

St George's Zambia Trip 2010

This summer 19 staff and students from St George's, Rome visited the orphanage in Serenje, Zambia. Together with College de Lemans (CDL) in Switzerland, St George's raises 16,000 euro per year to fund the orphanage.

The visit was a fantastic success. Here is a summary of the many activities we undertook.



Decorating the Canteen and Laundry

CDL did a fantastic job painting the outside of the canteen and the inside seating area. St George's staff and students continued the good work painting the inside walls ably led by Jo Hayes. Students drew the outlines of various animals. The orphans then filled them in using aboriginal-style finger painting. The canteen is now completed. The laundry room has also been finished in white paint.



Michael Barber painting the canteen



Students led the orphans in painting the canteen using an aboriginal style of finger painting



The Playground

Funding for the playground was provided by the Ustinov foundation. James Johnson and Karl Rogers led the construction of two playgrounds at two local schools. The project involved construction of a swing, a climbing wall and frame together with a slide. Both sites chosen for the playgrounds were significantly deprived, the children having very little in their lives. It was tremendously rewarding to see the children playing on the playground when it was opened.



Digging in and cementing the posts for the climbing wall was tough work



Construction of the climbing frame



The completed climbing frame and swing in the background.

Education

Chris Williams and Sarah Gott were heavily involved in looking at the provision of schooling for the orphans. Chris visited the schools and nurseries our orphans attended. She found that the teachers were doing their best to provide a good education in tough conditions. Chris provided support and advice to the teachers and head teachers in these schools. Sarah taught several maths lessons demonstrating alternative teaching methods.



Sarah teaching students in a local school

Nine children at the orphanage were identified from their school reports as having difficulties reading and writing in their mother tongue, Bemba. As a result Chris and John organized for a teacher to come in three days a week for an hour to provide additional support. Funds were left to support this initiative for the next year. Chris will monitor this project. If it is successful then further funding will be provided by ZOA Roma in subsequent years.

The Furrow

On arrival the furrow running through the orphanage ground was up and running, bringing fresh water into the grounds of the orphanage. With the help of Teddy, Ashleigh and several other volunteers dug a vegetable garden. Ashleigh also bought and planted several fruit trees using funds donated from her friends in New Zealand. We have high hopes that the orphanage can at least become partially self sufficient in producing its own food in the coming years.



The Furrow running through the orphanage grounds.



Fruit trees in recycled cartons ready for planting

Medical

All the children looked in good health at the orphanage thanks to the hard work and care of all the orphanage staff. One girl, Dorcas, however, has a problem her femur. During our stay she was taken to the local hospital for a check-up. We were advised that she needs an x-ray and at the very least an orthopaedic shoe if not an operation to graft bone onto the femur. The hospital in Serenje could not help her so we provided money for Kamandete to take Dorcas to Lusaka for an initial consultation and x-ray.



Some of the orphans with their new shoes.

Football Coaching

Next year Dek, the St. George's football academy coach, plans to visit Serenje to provide coaching for both children and teachers. Michael Barber had a meeting with interested teachers from local schools. There was a big turn out, all showing a keen interest in what potentially is a very exciting project for next year.



Bags

Using a design Jude brought out with her, the Matron started making school bags for the children using material bought from the market. The plan is for the matron to teach some of the children how to make these bags, many of which will be posted to Italy to sell at the Christmas Fayre. The money raised will be sent back to the orphanage. Jude did a fantastic job supervising this project.



In closing I would like to add a big thank you to everyone involved in the expedition, in particular to Kevin Gilbert who helped me enormously in planning the trip and to all the staff and students who took part. Finally, a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to ZOA whether financially or with their time.

John Talbot

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September 2010