

President Edgar Lungu visits an assembly in Eastern Province

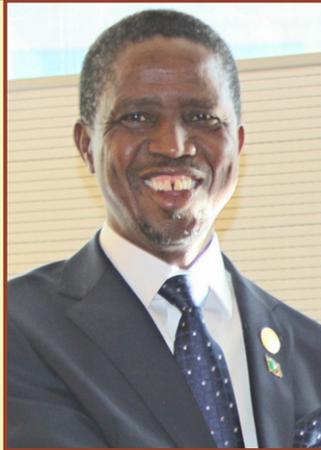
On 22nd July 2018, the Chitandika assembly was privileged to have the republican president of Zambia, Edgar Lungu, (photo right) attend the Sunday gospel meeting.

The President was in the area to attract support for the Mayoral candidate, but prior to any political rally he normally likes to meet with Christians at a bible believing church.

Brother Mussa Tembo, the SHAREAfrica Zambia farm manager, preached from Isaiah 53 v 5 and Acts 3 v 19. The message centred on the substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ and the need for repentance.

After the service, the President was given an opportunity to greet and say a few words to those present. He exhorted the believers to show brotherly love and unity, adding that no true Christian would wish to do harm to his brother if God was resident within him.

Our SHAREAfrica Zambia project manager Mwewa Mwindula, who was also present, took the opportunity to inform the president of SHAREAfrica Zambia's activities within the community. The President was delighted to learn how the organisation is impacting the lives of the poor. He praised those involved in the work and promised to visit our processing plant in Lusaka.



Chitandika Assembly

Chitandika assembly is in an area in the Eastern province close to the Malawi border. It is one of 14 small rural assemblies in the region. It started in 1986, following the outreach work conducted by the late brother Nedson Nyirenda.

Brother Nedson resigned from his work at the mineral mines in the Copper-belt in answer to the Lord's call to serve as a full-time worker in his home province. After resigning he returned to his home village in Chitandika where he began evangelising the surrounding area

Brother Nedson pioneered most of the assemblies in the Chipata region, including the assembly at Chitandika.

The assembly at Chitandika started with a small number of saints comprised of five couples and their families. It continued to grow over the years but suffered a great set back when brother Nedson was called home in 2003.

The assembly is currently overseen by three elders: Mabvuto Tembo, Bornface Sakala and Paul Banda. The average attendance at the breaking of bread is 50, with over 100 at a gospel meeting.

The assembly is so enterprising that they managed to build the Gospel Hall through money raised from a shop run by the sisters.

Despite having very limited resource, the assembly has been able to pay the school fees for some of the orphans kept by believers.

Supporting widows and orphans in their fellowship remains their greatest challenge.



President with Mussa to his left



Fighting Malnutrition - Soya Blend for Orphans

Malnutrition is a major public health concern in Zambia

Malnutrition underlies 52% of all under-five deaths in Zambia. The 2016/17 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey notes that 40 percent of children under five are either stunted or wasted (stunted is age-to-height and wasting is weight-to-age).



To improve the nutritional diet of children on the orphan Programme, the SHAREAfrica Zambia factory has begun producing a Corn Soya Blend (CSB) which will be distributed to the children during visitation. We also try to sell the food to other 'feeding programs' to cover the cost of production. Our CSB super cereal is made to the standards specified by the World Food Programme. The food is enriched with 13 vitamins and 3 minerals.

The 2016 Global Nutrition Report notes that malnutrition and poor diets constitute the number-one driver of the global burden of disease. For Zambia, a country that can grow such a variety of nutritious food such as maize, rice, millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, cassava, groundnuts, soya beans - and many other fruits and vegetables - it is concerning that malnutrition is at such a high level. The root problem is poverty, where people either can't grow or afford to buy the type of food they need for a healthy diet. For far too long in Zambia, 'Food security' has been the catchphrase, meaning that people can survive on maize or nshima (a staple food in Zambia, similar to porridge) - but this is not enough.

Nutrition challenges have now shifted to 'House food security' and 'Nutrition security', which the Food and

Agricultural Organisation (FAO) defines as 'access by all people at all times to the adequate utilisation and absorption of nutrients in food, that will enable them to live a healthy and active life'. Having 'food' – however defined – does not guarantee a nutritious diet. The food must be of the right quantity, quality and variety.

