



# Newsletter

1<sup>st</sup> QUARTER January/March 2015

## Makeni Ecumenical Centre

*Sharing experiences and information with our partners*

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## Laboratory construction now in progress at Makeni School

**By Fr Andrew Mukuyamba**

In our 2014, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter edition of our Newsletter, we reported that the MEC School was in dire need of two more laboratories, as per the new Ministry of Education requirement. We said that Makeni Ecumenical Centre has space to accommodate this

construction, which it is estimated will cost K281, 000 (\$45, 000).



*The School Laboratory under construction with the help of the Friends of Makeni in the Netherlands*

We are glad to report that financial assistance was sought and Makeni Ecumenical Centre's all-weather friend, the Friends of Makeni Netherlands, have come on board to assist with half the amount required. The agreement was finally sealed during the visit of Mr Jan Kars, the treasurer of the Friends of Makeni, who visited Makeni Ecumenical Centre in March 2015 in the company of his wife Yvonne, and friends Kerst Koopmans and his wife Griet.

Makeni Ecumenical Centre is very grateful to the Friends of Makeni in the Netherlands for this great assistance and support. We hope that our friendship and partnership will continue to grow from strength to strength and that Makeni Ecumenical Centre will continue to be a channel through which people will be helped to live a decent life.

We will need to source the other half of the amount in order to finish the project. And, after the building is completed, the laboratories will need equipment and other related requisites.

As was reported in the 3<sup>rd</sup> newsletter of 2014, Makeni Ecumenical Centre injected K11, 070 to kick start the project. We have engaged other stakeholders like pupils and parents in fundraising activities, and if all goes as per plan we expect to raise K15, 400 from contributions by the pupils (K50 per pupil) as one of the activities.

The building is now at roof level. Materials for roofing have been procured and the roofing works have started.

As a school, we are looking forward to having two more completed laboratories and we are appealing to individuals, organisations and the corporate world to help by contributing financially or materially to this noble project. The school has been operating for over 30 years and

we have to keep moving with the times.

## The changing faces of the Settlement Villages

**By Joe Silwenga**

If anyone visited one of our five settlement villages 5 or 10 years ago, they may wonder if anything takes place as far as socio-economic development is concerned. We are pleased to report that the settlement villages have over the years seen positive socio-economic development taking place. The writer observes some of the emerging trends.

### The emerging culture of all-year farming enterprises

Over the years the majority of farmers settled by Makeni Ecumenical Centre have depended on rainfall for crop



*One of the new investments gradually characterising the shift from seasonal farming to all-year round farming, through irrigation, in Mwomboshi*

production. The major crop has always been maize. Farmers have often had

the possibility of only one income in a year, with annual production ranging from 12 to 80 bags of maize, from which the expected annual income has been ranging from K780 (\$105) to K5200 (\$703) per year.



*Two pioneering settlers (Mr Banda and Mr Chifita) in irrigation farming in Mwomboshi, showing how the diesel water pump operates*

However, a few farmers have been exploiting the possibility of investing in some form of irrigation that has enabled them to produce crops throughout the year. Mwomboshi Settlement, 24km north of Chisamba District, has been leading the way, with more than 10 farmers who have bought water pumps to irrigate vegetables planted along the banks of Mwomboshi and Chalampa Rivers. Some have even bought and mounted water storage tanks to expand the area under irrigation and improve supply of domestic water.

The irrigation method they are using is surface irrigation. Many more are joining in with the passing of time and emerging issues over available land can be expected in the future. The

biggest limitation is access to markets due to longer distances to markets.

### **The emerging culture of building modern houses and other feats**

A good number of farmers have been shifting from building small grass thatched village houses to bigger modern brick-cement houses. The leading village is Kalwelwe.



*One example modern house being constructed in Kalwelwe Settlement Village*

The common viewpoint which farmers state is: "I have come to stay, why do I need to live like a squatter?" A good number of them have gradually been replacing old, small, mud houses with large brick and cement houses.

