

HIGH FIVE CLUB

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H5C Tiny Forest Project, Zambia



Following on from the 1-year Tiny Forest Project (reforestation) that the High Five Club started up and ran as part of the 'Hunger and Food Insecurity Reduction' programme that we implemented in partnership with the **Rotary Club of Canterbury Sunrise**, the High Five Club continued to run its Tiny Forest Project in the same three H5C-constructed primary schools in Zambia's wildlife-rich Luangwa Valley throughout 2025.

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Background

Deforestation is a huge issue in rural parts of Africa. One of our H5C Trustees, Fen Marriott, is passionate about tree planting which she does in her home town of Eastbourne in the UK. Fen proposed implementing the 'Tiny Forest' reforestation model at our schools in Malawi and Zambia as a way of uplifting the local community and improving the environment for both local people and wildlife.

3 years on and H5C's Tiny Forest Project is now well established at our school in Chitindi in Malawi, and in Zambia's Luangwa Valley where we first introduced this reforestation model as part of our partnership work with Rotary Club of Canterbury Sunrise, starting in Madimba, Chitenga and Chinjobvu Primary Schools in Mnkhanya Chiefdom in 2024 – the 3 schools that the H5C constructed and equipped in this marginalised, rural community.

When the Rotary Programme completed at the end of 2024, the H5C continued to fund and run the Tiny Forest Project at these 3 schools for a further year up until the end of 2025, thereby ensuring its sustainability into the future.

The project continued to be managed on the ground by H5C's very talented tree planting partner in Zambia, local community member Moloson Banda. Moloson is fast becoming, through this initiative, a tree

planting specialist. His passion for trees and nature, and sharing this with others, is truly inspirational.



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150 indigenous tree saplings (of 20-30 different species) were initially planted at each school using our 'Tiny Forest' method of close planting to stimulate rapid growth through increased competition between



the different trees species planted, with the children taking ownership for caring and watering for the trees. Over the 12 months of 2025, the children and teachers at these 3 schools have learnt how to propagate, expand and care for their Tiny Forests. Along with practically learning how to collect indigenous seeds and prepare them for germination in nursery beds at each school, the children have learnt how to make natural fertilizer and implement pest control solutions (spraying with



neem oil solution is great!) and protecting them from being eaten by goats, along with the importance of watering the



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saplings by hand ensuring they survive the first 18 months post planting out.



They have also learnt how to transplant their saplings into the Tiny Forest and care for them there, each child 'adopting' trees of their own to care for - marked with hand-made tree labels bearing the tree's scientific and local name, along with the name of the child responsible for caring for each tree. In this way individual accountability has been taken by the children for each tree in their



Tiny Forest. In the past, reforestation projects implemented by other NGOs in the Luangwa Valley have failed as the children did not have a sense of ownership and the trees went unwatered after the NGO had left.



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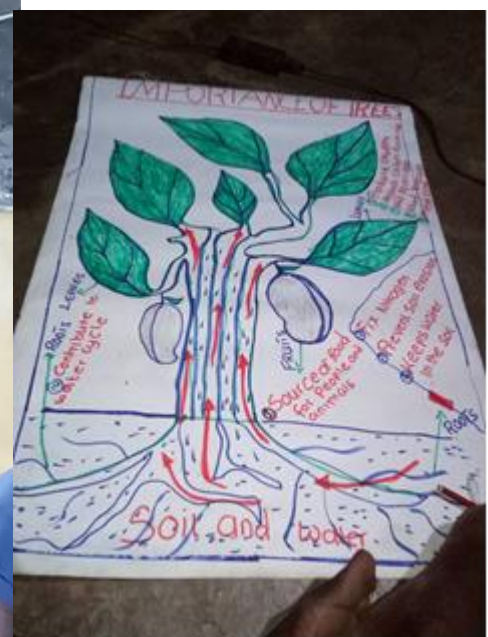
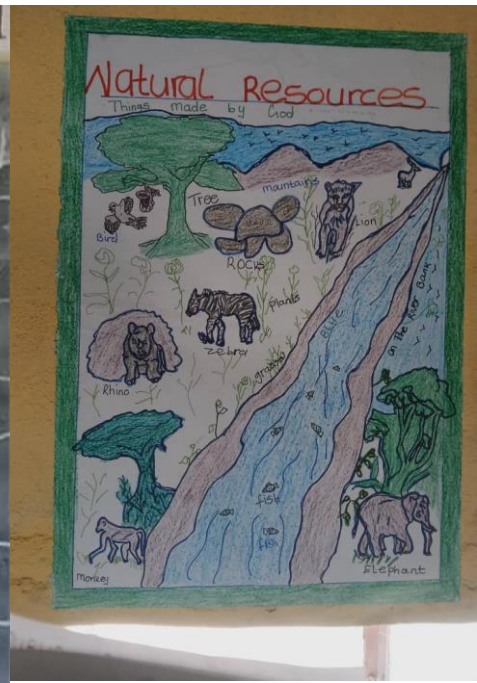
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A key aspect of this initiative has been conservation education delivered by Moloson on a weekly basis at the 3 schools. As well as practically looking after and propogating their Tiny Forest the children learnt of the importance of trees to themselves and their families, along with the wildlife with which they live.

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Each term throughout this initiative (there are 3 terms in a school year) we have run a H5C Tree

Heroes Prize Giving Day at each of the 3 schools, recognising and rewarding those children that have gone the extra mile in caring for their Tiny Forest. To be honest, ALL OF THE CHILDREN have excelled, so as well as prizes for the Best Girl and Best Boy Tree Hero, runner up prizes were given to 3 more child in each school. And we ensured that in each term different children were recognised in this way.

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To say that the Tiny Forest Project has been successful is a bit of an understatement. It has been phenomenally successful at each of the 3 schools. It has been warmly embraced by both the children and teaching staff, and critically it is now cemented into the school curriculum and hence sustainable into the future. We have embedded the initiative at each school every week of the school year for 2 years, and it is now part of their DNA. Each school has continued to collect seeds and grow saplings and expand their Tiny Forest after we concluded our work at the schools in Dec 2025.

The schools all now have a lush, green, biodiverse woodland in their grounds. At the start of this initiative it was just bare earth. The birdlife, insects,

bees and reptile numbers have significantly increased in the area around the schools because of these Tiny Forests, and the children have a shady place to sit in the dry season. The Tiny Forest also acts as a sink for rainwater, helping to reduce flooding in each area.

The transformation from bare earth to a Tiny Forest in just 2 years is simply amazing to see as the photos below clearly show.

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We plan to continue to replicate the H5C Tiny Forest Project model at other schools in the Luangwa Valley as funds allow.

High Five Club Support

High Five Club has managed and funded the Tiny Forest Project throughout 2025 at these 3 schools, including replacing essential tools and equipment for managing the Tiny Forest Project as needed, providing a stipend for Moloson's time leading the project on the ground and prizes/certificates for the H5C Tree Heroes Prize Giving Day at the schools each term. **In total High Five Club provided £922 to run this initiative for the year.** £300 of this was a donation from the Rotary Club of Canterbury Sunrise.



For more information contact cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk