

I can't believe we are already halfway through the year. It's was a rather fast and eventful few months though.

First of all, the anchor of hope charity based in the US has decided to feed all our 340 students instead of the previous 200. That was a huge relief since the different lunch provisions was never what we had felt comfortable with. Now our students get a rice dish filled with vitamins and minerals that reminds a lot of risotto.

The first months of the second term was only two weeks of schooling followed by 5 weeks of holidays. Nayamba started the second term on the 20TH OF MAY and one of the big points on the new agenda was to fall in line with the new policy of the Zambian government to keep Zambia clean. In that spirit the teachers organized a nayamba - nagwaza environmental day on which all kids and teachers cleaned the school grounds as well the entire farm.

Then we had the cervical cancer mobile screening unit visit Nayamba on the 13-15th of June. Our students are too young to benefit directly from that service provided by cidrz but their mothers and other female from the age of 25 years onwards profited hugely from that visit. On the 9th of June we had a teaching and health team from UK visit. All teachers mentored Zambian teachers throughout the week. As the week progressed the teams planned together from the Zambian curriculum the relevant lessons that were next in their teaching sequence. Using this starting point we focussed on clear objectives, differentiation, questioning for deepening learning & assessing understanding and lesson evaluation in the light of these priorities. All groups emphasised the learner at the centre of the lesson - it is not about what you teach, how clearly you explain etc but how well the children are learning and for this the pupils must be active. This approach was a huge success with the UK teachers seeing the Zambian teachers take strategies they had observed earlier in the week (and reflected on during team planning in the afternoons) and embedding them into their own lessons. Teachers also worked on classroom management strategies and behaviour expectations. In class, generally, pupil behaviour is excellent though this becomes more challenging when pupils are given greater opportunities to talk to learn. The wider issue of school behaviour continues to need to be addressed. pupils can be rough with each other and this is not always picked up by staff. This will also be a focus for Digilo in his assemblies.

Update on Health Input

Simon and Kim, a doctor and a nurse spent a full day visiting the main clinic in Chisamba and two smaller provision, finding out what is currently provided and how easily accessible it is. On the first day, word had already spread that we had a doctor at the school and approaching 100 people arrived seeking medical support. As Simon had to prioritise setting up the sight and hearing screening, and had no medical provision beyond first aid, we had to send these people away. It did however highlight the extent of unmet medical need. The sight and hearing screening has been set up, training Reuben and Digilo (and Anja and Li) how to carry out the tests and record their findings. Already this has highlighted a number of students that have been suffering in silence and we will be testing our new referral pathways for dispensing glasses / hearing aids. We are creating a database / spreadsheet for pupil registration information that can be used to keep sight, hearing, height weight and other key information of pupils.

All staff and key classes across the school were given detailed first aid training and a manual for first aid in Africa was left with Teacher Peter who is the lead for this. Staff attended in their evening time and were keen to ask lots of questions even when the session had ended.

We were overwhelmed by the number of women attending the Women's Health Workshop for the Monthly bags. We had to turn away some women who did not have a female relative in the school but still gave out 165 bags. Alongside working out how to train and provide equipment for local women to make these products (Sending out waterproof fabric and poppers) we would also like to offer women of sons at Nayamba the opportunity to come to a workshop. We also trained 22 women in the use of menstrual cups. They will be our pilot group and we will review this either in September or the next suitable trip. We also had 45 women screened for cervical cancer and only 1 required treatment and was treated on site. The charity Cidres will return for free in October for Breast Cancer screening.

Update on School needs

Our water pump broke a few weeks ago and the new water pump arrived on Tuesday but without the correct joining kit. Fortunately, Kevin's company were able to help out last minute and get the water running again. Given the impact of the pump on daily life now, they plan to send the current broken pump to South Africa and get a quote to repair. Then we can keep it for emergencies in the future.

