



Old and New Kalungaleka School

BZT donors have enabled the construction of a new classroom block at Kalungaleka School. BZT Trustees recently visited and, turning the corner, were overwhelmed to see the stark contrast between the old and new buildings. The old was just a community school with no public funding, the new one is now a Government primary school. BZT has made this happen.

Kalungaleka is the most isolated of all the communities where BZT's partner, ZRDF, is currently working. It is some 56 kilometres from ZRDF's base along a difficult dirt track, which is impassable in places due to swollen rivers during the rainy season. Kalungaleka area is at the "end of the road" which adds to its isolation.

Donors will be familiar with our holistic approach of improving educational opportunities with better school facilities, raising incomes through crop diversification, the introduction of village banks and the on-going HIV and AIDS work.

BZT/ZRDF has a proven model of interventions, which are all in partnership with the local community.



BZT first visited this community in 2012 and saw the old community-built construction purporting to be a classroom. In reality it was a building of mud and tree branches, very exposed to the elements, tree trunks for (very uncomfortable) seating, no text or exercise books and no trained teachers. There were around 100 children in irregular attendance, estimated to be less than half the young people in the area who should have been attending school.

Before proposing BZT financial support, ZRDF looks to a community to demonstrate passionate

commitment to education, evidenced by their willingness to play their part in the construction. This involves local parents and others moulding and firing the required 60,000 bricks and procuring local sand and crushed stones. At this planning stage, ZRDF also obtained the written commitment of the District Education Office to the Zambian Government agreeing to take over the school once the new classroom block and teachers' houses were in place. Critically this means the Government will supply and pay the salaries of trained teachers and provide desks and some teaching materials.

The PTA chairman proved to be an effective community leader and as a result they supplied the requisite local materials. This unlocked ZRDF's approach to BZT to provide the remaining 75% of the cost for the construction from BZT to supply windows, roof trusses, doors etc.

The work was completed in September of this year and was officially handed over to the Government at a ceremony described overleaf.



A Great Day



Chief Kaundula

The people of Kalunkaleka are very proud of their new school and the whole community turned out for the grand opening ceremony on 17th September.

The event was attended by the local Chief Kaundula, complete with his uniformed body guard and general factotum, the District Director of Education and the Guest of Honour was the District Secretary (the senior civil servant of the District). The day started with dancing by children and women in front of the Chief, whilst hens and an itinerant pig wandered around the school compound. There was a long line of long speeches including (not so long) from Brandy Mungaila the Director of ZRDF who gave an excellent description of the work of ZRDF.

The opening speaker was due to be the excellent PTA Chairman who was unfortunately completely tongue tied being in the presence of the Chief and couldn't speak! Other than Brandy and the BZT Chairman speeches, the most succinct was from Chief Kaundula. He focused on the importance of parents avoiding early marriages of their daughters and the imperative of sending them to school and keeping them there. For the Chief to say this was a really powerful message to the



Excited pupils enjoying their new School Celebrations

community from their traditional leader who has huge respect and authority. He is addressed as His Royal Highness and when presented to him the BZT Chairman did, as is expected, an impressive courtesy!

As the speeches wore on the community drifted off to watch a game of football. However, it was an important day for two reasons.

Firstly, the senior Government officials in attendance will have seen first hand the key role of ZRDF and their work in the District.

Secondly, it was a community celebration that they had been energized by the transformation of their school facilities. They are proud of what they now have. They proved they could work together when they supplied the local materials and that they had effective leadership.

This community cohesion and ambition has seen the formation of farmers' groups who have enthusiastically diversified, with the technical support of ZRDF, their maize crops to include growing soya. In addition, groups have



come together to operate as Savings and Loan Communities, effectively a village bank, and have become fully engaged in the ZRDF HIV and AIDS support programmes.

The construction of the new classroom block is the start of a journey for the people of Kalunkaleka to improve, through their own efforts, their opportunities in life.



Uninvited guest!

The Challenges and Opportunities of Growing Soya

Donors will be aware from previous updates that crop diversification is an important ZRDF intervention to reduce dependency on maize.

At four ZRDF communities (including Kalunkaleka) farmers have embraced, with training from ZRDF, the growing of soya beans. Soya has lower input costs than maize, has higher returns when sold, provides better family nutrition and is harvested earlier than maize.

