



Our Children Your Children In Zimbabwe

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Executive Director

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~ Finishing Up Ancient Ways' 30th Anniversary! ~

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 VILLAGES create the Nhimbe for Progress core since 1999

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As we head into our 31st year, I write you with so much gratitude! Ancient Ways is truly an incredible path to have chosen for my life. Little did I know! It has brought me to be deeply intertwined with the essence of music and dear musician friends, plus Zimbabwe and her people's genuine life concerns, as well as setting many of us to embark on this unique unexpected humanitarian journey. We continue to be forever blessed by the unfolding generosity that points the way to move forward with our mission and goals.

Our objectives for this year have met with reasonable success considering all of the challenges rippling through us from the hardships on the ground. Things like an ongoing drought resulting in little to no electricity, flowing on into reduced-to-no communication at times, makes one appreciate prosperity in all its forms and engenders compassion without bounds. With all of the complica-

tions, we still feel that every ounce of energy that is funneled into the organization is met with grace and supplemented from the spiritual world. This gives hope for continued success birthing evolving relationships of a cherished nature.

Thank you for your recurring support that makes the difficulties we face with Nhimbe for Progress something through which we can work. It would seem that we, here in the US, are not struggling, if we compare our details of daily life to theirs...but I have to say, that when you pour yourself into something and the glass tips over, it doesn't matter where the glass is located, we all feel it!

We had a few losses this year: 1) a box of library books stuffed also with special staff T-shirts hasn't shown up, and it's been 3 months, having left our soil in October. (It might arrive yet, one never knows.) 2) \$500 worth of embroidery blocks from the women's sew-



A sampling of the lovely blocks lost somewhere on the east coast...alas...

ing group was lost as it came to the US with a visitor. 3) We had a mis-step with our H2O Drip for the Drought program at the Community Center where some of the garden didn't receive enough follow-up tending (and after such a great start), which in turn delayed the workshop sequels (ouch).

Well, I could simply not mention these things, but maybe you need to know that disappointment and heartbreak are part of the territory? We continue to be steady at the helm although a little emotional from time to time. Yes, everything happens for a reason, and oh well, these things are minor in comparison to the accomplishments, and we are all alive and well, and hard at it. We keep on growing and developing as a team, and I'm grateful for that!

That was the unfortunate news, so, now, what about the good, better, and best news? We moved forward in all arenas touching many people's lives, including all the most vulnerable populations – the elderly, the children, the girls. We continue to make headway with Nhimbe Community [library](#), Mhandara Monthly Care ([MMC](#)), W.A.T.E.R! ([Wells and Toilets Everyone's Right!](#)), Nhimbe for Progress [Preschool](#), plus our Ambuya's quilt project [Heartworks Elder Care](#). Read on!

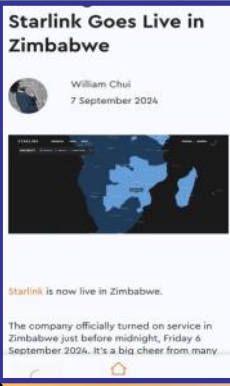
Thank you for everything you do – whether financial, volunteering, or prayers! Every bit of it is felt!

[Click here to donate now!](#)

~ PRESCHOOL AND EDUCATION ~



“What if we could assist a child by giving them an open window to see beyond the rural landscape with new and exciting learning opportunities?”



Nhimbe for Progress Preschool Plus!

Out of 75, we graduated 24 students this year, and they leave us with great optimism. A new world is opening up wherever they land.

Parents are hopeful, while also knowing that anything their child receives in the way of education will cost them money, which is limited within the rural lifestyle. There are no free lunches, let alone education in Zimbabwe, so the parents are facing

finding enough to eat, as well as enough to pay school fees, plus buy a uniform and books. And then, what if you have more than one child? Eeeek!

Sponsoring children to attend school was a key initiative when we first began in 2000. We started with 21 children and grew to be over 700 a year. Thousands of children have been sponsored by Nhimbe since the beginning.

We remain very grateful that we have given all of our children a great start. We thank all of the Nhimbe Preschool staff and managers, as well as the parents, who are the team that make it happen successfully on the ground!

