



# Our Children Your Children In Zimbabwe

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## Special Points of Interest

- IT WAS HEARING THE SWEET MUSIC FROM ZIMBABWE that first captivated us in 1990. We continue with Shona music study, classes and performances. We also continue to reach into our depths to bridge the cultural diversity amongst us all, making building community "the priority and final frontier".
- SIX PRIMARY VILLAGES create the core for Nhimbe since 2000.
- UPCOMING ZIMBABWE visit in November!

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## ~ The African Bush in This Moment ~



Black beads of sweat  
generously drip  
from your brow.  
Humidity softly grits  
between my palms.  
Lightning white moon  
and mammoth thunder  
crack the star-quenched sky  
in half.  
We share equally.  
The sun, wind, rain  
are relentless and  
without favoritism.  
It's just another day

in Zimbabwe.  
How do you do with little?  
Why do we expect so much?  
Both of us,  
we calculate, we strategize.  
We move the playing pieces  
around the board.  
We try and make the game fair.  
It isn't.  
Death isn't fair.  
Weather isn't fair.  
Governments aren't fair.  
But you and I,  
we can create real rules,  
not death,  
not the weather,  
not governments.  
Reaching out  
with heart,  
and a penetrating

song of the souls,  
we slice  
through the illusion.  
And that song  
pervades the forests  
Sinks deeply into the waters  
Permeates the day  
And hums to the savannah  
all night.  
The crickets and raindrops  
on the thatched hut roof  
offer the percussion.  
Our song rules the African bush  
in this moment,  
because we Love!

Jaiaen  
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**NHIMBE PRESCHOOL** – Since 2002, many teachers (like Mrs. Melody Chakadya our local 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher at Chibikira Primary), have referred to our Nhimbe 1<sup>st</sup> graders as bright stars, where the light is in their eyes, eager to learn. After enjoying daily healthy meals, and stimulating learning activities including music and dance, it's no wonder they shine above the norm. The entire community is grateful for these incredible opportunities, all of which preserve the past, and nurture hope for the future.

**W.A.T.E.R!** – Currently 132 extended families can grow prosperous gardens because they have a well. The Chikore family, one of many, also has reduced compromised health issues because their water source is clean and clear, and not pathogen laden!

**MMC** – The Nhimbe girls no longer need to tell us that they don't have underwear or monthly care supplies. We have lightened their load of being maturing girls, like 14 year old, Talent in Form 2, who can now, like many of *our* girls, attend every day of school!

**LIBRARY** – A new horizon of reading and education is palpable because of our library. Girls, boys, parents, teachers, and local officials (even police officer Mashinga stops by to read with a cold soda in hand), all visit our library and expand their world with books!

## ~ NHIMBE PRESCHOOL SHINES ~

2019 sees another 25 graduates leaving our Nhimbe preschool heading into the Zimbabwean educational system. A key has been the children's diet, which has been supplemented since we began in 2002. Nutrition is the #1 reason children can't learn, but because of our garden and orchard, we regularly provide produce. Besides purchasing basic protein sources, like *kapenta* (dried fish), rice and beans, and *dovi* (peanut butter), the fresh pro-

duce is packed with vitamins and minerals and is the primary way to increase the body's Ph. This part of the biological terrain is what the immune system requires to stay optimally healthy.

Our latest endeavor ([see blog dated 10/30/19](#)) is to provide a community workshop on drip irrigation using the preschool grounds for demonstration. Not only will this provide more prosperous gardening, but also has the potential to someday give the

preschool a leg towards self-sufficiency, since the extra produce can be sold. We are busing instructors from Zambia who have been teaching this drip technique in Eastern Zimbabwe, where water levels are even harder to maintain.

Expanding on this permaculture idea with your help can change the future of the Nhimbe preschool. Any donation is helpful.

**Thank you for the continued support of these special projects!**

*"Nutrition is the #1 reason children can't learn, but because of our garden and orchard, we regularly provide produce."*

### ~ MWOYUCHENA CDs \$15 ~

Our Online Shop lets you listen to the tracks on the incredible [Mwoyochena kuZimbabwe CDs](#), all donated by the best musicians. If you don't have a copy, you should! The song selections are exquisite.

[Listen in for yourself!](#)

*Mwoyochena  
kuZimbabwe*



### ~ RETURNABLES? ~

Can BottleDrop be an easy way for you to donate? One bag of returnable bottles or cans buys twice as much as in 2018 in Oregon! Even water bottles generate funds! For instance, just one bag can help us buy:

- ♦ 3 Girls each monthly soap for 1 year
- ♦ 4 Girls each 3 pair of underwear

Check out how this works!

