



# Chitungulu Foundation

*community outreach - nature conservation*

Newsletter # 3

October 2014

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## Our thanks to:

- ◆ Our donors in the Netherlands, Zambia, Switzerland, Germany and Singapore
- ◆ Stichting Alle Beetjes, the Netherlands
- ◆ Kenneth Kaunda Centre for Practical Agriculture, Mfuwe
- ◆ Community Markets for Conservation (Comaco), Zambia
- ◆ Steven Paas, author of the Chichewa/Chinyanja-English Dictionary

Dear Friends of Chitungulu,

### **General**

Welcome to our third Newsletter! As you have come to expect from us, this one is again packed with information on the latest in Chitungulu - including our activities during the months of June-July 2014. Overall, developments in Chitungulu show a positive trend - this despite concerns about the socio-economic impact of the HIV pandemic, which continues to take its toll, and the use of harmful pesticides, which are widely applied by cotton farmers (cotton seems to be the only viable cash crop in Chitungulu these days). Should you have any queries after reading this Newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact us at: [info@chitungulu.nl](mailto:info@chitungulu.nl)

Let's start with some exciting news. First of all: at long last, Chitungulu is going to be connected to Zambia's mobile phone network! The radio tower had already been erected earlier this year, and connection is bound to happen anytime between October and December 2014. Obviously, the mobile phone will go a long way to aid development for the people of Chitungulu. In fact, the cell phone is going to be a potential life-saver, as it will enable people to make a simple phone call to the clinic, should they need the ambulance services. Yes, you read that right: the ambulance! As from 2014, the Zambian Ministry of Health has allocated an ambulance to the area, which has been stationed at the



Rural Health Clinic in Chitungulu. Obviously, this is a great step towards increasing access to health care services, especially with regard to emergency hospitalization of maternity cases (which are usually referred to the District Hospital in Lundazi, a four hours' drive from Chitungulu). Apart from the new ambulance services, Chitungulu will also soon have a new physician. In July this year, the Chitungulu residents have been busy ferrying their contribution of home-made bricks to the clinic grounds for the building of a doctor's house. We are surely looking forward to meeting the new doctor in 2015.

There's more good news in the field of nature conservation: the Zambia Wildlife Association (ZAWA) has finally given the green light to a team of biologists from Germany to revive conservation efforts in Luambe National Park. They become the new owner-operators of the newly established Luambe Lodge. As you know, Luambe literally borders on the village of Chitungulu, and conservation of this beautiful, remote park with its incredible diversity of species-rich habitats depends very much on a mutually beneficial cooperation with the park's adjacent communities. With the opening of Luambe Lodge, which is scheduled for mid-2015, it is expected that new opportunities will arise for local jobs and the sale of local produce. We'll keep you updated on this exciting piece of news!

Our stay in Chitungulu this year was a bit short: only two months. In spite of this, much has been achieved, in particular thanks to the hard labour put in by the four local Nutrition Clubs. Within quite a short time span, these Nutrition Clubs completed several fine buildings for the benefit of the entire community of their respective neighborhoods. Let's start our Newsletter, however, with an update on what we may regard as the

foundation and pillar of all development: education. We wish you Happy Reading!

### ***Education: supporting the teachers***

Teacher Hendrix of Chocha Community School has been doing fine, though he admits he's never been so busy: since April this year he has been enrolled in a three-year teacher training course in the provincial capital of Chipata. Since this is a distance learning program, Hendrix is able to continue his teachings at Chocha, and spends his holidays in Chipata for lessons and writing his exams. Meanwhile, his colleagues at both Chocha and Chilubezi Community Schools are busily preparing for their own entrance exams for the same teacher training program, and we hope to be able to fund as many of them by next year, so that the children of both community schools can directly benefit from improved education. The number of pupils involved has increased to 451 this year for both schools together. This number is exclusive of the kindergartens, which are a new requirement in Zambia's education system. We were lucky to receive a gift from a friend in Katete (a town half-way Lusaka-Chitungulu), containing many colouring pencils and drawing paper, which we donated to the kindergartens as a way to get them going.

The four teachers from Chocha and Chilubezi who, since 2012, had been participating in Zambia's teacher training program Psycho-social Care, Support and Protection, obtained their diploma in August this year. As the program did not cover the teachers' travel expenses, we helped them out with this in 2013 and 2014.

On the following page you'll see some of 'our' teachers in action.







### ***Education: rebuilding Chilubezi's roof***

One of the pictures above shows a classroom in the shadow of a tree: a temporary solution due to the renovation of the roof on the Chilubezi school building. In June, it appeared that this roof was on the verge of collapsing, and we therefore decided to help out and install a proper, rainproof iron sheet roof. Simultaneously, in order to enhance the ventilation, the walls have been raised to a more appropriate height. The Parents/Teachers Association of Chilubezi was extremely thankful for this support, which will enable the teachers to continue their lessons even during heavy downpours in the rainy season.

