

LifeNets Improves Living Standards

In previous years, the Australian church has supported many successful programs for United Church of God members in Nalubanda and Kasumpa in Zambia, including cattle projects and the building of much needed wells to ensure good water supplies. The latest report from Kambani Banda, LifeNets Director and Zambian elder, on the Australian financed wells and cattle states: *All three wells continue to faithfully deliver water to our families and the wider community. The water pumps from India were made to last. They are working perfectly; so far, none have broken down.*

The well at Apren Momba's village was especially useful in 2007. It supplied water to three hundred and fifty people, non stop! This was for nine days during the Church's Fall Festival. This number (three hundred and fifty) does not include the local community that continued to benefit from this well during the Feast. To my simple mind, LifeNets through these wells and other programs, is literally 'feeding and watering the flock.'

Without doubt cattle restoration is our flag project. It has delivered animal draft power and supplied milk—a critical source of protein. Our herd now numbers 92, valued at 92 Million Kwacha. This is equivalent to US\$ 25,000. All this, from US\$ 4,000 invested in 2001! This number excludes 9 animals sold to buy Scotch Carts and meet various family needs. (In rural Zambia; a scotch cart is a valuable and expensive capital item).

Makopo Project

Due to the success of these and other projects in Nalubanda and Kasumpa, Australian donations last year (see box on this page), have been directed towards a new development area in Makopo.

A specific strategic plan for the area has been established. Training programs in animal husbandry and crop production have been given by qualified experts and the following have been purchased in stage one of the project: heifers, one bull, oxen, three ploughs, three chains and three cultivators. Monies have also been invested in a revolving fund project which has been very successful in other areas.

Revolving Fund Project

Quoting Kambani Banda again: *This program continues to deliver benefits to our community. To my mind, the Church teaches theory in the 'skills of living classes.' Planning, hard work, reviewing one's work, integrity, keeping one's word, evidenced by paying loans, etc. These and much more are taught from a spiritual perspective. In these classes, we emphasise these values.*

LifeNets provides the laboratory, the materials and instructors. Using the above resources; instructors demonstrate, step by step, how knowledge taught by the Church can be put in practice. This dual approach to poverty reduction is highly effective and is the key that has made us succeed where others have failed.

The outcomes speak for themselves. In the year under review this is what the agriculture credit program delivered:

- Contributions to the Church from Nalubanda and Kasumpa reached an all time high.
- All the households contributed to the Church.
- No family requested church assistance.
- We are well ahead of the UN millennium goals. While they are still talking; we have already reached 100% food security at household level.

Current Challenges

In 2008 the rains are way beyond normal. The road to Nalubanda and Kasumpa is impassable, so is the road to Mapoko. Parts of Central and Southern provinces of Zambia, especially along the Kafue river basin, are experiencing flash floods. In fact, even the trunk road from Lusaka to the Malawi border was closed for four days because two bridges were washed away.

Having said that, we are still hopeful that God will be merciful to us and that we will still get a good crop. When the rains abate, our first order of business will be to travel to this area and access the performance of this very important project.

Conclusion

The projects financed by Australia continue to be suc-

cessful, but prayers are always needed for this turbulent area of Africa. The partnership of the Church and LifeNets in teaching our members both spiritual values and their practical application will continue in 2009. LifeNets continues its goal in Zambia of *meeting needs in practical ways and promoting self sufficiency.*

A note from Joseph Banda, son of Kambani and Shirley Banda, to Victor Kubik, Director of LifeNets International, in regard to all those contributing to LifeNets: *I just wanted to drop you a short note to thank you for all the wonderful work that you are doing here in Zambia. You are making a great difference in the lives of many and are giving hope to those that were once hopeless...keep up the wonderful work and God bless your efforts.* □

Trevor Huthnance

LIFENETS - AUSTRALIA

November 1, 2007 - October 31, 2008

	\$
Gold Coin Collections At Church	4,059
Private Donations Over \$400	3,000
Zimbabwe Fundraiser	240
Festival Collections	
Devonport, TAS	265
Kawana Waters, QLD	1,044
Merimbula, NSW	641
Busselton, WA	1,512
Total	10,761

Below: Kambani and Shirley Banda