[www.bottledropcenters.com](http://www.bottledropcenters.com)

## ~ NOTHING LIKE PURE CLEAN WATER! ~

We began this year with optimism to build at least 13 wells, and we did it, even with an early rainfall! The wet weather was gratefully embraced, as Zimbabwe had just struggled through a year of drought with millions facing starvation.

Each Nhimbe family digs their own 30'+

water hole (usually by the young men—sons, nephews, friends). We provide the builders, cement and bricks. The family provides the bucket and draw chain. Everyone is contributing, and the rewards are many!

Fresh pure water close to the garden is giving ample irrigation, and making health a priority. Rains can no longer wash pathogens into the well nor can storms easily collapse the brick sides.

Many thanks to you! \$300 builds a clean well (with your name on it) that lasts for generations. Let's keep building until everyone has pure water!

For those without a well, we use the SODIS solar disinfection. From Lebanon to Ireland and Sweden, gratefully the Swiss bring this within reach!

[Check this out!](#)

**We all deserve  
the basics!**







*“Most importantly can we lift a child’s vision of herself a few notches, so she feels worthy and deserving of basics as well as capable of having a sense of some control in her own life? Ultimately, can we help her stay in school?”*

## CAMPERS



**Our mission is to reach more girls! When donors like you support this cause, we can do so much more. Tatenda Chaizvo!**

## ~ WHERE POVERTY REIGNS ~

Women and girls all over Zimbabwe have very few ways to manage *mhandara* (women’s days). **Have you heard that girls stay home from school all over the undevel-**

oped world during their monthly cycle? Modern disposable solutions are not an option where rural people have little food or clean water. Using scraps of fabric

has often been the answer where poverty reigns. Zimbabwe’s inflation rate is the highest in the world today, and every resource continues to be significant.

## ~ WE EMPOWER MATURING GIRLS! ~

**For several years now we have been providing a successful** solution; one that has been well-received by parents (this is critical), the girls (also important), and the entire community. What we do is facilitate the process of making re-usable washable *mhandara* products and distributing them in the rural area, along with underwear, soaking buckets and a monthly bar of soap.

It all starts with a tiny manufacturing operation involving four team members in the capital city of Harare. We purchase absorbent flannel fabric, and then hire people to sew and package these reusable washable supplies, which last about three years. This approach is not just culturally appropriate, it also is sustainable, giving a young girl a lifetime of skills. Her first MMC package includes a sewing kit of fabric, pins, a needle and some thread for her *mhandara* tote.

With your generous gift, you offer us outreach opportunities, so then we are able to gain the trust and attention of many growing girls. We use this opportunity to open their hearts and minds. Beyond the care we take, in bringing monthly solu-

tions, we also offer weekly meetings as well as tri-annual 3-day camps that allow for *Hurukuro na Tete*, (discussions with auntie). In this culture, it’s the aunt’s role to give all basic advice regarding sexuality and romance to young ladies (parents are not to talk about these things). Due to land redistribution, mal-nutrition and HIV/AIDS taking a toll on this generation, many aunties have perished, or they are far away, leaving girls without guidance.

At one of our routine Youth Well-Being camps years ago (during sharing time) we learned that some of the girls did not own underwear. We started our initiative to buy each girl three pairs. Then at the following camp, we learned that sometimes they had no monthly care supplies at all, and so Mhandara Monthly Care (MMC) was born.

Our MMC program not only provides resources (**start-up kits are only \$18, and \$2 for a year’s worth of soap**), it’s also the blessing of offering them a substitute auntie for assistance with serious topics. Teen hormones are raging the same everywhere. We ask ourselves: Can we prevent teen pregnancy, or perpetuation of molestation or

rape? Can we stop the spread of HIV/AIDS from its course? Most importantly can we lift a child’s vision of herself a few notches, so she feels worthy and deserving of basics as well as having a sense of some control in her life? Ultimately, can we help her stay in school?

It is these camps that provide safety, to allow sharing of intimate topics otherwise kept private. Although reporting incest or other attacks is not common, not unlike other parts of the world, we are simply creating a forum to talk and provide information rather than pretending there are no problems. **All ages of girls attend our three 3-day camps, which are only \$12 per year.**

We are also able to offer marimba classes twice monthly! But only through your hands will we succeed. When you act, they benefit...we cannot do this without your help!

Our program is reaching over 300 girls and touching lives in three Chief’s areas. Please [link to the website, donate today](#), and let’s change the female faces of rural Zimbabwe!



