

HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

Education for the Poorest, Zambia

Following a trip Cheryl and Manny organised for some friends to visit High Five Club projects in Zambia in May 2016, we felt called to help the community improve education provision for some of the poorest children in the Luangwa Valley at Chitenga Community School.



The parents of these children joined hands together 4 years ago to erect a simple classroom structure for their youngest children out of the natural materials around them. These 5-7 year olds were simply too small to walk the 5km+ each day to the nearest school. It wasn't just the distance, but the dangerous wild animals they would meet on the way such as elephants and hippos.

This simple structure catered for 103 children, with community members who had completed secondary school volunteering their time to teach them. They split the children into 2 classes, with



one class of 50+ being taught in the morning and the other in the afternoon. This was how we found these children, balancing their writing slates on their knees sitting on benches moulded out of mud, their blackboard with more white worn out patches than blackboard remaining, and during the rainy season rain blowing through the classroom leaving them wet and cold.

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After discussions with Chief Mnkhanya and his Indunas (advisors) we agreed to come alongside the community to help them uplift this little school. A school that had literally been raised from the earth by themselves with so much love.

Over the next 18 months various High Fivers fund-raised to top up our regular members' monthly donations so that we could together do something transformational for these children.

Manny ran his first ever half-marathon to raise funds, Emily organised an amazing wild night out Summer Ball, Lynn orchestrated a Zambian evening with a mouth-watering evening meal at our local church, and Dennis and his 6-year old grandson Jack ran a cake sale and a variety of other fund-raisers for these children. Our educational benefactors from Roffey Homes also pledged their support, as did the congregation at The Parish Church of St Peter & Paul in Shorene.

At the same time the community began hand moulding thousands of bricks and collected stones and sand from dry river beds in this remote, rural area. Their Community Resources Board, Mnkhanya CRB, managed the build in its entirety first securing quotations for the build and, once approved, then project managing the construction works.



The result of our collective efforts is the recent completion of an amazing fully furnished 2-classroom brick-built school with a staff room for teachers.

It was so encouraging when we heard that the classrooms the community had built exceeded the government of Zambia's own specification – and at **one fifth of the cost!!!!** It is amazing what

can be achieved when the funds go directly to the ground and not via NGOs and Departments of Education in Africa.

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Manny and Cheryl were in Zambia working in July and were fortunate to attend the ceremonial opening of the new school.



It was quite an affair with speeches from the Chief, us as High Five Club, and the lady in charge of the Department of Education for Mambwe District

The Department of Education lady-in-charge was so impressed by what we had collectively achieved, that she pledged 2 qualified teachers to the school right there on the

spot! These have now started and are fully funded by the government, complementing the efforts of the volunteer community teachers. She also pledged to begin a feeding programme at the school along the lines of the High Five Club's Breakfast Clubs!

Chitenga Community School is now catering for all of the youngest children in their



community, operating 4 classes each day – two in the morning and 2 in the afternoon, providing quality education under the supervision of qualified teachers and running a feeding programme to boot. A total transformation in the lives of these young children.

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High Five Club Support: Our collective support of **£8,028.50** funded the construction of the 2 classroom block with a teachers' staff room/office in between, along with equipping each classroom with locally made desks (20 x 3-seaters in each classroom), blackboard and a teacher's desk and chair. The community provided the bricks, sand and stones and project managed the build.

What teamwork and what amazing value!! We have agreed to 'adopt' Chitenga School as a High Five Club School and will be working with the community to further uplift their school over the next few years.



For more information contact Cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk