

SAM PROJECT NEWSLETTER



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The SAM Project has now completed our 12th year working with rural communities in the drylands of Southern Province, Zambia.

We spent a great deal of our effort this field season refining and evaluating our current and past programs. We have seen great strides in our partner communities in improving access to safe water, the creation of new enterprises, the establishment of goat herds and vegetable gardens, and the number of families who are able to provide more abundant and nutritious meals for their children. These gains have been made thanks to our volunteers, donors, advisors, our partners at Rotary International, and, most importantly, the motivated and energetic work of the rural families in Zambia.

We will be embarking on a new, multi-year integrated program, based on improved access to water in the Masanyza area in 2019. This initiative will be potentially life-changing for the thousands of people who are currently isolated from most government services, and for whom it is a struggle to secure the basic necessities of life. On behalf of all those good folks, and the members of our small team, we would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to everyone who helps make this important work possible.

Colin Eves
Director

WHAT WE DID IN 2018

THREE PRIMARY GOALS FOR THE YEAR

Our 2018 field season was carried out under the guidance of our amazing and dedicated SAM staff members: Rachel Lynch, Taylor Josephy, Hilary Fraser and Leah Blezard. Working closely with motivated community members and local government leaders, we focused on

- completing a thorough Hydrogeological Survey of the Masanzya area, to support a multi-year water project that will begin in 2019
- formalizing our "household economy" survey of the families and communities in the Muzya and Masanzya areas
- further development and consolidation of our legacy projects, primarily around the Siandwazi Dam and the villages of Lubemba Cooperative member-families



WHO WE ARE

The SAM Project is a Canadian-registered charity working in the in the dry lands of rural Zambia.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The SAM Project works alongside local Zambians in a community-driven approach towards a dignified and sustainable livelihood for rural families. Our collaborative programs are based on three fundamental needs: access to clean water, agricultural and economic diversification, and nutritional knowledge.

HOW WE OPERATE

SAM faces the complexity of poverty with a holistic approach. We concentrate our resources to develop multiple assets of one community, instead of diluting our impact over larger areas. This approach means our programs can build on one another. It also allows us to become more immersed within the community, understand how it operates, and to strengthen the bonds between the local stakeholders.

WATER



The grass-planted embankment and reservoir of the Siandwazi Dam. On the advice of the Ministry of Agriculture, the trees were left to provide habitat for the fish to be introduced in 2019.

THE SIANDWAZI DAM

The rainy season left behind this beautiful and bountiful reservoir (above photo), the product of last year's dam installation project. This initiative was made possible by our dedicated and hardworking SAM staff and the amazing commitment of the community members who volunteered their labour and resources. The project was funded entirely by donors to the SAM Project. In early 2018, the dam-building committee members planted grass on the embankment and spillway, and manually collected tons of rocks to line the gullies to prevent erosion. The reservoir now provides a water point for the entire surrounding area (1,200 people), their gardens, and livestock. A village oversight committee, made up equally of men and women, adopted a formal constitution to ensure the responsible management of this critically important resource. Garden plots have been democratically allocated to take advantage of the irrigation canal that was completed before the dam filled. SAM donors provided for a fence to be installed to protect the gardens from livestock. The gardens are already producing abundant quantities of vegetables for local consumption and sale, and a transformation of the physical, social, and economic fabric of the community has begun.

GERTRUDE - SIANDWAZI DAM BENEFICIARY AND GARDENER



"When we see this water, we can't say anything - it is amazing to have water.

It used to be very difficult to draw water: we would have to get up at 3am to walk 5 or 6km, it would take half of our day. We used to fight for water, now we are no longer fighting. When the rains would come is when we used to wash our clothes. In the dry season we couldn't wash and we would pack them away. We can now do laundry anytime. We are now planting our own vegetables so that we can have money for school fees."

