



Letter from the Executive Director

Elizabeth Bara

It has been over a year now since returning to the US after living for 11 years in Africa. The transition has been a turbulent one. Coincidentally, Operation Murabatsvina (or “clean up trash”), was launched immediately after our departure from Zimbabwe. Upon arrival in the US we were shocked and saddened that three of our staff were now suddenly made homeless and we needed to assist in their time of desperate need.

Today inflation continues to run rampant and has varied from 600–1,000%. It hit a record 1205% in August. Fuel continues to be virtually unavailable and intermittent shortages of basic commodities are expected as part of daily life. It is in this environment that ASAP Africa remains committed to affecting positive change in one of the most challenging environments to operate effectively in the world today.

With the War on Terror, Hurricane Katrina, and other International natural catastrophes in the forefront throughout the past year, it was very uncertain if the plight of rural Africans would be of concern to Americans or if donors would show interest in our program.

The response has been more positive than we could have imagined. I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank anyone reading this, as it is your interest and support that motivate and inspires all of us at ASAP Africa. We remain committed to working together with the people of Zimbabwe, bringing hope for a better future in a place where it continues to be needed most.

Mushandiripamwe

(‘We do it together’ in the Shona language)

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What’s New at ASAP Africa

ASAP Africa entered into some exciting new partnerships in the previous quarter.

Partners for Literacy Project

This partnership between 4 Rotary Clubs and ASAP Africa will greatly benefit rural education in Zimbabwe. (page 2)

Rural Nutrition Initiative in Zimbabwe

Global Giving is a unique organization. Read more about the project on page 2

Joint Initiative Consortium

Working together to reduce urban vulnerability with Mercy Corps, Africare, Practical Action, SAVE UK and CARE (page 2)

Kufusa Mari Two Project

Read about this Village Savings & Lending project funded by the McKnight Foundation on page 3.

Worldchangingbusiness.

ASAP Africa is proud to be included in the

http://www.worldchangingbusiness.com/1_million_initiative.html

New Partnerships for ASAP Africa

Partners for Literacy Project

On International Literacy Day, September 8, ASAP Africa launched a literacy book drive. Children's and educational books for schools in Zimbabwe are being collected through September 30th. The Rotary Club of Peachtree City is applying for a Matching Grant to provide the ocean freight transport for donated books and educational materials for schools in Zimbabwe that ASAP Africa works with. The other Rotary Clubs involved in the project are Borrowdale Brooke in Harare Zimbabwe, Fayette Daybreak and Fayetteville Clubs in Fayette County GA.



Rural Nutrition Initiative in Zimbabwe

The Rural Family Nutrition Initiative in Zimbabwe is a new ASAP Africa project posted on the Global Giving website. www.globalgiving.com/1434a. So far ASAP Africa has received over \$1,500 toward this project, which will improve the health, nutrition and well-being of over 300 extended families.



Joint Initiative Consortium

ASAP Africa entered into a new project partnership with CARE Zimbabwe during August 2006. ASAP Africa will address the need to strengthen livelihoods in the high density area of Sakubva – just outside of Mutare, Zimbabwe – where ASAP's

The word "Sakubva" means "to go away from" in the Shona language. During colonial times, African and Asians would work during the day in Mutare but had to be out of the city, back to Sakubva high density suburb, by night fall "to go away from" where the whites lived.

A Story from Zimbabwe

A Regional Administrator

From ASAP Bookkeeper Beauty Kadzu

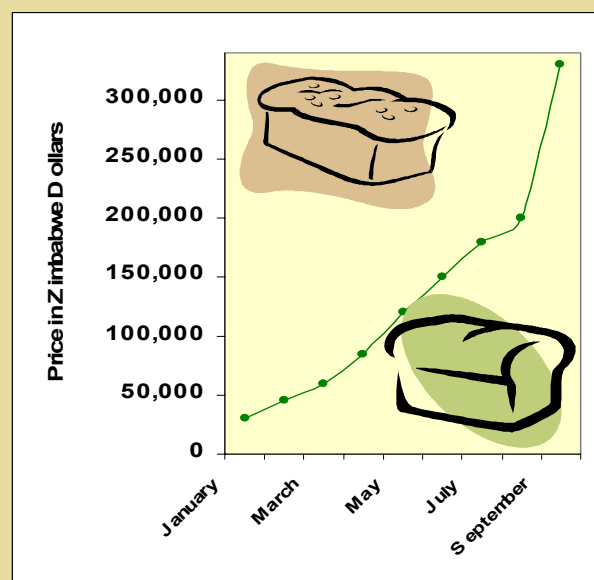
A regional administrator was keen to impress his office staff the key role they played in the organization. At a staff meeting, he explained that although the fieldworkers did a wonderful job among the poor and under-developed communities, good accountability of funds and competent administration were really the nuts and bolts of the work.

On his birthday some few months later he found a card on his desk. It reads "To our spanner (wrench)." "God bless you on your birthday.

From your Nuts and Bolts.

Our Daily Bread

Here's how the price of bread has changed over the last 9 months in Zimbabwe's inflationary economy.



Take Charge of your life with Kufusa Mari

By: Lovemore Manjoro
ASAP Africa KM Field Officer

Each of us has the capacity to transform his or her life by choosing not to think or behave like a victim. I have come to conclude that our attitude to life determines the path our lives will take.