Unfortunately, the 2014/15 season was impacted by poor rainfall with a drought in February when there would normally be torrential rain at the time the plants reached the flowering stage. The consequence was a halving of normal yields as the flowers withered and the soya produced was not suitable for re-use as seed.

Amazingly the farmers (around 300 in total) demonstrated great resilience and in total repaid 98% of the ZRDF loans (provided at the time of sowing for seed and fertilizer) with the more successful farmers supporting others



Farmer inspecting her soya crop

with lower yields. Their enthusiasm and commitment to growing soya has not been diminished.

BZT has agreed to provide additional funding for the 2015/16 season to enable suitable seed to be purchased and to fund an increase of 100 in the number of farmers who are keen to

grow the crop. In addition, BZT is supporting famers groups who have proposed helping “the poorest of the poor” by growing soya on behalf of individuals who are physically incapable of doing so themselves.

The cost of supplying inputs for a new soya farmer for one year is £100.

Empowerment



Rita Mutinta

Rita is a 67-year-old widow. She lives in Busa, one of the new areas where BZT and ZRDF have been working with the

community since 2013. Like very many older people in Zambia, Rita has three dependent grandchildren, two boys aged 4 and 6 and a granddaughter aged 14 years, whose parents are dead. Rita is poor with no income other than what she can grow and selling any surplus. Rita qualified as a soya farmer under the loan scheme as a member of the Busa farmer’s Group. She received training from the ZRDF staff in the planting, growing and harvesting of soya.

Through a ZRDF loan, Rita was supplied with seed, fertilizer and herbicides. All soya farmers harvest together and sell in bulk so as a member of a group of 100, Rita obtained a better price than selling individually.

Rita was very pleased with her crop despite the poor rainfall. She harvested 11x50kg bags and made enough profit to repay all her loans. She purchased 12 corrugated zinc sheets and kept the remaining profit to buy fertilizer for next season. In normal years, the soya seed can be re-used for 2 further seasons, so saving on costs.

“I want to continue growing soya despite the poor rainfall last season. Now I can boast of sleeping in a house with iron sheets”! Next year Rita plans to buy her own ox drawn plough “so that I don’t have to hire anymore. Thank you to BZT and ZRDF for their help and God bless them”.

Empowerment



Christopher Mumene

Christopher is a subsistence farmer married with 2 young children. He is also responsible for his widowed mother and 3 siblings, two are still at school, and who live at his homestead. Christopher was able to obtain a ZRDF loan and train as a soya farmer. He was attached to a group of 4 other farmers and grew his acre alongside their crops.

Christopher harvested 18 x 50kg bags and made £25 profit. After repaying his loan of Kwacha 850, he purchased some household goods, blankets and

salt and soap, and paid school fees for two of his brothers. The remaining income will be used to purchase fertilizer for next season's crops.

Christopher wants to continue to grow soya but on a larger scale. He feels it is a better investment than just growing maize as it requires less fertilizer per acre and is harvested earlier. Soya has increased the quality of his family's diet as well as obtaining a much better return from his sales than the equivalent quantity of maize. "Thank you to BZT/ZRDF. It is really helping to improve livelihoods".

The Future

As described in these pages, the activities managed by ZRDF and funded by BZT donors, is making a hugely positive impact on the life chances of thousands of families living on the bread line in very isolated rural communities.

BZT and ZRDF see evidence that the holistic model of multi interventions working with local communities is proven. The Trustees of both organizations are now considering plans for a new three-year 2017/19 programme building on this success.

It is early in the process but some themes are very apparent.

Firstly, there are many more extremely isolated and impoverished communities within the geographic reach of ZRDF that are asking to work with ZRDF. BZT Trustees have recently visited four of such potential new partners and saw the extremely poor conditions families are living in and the complete absence of services and opportunities. They need our help to help themselves.

Secondly, yet more effort will be applied to raising educational standards at primary schools and in the training of farmers.

Finally, BZT will support ZRDF Trustees

in their ambition to become a sustainable organization with their own access to funding from sources in addition to BZT.

How You Can Help

If you would like to help farmers like Christopher and Rita, £100 will fund the supply of seed, fertiliser and herbicides for soya farmers during their training year.

Thank you

None of what has been described nor our ambitions for the future would be possible without the financial support and encouragement of our donors.

Thank you.

Patricia Napier, Chairman, BZT Trustees



BZT – A Charity Supporting Self Help Groups in Africa

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