

A Question of Trust

Measuring the impact that charities and non-profit organisations have is somewhat subjective. News reporting is often done with the intent of reassuring donors that their money is being used wisely, and that the charity's responsibilities are being effectively managed. In recent months criticism has been made of some well-known charities where an apparent abuse of trust by front line operatives have brought their name into disrepute.

SHAREAfrica and SHAREAfricaZambia are small low overhead organisations managed by trusted believers. The effectiveness of our activities can be easily measured, for example, the success of the Orphan Programme is measured on the number of children who pass grade 7, plus the number who go on to complete grade 12. Our Outgrowers scheme is measured by the number of farmers who continue to improve their earnings. The seed farm is measured on the value and variety of seed produced in a season; and so on.

One of the reasons for our success is the commitment and trustworthiness of those who run the in-country operations. All have a heart for the work and are prepared to go that extra mile to exceed expectations. Their skills and professionalism has grown in successive years meaning that year on year we have been able to help more people.

The photograph shows the brethren who run the operation in Zambia. There is also one woman, Gertrude, who is pictured on the inside page. They all come from humble backgrounds and can relate to the circumstances of those they are trying to help. All have a touching story to tell.

Left to right: Mwewa, responsible for farm projects; Chabala, accountant; Mwape and Paul, responsible for the Orphan Programme; Eddie, our manager in overall charge. Please pray that they will resist temptation and continue to serve the Lord with a pure heart.



New Software and Web Sites

A new sponsorship system for Orphans and Farmers is now up and running. The system includes information about the children and farmers on the scheme, as well as awaiting sponsorship. It includes information about their circumstances as well as the help they receive throughout the year. All data is password protected and complies with the new Data Protection law.

Existing sponsors can log onto the system using that same name and password they used previously. New sponsors will be advised of their log-on details when they sign up.

We also have two new web sites; shareafrica.com and shareafricazambia.com. The shareafrica site provides general information about what we do to support the work in Zambia. The shareafricazambia site is aimed at a Zambian audience; publishing our work locally and encouraging people to buy our products. We want local people to know that we are a Christian organisation with a mission to help those in greatest need. So far, the feedback has been encouraging.

The SHAREAfrica site will become our main news site. Future Newsletters will be posted to the site as well as interim news updates. An email will be sent to those registered in the system to inform them when our newsletter is posted to the site. If anyone wants to be included on our mailing list, please send an email to info@shareafrica.com

We warmly thank all who have supported the work

The Seed Farm is Growing

Mussa Tembo and Mwewa Mwindula are to be congratulated for their efforts in developing the land and acquiring the skills to grow specialised seed crops. The Zambian Agricultural Research Association regularly inspect the fields and are delighted with the way the crops are being managed. So far there has been no difficulty getting the seed registered. We are confident that this year's crops will also meet the agencies requirements.

The soya crop has just been harvested with yields exceeding our forecast. The seed is now being sorted and bagged.



Women sorting soya beans

Groundnuts, beans and sunflower are currently being harvested; everything appears to be going to plan.

We still have challenges with storage. An arrangement to rent a secure shed in Chipata has fallen through so we are now looking for another location. We have a large storage shed close to the farm which is used as a collection and sorting point, but we need a similar storage facility in Chipata where the grain can be stored prior to distribution.

Because farming in the area is entirely dependent on rainfall, we are experimenting with ways to harvest rainwater and use solar power pumps for irrigation. There are several technical challenges to overcome, but with some inspired thinking we hope shortly to have a system to trial.



