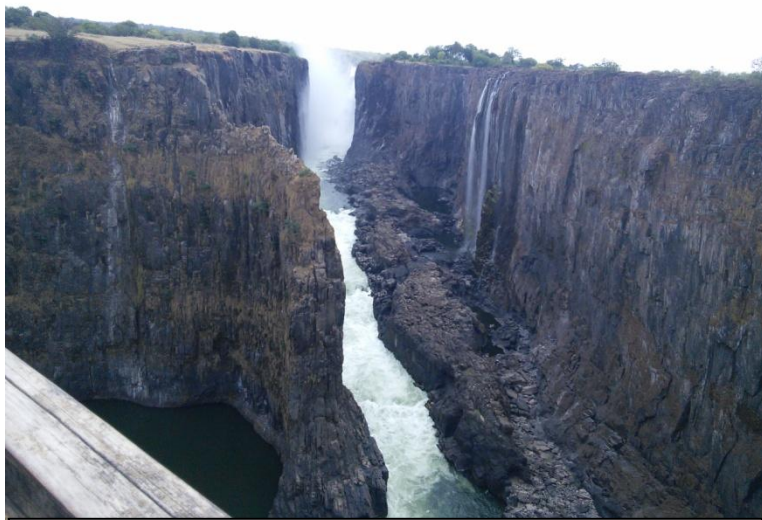


Dear Church friends

Recently I heard about a water scare in Britain where a certain area had to boil drinking water. I smiled to myself to think this could make national news, as I have been doing it here in Zambia since 2007! The safest water supply we have here is borehole water which is pumped up from many metres deep. Even our water companies (SWASCO for Southern province) do not treat water to UK standards and tummy upsets are frequent.

But water is not the main problem at the moment, - it is the electricity supply. In a country which has 1/3 of the water in sub Saharan Africa and 3 major hydroelectric plants you may think “what’s the problem?” Our 50 year old dam wall on Lake [Kariba](#) is unstable and the hydroelectric turbines not in good condition, thus the water levels are kept low to put less strain on the dam. This, plus naturally low water levels has triggered a huge power crisis which will probably last till the new year when the



The waterfall on the right of picture hardly has any water now

rains are established again. It is not just the 8 hour a day power cuts (yes, that is 8 hours a day 7 days a week) that are the problem, many people cope with this by using charcoal to cook and candles or kerosene lamps in the dark. It is the knock on effect on the economy that is the looming disaster for Zambia. Mines and agriculture need electricity, but so do small shops, supermarkets, small industries like our carpentry production at Chodort and of course hospitals and schools.

One effect close to home was that a misplaced candle set fire to clothes in the house of one of our workers, Mr Chavula. His wife lost all her clothes and the kids their school uniforms. In fact it is probably the poor who will feel the pinch most. Fuel prices have begun to rise again, a huge increase in inflation (K14 to the pound instead of K10 at the beginning of the year) means that all imported goods have gone up. Shops have to use generators to keep open in working hours and are passing on all these increased costs to their customers.

It is not all gloom and doom however; our lives at Chodort have been brightened by a succession of visitors. Vicky Williams came over for a couple of months and helped enormously with marketing and general business advice, she was followed by Rev Robin MacAlpine from Bennochty, one of our supporting churches in Kircaldy, Scotland who was interested in seeing firsthand how everything works here. Moira Lee is a most welcome visitor, returning for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time to support Play4all and be a pair of helping hands with useful things like updating the website ([www.chodort.org](http://www.chodort.org)).



Moira on her last visit helping judge the tailoring competition at graduation

Still to come is a short visit from Bunmi Olaysiade, our Methodist World Church representative for Africa, and visitors from Germany and Ireland, including David Nixon, my predecessor, who are coming for the official opening of our new classrooms in October. I must hurry to finish this however, as the power cut is from 6.00am to 2.00pm today and I need to email this before the power goes!

#### Items for praise

- For the enthusiasm of all our volunteer / visitors
- For safe journeys so far on Zambia's notoriously accident ridden roads
- For continued orders for our production units
- For good partnership relations with churches in the UK

#### Items for prayer

- The most effective way to get around the electricity cuts for our production team
- For inflation to slow down and level off
- For a national solution to the power crisis
- For wisdom in how we use the new classrooms
- For a successful launch of the classrooms in October
- For the success of the bid to Comic relief for funding vulnerable students next year

Every good wish,

*Jenny*

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