



## The Deserving Poor

The title of the book written by Michael B Katz in 1989 called 'The Undeserving Poor' has often been used to describe people who are poor because of their own actions and therefore do not deserve sympathy from other people.

In a sense the whole of humanity could be described as 'undeserving poor', but God in grace has met our spiritual need in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our material need in a world full of rich resources.

The poor deserve help. The Lord Jesus gave the answer in the second commandment (Matthew 22v39), therefore, loving our neighbour should be a consequence of our love for God. The majority of the world's poor are not poor by choice, they are poor because they lack the opportunity to improve their own wellbeing.

The biblical principles of work and reward provide the basis for economic sustainability, but when success becomes a competitive measurement, the weak are often exploited and disparity increases.

SHAREZambia's food processing and seed growing business is a 'not for profit' business aimed at creating opportunities to lift people out of poverty. Any surplus resources are used to expand the work as well as support humanitarian, educational, and assembly gospel outreach activities within Zambia. The more we expand the seed farming and food processing activities the more support we can give to the other activities, therefore, the sustainability of the work in Zambia very much depends on the success of these activities.

*Jer 29 11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. (application only)*

## Chief Mafuta recognises the work done by SAZ

The SHAREAfrica Zambia (SAZ) seed farm, which is located in the chiefdom ruled by Chief Mafuta, has for the past 5 years been growing quality seed for distribution to the farmers on the SAZ Outgrowers scheme. The increase in farming outputs has resulted in noticeable improvements in the wellbeing of those families supported by the scheme. In recognition of the work done by SAZ, Chief Mafuta has offered additional land so that more seed can be produced hence extending the benefits to more farmers (and families) in the region.

Although the 115 farmers currently supported by SAZ also benefit from training, transportation, storage, and the agreement to buy back all produce at a fair market price, there is no reason why seed shouldn't be made available to other farmers in the area. However, expanding the scheme would be limited to providing seed only at present.

All farmers currently on the SAZ scheme are believers in assembly fellowship and many more are asking to be included. In addition, there are over 10,000 farmers in the area who could benefit from having quality seed. Helping others in this way opens doors to share the 'good seed' of the gospel, which many believers are keen to do.

Most of the people living in the region are poor by any standards. They live in makeshift structures with little resources to support their large households. Any help we could provide would be gratefully received.

Developing the new field brings its challenges.

- The field must be cleared and cultivated – which requires a tractor.
- Workers will be needed for 18 months before seed is harvested.
- A storage shed and caretakers house will be required.
- A borehole will be needed for drinking water for the workers.

This would be an initial capital investment. Once seed is being produced, some of it can be sold to other regions to recover costs and provide additional income.

This new land will also allow us to rotate the soy crop to a new field since we cannot grow the same crop in the same field for more than two years.

We intend to demonstrate our good will to the chief by doing all we can to fully utilise this additional resource.



Viewing the new field.



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## Sharing - 'out of their poverty'

In 2 Corinthians 8, Paul generously commends the believers in Macedonia for liberally supporting the needy saints at Jerusalem, even when they themselves were in great poverty. Three small assemblies in the Eastern Province of Zambia mirrored such kindness when they shared their dwindling provisions during a time of hunger. This happened between November 2018 and March 2019 when drought in the previous season meant there was insufficient food to last until the 2019 harvest.

During a recent visit to Ndiawala, the three assemblies, Ndiawala, Samuel and Lupampha, came together to greet us and to thank us for the help they had received previously. It was a privilege to meet them and witness their zeal for the Lord in such trying conditions. Their kindred spirit demonstrated such practical fellowship in a way that was a true testimony to the grace of God.

The farming conditions in the area are tough; poor sandy soils which don't hold enough moisture for crops to withstand short periods of drought, difficult trading conditions due to the distance from sizable towns, and their exposure to unscrupulous traders who buy their crops in advance, paying them a small deposit and committing them to sell at rock bottom prices. Improving the conditions of these dear people may seem an insolvable challenge, but we must believe that with God's help, any challenge is never too difficult to overcome.

Brother Mossa, our farm manager in the Eastern Province of Zambia suggested they should set up their own cooperative so they can buy fertiliser in bulk and coordinate sales in order to sell in truckloads rather than in small quantities. This would make transportation more cost effective for buyers from Malawi or Chipata. Brother Mossa has offered to help them with this initiative.

