

Revealing Jesus through
EDUCATION, HUMANITARIAN SERVICE & CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

Food Relief Delivery

How your donations feed the hungry



Ellie Hamby, Zambia Mission Fund board member, rode along with Wilson Siazilo on a Dec. 1 food relief delivery.

Namwianga Mission's Food Relief Committee had received reports from the church in Nkadanzovu, 87 miles north of Namwianga Mission, that people were starving. The recently settled village is located on land that was part of a game management area inside Kafue National Park.

We left Namwianga at 8 a.m. and drove into nearby Kalomo to pick up the food, but there were complications that caused delays. First we couldn't locate the driver. Then there were problems getting the 200 bags of mealie meal (ground maize) loaded onto the truck in Kalomo. But eventually we were on our way.

Food Relief Coordinator Wilson Siazilo and I were in a small pickup behind the loaded food truck. We got

separated from the truck for a few minutes and didn't realize that it had already left Kalomo. We didn't know the way and had planned to follow the truck, but realized we were on our own. We did know which road to start out on, so we took off hoping we would catch up with the truck.

Because we were three hours late getting started, I asked Wilson if the people waiting for food would become discouraged and leave when we didn't arrive on time. "Oh, no," he said. "They will wait until we come, even if we are over 24 hours late. When you are as hungry as they are, they will wait for the food to come."

We had to stop at villages along the way, asking villagers if they had seen the white Namwianga truck go by. Each time, they told us it had, so we continued. We finally caught up with the delivery team and truck waiting for us just outside the Kafue National Park gate. Then we drove another 30 miles into the park to Nkadanzovu.



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Food Relief

BY THE NUMBERS

Jul. 1, 2019 – Jan. 1, 2020

704,275

pounds of food delivered

60,808

pounds of seed distributed

107,468

individuals fed for one week

25

community water wells drilled

3

community gardens funded

\$60,000

needed for Feb. food relief

February will be a crucial month for Namwianga Mission's Food Relief Program. Most families are surviving on wild plants. New food crops will not be ready for harvest till March or April. Supplies of mealie meal have become more difficult to find and more expensive. The Food Relief Program needs \$60,000 to purchase enough mealie meal to continue to feed the hungry.

Help hungry Zambians make it through this scary time. Please donate using the enclosed envelope or online at www.zambiamission.org/hunger.

Haven Aunties Provide Loving Care

The Haven's three homes care for orphaned and abandoned babies. Aunties are the staff members who provide the day-to-day care. Missionary Jana Miller works with Haven children and wrote this tribute to the aunties.

Let it be known, our aunties make the world go 'round at The Haven!

Their love for the children is evident in the little things. I see it in the way they braid the girls' hair as soon as it's long enough. The way they know each child's likes and dislikes, what soothes and what annoys them. The way they sing Jesus songs to them. It's evident in the way each child has an attachment to their auntie and prefers them over anyone else.

I see their love for me, too—teaching me how to tie chitenges (fabric skirts) and cook nshima and correcting my Chitonga words. They remind me of what it means to be faithful in difficult times. Their laughter and guidance and love are the biggest blessings, to me and also to every precious babe who is with us.

This work of caring for babies was going on long before me, and it will continue after me for as long as the Lord leads it. But it was never without Aunties—faithful women, daily choosing to pour their love into the tiniest among us, giving them the best start possible.

Your support of The Haven has enabled more than 500 children to receive the loving care of aunties. Thank you for your generosity!



Wheelchairs Change Lives

\$1400 needed to reach goal

Paul and his wife Mibangu know how a wheelchair can change lives. Mibangu suffered a stroke that left her unable to walk. For six years Paul carried her on his back to the market, to church, to the doctor—everywhere she went. When Mibangu received her free wheelchair from Namwianga Mission, she was elated. So was Paul. “You have given my husband his dignity back,” Mibangu said.



For the last 10 years Namwianga has distributed free wheelchairs to those who need them. Until recently the chairs were imported from China. Although the chairs were donated, it was costly to ship them from China to Zambia. Last year Martin Mwimbili, a Namwianga Christian Secondary School graduate, designed a sturdy wheelchair that can be made from parts that are locally available. The chairs are sturdier than the imported ones, made specifically for rural conditions, and can be customized for children. These wheelchairs are made in Zambia and cost just \$100 each.

In December Zambia Mission Fund launched an initiative to raise \$10,000 to purchase 100 wheelchairs. A matching grant and a generous online response on Giving Tuesday (Dec. 3) plus end-of-year gifts totaled \$8,600. We still need \$1,400 to purchase all 100 wheelchairs. If you'd like to help, please use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.zambiamission.org/wheelchairs.



Namwianga patient in new wheelchair

‘Sometimes I Cry’ – An Interview with Wilson Siazilo

Food Relief Coordinator faces difficult daily challenges

His cellphone rings constantly. The calls come as late as midnight. Sometimes 35 calls a day. Most are from hungry people asking for food.