However, when most people live below the poverty line and cannot afford to buy the food they need, the answer to such aspirations is complex. Economic growth lies at the heart of poverty reduction and improvements in health and inequality. The reason why SHAREAfrica Zambia is involved in such activities is to try and help our fellow-believers (and others) improve their income by creating and supporting 'self help' opportunities.

Our small food processing factory, which buys the grain from the rural farmers to make several products, adds nutrient fortification to these products to enhance their nutritional value. The SHAREAfrica Zambia facility wants to contribute in whatever way it can to fight malnutrition, especially among our fellow-believers and their children.



Office Burglary

On the 13th July 2018, thieves broke into our offices at Makeni and stole all the computers, other valuables and, ironically, the office Safe - a total loss of about £4,000.

The burglary was reported to the police, but no arrests have been made. The site is guarded by a security company and the guard on duty was taken into custody, but no information has been forthcoming. It is unlikely that any of the stolen equipment will be recovered.

Our greatest loss was the back-up data for the computers. These were held in the fire safe along with some legal papers. Thankfully our accountant had a month-old copy of the accounts on a home computer. He is now in the process of re-entering the lost data. Fortunately, the Orphan data is held on a 'cloud' system which is unaffected.

The burglary has highlighted the need for a more robust security system. We are planning to install surveillance cameras and alarm systems, as well as erecting a razor wire on the surrounding wall and fence. We are moving the accounting system to the 'cloud' so that the financial information is also stored remotely.

In the past we have had a borehole pump and truck parts stolen but this break-in has been the most serious.

The Seed Farm

The 2017/18 SHAREAfrica Zambia (SAZ) farming season is the best experienced by the farm thus far. Apart from the favourable rainfall, the exemplary farm management, coupled with experience acquired over the years are some factors that contributed towards a successful season.

During the last year, three seed crops were grown at the farm, namely: Soybean, Sunflower and Groundnuts. A total of 75 acres was cultivated, with Soybean taking up two thirds of the field, and one third shared between Sunflower and Groundnuts.

The Soybean harvest exceeded our projected yield by almost 30%. The yields for Sunflower and Groundnuts

were average considering that the crops experienced a partial drought soon after planting.

The government institute responsible for the regulatory compliance of all seed companies has already conducted field and laboratory tests for all seed grown at the farm. We are pleased to report that they are happy with the results.

The seed is now being packaged into printed bags in readiness for distribution back to the farmers. The surplus will be sold to cover overheads.

Some assembly believers are already requesting orders for Soybean seed to grow next season. A lack of quality

seed has been the main cause of poor harvest amongst most of the believers in the rural areas.

Our aim is to grow more drought and disease resistant seed and to make it affordable to other poor farmers who are not on the Outgrower Programme. This is a way of helping them improve their crop yields and consequently their livelihoods.



Soya Seed ready for distribution

Out-Growers Harvest

The yield for 2017/18 SHAREAfrica Zambia Out-growers (SAZ OTG) farming season was unfortunately below average. The scheme has recorded a reduction in yield compared to 2016/17 season. The reduction is mainly due to rosette disease which severely attacked most of the crops of the farmers on the scheme.

Despite a drop in yield, the scheme still reported a number of positive achievements, for instance:

- 10 farmers that were sub-contracted by the SAZ farm to grow a rosette resistant groundnut seed variety have all met the projected yields. This means that this new seed will be available to farmers in the coming season.
- New groundnut shellers have proved to be far better than the old ones. Farmers are delighted with the initiative confirming that the new shellers are working well without breaking the nuts.
- Though some farmers had a poor harvest, others whose fields were not affected by rosette disease have managed to make a reasonable profit (see farmer story).

Impact of the Out-Growers Scheme

It has been proven that the use of certified seed produces a better yield than recycled seed. Farmers on the out-growers scheme have confirmed that they have seen a tremendous improvement in yield since we began giving them certified groundnut seed. We are confident that our

new soya and bean seed will have the same effect next year.

During the 2017/18 season, an additional 500 farmers in assembly fellowship (farmers who are not on our Out-growers programme) benefited from maize seed which was grown at the farm. We provided the seed on condition that they give back some bags of maize after the harvest. Almost all the farmers who planted the seed reported improved yields compared to previous seasons. They are appealing for the same help next year.

