

AUGUST 2010

Dear Church friends,

On August 1st, I saw my first swallow of the season. I think he was a bit enthusiastic as I seem to remember that swallows do not start lining up on the telephone wires for the long haul from the UK until the end of this month; however he will be able to monopolise the mosquitoes for a few weeks to come.

I too can also be thankful for Zambia's bounty. My garden is producing tomatoes by the kilo; lots given away and still enough for tomato soup, tomato ketchup and tomato jam (yes tomato jam!).

In the compounds, both the groups in Kamatipa and Ipusukilo have made good use of the money they raised from selling their greetings cards when I was in the UK. They have started small projects individually or in small groups, selling charcoal, cooking oil, buns etc and are making a little profit, although business is slow in some cases.

I have recently held a couple of workshops with them to get people more interested in *chatting to some of the kids from Kamatipa* using soya, as it is cheap and nutritious. A bag of soya pieces costs about 25p and will easily provide enough protein for a family of 5; Thobwa (a thick soya and maize drink) works out at around 10p a 250ml glass and has 1,000 calories, so is good both for kids and adults who need energy.



I am happy to report that I have been given a site for a playground project in Kamatipa. The Afrieagles local football team have said I can use a 25 x 75 meter strip of land behind their goal post and I am just waiting for the paperwork to be finalised with the council then we can begin

clearing the land and building a shed. I have been thinking of this for some time.

Kamatipa is full of vulnerable children, about half of whom cannot afford the uniforms and books needed to go to school. They are a sad sight as they wander unsupervised round the streets all day. I am hoping to make a safe area for them to play, perhaps with a play worker and volunteers who can teach board games like drafts and coach team games as well as read to the young ones or do some creative crafts. When things are well established, I would also like to involve the local clinic and start a regular nutrition programme using something like Thobwa (as mentioned above). A 500 calorie drink x 3 a week would cost less than 50p per child and provided on a regular basis would do a lot to compensate for their poor nutrition.



watching Afrieagles play from the sidelines

Last month, I visited the farm orphans who live about an hour away, with the Rev Judith Nkondo a UCZ minister from Luanshya. She has been very successful in getting vulnerable groups to raise chickens for an income and she came with me to look at an income generating plan for

Gladys and the 20+ orphans on the farm. We decided that egg production would be their best option and together, they are making plans to build a hen house for 50 chickens. This should produce enough for a stable income for them of around £50 a week if Gladys can find a market for all the eggs. Many thanks are due to Rev Judith for fitting us into her very busy schedule.

On a more sombre note, the financial problems still continue at MEF and workers are being laid off nearly every month as their contracts come to an end. Some have been here for many years, and with unemployment now nearing 50% many of our unskilled workers will have little opportunity for jobs. Our director for the past 3 years, Rev Daka left at the end of last month too, and MEF is in limbo awaiting the appointment of another director. Meanwhile, there is talk of selling of the prime farming land MEF owns at Kalalushi in order to service the debts and to contribute towards the remaining workers wages.

Items for praise

- For Rev. Nkondo & her church as they give their time, advice and support to the farm orphans
- For the effort the compound groups are putting into their small scale income generation projects
- For a good prospective site for playground, and for the commitment from Ernest Salaka to manage the project from September.

Items for Prayer

- For Rev Daka, and all the other workers who have lost their jobs, as they face the challenges of life away from Mindolo
- That the board will find a director with suitable skills to effect a recovery at Mindolo
- For enthusiasm and success for the egg laying project on the farm near Luanshwa.
- For the paperwork for the playground to go smoothly, and for the project to have good community support from the local people.
- For all the families who cannot afford to send their children to school.

With every good wish to you all,

Jenny

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