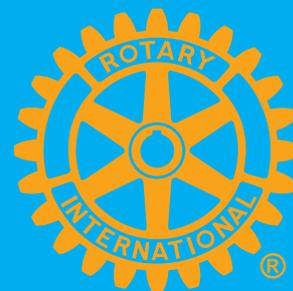


A Global Grant Project to Reduce Hunger and Food Insecurity in the Luangwa Valley, Zambia

Rotary

Clubs of
Canterbury Sunrise (UK)
and Mfuwe



HIGH FIVE CLUB
changing lives: £5 at a time

CSL
CONSERVATION
SOUTH LUANGWA



mizu
eco-care

The March 2024 edition of the District 1120 Magazine, laid out the aims of a Global Grant project instigated by the Rotary Club of Canterbury Sunrise, in partnership with The High Five Club and the Rotary Club of Mfuwe, Zambia. 12 months later, the project is complete with villagers saying 'God is on the move for sure', expressing their delight in the change of fortunes they are experiencing.

If Global Grant projects were easy, we would all be doing them. We hit a few bumps in the road along our journey but ultimate success in this project would not have been possible without the help and guidance of our project partners, The High Five Club www.highfiveclub.co.uk. We soon discovered the well known scourge of corruption in Africa, and once we overcame that issue, the rewards were even more satisfying knowing we had thwarted further damage to the local community.

In addition to fundraising events, The Rotary Club of Canterbury Sunrise raised \$85,000 with donations from our district, the Rotary Clubs of Aachen-Land (Germany) and Winchester, and their respective districts.

Our project goals comprised:

- *Increasing the yield of the land set aside for subsistence farming in the chieftom through mechanisation.*

We purchased a tractor, a conservation ripper, a plough, a harrow and a trailer. Our tractor, seen in action below, is securely housed and regularly maintained, with fully trained drivers.



Jarle Tatt, Canterbury Sunrise project leader, joined Mfuwe Rotary President, Mohammed Mphande, to take delivery of the new tractor last November



- *Trials of drought-tolerant crops alongside the traditional maize crop*

Mizu Eco-Care carried out consultation with and training for 10 Village Action Groups. Each session was well subscribed, with 20 - 30 farmers having walked many miles to attend.

With careful budgeting, our contingency funds were sufficient to provide an indigenous seedbank, shown here, converted by locals from a former shipping container.

This facility is managed by Mizu Eco-Care, an NGO dedicated to "Protecting the Environment and enriching Human Life through Agency".



Right: a local farmer ready to trial new seeds.



- *Purchasing a Community-run, affordable maize grinding facility*

We purchased a hammer mill, which is housed in a building funded by the High Five Club, right next to the seedbank. This too is managed by Mizu Eco-Care.

Already, this is proving immensely popular with local farmers, as hammer mills are often 20 - 30 kms apart and this one is diesel-operated in a country where power cuts are a daily occurrence.

As with all the equipment provided, different tariffs apply according to ability to pay. All fees pay for running costs and ongoing maintenance.



- *Reducing human-elephant conflict thereby protecting crops and elephants*

Elephants stealing harvests which have taken months of back-breaking work is extremely worrying for farmers. Measures to ensure humans and elephants can live in close proximity and relative harmony have been worked on by Conservation South Luangwa (CSL) for many years.

We have helped CSL to expand their reach of elephant / crop protection measures, including solar powered electric fences, motion sensor solar light fencing, smelly fences (using plastic bottles filled with garlic, ginger, neem tree leaves, chilli powder, cow / elephant dung and cooking oil). This same mixture is used in 'chilli bombers', trialled by Jarle (right), which is injected into ping pong balls and fired from this 'gun' made from plumbing pipes. A domestic anti-mosquito spray is used as an accelerant and elephants can be 'shot' from 50m away. The chilli balls will actually shoot up to 200m away. The mixture sticks to the elephants' skin and is an irritant, resulting in the elephants moving away. There are no lasting ill-effects for the elephants.



- *Reforestation education in schools / growing 'tiny forests'*

This initiative set out to educate children practically about the needs of our environment and the benefits of growing trees to counter climate change and the droughts that cause their crops to fail. Amazing results have been quickly seen.

3 schools have embraced the 'Tiny Forest' projects, under the excellent tutelage of Moloson, pictured here at Madimba Primary School.

Only 10 months earlier, this lush green foliage (right), was barren land.



Should you consider applying for a Global Grant?

Of course you should. However, such a project cannot be taken on lightly. Choosing the project and establishing any partners represent the biggest challenge. Without the intimate knowledge of the area we were operating in by Cheryl and Manny Mvula of the High Five Club, the process would not have got off the starting blocks. Africa has very different cultures and customs.

Following the discovery of the corruption eluded to earlier, we entered discussions with Timothy Phiri www.mizuecocare.org, whose operations were based in Lusaka. It was a case of serendipity as Timothy was keen to expand his reach into the Luangwa Valley, and his values align almost exactly with those of Rotary. This was truly the lucky break we needed, and perhaps every project needs a little luck to go its way.

There is no doubt that all the effort, frustration and stress has been more than compensated by the reactions of the farmers whose lives are being transformed. In Rotary speak, \$85,000 between 20,000 people amounts just over \$4 each or a cup of coffee at Starbucks! I know where I would rather give my money.

Finally, a huge thank you to all who contributed to the project, especially Cheryl (High Five Club) and the team from Mizu Eco-Care, pictured below.

Jarle Tatt

