

## PARTNERPLAN

# Jenny Featherstone - Zambia October 2017

Chodort Training Centre, Choma  
PO Box 630451  
Kitwe  
Zambia

Dear Church friends,



The Girls Brigade wait to deliver a small play for Mabel

This is a slightly longer letter, but as you can see as you read on, the last few months have been quite busy.

Recently I attended the reception at Mala for one of the Southern Presbytery Deaconess', Mabel Mukamo. Mala is around 100 kilometres North of Choma then another 18km along a dirt road. Even with a 6.30 start it was 9.00 before we arrived at the open air service, as the church was too small to seat all the guests, which included 5 choirs. These events take a while to organise, Mabel has been at Mala for over a year now and now has a 6 month old baby daughter with her, whilst their 4 year old son remains in Choma with her husband. The sort of dedication most of us would not recognise! The whole occasion finished with a grand meal around

3.00pm, just in time for us to get home before dark. These occasions happen 8 - 10 times a year and are very much part of the UCZ culture and Zambian hospitality.

600 kilometres to the North in Kitwe, Jane continues to develop Play4all and is now working with a former social work student of mine from 2011, Kabutu, in a compound called Kandabwe. His



Some of the older vulnerable people of Kandabwe

original project was with older people, many of whom have dependent grandchildren and they are now part of his project too. Jane is going twice a week at the moment and teaching the volunteers how to play the games with the children. There is a small lean to shelter which doubles up as somewhere for the homeless older people to sleep at night. Kabutu has been working tirelessly for about 7 years trying to get the local mine companies involved, he has had a lot of promises but little real support, but he remains hopeful for current negotiations though.

We were also delighted to have a visit from Rev Davis Nixon the former Principal this July. He stopped over on the way back from a delegation from the Methodist Church in Ireland to South Africa and was able to catch

up with old friends and see some progress at Chodort. We also appreciate the consignment of books he brought which will swell the food production library.

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Other visitors this year have included Nora Dudderidge who came over for almost 3 weeks in August, and Bunmi Olaysiade from Methodist GB world church just last week.



Amongst the visitors this year, was Rev Davis Nixon, the original Principal for Chodort, seen here with Jane Mwenda from play4all and myself

This year has also seen the first changeover of volunteers from the German charity Bread for the world. Davis Horch, a 23 year old graduate in electronics and welding has proved a lively and tireless volunteer working in so many more areas than originally envisaged over his 12 month stay. He is replaced by Jacob Zenger, a thoughtful 20 year old auto mechanic, who has already bonded really well with the team, and is working on the brakes of the Izusu as I type.

Sometimes we face difficulties which seem insurmountable and it was so this year with our student intake. In carpentry only one person could afford the full fee and the others who were given bursaries, could not even find the roughly £2.50 a week which was required. The new food production course also faced profound difficulties with drop outs of students and staff, and that, along with the recession, inability to find legal wood for our carpentry production, and other issues, left us considerably in the red. I am sure you will all recognise it is at such times we turn to the lord saying, I see no way out of this, and ask for His intervention. So it should not have been a surprise that at the beginning of May TEVETA, our skills awards body,

asked us to participate in their programme of sponsored skills and entrepreneurial training for vulnerable people. Our proposal was accepted and we were chosen to give skills training to 55 people for 14 weeks. This short course began at the end of August and will finish in December. Whilst it is all hands to the deck we are very pleased to be fulfilling the remit of Chodort to train the vulnerable and also have an influx of cash which reflects the true costs of the course.



Charity Mweene (holding the pan) is teaching 25 sponsored students the art of catering

The generosity of our partnership with the Dortmund Evangelical Church has seen a great improvement in our resources because they helped us to build a wall around the new college site, which is about 2 hectares in all. This not only marks out our boundaries and stops people encroaching, but it has increased the security of our night guards. An unexpected spin off was that Jet who can now roam free on the site, caught a rock hare which Mr Chavula, our general worker, enjoyed for his dinner!

Another venture we have undertaken is the building of another 2 semidetached 2 bedroom

houses for rent. Over the years we had been able to ring fence money for this and when the houses are finished this will take the number for rent to 8. A business plan shows that once we make 10 houses we will be able to build more through our own resources and become self-sustaining when all 18 are built. I thank God that in the 5 years I have been here we have been able to increase this resource, something which seemed unimaginable to me during my first few

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months in the job. Thanks are also due to Bennoch, Burnt Island and Abbotshall churches, who



have together raised over £1,500 towards fitting the kitchens in our new houses. And I will also take this opportunity to thank other friends who have help subsidise students' fees, Kitwe projects such as play4all and those in Kandabwe, and sponsor orphaned children in Choma.

As temperatures here climb into the high 30's we are waiting for the rains to come in earnest, and hoping for another good harvest after 4 years of drought. I have found one way of coping with the muggy nights however in the form of my hot water bottle – from the freezer!

## Items for prayer

- The project in Kandabwe will flourish
- That our bid for a second allocation of sponsored training in 2018 will be successful.
- That our houses will be finished and ready to rent in 2018

## Items for Praise

- The completion of the wall around the new college site.
- For the inclusion of Chodort in the TEVTA programme in 2017.
- For the positive relationship with Bread for the World
- The visits of Rev Davis Nixon, Bunmi and Norah.

With every good wish to you all,

## Jenny

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Rocky and Jet wait for their dinner – this time “caught” by me!