MORE WATER IN 2018

This year, we teamed up with the Provincial Water Affairs Department to compile the drilling history and existing resistivity data to guide future drilling efforts in the Masanzya area on the North side of the Kalomo River. This area is very challenging for the creation of water points, and people currently spend up to 8 hours a day collecting meagre supplies of water from un-hygienic sources. Thanks to the survey work and dogged persistence of Taylor Josephy, SAM's Water Director, the drilling contractor was successful (on the 3rd and declared "final attempt") in establishing a well which will provide clean water close to the local school and surrounding communities!



ANOTHER SOMAP SHOP

In another initiative to improve the water infrastructure of the area, SAM and our partners at Rotary International funded the inventory of a second water-well spare parts depot in the Zimba District, which will give scores of local VWASHE committees access to critical spare parts, ensuring the functionality of existing water points.

(Left photo) Having a reliable source of spare parts and know-how, means that hundreds of hand-pumps can be kept working or restored to service

2018 MICRO-ENTERPRISE

DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

MOTIVATED LOCAL GROUPS

SAM volunteers were very busy developing and delivering workshops in agro-business management. We worked with five highly-motivated groups who have established their own chicken coops and vegetable gardens. Our Enterprise Development Director Rachel Lynch helped a further eight Women's Economic Empowerment groups on the path to economic sufficiency. These groups organize themselves and fundraise for inputs such as sewing machines so that they can establish the means of providing income alternatives for their families. We have trained a local facilitator, Chipo Ngoma, who is now delivering these workshops on her own, providing training in basic bookkeeping and management skills, Rachel was able to build on the women's enthusiasm and commitment to generate real increases in their household wealth, which leads to greater prosperity, independence and stature in the community.



DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING 2018 MICRO-LOAN SUCCESS STORIES

The Lubemba Cooperative Micro-lending program which was begun in 2017 is a continuing success. Two businesses were established in 2017, the loans repaid in full, making these funds available for the next clients who have had their business plans approved by the Lubemba Loan Review Committee.



KELVIN- RECIPIENT OF \$200 LOAN TO PURCHASE A "FREEZIE" MACHINE

"At the time of getting the loan I was in the village and separated from my family who were living in town. When I got the loan from Lubemba Co-operative (SAM Project) I purchased a Freeze-It machine and took a course on how to make freezies. My Freeze-it business has enabled me to cover the day-to-day expenses of my family. From this business I've been able to move into town and re-unite with my children and wife. Now I'm able to feed my children nicely and spend time guiding and mentoring them. The Freeze-It business is seasonal, so now I'm investing in a poultry business to diversify my income so I have continuous income to support my family. I have a daughter who is studying to become a secondary school teacher and with this business I am able to provide financial support for her during her studies.

My family and myself are very grateful to this project. Myself, I am a happy man because of this loan. The SAM Project has not only helped me to keep my family well but has also trained me on business skills such as writing a business plan and keeping records."



BEARDSLEY - \$70 LOAN TO START HIS OWN CARPENTRY BUSINESS

"The loan has helped me so much in the sense that in carpentry, practice makes perfect. For a long time I was unable to practice my trade due to lack of materials. With this loan I was able to buy materials and construct items for selling and contribute to the household income. Now I have enough money to build items when people order. I am very happy to be practicing my skill and my family is very happy to see me back on the bench. The carpentry business allows me to cover school fees, groceries, and emergencies. I am very grateful for this project as it has allowed me to expand my carpentry business. The community is now aware that there is a carpenter in the village and they can come to me with their orders."

IMPROVED, YEAR-ROUND AGRICULTURE



IRRIGATED VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

SAM continued our work with communities who have access to reliable dry-season water to establish supply chains for the production of vegetables. The communities around the Siandwazi dam have now started to transform the arid landscape below the dam into a productive "market garden". We presented workshops on growing high-value crops such as tomatoes and carrots, in conjunction with basic business management courses in budget-setting and bookkeeping. The end result is a significant increase in the local availability of vegetables, providing nutritional and financial benefits.



