Africa" does not refer to skin colour or primitive lifestyles. Instead, it highlights the Western world's limited knowledge about a continent rich in minerals, natural habitats, and diverse cultures that predate much of Europe. TV images of poverty, conflict, deserts, wild animals, or stories from early missionaries often distorts Western perceptions.

Like many African countries, Zambia boasts modern cities, shopping malls, new hospitals, and universities and has been governed by a democratically elected government since 1964. However, despite these advancements, more than half of Zambia's population remains poor, and only 22% are in full-time employment (according to Government statistics). Understanding the reasons behind this requires a deep dive into African history, which can be humbling and uncomfortable for those of us who have benefited from the spoils of slavery and colonisation.

The theme of "Darkness and Light" can represent many aspects of life in Zambia but power cuts are just one example of how a country can be left in darkness (or powerless) due to an infrastructure that cannot keep up with the demands of a growing population and the impacts of climate change.

This year, following one of the severest droughts in decades, the water levels in lake Kariba are so low that

only one of the 5 turbines at the Kariba power station is operating. This has decimated the power generating capacity causing the worst blackouts in living memory.

The crisis is so severe that cities and towns across the country are sometimes without electricity for three consecutive days, with people counting themselves lucky if the lights come on for an hour or two.

This affects about half the Zambian population connected to the grid, while the other half rise and sleep with the sun as nature intended. Yet it could be argued that those who have never benefited from electricity have suffered most due to drought and the loss of the crops they depend on for food.

At the small SAZ factory, where food is made for the Orphan and Church Feeding programmes, power is limited to three to six hours a day, which is less than needed to produce what is required. Frequent appeals to the supplier to provide a dedicated power line have been rejected because electricity, they say, has to be shared fairly.

Laying off staff would be devastating for them and their families. Solar is not an option due to the amount of power required, therefore a diesel generator remains the only solution. This is what hotels shops and other businesses have had to do to stay in business. Although costly to run, the cost of doing nothing is far greater, thus a new generator has been ordered, with delivery expected at the end of December.

We trust this is the right decision.

Remember the Fatherless

*A Father of the fatherless a defender of widows
is God in his holy habitation. Ps 68v5*

Caring for dependent relatives, particularly children, is important in Zambian culture. Historically, civilisations have formed around family and tribal bonds, with customs, languages, and beliefs unique to their environment, resulting in practices that benefit kinship.

The wider Christian family has similar bonds where care and dependencies are integral to the life and growth of the church. The language of the New Testament embraces the family bond with language like 'my little children', 'love one another', 'the household of faith', 'the family of God', and so on. Helping our fellow believers who suffer from extreme poverty is at the heart of what we do.

SHAREAfrica's Orphan Programme aims to support the basic needs of orphaned and vulnerable children, enabling them to enjoy the same opportunities as other children. The program has grown to support 240 children, from 33 assemblies. The guardians are assembly believers who struggle to meet the daily household needs. The food we provide is especially welcome given the country's economic challenges and rising food costs. The pictures show examples of food and allowances delivered in November.

Pictures and Stories



Agness Mboshi grade 11 with her grandmother in Kanyama compound. The girl lost her father in 2008, the year she was born. Her grandmother said she hoped she would live long enough until Agness was old enough to care for herself. She said Agness is big enough that she now cares for me.



These children are from Kamimbi, a village close to lake Kariba where their fathers fish in small dugout canoes. The children consider it a privilege to attend school even though they have to walk 11 kilometres there and back each day.



Children from Lisutu, an area that is generally dry but this year the drought has made the situation even worse and so people are generally hungry. They all sang in gratitude

Spiritual Progress

Once again it is heartening to see young people committing their lives to Christ and declaring their faith in baptism.

Rodger Mwamba from Chibolya, is an orphan and the first-born child in a family of five. After the death of their parents, Rodger and his sister Rosemary were cared for by Melody Mwamba, sister to his late father. Melody keeps several children in her home in difficult financial circumstances.



Rodger is in grade six and is determined to do well at school. Despite his living conditions his attendance at school and church is good, and considering his young age, his declaration of faith, has been encouraging. We pray as he matures in faith that God will preserve him.

BES Courses

Many children on the Programme enjoy doing the BES courses. The material is distributed and marked by the SAZ administrators.



