



## **THE VILLAGE NEWS**

### **A New Beginnings Children's Village Newsletter – June 2011, Edition 3**

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If you would like to help support the children, vegetable garden or orchard at Project J555 New Beginnings Children's Village, please click on this link & be taken directly to the GDG Australian secure online credit card page. Thank you!!

[https://www.globaldevelopment.org.au/donations.php?for=J555\\_New\\_Beginnings](https://www.globaldevelopment.org.au/donations.php?for=J555_New_Beginnings)

Hello!

Blessings and greetings to all our faithful friends and supporters in Australia and beyond. Once again I am so excited and can't wait to share the good news from our beloved nest, the New Beginnings Children's Village. The last 6 months have been busy and exciting for the kids and staff here with tremendous progress of development activities.

NBCV is currently home to 18 children, with 10 boys and 8 girls. We also have a minder team of 8 staff who care for the children, the home and development projects. Together we make a beautiful and happy family.

The kids are growing so quickly! Most are small and undernourished when they arrive here. Now, when I look at how healthy and beautiful they are, I am filled with great joy. I cannot find the best words to thank you, our friends and supporters, who have generously provided nutritious food for our children. Thank you very much and may God bless you all.

Apart from the children's physical growth, there has also been tremendous growth in the bonding amongst them, and also with the caregivers who they fondly call uncle and aunty. Most notably, the brotherly and sisterly attachment is growing every day with each child assuming a family role naturally. The older ones are showing autonomous responsibility over the younger ones such as grooming for school, polishing their shoes and other light chores. Similarly, the younger ones are also reciprocating with respect, trust and affection toward their elder siblings just like in any conventional home.

None of the children has faced any serious threat to health, with the exception of Musonda's event in March – more about that shortly. We thank God for His grace in keeping the kids safe and well. Malaria is very prevalent in our region, so we ensure each child and staff member has a mozzie net. Our running water supply is enough thanks to our 2 water tanks, so the taps never run dry and we can ensure high standards of hygiene and cleanliness.

Security for the premises is present 24 hours throughout the month. Our 2 security officers are doing a commendable job and so far the environment has been peaceful.

Dear friends and supporters, your support is invaluable! Words and figures cannot express, the children, their education, their well being and redeemed life and future are a testimony of your work and love. You have not grown weary in giving even when finances have been hard to come by. The kids and staff join me in saying thank you for bringing the light and the warmth when it was cold and dark.

Share and enjoy our life at New Beginnings as you explore through our adventure newsletter. We love you and cherish your friendship!

## GDG's IN-COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE FOR EAST AFRICA VISITS

Here at NBCV we are privileged to partner with Global Development Group (GDG), an Australian charity organisation carrying out aid and development projects to relieve poverty in developing countries. NBCV is assisted by donations through GDG, so we are covered by GDG's ongoing project oversight.

In February, GDG sent Martha Waithaka, their representative from Kenya, to spend a full day with us examining our whole project and its day to day operations.

Martha was impressed with our income generating activities including the vegetable garden, fruit orchard and poultry, commenting that we made optimal use of our limited land. Our accounting systems and financial statements were found to be consistent with GDG standards and free of any accounting flaws. We were happy to have been accorded the opportunity to showcase our project, New Beginnings Children's Village, a gem in the thicket!



*Kenny, Martha, Charity and Siizio*

## NEW YEAR, NEW GRADES – SCHOOL GETS TOUGHER

All the kids except for Betty, our youngest, have gone up a grade in school. Betty's teacher recommended that she stay in pre-school another year to allow her more maturity. Esther is in 7<sup>th</sup> year, the highest primary grade. After grade 7, pupils sit an exam to qualify for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, known as basic school which lasts 2 years. Upon completion of the basic grades, the pupils sit for another examination to qualify them for high school which lasts 3 years.

Our children attend government schools with 50-60 pupils per class. This makes teaching very difficult and hinders the kids' performance. Most of our kids however have made marked improvements in their school work thanks to after school tuition from Charity. English had been a major problem for our kids because they came from backgrounds and families where English was hardly spoken. Difficulty in reading and understanding English caused under-performance for some, but this is slowly changing with



encouragement to speak mostly English here at home and our home tuition.

Our kids love school and they want to go each day. It is winter here and some mornings get very cold; fortunately all the kids have school jerseys and closed shoes so they are kept warm as they leave early each morning. Homework keeps the kids busy in the evenings so they watch very little television. They are progressing well with their homework and there have been no bad reports from class teachers.

## **MUSONDA'S MIRACLE** – Musonda undergoes neurosurgery

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, one of our children, Kelvin Musonda woke up paralyzed down the left side of his body and with excruciating pain in his neck. The previous day Musonda's school teacher asked him to wipe the blackboard. Nearing the right end of the board, he turned his head sharply to the left to check the board was clean and heard a 'crack' in his neck followed by a pricking pain.