Electricity is still not fitted to the teacher houses and we experienced Zesco's inadequacy once more first-hand this week. We are still waiting for a final quote to instal as each time they come they make new demands on the electrics. As a result, the school have had to change the way they have wired the homes, making wiring connections that were safer underground, up on the walls which was agreed to be less safe but needed nevertheless. Therefore, the monies previously sent may not fully cover all the electrics. We also have the District Commissioner for Chisamba on board so hope we will make some progress. He randomly turned up (first time apart from the children's funerals in 2016) to meet us and we had a very positive meeting with him.

There are some lovely new desks and benches in G8 & G9. Although we need a few more.

Computers had been repaired and returned and Digilo was happy with the current provision and especially happy with the new projector, donated by Kier.

The Science resources are really enriching these lessons but will need regular topping up and a gas cylinder is needed.

We also are considering funding a loan for a small motorbike for Digilo. He has been working so hard, growing into his role as headteacher of a large school. He has no transport and often needs to travel into Chisamba town or further for resources etc and the directors fund transport. One proposal is to fund a motorbike part of which will be gifted to him and part which he will pay back in monthly instalments from his wages. It would be his and he would be responsible for tax, insurance, license, fuel and maintenance. There would also be a written agreement on conduct (ie. no children to be transported, must not impact on teaching and attendance) and it will be at our discretion, if the agreement is not working for any reason, to have the bike back and reimburse him for any instalments he has made. We do not have a quote for this yet but it would be good to know if this is something in principle we would support.

The 'girl empowerment' aspect of the women's health workshop also highlighted a need for more. The girls clearly had some strong misconceptions and are under considerable pressure to get pregnant and marry off. The female teachers are willing to run a "Girl Power Holiday

Club” at the start of the next holidays for the older girls, where they will camp for two nights at the school and have a programme of girl fun and empowerment activities. TNT are hoping to help us seek funding for this.

During their trip here the health care professionals also met a girl (16 years) who lives in the forest with her mother who is Deaf. She had attended St. Joseph’s School but was unable to continue in recent years due to escalating costs. She is a very bright girl and her mother such a strong advocate for her but, due to where she has been born, is stuck in the forest, incredibly vulnerable.

Digilo, Reuben and Fasten would like to run a workshop at Mutaba Community School (the little school in the forest)) for the teachers there and key community members. Half of Nayamba pupils come from these villages and many other children from this most vulnerable area are attending Mutaba. The teachers are finding that the messages they are teaching now about teen pregnancies, early marriage, sexual health and anti-bullying are being met with resistance in these communities as the two schools are not singing from the same hymn sheet. It is hoped this intervention will build a positive bridge between the two schools and help them work together to raise child protection standards across the area. This will require camping out for a few days, transport, food, handouts and support materials. It is important that the staff at Mutaba find it a blessing so we will offer food and additional resources to them.

Update on Trade Centre

While we still really want to move to this stage of development, the initial quotes for the scale of work planned seem extortionately high and so we are looking to modify the plan and complete the project in phases.

We therefore discussed a more manageable plan for moving on with the Trade Centre. This included still offering apprenticeships for carpentry and metal works off school site at Nagwaza Farm, but focusing on building a smaller unit to include an initial craft/trade (weaving).

Update on International Teacher

We have a teacher who has worked closely mentoring the staff over several visits, who would be willing to give a year of her time to live with us and work at the school. She would focus on developing teaching and learning, as well as establishing the first phase of the Trade centre and train a local person to continue the role of Lead Administrator for the school and trade centre when she leaves.

And last but not least update on Merit. The grandfather was sentenced to 25 years in mukobeku prison in kabwe. This outcome came as quite a surprise since we were assured that in most of the cases similar to Merits nothing ever comes if it and the perpetrators rarely go to prison at all.

Merit meanwhile is living with her child and her biological mother in a village in the southeast of zambia. We believe she is not very happy there and has no access to schooling. Our hands are tied in the moment but we have not given up hope that one day Merit will be back with teacher Sera

Really hope all is well on your side! Much love to you and your lovely team and our gratitude

Anja