Farmers in their soya field

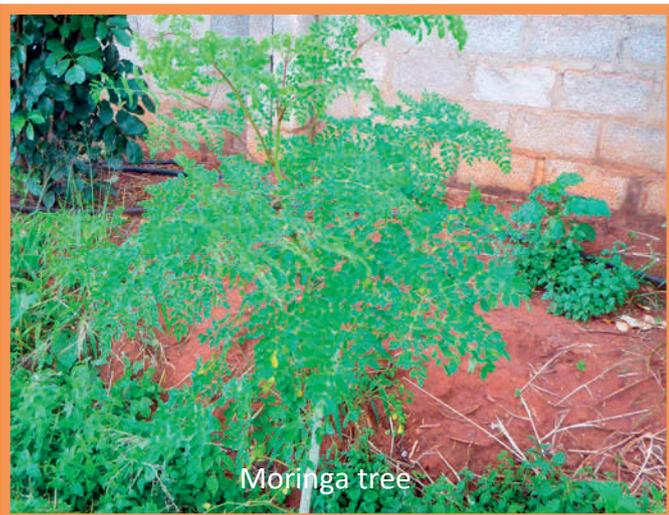
The farm workers are all assembly believers, grateful for the opportunity to earn a wage. We are determined, with the Lord's help, to do what we can to improve their situation.

The Food Factory – New products and encouraging progress



Our new Moringa flavoured version of our peanut butter is now in production. Three years ago, we learned of the health benefits of moringa. After finding a moringa oleifera tree in a field in Eastern Province, we harvested the seed and planted them at our yard in Makeni. We then transplanted several trees which are now mature enough to harvest the leaves and process them into a

powder to add to our peanut butter. This caused interest among health food specialists who subsequently visited our factory to make a brief documentary about the benefits of moringa. The visit was good publicity, and brother Eddie was praised for his initiative. In the US and Europe, moringa is reasonably well recognised as a health supplement. However, because we were able to grow this special variety, and incorporate it as a supplement into a food product, it became a matter of interest. Here is an extract from www.draxw.com about the benefits of moringa. *"Although this plant was initially discovered for its beneficial properties thousands of years ago, only recently has moringa (sometimes called the Ben oil tree) become known as one of the most impressive herbal supplements to hit the holistic health market. In fact, in 2008 the National Institute of Health called moringa (moringa oleifera) the "plant of the year," acknowledging that "perhaps like no other single species, this plant has the potential to help reverse multiple major environmental problems and provide for many unmet human needs."* We are not geared up to sell moringa powder, or capsules, but if we can get an export license then we may consider it as an option in the future.



Moringa tree

Interestingly, Julian Evans, in his book about trees and plants in the Bible, suggests that the moringa tree was most likely the tree that was cut down at Mara to make the bitter waters sweet. It is claimed that a few moringa seeds can remove most impurities from water, so it is possible that moringa oleifera was indeed the same tree.

Progress at the Factory

Progress has been made with the electricity upgrade. The equipment has been purchased and work on the new power lines and the installation of the new transformer is underway. Hopefully the new cornflakes line will soon be back in operation.

A reminder of the purpose of the factory:

1. Adding value to the grain coming from the Outgrowers scheme
2. Being able to pay the farmers an 'above market' price for their produce
3. Making nutritional food for the malnourished
4. Employing people and training them in new skills
5. Making a profit so we can use the money to expand the humanitarian work as well as supporting the assembly work.

We have still some way to go before the factory is fully self-sustaining. With a small increase in investment in raw material, packaging and basic infrastructure, then our business model shows that the factory could be self-sustaining by the end of the year.



The pictures show some of our factory workers. The life stories and conversion of many of them is remarkable. They are honest, hardworking, and grateful for the opportunity to earn a wage. Some prefer to work holidays so they can to earn a little extra for their families. Most are sole breadwinners in their household. (Gertrude, the supervisor, is pictured second from right at the back)

Outgrowers Scheme



There are 115 farmers on this year's programme. Most are doing well and expect a good harvest. Some, unfortunately, have reported that their groundnut crops have been partly damaged by rosette disease and others that their bean crops have been affected by worms. Overall however, the picture still looks promising.