GOAT BREED IMPROVEMENT



Our goat breeding program is proving to be very popular with the villages in the Muzya area. Five groups demonstrated their commitment to the enterprise by building housing and assembling herds of local does, and were rewarded by the contribution of breeding bucks from our Boer goat herd. Workshops were presented in livestock management and the construction of proper housing. The raised floor design that we promote allows for the easy collection of goat manure, which is a valuable fertilizer.



NEW WOMEN'S SHELTER



In Zambia, a well-intentioned policy requires that first-time mothers-to-be attend a “local” health clinic for the birth of their child. Unfortunately, this means full- and near-term women must walk great distances from their homes and basically camp-out for as long as it takes for the baby to arrive, away from their families and the basic amenities of home. Our “World HQ” is nearby the clinic in Muzya, and Community Engagement Coordinator Hilary Fraser set out to relieve some of the discomfort and indignities borne by these new mothers. Working from Zambia, she started a fundraiser on social media, and through our network of family, friends, and good-hearted strangers, enough money (over \$7,000) was raised to build a cooking shelter (critical during the rainy season) and a clean and bright shower and (flush!) toilet building.



(left to right) Bathroom building, cooking in the new facility, the newly completed kitchen shelter

The second phase, the sleeping shelter will allow the pregnant and newly delivered mothers access to more comfortable facilities instead of the current situation of sleeping on the ground. The facility will eventually be used for sharing early childhood care and nutrition basics with the new mothers in a comfortable, positive environment.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2019

We have demonstrated that a holistic program of small-scale interventions, when devised and managed by the people meant to benefit, can effectively make material changes in the health and well-being of a community.

We spent a lot of time this year evaluating existing conditions in the Masanzya area, which is cut off from most services such as health care, schools, and markets, by the Kalomo River, which bisects the chiefdom where we work. For half of the year, the only way to this area is via a circuitous 100km track that connects to the Livingstone-Lusaka Road. The villages on that side of the river suffer from very limited and unhealthy water sources, and women and children must walk many kilometres to the nearest water point. Our focus in this area will be on improving access to clean water. We were very fortunate to site a good well this year, and the knowledge we gained with that effort, and the important relationships we have strengthened, will go a long way in supporting our future efforts to help these communities. Of course, access to water is a necessary and fundamental priority for community existence, let alone development. In 2019, our fundamental task will be overcoming the significant water challenges in this area.



OUR AMAZING FIELD STAFF



TAYLOR JOSEPHY alternates between living in Zambia and studying Geoscience and Environmental Restoration at The University of Victoria. Taylor's vision and commitment to the communities we work with is integral to our work in Zambia. Taylor guides the team that designs and implements SAM's water programs, which range from WASH education delivery to water infrastructure development. He tries to work with stakeholders at every level to design programs that strengthen Zambia's water governance system and produce lasting sources of water deemed adequate by the user. Taylor is looking forward to moving to Zambia full-time to continue this pursuit and expand the scope of SAM's water initiatives. Taylor is interested in the interactions between land-use, hydrology, and poverty in rural Africa, and he hopes to continue his studies on this topic in the future.



RACHEL LYNCH is currently writing her master's thesis while volunteering in Zambia. She studies Economics at the University of Victoria where her research focused on the impact of education on women's fertility. She is also interested in microfinancing and business development programs, and the impact these programs have on poverty reduction. She has led the delivery of business workshops and small-scale loans to women's groups in the community as a means of improving women's economic empowerment. Rachel also works closely with SAM's partner co-operative, Lubemba, on agricultural diversification and income-generating projects. Rachel plans to continue to work with Zambian farmers on developing market knowledge and analysis that contribute to establishing sustainable linkages between rural farmers and urban consumers.



HILARY FRASER is a graduate of the University of Victoria, having obtained a BSc in Biology. Post-graduation, she has split her time between travelling and working in remote settings. Hilary has spent two seasons volunteering with SAM, implementing the water programs and overseeing the women's shelter project. She is interested in the practical application of academic theory and its capacity to affect social change. She enjoys the challenges presented in blending academic insight with on-the-ground experiences, and looks forward to continuing to explore this in the future.