They were also encouraged to grow cassava as a backup for maize. This is a drought tolerant shrub which produces root tubers that are a rich source of calories and carbs. The cassava root is dried and ground (pounded) into powder and used as a substitute for maize. The leaves are also edible and can be used in a relish.

The Lumpapha assembly started in 2017 following gospel outreach from the assembly in Ndiawala. It was encouraging to see these believers travel several miles to join us in Ndiawala. We carried new bibles and hymnbooks as well as lots of bread, all of which was gratefully received.

Before leaving, brother Jesten Chilufya and his wife Masonda took us to their home to view their fields as well as some cassava plants he had planted earlier. He also took us to an old structure where the assembly first met. It was lovely to see how the seed of the Word of God planted in this day and age in such primitive conditions can grow into a thriving company of believers. The picture shows the building with brother Jesten holding cassava tubers.

On leaving, the elders from the three assemblies insisted we accept two live chickens as a mark of their appreciation. This was particularly touching since very few of them would regularly eat chicken. For some, a whole chicken would be reserved for special occasions. We carried the chickens back to Lusaka, some 350 miles away, where they are doing well!

Two days after leaving, a gift was sent to buy a pair of oxen for brother Moses. The picture shows the brother and his wife receiving the new animals. This will help him cultivate more land which should improve his income and increase his food reserves.



The believers outside the hall at Ndiawala



Jesten Chilufya and his wife outside the old assembly hall



Brother Moses and his wife with their new oxen

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# Lusitu Assembly Revisited

Report by brother Eddie Kasongo following his visit to Lusitu at the end of May

The assembly at Lusitu was started in 2005 by brother Waka Wa Kasongo who was posted to the area to work as a Clinical officer at the local health clinic. Lusitu is in the Southern province of Zambia where there are relatively few assemblies compared to other provinces. In addition to Lusitu there are only three other assemblies, Chirundu, Siavonga and Kamimbi, which are closer to Lake Kariba and the Zambezi river. These three were established by fishermen from Luapula who moved to the area in search of fish.

The population in Lusitu grew when families were relocated during the construction of the Kariba dam. The area can become very hot, sometimes reaching almost 50 degrees. The soils are poor, containing large contents of iron oxide which at times causes the rivers and streams to turn red. All in all, living conditions are very difficult. If people had a choice they probably wouldn't live there, but for many, relocating is not an option.

In 2008 they had about 50 in assembly fellowship in Lusitu but now it has dropped to about 15. In 2011, SHARE provided funds for a borehole at the assembly plot including a solar pump and stand-tank which delivered water on tap. SHARE also provided cement and blocks so they could start building a hall but sadly work progressed slowly and until now they have only laid the foundation and built 3 courses of brick! The solar pump worked well until recently when thieves stole the cables.

The numbers have dwindled for many reasons, some moving away from the area and others fell by the wayside. Why they didn't proceed with the building is uncertain.

## Present Situation

Poor rainfall in the 2018/2019 season has resulted in a food shortage. Soghum and millet are usually grown in the area but this past season few of the crops germinated and where they did the plants were so small that they left them for the cattle.

The lack of water is causing their livestock to die

Children are dropping off school to go and assist parents to search for food in the wild.

The believers say they will commit to finishing the construction of the hall. They also say that numbers will increase if they have a hall and running water!



SHARE will get the water pump repaired and try to help with the construction of their hall.

## Bible distribution

During the visit, bibles and hymn books in Tonga, the native language used in the area, were distributed. The believers were very happy to have a copy of the bible and a hymn book. Some have never owned a bible because they were not readily available or affordable.



Bibles were also delivered to the assembly at Siavonga. Picture shows brother Davies Chomba receiving a box of bibles on behalf of the assembly.

## Family focus at Lusitu



Brother Pazlam and sister Decent Kilwani (in picture) have 4 children, but struggle with various health issues. They are hard workers in their small garden at Lusitu. They grow vegetables but find it difficult to irrigate their field. A

small treadle pump would be a great help to them. SHARE will follow up.

## Appeal for bicycles for outreach purposes

Four brothers in the Lusitu assembly walk distances of more than 15 miles spreading the Word of God in areas around Lusitu. They appealed for bicycles to help with evangelism. Bicycles would obviously help in other ways. We hope to provide these bicycles soon.