The help given to the farmers is greatly appreciated. Many plead with us not to pull out like other NGO's have done in the past. The benefits are easily measured; our records show that most farmers are significantly better off from joining the scheme.

Here is an example of one family we visited. Sandy and Tatamenji are an elderly couple; Sandy is 74 and

Tatamenji is in her 60's. Due to ill health Sandy can no longer work in the fields leaving it to his wife and family. They have lived on the same land for over 20 years. They had 10 children, 6 of whom have died. They presently have 20 grandchildren and 4 greatgrandchildren. Food and income from the farm supports the entire family. The help provided has enabled them to buy an oxcart, metal sheets for their roof, as well as send some children to school. They have more land than they are able to cultivate, but if they train the oxen to plough, then they will be able to cultivate a larger area.

Of the farmers on the scheme, Sandy and Titamenji, who are from Chimwala assembly, are among the most successful. This gives you an idea of the lifestyle of others on the programme. Sandy and Titamenji are blessed that they have a large family living on site, others are not so fortunate.

We are sure that our intervention can have both immediate and long-term benefits. Firstly, most farmers on the scheme have more land than they can cultivate. Secondly, there is no vehicle access to most farms, only paths used by bicycles and walkers. Thirdly, most farmers grow maize as their staple crop which is not the best drought resistant crop, neither is it the best cash crop. For £500 they could get a pair of trained oxen, including a plough and cart. This would increase the area they can cultivate and, allow produce to be carted to a collection point. They could also hire out their oxen to help their neighbours. Crop rotation and diversification would be another benefit if we can provide them with the right seed.

Farmer Sponsorship Scheme

Funding the Farmer Programme from our general fund makes it difficult to guarantee consistent support for every farmer. For this reason, we have developed a sponsorship programme that allows people to donate a set amount every month to a named farmer, therefore ensuring that that farmer gets the support he needs throughout the season.

Each farmer on the programme is selected based on need and ability (all are assembly believers). Their circumstances are similar; they are trapped in a survival cycle where their efforts are consumed by growing enough food in one season to ensure their survival to the next.

The sponsorship fee of £20 will provide a small fixed allowance for each farmer, covering the cost of seed, bags, training, transport, and some equipment. The equipment for example, could be a silo, plough, sprayer, or sheller. By helping them become more productive, improving food security, and providing disposable income for school fees, medicines, clothes, household goods, and so on, the benefits are shared by the whole family.

People who currently donate a monthly amount to the farming programme will be allocated a farmer and notified about the family's circumstances.

The easiest way for a new sponsor to sponsor a farmer, is to go to the web site, select a farmer, and pay on line. The procedure is straightforward and well documented. Each sponsor will receive a login name and password; this will allow them to see the farmers records and get information about how they are faring.



Orphan Programme

System Update

The new orphan system is bedding in. Work on bringing records up to date and posting new photographs is ongoing. We are pleased that the transfer has gone well, and that the system is running without issues. The interface to the new web site is in final test and should be available by the time this newsletter is mailed. Existing sponsors should be able to log in and view current data using their existing user name and password.

Minor changes are underway due to changes in school fees and the introduction of new gift packs. The changes will provide better control over how the sponsorship money is allocated to each child.

Support Packs and Changes to School Fees

Government schools no longer charge school fees for children up to grade 7. While this is a major step towards allowing free schooling for all children, there are still many community schools where this doesn't apply, particularly in rural areas where the need is greatest. Also, the government schools that don't charge fees, still expects parents / guardians to contribute towards school maintenance and special activities.

When reviewing the needs of the children we concluded that all still required help of one kind or another. Other agencies who support many more orphans than we do, provide Support Packs for different ages; the packs include food, fees, clothing and other essentials. We have now decided to do something similar.