LEAH BLEZARD has been with The SAM Project since 2015, directing the Nutrition Program and working closely with local women to understand and address the social determinants that drive early childhood health. Leah obtained her Bachelor of Arts at McGill University, where she graduated with an Honors degree in International Development. She is currently based in Kigali, Rwanda, where she is working towards a Masters of Science in Global Health Delivery at the University of Global Health Equity, a Partners In Health initiative. Leah is passionate about global health equity, gender equality, and the intersection of health care and social justice.

ADVISORY BOARD



DR CHARLES ERICKSON received his MD degree from the University of Nebraska College Of Medicine and completed his residency at The University of Colorado School of Medicine and Denver Children's Hospital. He received a Yale Scholarship in International Health in 2003 and served at the Livingstone General Hospital at Livingstone Zambia for 6 weeks. Dr. Erickson has since returned to Zambia on nine separate occasions to teach Community Health Workers and develop collaborative relationships with non-government organizations in Zambia. He is a Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine..



DOROTHY ZIMMERMAN is a retired RN and Healthcare Administrator. Her nursing career included experiences as a surgery staff nurse, continuing education coordinator, and Director of Nursing. The majority of her career was at Beatrice Community Hospital & Health Center in Beatrice Nebraska in various administrative leadership roles.- Patient Services, Public relations, and retiring as Corporate Compliance Officer.. In 2008 Dorothy traveled to Zambia for the first time, focusing on providing clean drinking water, evaluating malnutrition in children, teaching Moms about proper nutrition for children under the age of two. Dorothy has made 8 trips to Zambia.



DAN BLANKENAU is a professional geologist and President of Great Plains Energy, Inc. an oil exploration company. He also co-founded CGP Inc., an environmental consulting firm specializing in groundwater evaluation. Dan is a past president of the Nebraska Geologic Society and is on the Department of Geosciences Alumni Advisory Board at the University of Nebraska. For the past six years Dan has served as a consultant to the SAM Project's Zambian water supply initiatives. Drilling new wells, investigating potential catchment dams, and refurbishing old wells have all been part of this process. Dan plans to continue to support these efforts.



DR. JIM GREISEN moved to Nebraska in December of 1977 to accept the position of Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He served as Interim Chancellor of UNMC during the 1982-83 academic year. In October of 1984 he transitioned to the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, first in Academic Affairs and then serving as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs for 20 years. After his administrative retirement in 2006 he taught full-time in the UNL Department of Educational Administration for eight additional years, and is now Professor and Vice Chancellor Emeritus.

MR. TEDDY NCUBE



Mr. Teddy is our Country Director, mentor and good friend and has been an integral part of The SAM Project since its inception in 2007. He has headed the vast majority of our projects throughout the years and advised the others. He has become a Zambian father figure for visiting volunteers and indeed he refers to them as “my white children”. Currently, Mr. Teddy is battling a very serious health challenge, and we have been helping him navigate the hospitals and treatment protocols of the Zambian health system . Despite his illness, Teddy has maintained his wise outlook and unmatched sense of humor as he guides and supports colleagues, clients and friends. We are happy to report that Teddy has responded very well to treatment, and all of us here at The SAM Project wish him continued improvement in 2019.



THANK YOU!

to everyone who donated their hard- earned dollars, and to our amazing and dedicated volunteers in the field. Also to those who work behind the scenes - Duncan Patterson, SAM's accountant; our Advisory Board who meet regularly to provide sage advice and direction; the team at GSI Outdoors who equipped our field camps; and to many other folks who keep the wheels turning without public recognition or compensation. We are grateful beyond words to each one of you and hope this newsletter conveys some of our pride at each small success that SAM has achieved, and the tremendous gratitude we feel for you being a part of this project.

We honestly could not do it without you!