Activities carried out by SHARE Africa Zambia

Projects and Activities

Boreholes
Assembly buildings
Outreach support
Nutritious Food
Seed Development

Current Programmes

Orphans - 240 Orphans
Farmers - 51 Farmers
Students - 2 Students
Food Relief - Assemblies

Funding

Donors
Seed sales (SAZ generated)
Food Sales (SAZ generated)

Helping the Needy

Dorothy Nkhoma



Dorothy was born in 1962 in Chimwala Village, in Chipangali District, Eastern Province. She is 62 years old and has three children: two daughters and one son. Currently a single parent, Dorothy's husband left her several years ago. She is a committed believer and has been part of the Chimwala assembly for over 20 years.

Born with a disability that left her with crippled legs, Dorothy cannot walk upright. Despite this, she attends Chimwala services every week, moving on her knees from her home to the assembly hall, a distance of about 350 meters. It was touching and disheartening to see her struggle when she came to collect her relief maize during the October distribution.

Unable to work, Dorothy relies on her brother to provide food for her and her children. When speaking with her, she asked if SAZ could provide a wheelchair, as her previous requests to local clinics have been unsuccessful. We are committed to doing whatever is necessary to help her.

Peter Banda



Peter Banda suffers from chronic kidney failure. He has to travel to Chipata Central Hospital three times a week for his dialysis. All of this places a large burden on the family. He is included on SAZ food distribution and also receives a grant towards medical expenses. He is very grateful for the support which has eased the burden on the family.

Mrs Banda has also been ill. When visiting them at their home she had just got out of hospital after having a hysterectomy. Their humble home was a one-sit room with a bed at the rear. The thing of note was a well used Bible lying on the table.

His son, Elijah is also active in the Assembly. He is a farmer and when the SAZ Outgrowers programme was introduced into the area in 2021, the leaders and believers in the Assembly selected him for the programme. He is now a lead farmer in the Mchacha area and was instrumental in spearheading the development of farming activities in Mchacha area. The

Mchacha group started by growing soya beans for food and the quality produced was so good that SAZ decided to upgrade them to seed growers.

Elijah also grows soya beans but much of it was damaged last season by the drought. His farm earnings go to cover medical costs for his father, as well as providing food for his family, SAZ has provided a borehole for him which will be a great help. Elijah is already actively involved in irrigation gardening i.e. watering by cans. He would really appreciate if he could have a better irrigation system to enable him grow crops throughout the year on a larger scale. We have now sent money to purchase an irrigation system for him. This will include solar panels, a pump and drip irrigation lines. This will ensure that he is not so vulnerable to drought in the main growing season and should also be able to grow some additional crops during the dry season.

Catherin Kalekesha



Catherin was widowed in 2020. Before her husband died Catherin had been at home caring for the children while he did casual jobs to get by; they had no investments and didn't own their house. When her husband died life became difficult for her and their 5 children. Her sick sister and children later came to live with them which increased the burden,. They received help from well-wishers and the church but with the droughts people have failed to help. The two older daughters are street traders and they are also struggling to provide for their own families. She said "thank you for the food we receive from Share Africa. I'm able to feed my children and take care of my sick sister and her kids, your help is appreciated; as a widow life has not been easy and the support I receive from SAZ means a lot, it really eases my burden".

Lilian Kasepa



Lilian is a very resilient lady who has been trying hard to get herself out of poverty through making floor polish. Despite being a widow and facing health challenges she wakes up early to make the floor polish to sell to her fellow women in the compounds but it has been a challenge as people do not have the money to buy the polish; they prioritise the food. And with her sight challenges, she has been struggling to do mobile sales due to the sun which cause pain to her eyes. She said "the food from Share Africa has been of great help, I'm able eat and gain some weight. This food you give us brings nourishment to our bodies, God bless you!".

Irrigation — not quite so easy

With the increasing unpredictability of rain patterns in the region, trials using drip-fed lines have been ongoing for several months with varying degrees of success. The smaller plot of land at the SAZ office was the first to implement this method, and the results have been encouraging. Crops of maize and groundnuts have thrived, and projections suggest that three crop cycles can be grown annually on the same land. The area is well-guarded, and the soils are fertile.



Pictures of groundnuts and maize

At the large Munya farm, finding a reliable water source has been challenging. Three boreholes were drilled in close proximity with plans to combine their output and use solar booster pumps to irrigate the desired area. This work is currently underway. Additionally, several large sumps have been dug to harvest water for use during short spells of drought.

Extensive work was done at the Chamasongwe farm, yielding encouraging results from the first crops sown in October. However, cattle and hyenas destroyed the crop overnight. While it's understandable that cattle would be attracted to the fresh vegetation, the reason hyenas are chewing on rubber pipes remains a mystery, possibly in search of fresh water. The field has been replanted, and workers are now building temporary fencing to protect it from animals.