We cannot currently commit to freely distributing seed to farmers who are not on the Out-growers programme. However, as more farmers are sponsored, we will be able to freely distribute more seed and meet this wider demand. If you would like to sponsor a farmer, please visit the SHAREAfrica site at www.shareafrica.com or contact us directly for more information.



Unloading maize



New SAZ shellers

Out-Grower Scheme - Feature Story

To provide an insight into the family life of a rural farmer, we have included a feature story about one of the farmers on our Out-growers Scheme. This story is about Ekelesi and Philip Mwale and their family who live in Mgawa. They attend the assembly in Mgawa and farm 10 acres of land in the same region.

Ekelesi was born on 4 January 1979

She is married to Philip and together have 6 children, 3 boys and 3 girls.

Isaac their first born stopped school in grade 9 due to financial challenges

Martha and Mary are still in school doing grade 9 and 10 respectively

Jackson, the fourth born is in grade 5. Kennedy and Mercy have not yet started school.

During the 2017/18 planting season they grew 3 field crops namely: Cotton, maize and groundnuts

The harvest for cotton was low due to poor soil conditions. Although their maize crop struggled due to a period of drought immediately after planting, they have managed to harvest 40 x 50kg bags which is enough to last them to the next season.

The yield for groundnuts was good, which SHAREAfrica Zambia purchased for 10% above market value.

The revenue realised from the groundnut sale was used to build a new house and pay for their children's school fees.

Their old house was on the verge of collapse, hence the income made from their groundnuts came at an opportune time for them to erect a more substantial replacement.

Their greatest challenge is to continue to raise their annual income, so they can support their children's education and remain with enough food to last them throughout the season.

The couple are grateful for the support provided, particularly in providing seed and soft loans to enable them to hire labour to help them work their field.

The pictures tell the story of how they have improved their living conditions and how proud they are that they have been able to provide sheltered accommodation for their family. We believe that providing them with the means to work their field profitably is the best approach to help alleviate their poverty. Ongoing dependency is not a long-term solution to sustained improvement - but we believe that increasing income will reduce the need for such support. Hopefully Philip and Ekelesi may soon be in a position to buy a range of quality seed from SHAREAfrica Zambia rather than have it donated to them. Please pray for them and their family.



Old House



New House



Ekelesi, her Husband Philip, Mary and Mercy

Progress on the New Office Block



The new office block is taking shape. The shell is almost complete, and we hope to start working on the roof and windows in October. We want the building watertight before the rains come in November.

The new office will be a significant improvement on the converted containers which have been used since the outset of SHARE operations in Zambia. The new building will be more spacious, with improved security, air-conditioning and proper toilet facilities. The roof, windows and finishings will be the most challenging and costly stage of the build. We thank everyone for their continued and ongoing prayerful and practical support.

Orphan Programme – Feedback and General Update

Besa Katanga



Besa is a fifth-year student studying for a BA degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Zambia.

Despite being an orphan, having lost both parents at a young age, she is a young lady with a strong Christian testimony who is taking her education seriously.

Besa is encouraged by the words of Paul in Philippians 4v13, quoting them to us when she states *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”*. She goes on to say *“I have experienced God's amazing grace and unconditional love shown by His people. The unfaltering support I have received from SHAREAfrica Zambia and those supporting the work has indeed helped me see how truly God provides for His children. It has also helped me see how much God's children are willing to sacrifice. When I think deeply about such selflessness, tears fill my eyes and I am but compelled to go an extra mile in my efforts towards my academics as well as other avenues of life. I believe and trust that great reward awaits them that serve the Lord earnestly”*.

Besa will finish this year and go on to full-time employment. Zambia is aware of the need for young engineers to develop their economy.

Besa is one of only four students we are sponsoring through tertiary education. While such support provides a great opportunity for talented students, the costs are high. In future, it may be possible to set up a ‘further education’ fund for students with exceptional talent, but, as always, it is a question of balancing resources across our many commitments. Please continue to pray for Besa’s spiritual progress and preservation, as well as her studies and future employment, God willing.

Clement Sicoobo



Clement with his aged grandfather

Clement is 17 years old and currently lives with his elderly, partially blind, grandfather. Clement and his younger sister Nora are both sponsored by our Orphan Programme. The school they attend has a separate feeding programme provided by another organization – they say without this they couldn’t survive. Despite the hardship, Clement is doing well at school. The head teacher commended him as a well behaved and hard-working boy.