## Neverson Hakabwa (in picture)

Hakabwa (12 years old) was born in 2007 with an abnormally small brain which has affected his growth and ability to do anything on his own. The hunger situation in Lusitu and poverty conditions at his home has seriously affected his nutritional



intake. His digestive system is equally weak and he can only take liquid foods. When we met Neverson, he was being carried in a basket made from reeds. We managed to provide him with a wheelchair, so he is more comfortable and is able to be pushed by his carers more easily. Please pray for Neverson and those who care for him.

# Orphan Programme - Guardians and Widows

The SHAREAfrica Orphan Programme was set up to help those from Christian families who have been left in the care of relatives or single parents. When visiting the homes of these children we were also struck by the struggles of those who care for them. Here are some observations following a recent visit.

## Joyce Chanshi

Joyce lives with her three children, Sondashi, Frank and Gershome in a suburb of Lusaka called Garden. Her husband, also called Sondashi, died in August 2018. He was a respected evangelist commended from the assembly in Garden who worked in the local Garden area as well as other areas of Lusaka. He supported his family by making and selling soft drinks, but sadly contracted diabetes which resulted in him losing his leg and then his life. When he died the owner of the house gave Joyce 6 months free rent. When we visited, she said the rent-free period had expired and she was now struggling to pay. It is only a small living room and bedroom but accommodation in these congested compounds is scarce and it appears landlords are often cruel and exploit such sad circumstances to their own advantage.

Her income came from selling pails of charcoal. When we passed on a gift, she was delighted saying she would now buy and sell potatoes because that would make more income and help her situation.

In Zambia it is very unusual for a widow to remarry, which means she is likely to remain a widow for the rest of her life. Her three children are on the SHAREAfrica Orphan Programme which provides school fees and other allowances. Frank, the oldest, is now at a senior school in Kabwe. Please pray for Joyce and her family.



## Barbara Tapa

Barbara, a widow since 2004, lives in Nampundwe, a town about 30 miles from Lusaka. She cares for her sister's three children, Betty, Emanuel and Mora; all three are sponsored by SHAREAfrica. Barbara's own children are older and have left home.

Barbara's mother had cows which she sold, enabling her to buy a small plot of land and build a house on it. Although she has no rent, she still struggles to support the children. One of them, Betty, has been attending hospital and this has drained their resources. She said her blind sister gave her a goat to sell to raise some income but sadly she sold it on credit and has yet to be paid.

Mora is a very bright girl. She has been first in her class since she started school. Emanuel who is in grade 9 wants to be a pilot.

Barbara was uplifted when we left her a gift. She said she would buy things to sell at the street market to raise income. Barbara, her sister and her extended family would value your prayers in difficult circumstances.

## Alice Nyirenda

Alice lives in Chawama and attends the Chawama Main assembly in Lusaka. Her husband died in 2017 leaving her to care for 6 children: Godfrey, Towela, Sinkamba (pre school), Suwilanji, Jessy and George. All but George are sponsored by SHAREAfrica. George decided to leave school and found a job repairing roofs so he could earn some income to help support his siblings.

When we visited Alice in 2018 we learned that she was about to be evicted because she couldn't pay her rent arrears. She had also been robbed of goods she kept for her stall at the street market. At that time, we left money to replace her stolen stock. Though she still looks frail and poorly, things appeared to be a little better.

As a widow, raising money to pay rent and care for 5 children is a real challenge. With no food banks or social payments they rely on support from friends and fellow believers.





## A Good Year for Farmers in the Eastern Province

In contrast to the drought in the Central Province, the rains in the Eastern Province have been good all year. This has resulted in a bumper harvest for the SAZ seed farm as well as for the farmers on the Outgrowers scheme.

Harvesting soybeans and groundnuts is finished. Two-thirds of the soya has been threshed, sorted and bagged. Shelling, sorting and bagging groundnuts is a much slower process which will continue until late August.

A combination of quality seed, good local management, high rainfall and a guaranteed market will significantly improve the income for the 115 farmers on the programme. We praise God for such blessings.

But the good news also brings its challenges. SAZ has committed to buy back their produce, and with the shortage of grain in the Central Province, the prices continue to rise.