“When ASAP Kufusa Mari finally arrived in Nyanga West, it was like a long awaited day had finally come”, said Martin Matimanga from Village 7A Nyarumvurwe. He is amongst the first clients to join the Kufusa Mari project at Ruware cluster in June 2004 and has defied all odds in his endeavors to running a project of his dreams. The group comprises seven members, 3 couples and a widow. Others, too, are doing well in their respective projects.

Matimanga, who borrowed zwd \$500,000 in September 2004, managed to trade and made a reasonable profit. By the end of the month he managed to order chicks (broilers) and repaired his water tank, which supplied water to his garden. He also extended his garden and could feed his garden from manure from the chicken run. In no time he was supplying his chicks to local hotels around Nyanga town.

With profit coming he managed to buy a boar and a sow. He also added some pipes to his garden project and increased the area of crops under irrigation. Luck was on his side as the sow gave birth to eight piglets. The chicks and pigs need some stock feeds and they are very expensive.

To my surprise the projects require less working costs today than when started. Profits after selling some of his produce are used to buy chicken feeds. Chicken droppings are used to feed the pigs, the dung from the pigs is used in the garden and the vegetables and grain from the

Rumbidzai Chikodzo cradles her infant son, Elton Anesu, at a Kufusa Mari graduation celebration. She is a successful project participant whose husband praises her ability to provide for household needs like food and clothing.

Kufusa Mari Two Project



Kufusa Mari 2 Project Launch
Alpha Chapendama of SIDA
Mr. Goran Engstrand, Swedish
Ambassador to Zimbabwe

On August 25th ASAP Africa was proud to welcome the acting Swedish Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Mr. Goran Engstrand and the CARE Zimbabwe Country Director Mr. Steve Gwynne-Vaughan, to the launch of ASAP's new village savings and lending project (VS&L) held at Nyamahumba Primary School.

Funded by The McKnight Foundation, the “Kufusa Mari Two” rural microfinance project will work to strengthen and expand ASAP's existing savings-led microfinance program for rural women in Nyanga District in eastern Zimbabwe. The project will improve the income and self reliance of over 6,000 women over the next two years.

The McKnight Foundation also funded ASAP Africa's first VS&L project in the same area from 2001-2003. The first activity of the newly funded project has been to conduct a sustainability survey, to assess exactly how many savings clubs that were active in 2003 continue to operate today. Preliminary findings are that 78% of the groups are still functioning after over two years. Considering the current hardships that people have been enduring in Zimbabwe since 2003 – this is a phenomenal result! The final sustainability report is posted on the ASAP Africa web site.

The Bridge the Gap Project A commitment to Education

There is little good news coming out of Zimbabwe today. International organizations focus on addressing HIV/AIDS orphans and issues, child survival and human rights. These issues are in the spotlight around the world. But what about the education of a rural child? What about a child that isn't a statistic? That child deserves a chance to develop, learn and grow - to have the ability to take a leadership role in the future. Though not sensational – ASAP Africa is committed to having a positive impact on education even though today it does not make headline news or attract funding easily.

The Bridge the Gap (BTG) project has been ongoing since 2001, working to improve rural education in 112 schools with a focus on Math. Following is an overview from Collins Mutsvauro, BTG Project Manager, explaining how the project has helped Chimusasa Primary School, one of the 112 schools currently involved in the project.

Chimusasa is in the remote part of Nyanga district called Katerere. It is a few kilometers away from the Zimbabwean border with Mozambique. The seven staff members work hard each day to educate the 372 students at the school.

The Chimusasa School is extremely poor, as nearly all the parents are not employed. Nearly all parents are peasant farmers. Some parents are illegal gold panners in the Gairezi River that forms the Zimbabwean border with Mozambique. Food is scarce in the area because of low rainfall caused by the low altitude. As a result most money realized by the parents is channeled towards food. The school is ill equipped as few parents can afford to spare money for school fees. Textbooks are considered a luxury by the parents.

The remoteness of the school causes qualified teachers to shun the school. The school usually has an average of two qualified teachers at any given time. The rest will be unqualified teachers. Such teachers have contracts of 1 term only; hence the pupils are affected by a high turnover of teachers.

The Head of the school Mr. Nyamaropa has managed to run the school brilliantly, ensuring that students do well in Mathematics, his favorite subject. As a result he ensures that all teachers at the school participate in ASAP's Bridge the Gap Project. The school staff participates in the cluster Mathematics workshops and ensures that pupils take part in BTG Maths competitions. The typed mathematics tests produced each term by the BTG project provide the only opportunity that pupils are exposed to typed examinations. The school takes these seriously. Mr. Nyamaropa says the BTG project has taken Mathematics to greater heights at the school.

In 2005 Grade 7 final examinations the school had a Mathematics pass rate of 64.5% (compare this with district pass rate of 40.5 %) and was the top school in the ranking of Math pass rates in Katerere area of Nyanga District.

The school has potential to perform even much better if provided with relevant resources such as textbooks especially with the guidance of Mr.



BTG School floating trophy makes the entire school

Nyamaropa. Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture officials have acknowledged that Chimusasa Primary School has become a model school in the teaching and learning of Mathematics in Nyanga District.

COMPILED BY C. MUTSVAIRO

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in Southern Africa

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