SHAREAfrica pays his school fees and provides an education support pack, but school uniforms are not included in the allowance. Clement bought his school uniform from money earned doing part-time work during the school holidays.

Support Pack Distribution

The recipients of support packs expressed excitement after receiving the packs recently. Most of the beneficiaries are from vulnerable families, many of whom have significant needs. Once the food factory becomes more self-sufficient, we would hope to increase the help to orphans like Clement and others.

Presently there are two types of support pack; one for secondary school children and a different one for primary school children. Secondary school children get school fees, a school bag, Bible, dictionary, pencils and books. The primary school children

get school fees (as required), a food pack and supplementary items. The nutritional pack is tailored to combat the effects of malnutrition.

The distribution process is coupled with the provision of practical and spiritual support to both the orphans and the guardians.



Food packs being distributed



Schoolbags being distributed

General Update

The online record keeping system is continually being updated. If you are a sponsor and are unable to log-on or if you have a question about the information being provided, please get in touch. Presently we have 188 sponsored children. Because the system has been going for many years, sponsors are paying various amounts ranging from ten to twenty pounds. It currently costs about twenty pounds each month to provide the various orphans with their support packs via a personal visit.

If you would like to sponsor an orphan, then please visit our website where you can set it up online. Otherwise please contact us and we can make the necessary arrangements.

The dangers of toxins and the need for a test lab

What is Aflatoxin? It is a toxic compound produced by certain moulds found in food.

Why is Aflatoxin control important? Because it is harmful to human health and can lead to liver damage and cancer.

What causes Aflatoxins? They can develop as a result of a number of factors, including poor agricultural practices, high humidity or severe drought conditions and agricultural commodities that are more susceptible to it, such as peanuts. The species of moulds that combine to form Aflatoxin grow in soils when conditions are just right, including when decaying food, plants, hay and grains are piled together to decompose in areas with high moisture and high temperatures.

How many types of toxins are there? There are at least 13 different types of naturally-occurring Aflatoxin toxic moulds that researchers have been able to identify.

How prevalent are aflatoxins in Zambia? The current level of aflatoxin nationally is between 40 and 60 ppb (parts per billion). The official safe limit in Zambia is 15ppb! In other words, the toxic level is at least 3 times higher than it should be.

What about our food processing factory in Lusaka? Given the national prevalence of aflatoxins in Zambia and the significant health problems that can result, this issue is a key risk that we constantly measure and monitor. The peanut butter made in our factory actually has an extremely low aflatoxin range of between 6 and 8 ppb, making SHARE peanut butter the safest in Zambia. However we are not complacent and aim to reduce this level even further.

How is this achieved? As well as being trained on how to maximise returns on their crops, the farmers we sponsor in the out-growers scheme are also taught how to control aflatoxins in their fields and at post-harvest handling. A combination of physical and bio-control measures has resulted in a 70% reduction in aflatoxin levels being achieved. Further procedures and practices at the factory also help to minimise the incidence and levels of aflatoxin.

What can be done further? We would like to establish a small laboratory within the factory to perform a variety of critical tests for aflatoxins, salmonella, total coliform and Ecoli. Moisture analysis and other quantitative tests could also be carried out on site, allowing a more timely response in measuring and managing these risks. At present we rely on external testing services.

Electricity Upgrade

After waiting a year, the power upgrade to the Makeni site is now complete. It was a costly exercise; we had to pay for a transformer, poles, overhead cables and underground armoured cables. We trust the expense is justified by improvements in factory productivity.



Smart Phones

We collect unused 'smart phones'. (Samsung Galaxy 3 or above). They are helpful in tracking activities in the rural areas. They can also be pre-loaded with a copy of the Bible in local language.

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 and selecting 'Donations' from the main menu bar.
2. **BY ELECTRONIC BANK TRANSFER** using either on-line banking or by instructing your local bank branch to make an electronic transfer. The SHAREAfrica banking details are as follows

a. U.K. Donations

Account Name: Share Africa
Account Number: 10592935
Sort Code: 20-29-23

b. Overseas Donations

IBAN
GB56BARC20292310592935
SWIFTBIC BARCGB22

If you make a donation by this method, it would be helpful if you would please notify us by email or post (see contact information below) so that we can identify your donation on our bank statement.

Contact information

**SHAREAfrica, PO Box 401,
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Telephone: 01423879280 or 07889433979

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