We remain a model preschool, thanks to your continued help...[click here to support our 2025 Nhimbe preschool!](#)



Now, if its up to me, I am dreaming of another outcome. I see the possibility that several of the children coming through our preschool could be good candidates for further learning opportunities.



We have the potentiality to go beyond the current threshold.

What if there were children who had aptitude for study, and we could facilitate that by giving them an edge by using a computer, to access an online learning facility designed for just this scenario? We would need a laptop that could hook up to the internet and solar power. Can you imagine?

At this point, Starlink and solar are the only logical options for getting internet out into the rural area of Mhondoro.

Our hope is to partner with those who have their finger on the pulse of online learning and make this a reality for some of our children. What if we

could assist a child by giving them an open window to see beyond the rural landscape with new and exciting learning opportunities?

Sponsoring a child may return to Nhimbe in the future! **Interested? [Let us know! Thank you... Tatenda Chaizvo!](#)**



~ DROUGHT IN ZIMBABWE OF DEEP CONCERN ~

For the last several years the rainfall has been declining. It used to be in November the rains would come and people could plant their maize. Traditional farming ways are potentially becoming a thing of the past as we watch climate change affect us all. To the primarily agrarian society it has devastating results.

Our primary initiative has always been to provide the fishing pole not the fish, hence we often find ourselves in the educational arena. Dealing with the drought is no exception. As soon as we realized it was yet another year without water, we began the research to find solutions. That landed us at [Healing Hands International \(HHI\)](#) looking for drip hoses that we could supply to the residents. Come to find out, HHI has many irons in the fire and each one is about providing education and help in a variety of ways.

In partnership with HHI's vision, we began by running an H2O Drip for the Drought workshop in May with an excellent teacher, Mr. John Dube, who single-handedly, brought 106 villagers into the HHI training of how to use drip technology and permaculture to grow foods even in the worst of drought years. Muda, our Project co-director, coordinated all aspects making sure all the supplies were pulled together and everything was organized for the two-day very hands-on Nhimbe workshop.

Please see the [blog dated July 24th this year for the full story](#). After a month we returned to see how the beds were doing that were planted at the workshop. Our Community Center beds were all growing well. [In this video the segments were taken at the Community Center, where you can hear the children and see the buildings in the back.](#)

What was even more impressive was the efforts by the residents who attended the workshop. The next video is from some of the attendees taking what they learned and putting it into effect. [The very last segment on the video is Deni Chikore, a resident who is very serious about watermelon farming \(wait for it\)](#). Very impressive. We have several videos of him (all in Shona) showing a variety of crops using drip.

He must have invested a large sum in the hoses and buckets to plant such a big area, which is unusual for anyone to have that much cash in the rural area.

Wow! I love that drip and permaculture systems can seriously impact a food shortage and transform it into food security...it is possible!

~ LET'S NOT LOSE HOPE! ~

I know that people think about the maize-and-meat part of the diet, but in fact, the greens, fruits and vegetables grown in our gardens carry prominent nutrients that not only flavor what maize and meat there is, but also are like taking nutritional supplements. We are so proud of the residents who stepped up to, as my godmother would say, "grab a root and growl", like, get tenacious and change your life—don't lose hope!

About the time we were soaring with success we also had some setbacks which were hugely disappointing for everyone involved... a wake-up. Besides the lack of tending the new beds at the Nhimbe garden, the drought had

begun to take its toll to the point that residents who hadn't attended (we could only handle 100 at a time), were feeling apathetic, like, what's the use, since their wells were going dry. All of a sudden, we had to steer the ship in another direction to both regroup the garden tending plus deepen wells.

Thanks to your generosity 23 wells have been deepened! Really, you all came through to make the situation bearable. We are looking for a change moving into the summer season.

But, pray for rain for Zimbabwe!



Thank you for whatever help you can offer towards drip, well repair and building.
[What are we without water?](#)

Most library books shipped early this year will serve all of the youth, with a big audience within the MMC girls, as they are able to come to the Community Center each week for their meetings.

