



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Dear Supporter,

May I welcome you to this, our first Newsletter. In this edition we have tried to inform you of our journey so far, including the wonderful feedback we have received from the children we seek to help. We shall also inform you of what you can look forward to reading in future editions. Finally, a huge thank you to all those who have made our journey possible by the donations they have sent us, as without this flow of money we would not be where we are today - please keep it going!!

The Literacy Box Trust has a very simple aim - to give hope to children through the enabling of education. We have several programmes in operation, but our main work is focussed on the **"School Aid 4 Zambia"** programme and the dozen or so schools with which we work.

This Newsletter will take you through our journey from 2005, when we saw first hand, the educational needs of children in sub-Saharan Africa; through to the present, as we strive to give the Zambian children continuity of school supplies so vital to facilitate their learning. To put our task into perspective - it will take 250,000 Literacy Boxes to give each Zambian child exercise books and pencils ONCE!!!

Alongside our core programme, we have also sent Literacy Boxes to the children of Zimbabwe and the Philippines, using donations given for the express purpose of helping the children of those countries. Future newsletters will cover those programmes, along with our other up to date news.

I hope you enjoy this edition. If you have any feedback on it, or feel you wish to contribute on how you have raised funds to help send Literacy Boxes, do please let us know. Our contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

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WHAT WE DO

Our literacy boxes provide the basic essentials to enable children in severely disadvantaged situations to make the most of the limited educational opportunities they have. The idea started when two members of Roborough Rotary Club saw first hand the appalling lack of educational resources in Sub Saharan Africa. Back in Plymouth, they linked up with a local charity, Operation Sunshine, and started the first Literacy in a Box Trust programme,



ZAMBIA

Despite the fact that Universal literacy is a government priority, and primary education was made free and compulsory in 2002, a limited education budget results in chronic under-resourcing of schools. As a consequence, despite the best of government intentions, literacy rates amongst 15-24 year old have actually been falling and of the 97% of Zambians who receive primary education, only 38% go on to high school and a mere 2% to college or university. You can see the crowded and dilapidated conditions the



children have to work in but imagine what it would like for them without the basic essentials of pens, paper and backpacks provided in our literacy boxes. Our literacy boxes address a real need.

WHAT GOES IN A BOX?