Some have been buying solar panels for lighting and entertainment. The coming of cell phones has eased communication, though the signal is still bad in the areas most of the time. A few more have even bought vehicles to ease their transport needs. Others have started buying walking tractors to improve land preparation. An increasing trend of using herbicides for weed control has been gaining ground especially during the peak

periods of the rainy season when there is too much unavoidable field work.



*Some of the houses settlers are trying to replace with modern houses. For a good number of settlers these still are the only viable option*

It is expected that with better coordination and involvement of many stakeholders, the settlement villages will become more economically independent in the next few years.

## **Dutch visitors help repair eight boreholes in three settlement villages**

**By Kayula Kabamba**

The state of most boreholes in the settlement villages has recently been bad, owing to the age of pumps and irregular maintenance. This led to a critical shortage of water in the settlement villages in the last few years. All the boreholes were provided by Makeni Ecumenical Centre, but maintenance is supposed to be done by the communities themselves. However, our farmers still look to MEC and other well-wishers for some help.

So it was a blessing when four Dutch visitors, Jan and Yvonne Kars and Kerst and Griet Koopmans, visited MEC in March and offered to help reduce the water problems by repairing broken down borehole pumps.



*Jan Kars, one of the four visitors demonstrating to Mwomboshi settlers how to use and handle the borehole repair tools*

Many boreholes had rusted and broken pipes due to age, while others had damaged pumps or damaged pump accessories.

A three-week work plan was carried out to go round the settlement villages to repair pumps and restore them. The maintenance group comprised Mr Jan Kars, Kerst Koopmans, Kayula Kabamba (MEC staff) and Mr Joe Silwenga (MEC staff). Each village assigned at least six men with experience in hand pump maintenance to help do the work. Three new sets of repair kits for India Mark II hand pumps were procured and donated to the three villages by the visitors. The tools helped ease the work.

Nine hand pumps were repaired and installed, costing K26, 982 (\$3, 646).

The cost included pumps, pipes, rods, new spare kits, wooden toolboxes and full set repair kits. The breakdown of the costs was K8, 425 for Chisamba, K10, 887 for Kalwelwe and K7, 670 for Mwomboshi.

The Village Management Committees together with the settlers thanked the visitors, donors and MEC for the help rendered. They promised to devise mechanisms for ensuring water facilities are regularly maintained.

The Executive Chairman of MEC, Fr A. Mukuyamba encouraged the people to embrace a culture of preventive maintenance, self-reliance and community accountability to avoid future water shortage related problems.

## **MEC visits their Royal Highnesses Chief Liteta and Chief Chamuka**

**By Joe Silwenga**

In the late part of 2014, Makeni Ecumenical Centre management paid courtesy calls to their Royal Highnesses Chief Liteta and Chief Chamuka. The courtesy calls were undertaken to pay respects to the traditional leadership in the area, where MEC has settlement projects. This was the first time in many years that MEC undertook to visit the Royal Highnesses at their palaces.

Though the visits were on two separate days, the issues discussed were similar. Among the issues that

were discussed were the current state of the settlement projects in terms of populations, investments done and socio-economic challenges. Other issues discussed were the development needs urgently needed in the areas and the challenges of squatters in Chisamba Settlement Village. The development needs required in the areas include schools, water and sanitation, roads, health facilities and access to markets.



*Part of the palace of Chief Chamuka, where the Chief meets visitors and presides over matters of the chiefdom*

The challenge of squatters in Chisamba Settlement Village has brought about illegal tree cutting for charcoal, mushrooming of illegal liquor outlets, prostitution and security threats to our local settlers.

The Royal Highnesses appreciated the work of MEC in stimulating structured rural development and pledged to help whenever possible. They appealed to MEC to participate during the annual traditional ceremony of Kalamba Kubwalo. They invited the Village Management Committees of Chisamba, Mwomboshi and Kalwelwe

to always be in touch with the Royal Establishment for all developmental and social related matters and recognised the need for collaborative effort.