Many thanks to Dagmar Johnson, who so loves books and regularly keeps an eye out for good possible donations to our Nhimbe library! We so appreciate those of you who value the idea of this library like a rare jewel in the savannah where libraries are non-existent...hard to imagine, but true.

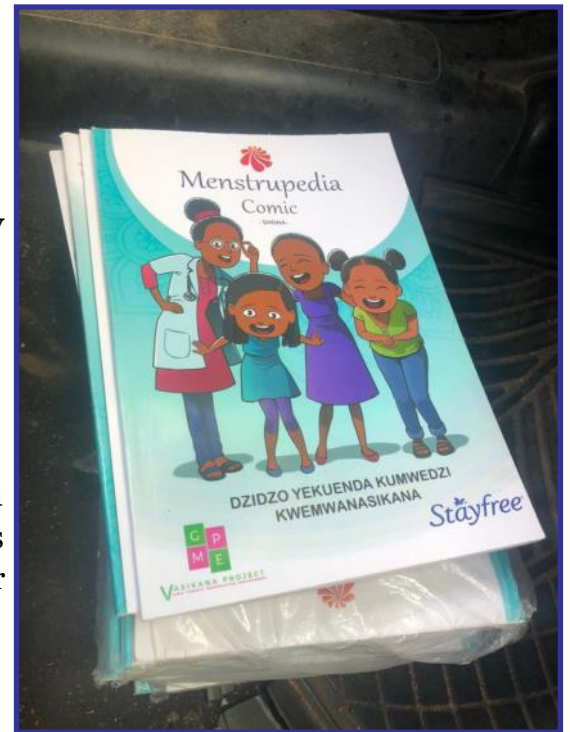
[Click here - donate to the Nhimbe for Progress Community Library, evolving since 2001! Thank you...Tatenda!](#)

~ MMC AND LIBRARY PARTNERS! ~

In partnership with [Zvisinei Dzepasi Mamutse](#), who founded the [Vasikana Project in 2014 in Zimbabwe](#), we have been able to distribute 30 copies of the book **Menstrupedia Comic, the Friendly Guide to Periods for Girls**, which she had translated into Shona ([English copy here – check it out](#)).

This book was originally published in India, and now has been translated into many languages. Recently, she donated 25 copies to our five main MMC schools and we bought 5 copies to be part of our evolving Nhimbe library.

[Translating into Shona was a brilliant idea](#) – thank you Zvisinei!



[We also want to thank Goodera for their continued audio book donations!](#) Goodera is an organization who works with corporate employee volunteers worldwide. These volunteers articulately read elementary level stories to add an aural experience to the growing resources at the Nhimbe Community Library by our teachers simply using an MP3 player and speakers.

The volunteers chose excellent stories for indigenous girls and did their best to read slowly. Listening to English will be a great help to our children. Very nice!



~ MHANDARA MONTHLY CARE MMC IS WELL-LOVED! ~

MMC girls meet weekly learning marimba, song and dance, as well as studying hygiene, learning from the women's wisdom and peer bonding experiences. Everyone looooves the MMC Program.

In 2024, we incorporated 360 new Mhandara Monthly Care (MMC) girls into our program, which includes 80 Nhimbe girls, with the remaining girls from the surrounding schools. We are able to easily work with the other schools because of a

collaboration with Girl Child Network Zimbabwe, which gives structure and guidance.

This now makes thousands of girls having received our MMC kits since we first started! [Please check out this video sharing distribution days in 2024.](#)

We were able to provide a nearly 3-day camp for 120 girls at the Nhimbe Community Center. This was a grande time to explore the bigger world outside of home and school. The rural areas hold little opportunity for expan-

sion. At the camp they can spread their wings, while still under the guidance of our leaders, and enjoy peer bonding experiences that only being out in nature can provide. [In case you missed the blog,](#) here are the camp videos:

- 1) [Arrival](#) 2) [Forest Hiking](#) 3) [Song & Dance](#) 4) [Dance & Song](#) 5) [Thank you at Magayas](#)

The girls lived and worked together while studying and singing, sewing and dancing, hiking and offering service work to the local elderly. [Click here to support our girls in Mhondoro through MMC!](#)

The "right to play" is often recognized as benefitting refugee children, but for those living in constant economic hardship and political instability, its overlooked. [Check out this website!](#)

~ HEART WORKS ELDER CARE ~

Again in 2024, we were able to ship [and deliver six handmade comforters \(only 4 shown\) to Nhimbe ambuyas, each woman selected by the headman of their village.](#) We are grateful for the volunteers that make this heart inspiration possible!