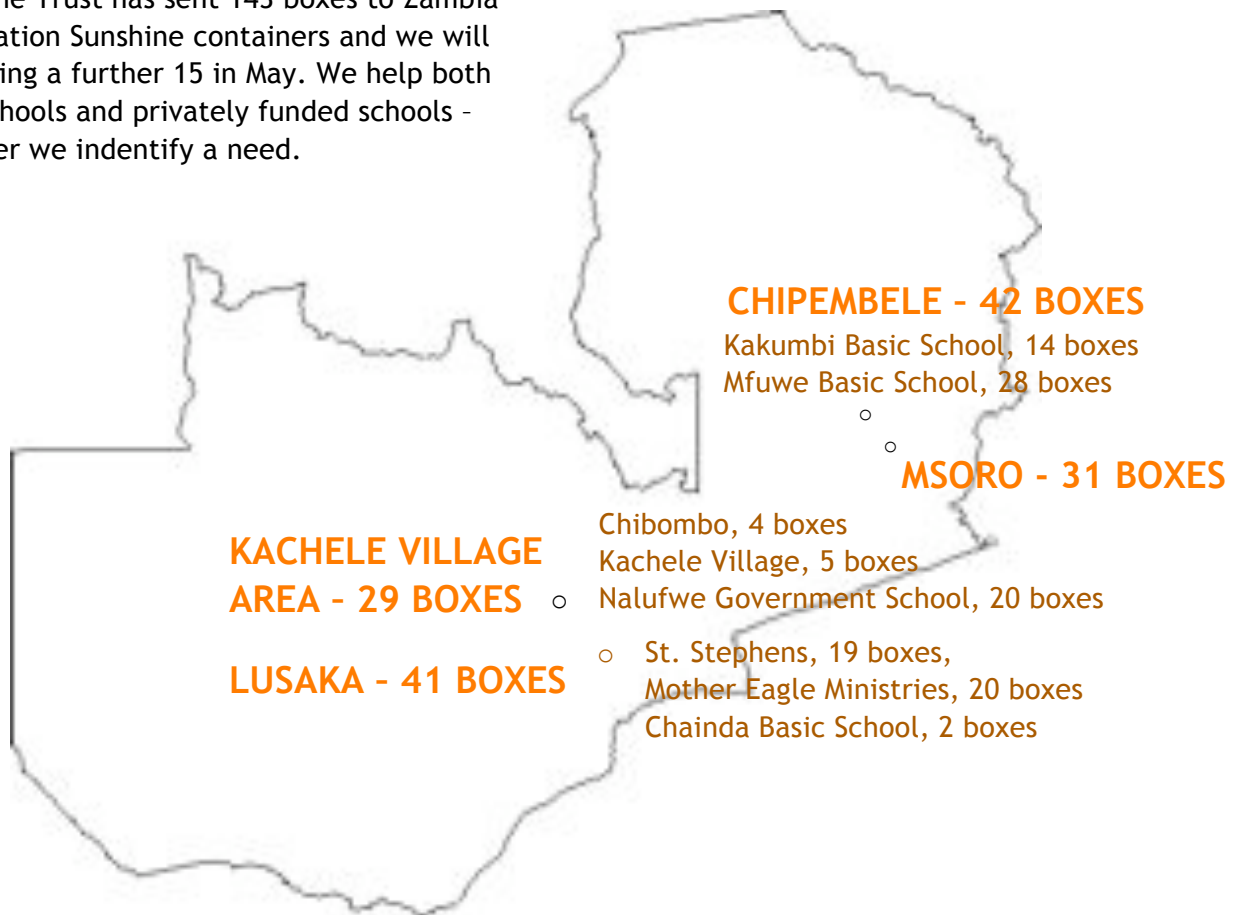
Typical contents are :-

- 1 pack of 25 Exercise Books (Green)
- 1 pack of 25 Exercise Books (Blue)
- 1 pack of 25 Exercise Books (Red)
- 1 pack of 25 Exercise Books (Yellow)
- 1 box of 50 Blue Pens
- 5 packs of 12 Pencil plus Eraser
- 25 packs of 12 assorted Coloured Pencils
- 25 Rulers
- 25 Bacpacs
- 2 boxes of 100 White Chalk
- 1 box of 100 Coloured Chalk
- 2 mini blackboards and chalk
- 2 footballs
- 2 skipping ropes
- 1 pump
- 2 needles for pump

but changes are made from time to time depending on suppliers, feedback, and special requests.

WHERE HAVE WE SENT BOXES?

So far the Trust has sent 143 boxes to Zambia in Operation Sunshine containers and we will be sending a further 15 in May. We help both state schools and privately funded schools - wherever we indentify a need.



In addition we sent 26 boxes to the Philippines last year and 10 boxes to Zimbabwe in April this year. We will be sending a further 40 boxes to the Philippines in May this year. More about these projects in our next issue.

Last year we also provided Florence Mwayona at Msoro with £1,000 worth of text books.



FEEDBACK FROM ZAMBIA

The best testimony we can offer for our work is the feedback from the recipients of the boxes. The 16 boxes sent out in October 2009, which included our 100th box, reached Lusaka in February 2010 and were then dispatched to St Stephens, Msoro, Mother Eagle and Chipembele. Below is a photo of Grace Lutanda from Mother Eagle Ministries with some of the children and one of our boxes and an e-mail from Florence at Msoro



Sent: Monday, February 15, 2010 11:41 AM

Dear Ian

I am writing to inform you that last year we had the first group of grade 7 pupils write examinations, and 18 of them wrote the exams and 14 made it to grade 8. We are very happy and very grateful to your organization who have been our constant supporters with supply of school items. Please pass our great gratitude to your members who have made it possible for our children to continue school, for those who would otherwise have stopped schooling, and for those who would never have had even the basic education because of their vulnerability. God bless all.

Your faithfully

Florence L Mwayopa, Msoro

In February 2010 we sent a further 14 boxes to Zambia, 2 of which were sent by Grace to a disabled school, Chileshe Chepala. Below is an e-mail from Grace and a photo of the Chilesa Chipela children with two of our boxes.

From: [Grace Lutanda](#)

To: ian@literacyboxtrust.org.uk

Sent: Monday, August 09, 2010 4:03 PM

Subject: LITERACY IN A BOX

Dearest Ian

Chileshe Chepela - a special school for the disabled were given two (2) boxes of literacy in box. It is about 900 kilometers from Lusaka in the Northern part of Zambia. There was a lot of excitement from the children because for most of them owning a school bag is a luxury. We are so very grateful for everything. The head teacher of the school was very grateful. This is a very big encouragement to the children as they feel so worth it and appreciated despite their disabilities. May God richly bless you ALL.