It was also apparent when visiting their homes that some guardians needed more help than the children they were caring for. In the suburbs of Lusaka, all homes we visited were seriously short of food. The picture opposite shows a dear sister from Chawama assembly who cares for three grandchildren on the programme. An older grandson was their main support, but changes in trading regulation to remove traders from the streets meant he lost his only source of income. The grandmother is also suffering from a terminal illness – seeing the hunger in their faces was heart breaking.

We have therefore decided that the Support Pack should include a 50 kg bag of specially prepared nutritious food. This will be made in the factory and given as often as is necessary. Other items in the pack will include items such as shoes, school bag, items of clothing, toiletries, a Bible ...and so on. Where school fees are required, these will be paid direct to the school. We will try and balance the value across two age groups; grade 4 to 7 and grade 8 to 12. Our next newsletter will report how well that has been received.



Delphine Mulubwa with her two grandchildren

Delphine lives in Chawama, one of the areas affected by flooding in February this year. The floods sparked a serious outbreak of cholera which killed hundreds of people including many children. When we visited the area in April there were still residues of polluted floodwater surrounding many homes.. It is a problem that will keep recurring until proper drainage and sewage systems are installed. It is a vast problem considering 350,000 people live in Chawama.



Picture shows flooding at the old Chawama assembly hall where brother Eddie was baptised. There are now two new assemblies in the area; Chawama Central and Chawama Main. Both have escaped the floods.

Sponsorship

If you would like to help by sponsoring a farmer or an orphan, you can do so by going to our web site at www.shareafrica.com and selecting a child or farmer from the list. Or, you can complete the Standing Order form below and send it to SHAREAfrica. (The PO Box address at the bottom of this page). The minimum amount is £20 a month.

Once you submit your sponsorship information you will be kept informed of the progress of the child or farmer you have sponsored.

Making a donation: You can also donate via the web site or simply by sending us a cheque payable to SHAREAfrica.

Orphan Programme

Farming Programme

NAME AND ADDRESS

BANK DETAILS- ACCOUNT DEBITED

BANK	
BRANCH ADDRESS	
POST CODE	
ACCOUNT NAME	
ACCOUNT NUMBER	
SORT CODE	

PAYMENT DETAILS

AMOUNT IN FIGURES	
AMOUNT IN WORDS	
PAYMENT PERIOD	<i>Monthly</i>
FIRST PAYMENT DATE	
LAST PAYMENT DATE	<i>Until further notice</i>

BENEFICIARIES BANK TO BE CREDITED

BANK	BARCLAYS BANK PLC
BRANCH ADDRESS	1 ST ANDREWS SQUARE
	EDINBURGH
	EH2 2BD
SORT CODE	20-29-23
ACCOUNT NAME	SHARE AFRICA
ACCOUNT NUMBER	10592935

SIGNATURE	
DATE	
TAXPAYER YES / NO	

Assembly News

While in Chawama we took the opportunity to visit the assembly at Chawama Central. In 2011 SHAREAfrica helped build a hall as well as a small school. Prior to building the hall, about 20 believers met in a makeshift structure covered by tin roofing sheets. Today they have over 70 attending the Lordsday meetings, and the small school seems to be functioning well.

They have yet to meet the governments requirements for teacher funding, however they expect to obtain this in due course at which time the teaching staff will become more stable.



New Office Block

Work has commenced on stage one of the building. This includes the foundations, septic tank and soakaway. It will be a great benefit to have a permanent structure with proper facilities. This is just stage 1 of a 4 stage project. It will take time; we have learned that nothing happens quickly in Zambia.

Smart Phones

If you have any unused 'smart phones', for example, Samsung Galaxy 3 or above, please send them to Jim McPhail at 43 Green Lane, Harrogate, HG29LP, or give them to one of our trustees. They are a great benefit to the believers and, it allows us to receive pictures and message without charge. Thank you!

Contact information

**SHAREAfrica, PO Box 401,
Harrogate, HG2 9WZ**

Telephone: 01423879280 or 07889433979

www.shareafrica.com

Info@shareafrica.com or

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Gift Aid applies