Since 2020, when we began developing the Community Garden, we have provided the elderly with greens. We also began digging wells for the wid-



ows/widowers since families normally dig new wells.

Please [come along side of us with whatever you can offer!](#) Materials are all donated except batting, which, by buying in bulk, we have the price down to \$10/quilt. Comforter tying is also being donated. Shipping is only \$30 because they are light.. [Please see the 2023 blog here \(prices have changed\).](#)

Thank you again for your help!



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

 160 wells built	 200+ drip systems	 12 toilets built	 40 stoves built	 44 huts built
 Nhimbe For Progress Community Center and garden built in 2000	 Thousands of maturing girls supported through the MMC Program	 Thousands of school sponsorships from preschool to university	 2,600+ books in the Nhimbe For Progress Library built in 2001 and recently expanded	 Thousands of marimba and mbira lessons

...and so much more!

Check out ancient-ways.org to learn more.

Ancient Ways has been building community & connection through local programs and international outreach programs since 1994

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~ MORE COLLABORATION ~

In the midst of this difficult harvest year, Brother Chu of the [Tzu Chi Foundation](#) of Taiwan, gave our 300 Nhimbe families each 10 kg of rice as a way to help them get through the food shortage.

Muda, our co-director, made the arrangements for this incredible gift. [Check out this delivery video.](#)

This all came at a time when we were needing to meet with as many families as possible to encourage them in having hope around the drought solutions on which we continue to work. For example, we are negotiating with HHI for further drip workshops. Muda was hopeful the villagers would sit up and take notice with this gift of food. Additionally, our sister organization [Humwe](#), was setting up their stand

(plot) to be operational, so the community gathering served as an announcement for that as well.

Tzu Chi bought the property adjoining ours a few years ago to develop an agricultural training program for local residents. Through this partnership in the area, our Nhimbe residents will be connecting with these folks over the coming years. They are a Buddhist organization but do not require any religious affiliation to benefit from their desire to alleviate suffering in the local population. Amazing to me that of all the places in Zimbabwe, they would buy a stand bordering our Nhimbe for Progress Center.

We are so grateful for anything and everything Tzu Chi Foundation can do to help the villagers as we all have the same goals.

Carina Barros from Brazil went on the 2019 visit to Zimbabwe and this year [gifted us with a lovely documentary!](#)

~ OREGON BOTTLE DROP ~

Can BottleDrop be an easy way for you to HELP WITH OUR PROGRAMS? One bag of returnables buys three, (yes, THREE) girls monthly soap for 1 year! CHOOSE Ancient Ways as your charity...thank you! BOTTLEDROPCENTER.com



Our Online Shop helps you listen to the clips 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.

~ RECURRING DONATIONS ~

Please consider a recurring donation with a bank draft or credit card! We have a new link on the website. You can set it up without our assistance. [CHECK THIS OUT!](#) Set up monthly, quarterly, or annually for any amount! Thanks for considering!

~ HOW CAN YOU HELP? ~

Several ideas here: Become an Ancient Ways member! Share our story! Donate your time...any gesture of time you offer is greatly appreciated! We are always so grateful for administrative skills. Just reach out and let's talk! We thank you very much! *Tatenda Chaizvo!*

~ EMPLOYER MATCHING! ~

If your employer offers donation matching ([click for example](#)), your \$10 becomes \$20, your \$50 becomes \$100! Ask your employer if that is a program they support. Some employers also donate based upon your volunteer hours as well. **Thanks for checking it out!**

~ THE MARKET PLACE ~

Ancient Ways now has much of its inventory online! These items have been hand made by villagers who are excellent artists. They work to pay school fees and put food on their table, while bringing their art into the world. [Please check it out online!](#)