Wilson Siazilo, Namwianga Mission’s Food Relief Coordinator, answers those calls. “Yes, I understand.” “We will come as soon as we can.” “I am sorry but we don’t have mealie meal in stock.” “We give to anyone — hunger knows no religion.”



In January, Wilson discussed his role in Namwianga’s Food Relief Program.

Kalomo Reporter: How is the food relief delivery working?

Wilson Siazilo: We are trying our best. We have two teams. The Procurement Team locates the food from wherever they can find it and gets it here. Then the Food Relief Team takes it out to distribution points. As soon as it arrives, we take it out. If it arrives in the morning, we take it out in the afternoon or the next day.

Sadly, some weeks there has been no food to distribute. The

Procurement Team tells me that the milling companies are challenged because of the power cuts and can’t run their mills. (Editor’s Note: The drought has reduced water flow at Zambezi Dam, a major source of Zambia’s electric power. Electricity is available only for 12 hours a day — sometimes less.)

KR: What challenges are you facing as you go out to deliver food?

WS: The roads are very, very bad. And the distances are far. But we just can’t stop. If we don’t do it, who will? There is too much need.

KR: How are crops doing this year?

WS: In some areas, crops are doing well. We have given out seed for cowpeas and sorghum. I am happy to see that sorghum is doing well even in areas with limited rainfall. The first planting of cowpeas will be ready for harvest soon. However, in other areas like the Gwembe Valley, there has been almost no rainfall. There will be hunger for another year at least.

KR: What are the personal stresses of your role?

WS: When there is a short supply of mealie meal and we can’t give out all that is needed, I take it personally. Traveling long distances is hard, and the days are long. And the phone calls are stressful in that sometimes I don’t have a positive answer to give. I pray constantly to be as polite as I can be.

KR: A few weeks ago you said, “Sometimes I cry.” What moves you to tears?

WS: When I see the old women who have walked long distances without food. At one distribution point they got word we were coming, and they got up early to walk to the place. We arrived there in the afternoon finding

most of them laying down, looking feeble and dehydrated. As weak as they were, they got on their knees clapping and singing with joy for hope of survival had come. They are living barely on God’s mercy. Indeed I cry.

KR: What responses do you get from people at the food distribution points?

WS: When we arrive at a distribution point, we often find the women lined up and singing songs and clapping. One of the songs says, “Praise God for the visitors and the gifts that they brought.” We see women and men who have traveled long distances—up to 10 miles—on foot with empty bellies.

When they receive the food, people are very appreciative. They show joy! I am reminded of the story of the 10 lepers and the one who said, “Thank you.” It is often the ones who are not Christians who are the most thankful.



KR: How can we pray for you?

WS: Pray that I will have good health so that I can continue. Pray for me to have wisdom and the ability to reach out to lost souls. Pray that I will have a humble heart so that I can say just the right words when I answer people. And pray for rain!

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Just as Wilson predicted, the people were waiting patiently. “You can see the hunger in their faces, and they need food,” Wilson commented.

All of our food relief efforts are done through the local church in the area, but we give food to everyone who needs it without regard to their religious beliefs. We follow *Zambian* government regulations and register everyone who is to receive food. It was impressive to see how orderly everyone was and how patiently they waited.

While the local church leaders were making sure all the recipients’ names were recorded, a devotional with the villagers was held. Wilson and the church leaders made speeches. They told the people that the food was brought to them from Namwianga Mission and would be given to everyone freely in the name of Jesus.

When the time came for distribution, each name was called and the person went forward to receive a 55-pound bag of mealie meal. It was amazing to see women put those heavy bags on their heads and walk away with big smiles, carrying their prized bag of food.

I asked some of the ladies how long it had been since they last had nshima, the cooked cornmeal dish that is the staple of the *Zambian* diet. They reported that it

had been from two to five days since they had eaten any. I asked what they were eating, and they said they were surviving on wild fruits and roots. They also reported that several of the villagers had become ill from eating poisonous plants. The people who are newly settled in the area are not familiar with the wild foods and will unknowingly eat poisonous food. Fortunately none had died, but some had been seriously ill. The ladies said it is only a matter of time till someone dies.

It was heartwarming to see the reaction of the people when they received the food. There was singing and dancing and clapping. They repeatedly said, “Thank you, and God bless those who provided this food. Now our children will have food to eat tonight.”

I want to say to our generous donors that the needy people of *Zambia* are very grateful. Your donations are going directly to help the people who are starving. It is done in the name of Jesus, and many of those involved in food relief say that people are becoming Christians

after receiving food. They want to be part of a church that helps so many people in the name of Jesus.

We left the village with a feeling that we had indeed made a difference in the lives of the people that day. After seeing the joy on the faces of the people who received food, the arduous journey over jolting roads didn’t seem so difficult.

Food relief efforts will continue until there is no longer a need. Find out more at www.zambiamission.org/hunger.



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