Meanwhile, we continue to source funding for the building of a completely new, three-classroom building block for Chilubezi, built according to official standards set by the

Zambian Ministry of Education. Only then, Chilubezi Community School will become eligible for much-needed support from the Zambian Ministry.

Plans are in the offing to turn the old classrooms into a community centre: a meeting point where people can play a game of chess, relax, read a book together, or receive training to enhance their skills and knowledge – something that has been long desired by many people in this neighbourhood. The same goes for Chocha Community School: the renovation of this school has been organized by the community, and is expected to be completed in the course of 2015 (unfortunately, the Community Resource Board doesn't have sufficient funds to repeat this self-help project for the Chilubezi school). Chocha's old school grounds, too, seem very suitable for the establishment of a community centre.



### ***Education: Dictionaries for Chitungulu***

Thanks to various great donations we have been able to realize the 'Dictionaries for Chitungulu' project. In total, 330 dictionaries Chinyanja-English and English-Chinyanja (in one volume) have been distributed to all seven schools in Chitungulu: apart from the two Community Schools we also found it important to include the four regular primary schools in this project, as well as Chitungulu's only secondary school.



*40 dictionaries Chinyanja-English for Chocha Community School*

The dictionary has been compiled by Dutch church historian Mr Steven Paas, who worked for several years in Malawi and developed a keen interest in the Chichewa language (called Chinyanja in Zambia). According to one of the Dutch fathers in Chipata, Mr Paas's dictionary is the most complete dictionary on Chinyanja ever, and we are therefore happy that all pupils in Chitungulu now have access to this useful learning tool. The real advantage of this dictionary for Chitungulu lies in the fact that, for the majority of schoolchildren, their first language actually happens to be Bisa, the most widely used language in Chitungulu, (closely related to Bemba but lacking official status). Still, at both primary and secondary level, the children write their final, local language exams in Chinyanja, one of Zambia's major, official languages. The Chinyanja

dictionary, therefore, will come in particularly handy for the children in Chitungulu.

More on this project can be read on <http://www.chichewadictionary.org>

### ***Education: Sponsorship Program***

We started our Sponsorship Program in 2013 to enable vulnerable children to complete their secondary school education. At the moment, we sponsor one boy and three girls. In addition, we are looking for funds to enable Josephine, a deaf girl from a very poor family, to enroll at the Magwero School for the Deaf in Chipata. Despite her disability, Josephine managed to get herself through primary education at Chocha Community School, writing her final exams with impressive results. In July, Josephine and her father were introduced to the Deputy Head Teacher of Magwero School for the Deaf, where she was admitted straight away. As we have been able to fund her first term, Josephine will start her education in January 2015. However, in order to secure her entire education at Magwero, we are in need of more support. When she has finished her secondary school education, Josephine may be further trained to become a teacher for the deaf, thus fulfilling a demand in Zambia. All support is very welcome!

For further details, please do contact us at: [info@chitungulu.nl](mailto:info@chitungulu.nl).

### ***Food security – recent developments***

In our previous Newsletter we informed you about the alarming deforestation rate in the area, which in the long run is likely to have a negative impact on the overall food security in and around Chitungulu (think of erosion in conjunction with changing weather patterns, etc.). Zambia as a whole has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world, due to outdated farming techniques, lack of fuel-





efficient stoves, and the mining of copper and other natural resources. In an effort to raise awareness about the need for tree conservation, fuel-economic clay stoves have been introduced in Chitungulu last year with the assistance of the Zambian NGO Thandizani. An added benefit to these stoves is that they can be easily made by the people themselves, who only need moulds and clay, rendering them independent of expensive parts or techniques imported from outside the valley. As the project is also meant to generate income for the volunteer-teachers of Chocha and Chilubezi Community Schools, we agreed with them to beef up the marketing of these stoves in 2015.

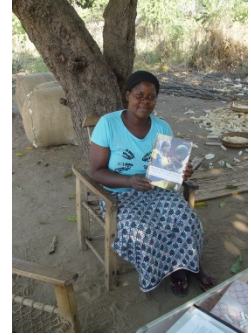
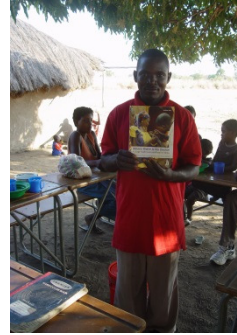


*Fuel-economic clay stoves*

Our support to local projects aiming at improving the food security in Chitungulu focussed this year on two main projects: rounding off the Chicken Layers project which we started in 2013, and continuing our support to the Chitukuko Organic Vegetable Gardeners Club. Besides these projects, we also continued our subsidized sale of the nutritious, Zambian-made breakfast cereal Yummy Soy, which has become a popular product in Chitungulu, especially with mothers of under-five children.