## ~ THE NHIMBE EVER-INSPIRING LIBRARY ~

With 2,500 books in our library we have given this special rural area a real treat. The library shouldn't be like candy but more of a main course. Books are so rare that it feels like a big dessert. Libraries are not commonplace in Zimbabwe, the closest of which is rumored to be in the capital city at the University. (Oh! And check out the [11/01 library hut thatching film!](#))

For nearly twenty years, with immense help from you, the power of the word has greatly added to their lives. Some of you have donated earmarked funds. Some have brought books. Some have sent me books to include in my suitcases. Others have hand-picked books to ship. A most significant gift has been from Books for Humanity who has paid postage to send the books

you have provided for us. They recently needed to close their non-profit so that will change our way forward. Since 2005 over 1,375 books have been shipped. We applaud that dedication with eternal gratitude... what an immense opportunity for the rural area! Thank you Anita!

Before bringing or buying books, please look at our book register of what we have. [Click on the website list](#) and use the find function (it's a standard excel file). Thank you for carefully choosing books (space is at a premium) and for bringing them in your suitcases!

**Let's continue to broaden the vistas of rural education for all ages. Thank you for your help!**

## 2019—ANCIENT WAYS IS 25 & NHIMBE 20 YEARS!

As we come to the close of 2019, we have enormous gratitude for all of your continued support over the years. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Spontaneous donations, as well as, recurring monthly bank drafts or credit card contributions, are the primary financial ways that you make the difference! We are focusing on these special categories for 2020:

**Mhandara MMC** – Just \$18 provides a new girl with a start-up kit and regular meetings. \$2 provides a maturing girl with a year's supply of monthly soap. Only \$12 sends a girl to camp where she has a chance to learn about herself, her hormones, and how to handle her changing body. We sponsor 300 girls with soap and camp. Some learn marimba twice a month! Our preference would be to provide kits to new girls in near-by villages, as well as, our Nhimbe community of 30 or so maturing each year. Please support these growing girls!

**W.A.T.E.R!** - \$300 provides one well to an extended family that lasts for generations, giving them a chance at optimum health, potential longevity, and prosperity through their agrarian lifestyle.

Please consider that your investment in these families not only assists them directly, but helps the entire community because their water sources can boost the productivity of their land immensely, incredibly impacting everyone in the local area. We also offer a SODIS alternative.

**Library** – Please consider donating towards the postage of sending books, or hand-pick your favorites that you don't see on our register. Can you help us find a way to get them to Mhondoro? The entire region benefits, increasing educational empowerment for all. Any amount is helpful!

**Nhimbe Preschool** – To operate for 75 students requires \$195 per student per year, which is near \$15,000. This does not pay teachers or cooks a recommended wage but instead only offers them a stipend to thank them for volunteering on behalf of the community. With hyperinflation the worst in the world, and all Zimbabweans just going through a year of famine, tolerance is wearing thin. Finding people to help out in the smallest ways, is difficult, as survival is knocking on their door.

We thank you for any way you can help us with the basics to keep our Nhimbe

preschool alive and well, particularly during these current hardships, which are some of the worst in their history.

**Craft Sales** - We also provide the community residents with small openings for craft sales. Please do check out our products at [Zimfest](#). We have an upcoming trip in November-December 2019 where we also will be bringing back a few holiday gifts for special orders. [See blog dated 10-23-19](#). Call or email now with requests! Your support with these small purchases makes a big difference in the lives of the women and men who Nhimbe (work together) for Progress!

**VOLUNTEER TODAY!** – Your time and energy means a great deal...we are a grassroots organization and that is how we grow. Every one of us has gifts and talents. We are looking for you to join us in this heart and mind expanding adventure, as we continue to look for solutions for our Zimbabwean neighbors in crisis.

**Play music with us, use your technical skills to keep us up with the changing world, or offer your time any way that makes sense to you...we welcome your heart and your energy! Tatenda Chaivzo! (We thank you very much!)**

*"... And that song pervades the forests ... Sinks deeply into the waters ... Permeates the day and hums to the savannah all night. The crickets and raindrops on the thatched hut roof offer the percussion. Our song rules the African bush in this moment, because we Love!"*



## MMC 3-DAY CAMP ACTIVITIES

### *Gardening at the Community Center*



### *Learning How to Sew*



### *Gathering Branches for Sweeping*



### *A Hike in the Bush*





# Playing Music and Playing Sports All Feed Success



*University Graduate Lillian Gomera  
2019 Congratulations—Makorokoto!*

*Traditional Dancing  
Learned at Camp*