Prior to sending out the October 2009 shipment we received this feedback from Chipembele

- How many boxes do you ideally need for your schools complex?

I support 6 schools in the area each with anywhere between 500 and 1100 pupils. Ideally I would need 7 - 14 boxes a year for each school (depending on pupil enrolment) but I know this is not possible..One box is sufficient for one class at Kakumbi Middle Basic (average class size about 45) and half a class at Mfuwe Middle Basic (which has class sizes of 90 to 110 pupils!). Each primary (or 'middle basic') school has 7 grades. If we stuck with the two schools you have already supported to supply every child we would need 7 boxes for Kakumbi Middle Basic and 14 boxes for Mfuwe Middle Basic. So a total of 21 per year.

- How long do the Boxes last?

The back packs last a couple of years. The stationery lasts one year or less. The exercise books are not enough for one pupil for one year as they need a book for each subject and study 8 subjects. Some books will last a year but other subjects are more detailed and they will need another book before the year is out. I would say each child needs a minimum of 8 books so that's 400 books in total for Kakumbi where the class size is about 50.

- Are the contents what you need?

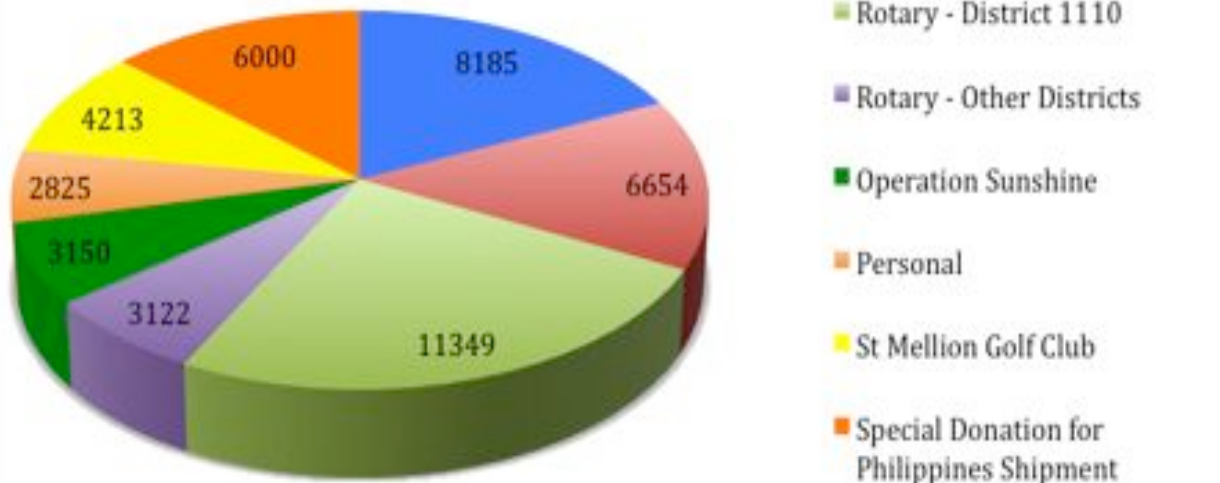
Yes, absolutely, the contents are well selected.

The feedback was from Anna Tolan who, together with her husband Steve, runs the Chipembele nature reserve, one of the aims of which is to teach local children the value of their wildlife. The photo shows Mfuwe basic school children with some of our boxes. Sadly we were only able to send 5 boxes to Anna, far short of the 21 per year she requested for the two schools we already supply or the 42-84 boxes she would need for all six schools. The need is huge and we are only scratching the surface.



OUR DONORS

Since 2006 we have received over £45,000 in donations with £16,000 so far in year commencing July 2010.



We are particularly grateful for the support we have received from St Mellion Golf Club and from Dennis Meadus who is the Literary Co-ordinator for Rotary District 1110.

THE LAST WORDS

Our website www.literacyboxtrust.org.uk contains lots of background information about the Trust and has a webpage specifically devoted to how Rotarians can help us. However, although Literacy in a Box grew out of the ideas of two Rotarians, and has received the bulk of its funding from Rotary Clubs, the size of our task is such that we need to address ourselves to a wider constituency. If you would like to help us to bring some joy and hope to underprivileged African children then please contact us via the "Contacts and Links" page on the website.



The next edition of this Newsletter will be issued in Autumn and will feature news about our shipments to Zimbabwe and the Philippines together with more information about some of the schools we support in Zambia.