

HANDS ON DECK



CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue of Hands on Deck

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“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” - Lamentations 3:22-23



“We need to be prayerful going into community stays. How are we going to make it personal to us?” – Candee Cameron

COMMUNITY STAY IN ZIMBA

Doing community stays in the most vulnerable communities is an important aspect of holistically caring for the most vulnerable. It is often in these times that we are able to more deeply understand the challenges faced by our children as we get a glimpse into their home and the reality of day-to-day life.

Recently, a group of six from Kachele had the privilege of doing community stays in Zimba Community in Zambia.

Emeldah Nanyinza, African Volunteer (Zambia), Kitwe Service Centre

“I stayed with Jackie (African Volunteer, Kenya) and Jane, one of the Care Workers. We visited Sarah*, who is 32 years old and has seven children. Her husband left the home when she was pregnant with their last child in 2018. In the evening, we had time to share our stories and Sarah was open with us. We had a time to encourage one another and pray together before we went to sleep. It was a tough night as it started

raining in the middle of the night and the roof was leaking, but it was a good reminder of the reality that our children face in the communities.

In the morning, we were able to spend time together and Sarah said, ‘Ruth (a member of the Kitwe SC) visited me in 2019 and I didn’t forget. Ruth’s story encouraged me. At that time, I was wounded and broken, but when she came to visit me, she shared her story and encouraged me. I felt healed.’ I am encouraging everyone that wherever we go, we have to share our stories because we might be able to encourage someone else.”

Candee Cameron, International Volunteer (Australia), Zambia Regional Support Team and Partnerships Team

“I was able to stay with Kay (African Volunteer, Zambia) and with a Primary Caregiver named Dorcus*. Dorcus is 40 years old and lives with her four younger children. Her older three children don’t live at home, the oldest of which is 30 years old. When we went into their home, there was nothing there, only a few cups and bowls. As we sat with Dorcus, she shared her story, and we prayed and

sang songs together. I was encouraged that Batista, one of the Care Workers, did the community stay with us even though she has young children and a husband waiting for her at home. I could see that Dorcus was opening up and sharing her heart with Batista, even though I couldn’t actually understand most of what they were saying. I learned later that Dorcus enters into unhealthy relationships with the promise of security, but the promise isn’t fulfilled. You could see the brokenness in her heart. From a young age, she has been pushed aside and has never known anyone that truly loves her. I was thankful that we were able to share scripture with her and the love of God.

Every time I do a community stay, I am challenged and pray that I will always have the eyes to see and the ears to hear what is happening. We need to be prayerful going into community stays. How are we going to make it personal to us?”

CHOOSING TO REJOICE

One of the challenges that the entire Kabwe Region has experienced in 2021 has been heavy rains. After years of drought, the rain was greatly anticipated. However, the sheer amount of continual rain has caused many homes to collapse and entire fields to be destroyed. In the midst of these challenges, the Kabwe Service Centre chose to rejoice at God's faithfulness.



Stephen Matondo, African Volunteer (Zambia), Kabwe Service Centre

Stephen says, "One of the highlights that we have experienced as a Kabwe Service Centre is seeing the way that schools in our communities are starting to understand what we do and want to help in whatever way they can. In one of our communities, there is a government school that 20 of our children are attending. With only a certain amount of finances remaining in the budget, we went to the headmistress asking if there was any way she could give us a discount. Because she understands the situations that our children are facing and the work that we are doing, she said that all we needed to pay was the money that we came with and those 20 children could attend school for the remainder of the year without being chased away."

We can praise God for His faithfulness in this situation and continue to pray for the Kabwe Service Centre as they build relationships and connections with local government services like our schools.

Cecelia Matibula, African Volunteer (Zambia), Kabwe Service Centre

One day, when the Kabwe Service Centre was doing Holy Home Visits in Chisamba, they met Rebecca*, who stays with her two children after her husband passed away. Cecelia shares, "There was a lot of mud water in the home. They were in critical condition. They were staying in a small thatched house, and the floor was covered in mud. We were surprised by the fact that this is where they slept. When Rebecca's husband died, she was depressed. She began drinking and forgot about bathing. She felt as though her youngest child was a burden and she was desperate to get rid of him. I tried to talk to her about God and His love, but nothing seemed to reach her. She didn't know how she was going to raise her son, as even finding food was difficult."

One of the ways that the Service Centre supported this family was through the rebuilding of their home. Cecelia continues, "Our God is one of miracles because as the building started on her home, Rebecca's heart began to soften. Before the house was even completed, she had stopped drinking beer. She said, 'When you were talking about the love of God, I didn't see His love in my life and I was asking where His love was. I was suffering. But the moment you started building my home, I saw that the Lord really loves me.' We thank God because Rebecca is now a Care Worker and has received Christ as her personal Saviour."

OPEN DOORS

Erick Rukang, African Volunteer (Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Likasi Service Centre Coordinator

After a year of being unable to travel, George and Erick were able to spend three weeks in Goma, located in the North-Eastern part of the DRC for three weeks. Having George and Erick in Goma was an encouragement for Bindu, the Goma Service Centre Coordinator, and the rest of the team, who have been unable to receive visitors since February 2020. George and Erick spent their time in both Buhimba and Luhonga communities, investing into the Care Workers, Primary Caregivers, children and surrounding communities.

"As we were walking in Luhonga, we saw people lying in the road dying of malaria. It was beyond anything that we could ever have imagined. To help with the situation, we started taking people to the local clinic where they were able to receive treatment for their malaria. During one of these times, we met Alex and his wife. Alex's father has died and his mother lives in another place, after she remarried. They don't have any family around who can help support them when they are ill. When we met Alex and his wife, they were dying of malaria, they couldn't even walk. When taking them to the clinic, they had to be carried, and once there, immediately began treatment. It was so tough and was a desperate situation. But the Lord was faithful and healed Alex and his wife. Once they had recovered enough to leave the clinic, both Alex and his wife joined the team of Care Workers. We praise God for what He has done. He rescued this couple, and now they have committed to rescuing other orphans who have no support.

"We also saw God working in many other ways. Through a number of amazing encounters with people, God opened the doors and provided us with a place for the Buhimba Care Point to operate out of, and a Goma Service Centre office and a storeroom where we can keep the food served at the Care Points. We really thank God for the things that He did for us. He is faithful and so we continue to fight for what God is doing in Goma."