Moreover, to enhance local knowledge on food security we handed over two copies of the well-known manual 'Where there is no doctor' to the Chocha and Chilubezi Nutrition

Clubs. This is a source book of information on nutritious diets, hygiene, disease prevention, and first aid, and is therefore a useful manual in rural settings like Chitungulu. The other two Nutrition Clubs will receive their copy in 2015.



*Where there is no doctor: manual on nutrition and first aid*

### ***Chicken Layers Project to become fully-fledged Poultry Project***

By the end of July 2014, Chitungulu's first four modern, spacious chicken houses were a fact. As you will remember, we started building the first chicken house in the Chocha neighbourhood last year. This year, the remaining chicken shelters were built in three different neighbourhoods. Thanks to the long hours put into the work by the builders and their teams, they managed to get the job done within two months. Within certain conditions as to safeguard animal safety and welfare, the builders added their personal touch to each chicken house, and therefore each one looks different from the other - as you can see on page 7.

All four chicken houses are linked to a Nutrition Club, which is a local self-help group set up to combat malnutrition in its area, especially in under-five children.

Last year, we informed you about the building of the first chicken shelter in the Chocha neighbourhood. Of course we were eager to see how the caretakers had been faring since our departure in 2013. Fortunately, our project coordinator could report that the two daily caretakers (both widows) have been



cooperating nicely, and were applying all the hygienic, disease preventive measures they had learned last year. As a result, the chicken house looked neat and tidy. Of the twenty layers supplied in 2013, fifteen were still alive whilst five had succumbed to Newcastle Disease, a bird disease endemic to the valley. The eggs registration was also well taken care of, thanks to the help of one of the widow's sons. The shelter, however, faced a severe problem due to the club's lack of financial means to buy specialized layers mash. As a result, by June egg-production had virtually come to a stand-still. Without adequate chicken feed, no eggs, without eggs no income – a vicious circle that threatened to thwart the shelter's success.

A solution came up during a meeting with all four Nutrition Clubs: instead of four, it was agreed that only two of the chicken houses were to specialize in the production of eggs whilst the other two focus on the rearing of Village Chickens for meat. As the latter type of chicken does not need highly specialized feed, generating income will be easier compared to the egg production units. In exchange for this advantage, the Village Chicken shelters have agreed to donate a small part of their income for a limited period of time to the layers shelters. In this way, the layers are able to accumulate capital which can be used to keep their shelters going.

As it turned out, the inclusion of chickens for meat to the original layers project is surely going to meet the local demand for both eggs and meat. Moreover, this adaptation of the project has the pleasant spin-off of increased cooperation between the chicken shelters, enhancing overall social cohesion.

Meanwhile, however, we continued our promotion of home-made chicken feed. During a number of meetings the needs of

chickens in terms of their daily energy, protein, minerals and vitamins intake were specified, after which all four chicken houses received a package of ingredients: organic soy beans, sunflower seeds, pigeon peas, amaranth corn, green leafy vegetables, hot chilli pepper seeds, *Moringa olifeira* and saplings of the Neem tree *Azadirachta indica*. These crops have the additional advantage that they need not interfere with the season for cultivation of maize, the staple crop in Zambia, as they can be planted and harvested several months earlier.



There is certainly scope for extension of the poultry project in the near future. Besides local demand for eggs and chicken meat, (which includes the new Luambe Lodge), towns like Lundazi are also seen as an attractive, new market.

We are therefore happy to note that the poultry project has already been copied by at least one of the Chitungulu residents: a cotton grower in Chocha has invested his money in the purchase of chicken wire, chicken feed and layers. The Chairperson of Chocha Nutrition Club provides him with advice and is of the opinion that two production units for chicken eggs in the same neighbourhood will complement each other – a remarkable demonstration of teamwork which we thought was quite the right spirit!





Hopefully in time the shelters will develop into reliable outlets for eggs and chicken meat, which are a welcome addition to the generally poor and protein deficient diets of the people of Chitungulu. We will keep you informed.

We take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks to Stichting Alle Beetjes from Amsterdam, who made the realization of this project possible.