We also need to find adequate storage for the grain and seed. At present we are renting a number of small sheds in various locations. However, this increases the risk of theft as well as making it more difficult to manage stock.

Brother Musa has done a commendable job in managing the additional work load at the farm. He is on course to meet the targets.

We will post the full results of this year's programme in our next bulletin but the two big positives are the rise in employment and the increase in farmer earnings.



Women sorting soybeans



Soybeans ready for threshing

### Sichoobo and Nambundwe

It was 2003 when we first visited the small assemblies at Nampundwe and Sichoobo. It was after a season of prolonged drought when people were greatly in need of food and many children were sick. As we responded with some emergency food relief, we got to know and love many of these dear saints, a bond that continues to the present time. They had about 30 in fellowship in each assembly and in 2005 we helped them build new halls in each location.

Nampundwe was a mining town which provided employment for most of the men in the area. Some were qualified workers who came in from the Copperbelt; they were well grounded believers with a heart for the Gospel. Sichoobo, which is about 5 miles from Nampundwe, began following outreach work by two young men.

Sadly, fluctuating conditions at the mine resulted in layoffs and reduced hours which caused some men to return to the Copperbelt. This weakened the assemblies for a time, but our visit in March showed the numbers had increased to around 40 in Sichoobo and 60 in Nampundwe.

The believers, particularly in Sichoobo, were finding things difficult. The hall is now badly in need of repair, two of the elders are seriously sick, crop failures has caused a food shortage, children looked under nourished, and some of the accommodation we visited was as bad as we have seen. As a follow up we have provided cement to repair the cracks in the hall and also committed to deliver food-packs for the undernourished children. Please pray for the testimony in these areas, together with the spiritual encouragement and practical help of the believers there.



Outside the hall at Sichoobo



Mr Sichoobo with his two grandsons

## Congratulations on their Graduation

For a few children who have successfully completed their secondary education, funding their further education has been possible with the kind support of some believers and, in some special circumstances, by the Zambian Government. Here are three examples of young people who have recently graduated.



**Lemmy Makina** was supported by SHAREAfrica through primary and secondary school. At university he was sponsored by the Government of Zambia. He completed his course in Environmental Education, graduating in March 2019. He was given help to hire his graduation outfit and looked the part on his big day!

Lemmy expressed his appreciation, saying, "I am very grateful for the support I have received from SHAREAfrica Zambia, without which I would not have come this far. I hope that my success will inspire other children that Share are supporting".



**Besa Katanga** has just graduated in Civil Environmental Engineering at the University of Zambia.

She has been sponsored by SHAREAfrica since 2008 when she was in secondary school and throughout her studies at University. She says, "In today's

cruel world one can seldom receive help from people with whom no blood bonds exist. SAZ however, has vividly shown that God's love is way beyond human relations. I am a beneficiary of their kindness through the Lord's own people that I have never met before. Indeed God works in mysterious ways to perform His will."

She hopes eventually to be employed by Road Development Agency (RDA) or Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO) and that one day she will be able in turn to help poorer Christians through their education.



**Gladys Nyirenda** was sponsored through primary and secondary education and then further sponsored for 3 years to complete a diploma in journalism. She has completed her diploma course and is waiting to see if she will be accepted for the degree course. Gladys comes from a

needy family with 4 siblings also on the Orphan Programme.

## Miniver Mwewa

Miniver was born into a family of two and lost her father when she was very young. Her mother works as a maid and struggles to make ends meet. Miniver came to accept the Lord Jesus as her Saviour 7 years ago when believers in the Garden assembly in Lusaka were evangelising her locality.



After finishing secondary school, she worked in a bottling plant for 4 years to raise fees for her nursing course. She managed to raise the fees for 1 year and someone in her assembly paid for the second year but couldn't afford to pay for her final year. SHAREAfrica Zambia has sponsored her final year which she hopes to complete this year.

Pray for Miniver as she sits her final exams this August. Miniver is a very committed and dedicated young lady at Garden assembly and a good example to many of her peers.

If you would like to support the work of SHAREAfrica by making a donation you can do this in a number of ways.

1. **BY DEBIT/CREDIT CARD** using our website [www.shareafrica.com](http://www.shareafrica.com) and selecting 'Donations' from the main menu bar.
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