



# Newsletter

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## Makeni Ecumenical Centre

*Sharing experiences and information with our partners*

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## **MEC hands over family planning equipment & tools to the UCZ**

**By Evans Mwanga Sodah**

On 27th September 2013 Makeni Ecumenical Centre handed over a supply of family planning equipment and tools to the United Church of Zambia. The handover was necessary since Makeni Ecumenical Centre has been scaling down its activities in family planning since July 2012.

The equipment and tools at the static clinic were not considered of much

further use. The static clinic was part of the original family planning project that MEC initiated in the early 1970s to serve Makeni and Lusaka based clients. It provided further support with weekly visits by a gynaecologist.



Some of the tools and equipment that were handed over to the UCZ by MEC

Cooperation between Makeni Ecumenical Centre and the United Church of Zambia dates back to the time our agricultural settlement project began in 1971. The first twenty families of settlers that were trained and supported by MEC were settled on UCZ land in Kafue.

The Executive Chairman of Makeni Ecumenical Centre, Fr Andrew Mukuyamba, presented the tools on behalf of MEC. The items were received by Rev. Lubinda Sitali, the Synod Health Secretary. Rev. Sitali thanked MEC for the gesture and stated that the items will be used fully. He further asked the management to feel free to share some of its challenges and UCZ would always extend its hand where possible. This in return would help in strengthening the relationship that has existed for a long period of time between MEC and UCZ.

MEC's family planning project began scaling down its operations because the government opened a number of public health facilities in rural sites that MEC was servicing and strengthened provision at local clinic level in Makeni.

## **Hon. Dorothy Kazunga Officiates at 42<sup>nd</sup> Graduation Ceremony**

**By Joe Silwenga**

Hon. Dorothy Kazunga, the Deputy Minister of Community Development, Mother & Child Health officiated at the 42nd Graduation Ceremony held September 13, 2013 at Makeni Ecumenical Centre. This was a day when the Adult Training Programme (ATP) was witnessing the graduation of 63 students in Agriculture, Agriculture Settlement, Food

Production and Electronic Systems Repair and Maintenance.

In her speech she commended MEC for her tireless efforts in ensuring that needed services are provided to the community. "Your tireless efforts in ensuring that the centre continues to provide such services are commendable", she said.



**Hon. Dorothy Kazunga greeting MEC staff before officiating at the Graduation Ceremony**

She challenged the graduating students to live and perform above the expectations of would-be employers to make a positive and lasting impact in society, unlike other learners that have acquired knowledge and skills but are not relevant to society, due to drunkenness and other social ills.

## **Girls' Brigade company opened at MEC Church of the Good Shepherd**

**By Gloria Chisenga (17yrs) G12**

The Church of the Good Shepherd enrolled a company of the Girls' Brigade in April this year. This is the congregation where the children from St Nicholas Children's Home go for prayers. The congregation never had its own company until the enrolment took place at the Church of the Good Shepherd within Makeni Ecumenical Centre.



**St Nicholas Girls who were enrolled. Chipo Phiri (l) and Gloria Chisenga (r) in the front row.**

The event was characterised by excitement, prayers, singing and other activities. The girls had several activities and displays which they presented to the congregation according to their respective groups. The brigadiers are girls between 15 and 18 years. They presented the meaning of the four parts of the Girls' Brigade badge. The seniors (14 – 15 years old) shared on the power of the Bible. The juniors (12 – 14 years) and explorers (8 – 12 years) presented

memory verses. After the enrolment service the girls had a party to celebrate.

The Girls' Brigade is a girl-focused, international, inter-denominational Christian Organisation whose motto is "to seek and to serve". The fundamental teachings are built on service, spiritual, physical and educational matters.

## **MEC partners with CAMFED to educate a girl child**

**By Edward Phiri – Training Coordinator**

The 2012-13 academic year provided Makeni Ecumenical Centre with a rare opportunity in the skills training program due to our partnership with the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) to educate eighteen female students in Food Production and General Agriculture.



**Part of the CAMFED sponsored group**

CAMFED, an international NGO that promotes education for female children, chose MEC to partner in

imparting skills to underprivileged girls in society. The students enrolled at MEC were from across the country, mainly from the rural parts of Zambia. There were ten students in Food Production and eight in General Agriculture, respectively.

A few weeks before the students graduated the editorial team had an opportunity to interview them. The girls had positive feelings about the courses they did and were grateful to CAMFED, MEC management, training staff and their families for the opportunity rendered and support. In fact, some of them have been employed already, while some had been promised employment from where they undertook their industrial attachment. They all passed the TEVETA examinations.



**Some of the CAMFED sponsored Food Production students display dishes they were taught to make.**

## **Killing two birds with one stone – the case of Beauty Banda**

**By Edward Phiri – Training Coordinator**

Beauty Banda joined Makeni Ecumenical Centre in the third term of 2010, in grade 10. Little did she know that her opportunity at MEC would lead to her developing skills in Food Production after completing her grade 12. Beauty thought of enrolling in the Food Production course with the Adult Training Programme section of MEC well before her grade 12 results were out.



She discovered that the course exceeded her initial expectations as she learned how to prepare professional and international dishes. She attested that, at home, her guardians appreciate the way she prepared family meals now.

She was among the best students in her intake and plans to advance further in the same skill.

# Mother of seven goes back to school

By Joe Silwenga

"I must learn to read and write so that I am not looked down upon", were the words of Felistus Mwale when she was visited by the editorial team to hear her story, in Mwomboshi.



Felistus Mwale (in uniform above) is a married mother of seven children. She joined the Settlement Project when she was 24 and the mother of four children. Her case was typically humanitarian because she did not qualify to be admitted for settlement training, due to her young age. However, a decision was made by the selection panel in early 2000 to consider her as an exceptional case.

Contrary to the views that she would not stay in the settlement village, she has proved otherwise and even achieved election to the Village Management Committee as Vice Secretary. It was during her time as Vice Secretary that she decided to go back to school to overcome her difficulties in writing and keeping

records. In 2010 she enrolled in Grade 6 and wrote and passed her Grade 7 examinations in 2011.

She is currently doing her Grade 9 and wrote her final examination in November 2013 at Mwemba Basic School in Mwomboshi. She rents a small hut near the school and every weekend travels back to her farm in the Settlement Village. We wish her the best.

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## **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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