## **Barclays Bank Zambia donates and lunches with St Nicholas Children**

**By Ireen Chinyama**

It was a happy moment again when Barclays Bank Zambia visited St Nicholas Children's Village in February and donated assorted items. The items donated include several toiletries, kitchen utensils and educational materials. They also donated 13 different plants and trees as part of promoting environmental protection.



*Some of the tasty foods Barclays Bank Zambia staff brought to share with children at St Nicholas during their visit*

The Barclays team enjoyed several activities with the children and orphanage staff before having lunch together. The motivational talks and exercises on financial prudence inspired many children, such that

those in Grade 12 and hated the subject of Mathematics have come to like it and are now studying hard. Many children have promised to work hard so that they will be successful in life and help vulnerable family members. The trees were planted in various places around the orphanage.



*Some of the plants donated by Barclays Bank Zambia Ltd as a contribution towards better environment management*

Lunch was very sumptuous and everyone had more than enough. The visit by Barclays Bank staff made the children feel loved and cared for.

## **Advocacy against early marriages and teen pregnancies changing lives**

**By Catherine Oreta**

In March, Makeni Ecumenical Centre under the HIV/AIDS Project, with financial support from NGOCC, embarked on advocacy programmes against early marriages and teenage pregnancies. The sensitisation

programme is scheduled to run to August 2015 at a cost of K150, 000.

Five rural communities and five rural schools, including those in neighbouring villages, were reached. The activities took place in Mwomboshi, Kalwelwe, Chisamba, Shikatende and Munyati. A total of 199 community members were trained, consisting of 100 youth and 99 Adults. The youth constituted 50 females and 50 males with ages ranging from 12 – 35 years. There 49 men and 50 women participating who were older than 35.

The aim of the programme was to build capacity in local people to advocate against early marriages and teenage pregnancies to their peers in their respective communities, so as to end the vice.

The first objective was to impart knowledge and skills on the dangers and consequences of early marriages and teenage pregnancies to targeted youth and adults. The other objective was to form working groups to carry out community advocacy against early marriages, teenage pregnancies and enhance HIV/AIDS awareness in the communities after training.

During sensitisations a number of issues emerged. Teenage pregnancy and early marriage account for a very high drop out rate in school among teenagers in adolescence. Teenage pregnancy and early marriage has increased poverty in the communities

and increased the infection rate of HIV among the youths.



*Bicycles being loaded for dispatch to Mwomboshi Settlement Village, to be used for transport by the Community Agents of Change. They were procured with financial support from NGOCC.*

Further, teenage pregnancy and early marriage has increased drug abuse, drunkenness and lawlessness among the youths in the communities. The use of traditional family planning and 'love charms' also contributes to early marriage and teenage pregnancy. It was also cited that some parents and guardians set a bad example to the community as a whole through drunken behavior, infidelity and lack of leadership.

In the first phase of the programme, the participants received training and 40 working groups of five members each were formed. Twenty bicycles were issued to twenty working groups in Kalwelwe and Chisamba communities.

Strong alliances of both youths and adults were formed to handle cases of early marriages and teenage pregnancies in the communities.

## ***Enrol Now!!***

### **MAKENI ECUMENICAL CENTRE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME**



Makeni Ecumenical Centre, a TEVETA registered training institution in Makeni, Lusaka is enrolling students for the 2015 January-February intake in the following courses:

**Agriculture General**

**Settlement Agriculture**

**Food Production**

**Power Electrical**

**Computer Short courses**

Training Coordinator  
P.O. Box 50255  
LUSAKA  
Tel 272853

**Hurry, limited places available!**

### **VISION**

***Prosperity for All Zambians,  
God Being Our Help***

### **MISSION**

***"To provide skills training, education,  
settlement, health and community  
services with the sole aim of  
empowering people  
to live a decent life."***

### **Editorial Team**

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