We rushed Musonda to our local Kafue District Hospital by taxi and he was immediately assessed by the Doctor in charge. Musonda was then admitted pending a MRI scan at our biggest hospital in Lusaka (70 km away). To ease the excruciating pain and keep Musonda's neck stable, the doctor applied a neck brace that had been donated via our Australian coordinator Ros. Amazing! God knew that one day our hospital that had *never* had a neck brace would need one for one for Musonda.



Musonda stayed in the local hospital for 2 weeks until the MRI was done which revealed a 7 cm 'mass or tumor' in the epidural space, compressing the spinal cord. This required urgent surgery. The options? Either book Musonda in under the welfare scheme (free surgery but a waiting list of 1 year), or pay \$1,200 for the surgery to be done almost immediately. Despite an improvement in symptoms, the neurosurgeon recommended immediate surgery. (The MRI was also viewed by an Australian radiologist who confirmed the large mass, spinal compression and need for urgent surgery).

We did not have the funds for surgery, yet God quickly provided the miracle of needed finances via generous Aussies giving through GDG. Around this time, Helen, a member of the Tugun New Beginnings church, held a function to raise funds for our Children's Village. Although she knew nothing of Musonda's situation, she raised \$1,000 for 'whatever is needed at NBCV' and handed the cheque to Ros just days before we learned the surgery would cost \$1,200.

On May 12<sup>th</sup> the neurosurgeon spent almost 3 hours removing the mass from Musonda's spine. It was a nerve breaking time, but surgery was overwhelmingly successful!! (It will take 3 month for pathology results). Musonda was discharged on May 19<sup>th</sup>, and today as you read this article, he is 100% restored and back to school and his everyday life. The whole family is rejoicing to have him home again.

Musonda and all of us at NBCV convey our heartfelt thanks to all our friends and supporters in Australia who stood with us in prayer for Musonda's healing and for financial resources. God richly bless you. Musonda is a miracle boy!



*Charity, Bruce and Musonda*



*Nicholas, Charity, Bruce, Musonda, Ps Kenny, little Peter and Tenge welcome Musonda home*

### **BANANAS COME FIRST**

Our orchard is becoming fruitful and the bananas have outpaced our timing for the first fruit – our estimate was November or December this year. But already many of the trunks are heavy and bending with bounty maiden bunches.



As well we have so many seedlings that Never is running out of space for them. Already he has transplanted over 20 seedlings and there is now no space left for the plethora that is still left huddling next to their parent stems. We are thinking of selling the seedlings to the community as an exercise of pruning the banana field and at the same time raise income.

The other fruit seedlings or upcoming trees are faring fairly well despite the presence of termites underneath. Occasionally, the termites cut at the roots of some fruit plants and they dry out. We have continued to treat the soil with an anti-termite compound but they still keep coming because part of the land on which the garden and orchard sits is the base of an anthill. Next after the bananas should be the orange and guava which are likely to bring their first fruit in about 3 year's time. There are no plans to sell the bananas at the moment; they are all reserved for the kids to supplement their dietary requirements. At last we are going bananas!

## GREEN AND FRESH



*Corn harvest, March 2011*



*Ground nut harvest, April 2011*



The garden is in season and the vegetables are bursting green and fresh. This time, Never has planted okra, rape, Chinese cabbage and tomato. At the beginning of last April, Never planted the first batch of rape which has now come to its end, most of it was used for the children's food, very little was sold to the public despite the overwhelming demand. There is now the second batch of rape among the other vegetables in the garden, this will be ready in about 2 weeks time. Chinese cabbage is another of the early maturing varieties we have, and this too is due for consumption in a week's time.

Though our garden space is very limited, it is optimally utilized and the rewards have been enormous, thanks to our hard working and innovative gardener Never. When the garden is in season like now, we do not buy any vegetables and this results in significant savings.

While the public demand for vegetables is relatively high, the prices are too low to make a profit, so we would rather keep them for NBCV and gain an indirect benefit from the saving.

For now until November, the gardens will be fresh and continue to supply us with all the greens we need. Around start of November or before, the wet season sets in and the veggies will have to give way to the corn and peanuts.



*Chinese cabbage, June 2011*



*Rape crop beside hen house, June 2011*



*Tomato seedlings, June 2011*



*Okra, June 2011*

This piece of mail is too small to send our thanks to you, our friends, supporters and families. How the kids wish they would wrap up their hugs in this mail news and send them over to you.

We want you to know; we value and cherish your love for the kids and your commitment to New Beginnings Children's Village. Your prayers, support and sponsorship make the kids and every one of us at the children's home to be what we are today, full of joy and smiles.

Our prayer is that the Lord continues to grant you the grace and the strength in this long walk, and may your families prosper in soul, spirit and body.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow all our sponsors all the days of their lives, and they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalms 27 and verse 6

We have a lot of exciting news to report on the development projects but that will have to wait until next month. Until then ....

Have a nice day and keep smiling.

Pastor Kenny, Siizio, the kids and staff at the children's home.