*Chocha Chicken House for Layers*



*Chilubezi Chicken House for Layers*



*The Neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*) was introduced in the framework of the poultry project because of its disinfectant properties, but is also well-known for its many other beneficial health effects.*



*Nthumbe Chicken House for Village Chickens*



*Chilenje Chicken House for Village Chickens*



*Go to work (or to school) on an egg: the boy with the bicycle was sent by his mother to buy some eggs at Chocha*





### ***Chitukuko Organic Vegetable Gardening Club***

Much to our delight we can inform you that the organic vegetable gardeners are progressing well. For this, we are particularly grateful to the Kenneth Kaunda Centre for Practical Agriculture in Mfuwe. The KK Centre has a number of dedicated experts who, since 2013, help us in our efforts to promote organic vegetable gardening in Chitungulu. This year, we split the newly formed Chitukuko Club in two groups, each of which was taken to Mfuwe for a two-day field trip. On the first day the gardeners received practical information at the Kenneth Kaunda Centre, which has a beautiful demonstration plot. The following day was spent visiting the gardens of various successful organic gardeners all over Mfuwe. The gardeners from Chitungulu were particularly impressed by the many, often quite young, female gardeners in Mfuwe who manage to produce a great variety of healthy, nutritious vegetables, thus serving their families and generating a nice income along the way. The two-day field trips proved to be highly inspirational to the eleven members of the Chitukuko Vegetable Gardening Club. Plans are in the offing to boost their production of organic vegetables even more in 2015! Next year, one of the experts from the KK Centre will pay us a visit in Chitungulu, in order to provide customized advice to each of the members' gardens. By now, all the Club members make use of various organic approaches and techniques, including natural soil fertilization, intercropping and other forms of integrated crop protection. Various nitrogen-fixing trees have been planted within and around their gardens, and they also experiment with organic pesticides, such as the use of garlic, hot chilies and other natural 'bad bug' repellents.

Like last year, we have enabled the Club members to buy a selection of organic

vegetable seeds at reduced prices, which will also help them to prepare for the opening of Luambe Lodge, which is likely to become an important customer.



*Field trip to Mfuwe – a guided tour in some of the gardens*



*Field trip to Mfuwe – the first group of Chitukuko Organic Vegetable Gardeners with their instructor at the KK Centre*







*Organic vegetable garden along the banks of the Lumimba river in Chitungulu*

### **Nature education: Birding Course**

Raptors (especially owls and vultures) were the theme of this year's Birding Course which, like our first course in 2013, took place every Saturday morning at the Chilubezi and Chocha school grounds. Thanks to a special gift from our friends from Switzerland, the children were able to extend their 'bird vocab' with the so-called 'Callfinder', a clever device that makes use of microchips in pictures to conjure up a bird's specific call. Judging from their active participation, we noticed that the girls in our classes have become a lot more confident – a good development! At the end of the course the kids wrote their exams, and the best amongst them got a prize for their efforts. In their August Newsletter, Bird Watch Zambia included an article on our Birding Courses which we've included as an attachment (see the link on our site).

### **Beekeeping project**

Unfortunately, our plans for a Beekeeping project have been put on hold, for the time being. Reason for this is the large-scale increase in cotton farming in and around Chitungulu, with its concomitant use of pesticides (neonicotinoids) that are tagged as one of the prime suspects in Colony Collapse

Disorder (CCD) in honeybees. Further research on the feasibility of this project will be done in 2015.



*Students of the Birding Course 2014 at Chilubezi*



*The best birders of Chilubezi 2014 with their Head Teacher*



*The best birders of Chocha 2014*





### ***Finally.... a Big Thank You!***

Explicitly on behalf of the four Nutrition Clubs and all seven schools in Chitungulu, we'd like to extend our sincere thanks to our donors and friends who made it again possible to carry out our projects with the Chitungulu residents. Thanks to your support we have been able to inspire and encourage many people in this far-flung village in the Zambian wilderness. Many thanks!

Our program for 2015:

#### *Education*

- ◆ continued support teachers Community Schools
- ◆ renovation Chilubezi Community School
- ◆ learning materials for the community schools
- ◆ continuation of the Sponsorship Program

#### *Nutrition*

- ◆ upgrade chicken shelter Chocha: higher walls and iron sheets for roofing
- ◆ continued promotion Yummy Soy breakfast

#### *Income-generating*

- ◆ continued support organic vegetable gardeners
- ◆ continuation African Bird's Eye hot chillies
- ◆ promotion fuel-economic clay stoves

#### *As well as:*

- ◆ Birding Course III
- ◆ Waka-Waka lights for Chitungulu
- ◆ capacity training courses
- ◆ feasibility study on rainwater harvesting

If you like to join us in helping the community of Chitungulu to improve their living standards, please let us know. As we say in Chitungulu: **Zikomo kwambiri!**

The Board of Chitungulu Foundation



*Chocha Nutrition Club: hand washing before eating a meal of sweet potatoes*



*The teachers of Chilubezi and Chocha Community Schools*



*Meeting of Chitukuko Organic Vegetable Gardeners Club*