New Hall at Nyimba

Nyimba, a town about 300 kilometres east of Lusaka, has a population of around 20,000, primarily farmers and traders who benefit from its strategic location on the main road from Lusaka to Malawi and Mozambique. Like many towns in Zambia, there are no planning laws, resulting in a haphazard mix of small structures that serve the community's needs.

Brother Brian Kayomba, a pharmacist, relocated from Kalulushi in northern Zambia in 2020 and began a small assembly, meeting in a temporary structure on a farm plot. Since then, they have acquired land and started constructing a building, but progress has been slow due to limited finances, and the building has yet to reach roof level.



Temporary fence with Betanigo the farm manager

Three boreholes were drilled at farmers' locations with the intent of providing irrigation for one to two acres. The justification is based on the value of the additional output versus the cost of the irrigation. However, we suspended the work until we recalculated the cost of fencing and included it in the overall cost.



New borehole at Mr Bandas farm and field being prepared for irrigation

The new estimated total for providing a farmer with irrigation for 2 acres is £2,183 if they already have a borehole and £3,182 including a borehole. The fencing and labour costs pushed the price up by almost £1000.

Justification: The recovery period assuming a 3-crop cycle is now between 2 and 3 years depending on the type of crop and while the investment may seem steep it is the only answer to protecting rural farmers from the kind of drought experienced in 2024.

Currently, about 20 believers continue to meet in the temporary structure. After outreach efforts in August by believers from Kalulushi and Lusaka, about 10 people professed faith, and five were baptised on November 17th.

A permanent structure would greatly encourage this small congregation. SAZ has asked them to submit two quotations: one to complete the structure up to the roof level and another to roof the building. Once we know the cost, we will do what we can to help.



Pictures show the new and the old

Assembly Feeding Programme

Increasing support in challenging times

Power cuts are happening across the country and affecting everyone, albeit unequally. Households not connected to the national grid are also indirectly impacted by the power crisis, as the prices of food and other commodities have risen. Combined with low copper prices, energy shortages have affected Zambia's exports and the Kwacha's exchange rates. It has become clear that although hydroelectric power is a renewable source of energy, it is not necessarily reliable. This situation does not affect all people equally; it has worsened conditions for households living in poverty. Many are struggling to afford even basic carbohydrates and vegetables, with some surviving on just one meal a day. For others, the only food available is the Corn-Soya Blend (CSB) provided by SAZ. This aid is a lifeline for many families, helping to prevent malnutrition and nutrient deficiency-related illnesses in small children.

Messages of Thanks

CHAZANGA ASSEMBLY



Elder Bwalya far right, said the power cuts have really affected the church operation and are making it difficult for the leadership to effectively manage the affairs of the church. He said hair dressers, welders and barbers miss church because they work once power is available, and others have been missing church because they have to go and look for food.

He said people come to ask for help from the church but the church has no funds to help, as offerings have reduced because people do not have money to offer, things are so hard for them.

This has affected church projects as they have managed to roof the church but it has been a challenge to put in doors, windows and the floor. Visiting the sick with food and money for medicine has been a challenge because the church doesn't have the resources to help.

The help we receive from Share Africa allows us to visit the sick with food and also help the widows and needy in the assembly. The food you provide is so nutritious that it heals the malnourished as well as gives them the energy to live reasonable lives.

The Elder said "We keep a few bags for the Sunday school children and give them during their meetings on Sunday, and this has really improved the attendance".

CHIBOLYA ASSEMBLY



Deacons; Brian on the left, Charles in the middle and Webby on the right. They have diligently managed the distribution making sure the people deserving the help get to the assembly on time. They

said the feeding situation for household has become worse with some losing their jobs as the companies they worked for closed down. The high inflation has pushed up food prices and people are finding it difficult to feed their households.

They said the food provided by SAZ has been a godsend for those living on the breadline.

KANYAMA CHILDRENS HOME



Peter came to Kanyama Emanuel children's home when he was about 6 years old. The facility is the only home he knows and the children he lives with are the only family he has. He is currently in grade nine and writing

his exams. Peter has benefited from the SAZ feeding program as the school receives 75x 5kg bags per month. Peter and other children have CSB for their breakfast before going to class. Peter said he is looking forward to passing his exams.

Planning to do More

These reports represent the many messages of gratitude from those receive food. Once we have a generator installed at the factory we plan to increase the tonnage and expand the distribution. The requests for help are genuine - the need is great.

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