

Shingirirai, United Family and Kupfumaishungu Working Groups, Zimbabwe Partnered with the Zimbabwe Connection, 2014-2016



Kupfumaishungu Working Group

Head of Household: Diana, 15 **Family:** Prisca, 19 (nephew); Reby, 78 (Grandmother)

Challenges: Diana lost her mother three years ago and her father when she was too young to remember him. Fortunately, her elderly grandmother was able to provide a home; however when ZOE first met Diana, her home had fallen in disrepair, she could not afford the supplies needed for school, and she felt isolated and alone. The stress that Diana felt from her life circumstances caused her grades to fall and she struggled to find the income to meet her daily needs. All of this began to change when ZOE invited Diana to join the empowerment program.

Focus On: Food Security

Children entering the ZOE empowerment program struggle every day to alleviate their hunger. Usually they try to find work, but because they lack status or an adult advocate, they are paid extremely low wages or small amounts of food. If the children beg, they are a nuisance to the community; if they take from the fields, they are thieves. They might try growing their own food, but they often lack the resources or knowledge to succeed. In the urban areas, many of the children do not have access to land. It is not unusual for these children to go two or three days without eating, and what they do eat is often of poor nutritional value and can lead to health problems.

With guidance from ZOE social workers, new working groups immediately explore their options for attaining a stable food source. Because ZOE is an empowerment program, the children are not told what to do, but rather are given options and training so that they can devise their own approach to becoming food secure and self-

sufficient. In the urban set of Zimbabwe, money for a group project and small grants to the heads of household are distributed quickly so that the children can earn money to purchase food. Of course the children also receive training in nutrition and how to use their money wisely. Often, they will combine their earnings to purchase groceries in bulk at a discount

Family specific achievements because of your partnership:

Diana has taken advantage of every opportunity ZOE has provided. Earlier this year, Diana and the other group members began to contribute \$2 a week to the group and with that money they buy groceries which they share among group members based on the amount each member has contributed. Group members are able to return home with a variety of groceries in order to provide their family's with a well-balanced diet. In March, Diana also received herbal remedies training so that she could start her own herbal garden for her family.

It is very important that Diana develop multiple ways to earn money and keep her family food secure. ZOE trains the group on business development and money management and then encourages the members to discuss potential income generating ideas among themselves. Diana expressed interest in starting a small kiosk with grocery items, sweets and fruits. This corner shop provides a consistent source of income that her grandmother can manage while Diana is in school. The stability of this income has decreased stress for Diana so that her school reports have vastly improved and she is able to buy all the school supplies she needs to set her up for academic success.

Diana was active in church before ZOE, but since receiving encouragement from ZOE staff, she has found herself praying more frequently in the morning and at night. Once isolated and alone, Diana now has a wealth of support in the friendships she has made among the group members, ZOE program staff, and the other children in Sakubva who are in ZOE's empowerment program. In a short time, Diana has already gone from an outcast in her community, unable to provide for her basic needs, to a driven, empowered and capable young woman.

Diana's Life Dream

Early in the first year, each working group member completes the Dream process to help them examine their current situation and set goals for transforming their lives. After discussing with her family, these are Diana's "Dream" responses:

- 1) What makes you feel sad? *The death of my mother*
- 2) What makes you happy? *Going to school and church*
- 3) What happens in the community that you do not like? *Being abused; being looked down upon*
- 4) What is your dream for the future? *Getting a professional job; ultimately running my own company*
- 5) What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *Working hard in school; listening to good advice*

United Family Working Group

Head of Household: Pardon, 12

Family: Faith, 6; Shallom, 4; Karota, 90
(Grandmother)

Challenges: When ZOE staff met with Pardon, they learned that his mother had died and he did not know what had happened to his father. Pardon and his younger siblings had to leave their home to live with his very old grandmother in a building that was falling apart. He suffered from chronic headaches and was forced to drop out of school because he could not pay tuition. Struggling to survive, Pardon had his first glimpse of hope of a way out of extreme poverty when he was invited to join ZOE and the United Family Working Group.



Family specific achievements because of your partnership:

This year, has been a busy year for Pardon. He received training from ZOE in the areas of child rights, HIV/AIDs prevention, good health and hygiene practices, and especially small business management. After his business training, Pardon decided that he wanted to start a small market business. He buys and sells vegetables, sweets, biscuits, and other small food items. Once his business started, ZOE provided additional training on customer care, how to keep his market place looking clean and organized, and how to position products in order to attract more customers.

The success of Pardon's business is changing things for Pardon and his family. He commented to ZOE staff that in the past they could not have tea (breakfast) in the mornings because they could not afford to buy sugar and bread. Instead, they cooked porridge of corn (called mealie-meal) with nothing in it. Being able to afford items like sugar or peanut butter to add to the porridge, not only makes the food more enjoyable to eat, it also makes the children feel that they are achieving a high standard of living and they are proud of this. Pardon has also saved money towards enrolling back in school and already has enough for his school supplies.

With the help of your prayers and support, Pardon is well on his way to becoming a great business leader. Until today, he had never experienced support and friendship like what he has in his United Family Working Group. Pardon's burdens may still be great, but he is building a foundation through his friends, community, and faith in God to be successful not only in business, but in life.

Pardon's Life Dream

- 1) What makes you feel sad? *When I heard my father left us.*
- 2) What makes you happy? *Going to church; having laughs with my friends.*
- 3) What happens in the community that you do not like? *Smoking; drinking beer; fighting.*
- 4) What is your dream for the future? *To have a house, a business, a wedding and start my own family. To have a good life.*
- 5) What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *To pray to God and to work hard.*

ZOE Zimbabwe Trip Field Notes, September 6-14, 2014

From the notes of Gaston Warner

United Family Working Group, First year group partnered with Zimbabwe Connection, Ohio



Many groups decide to pool their money so they can buy their groceries in bulk at a discounted cost. This grocery exchange meeting of the United Family Working Group took place at the home of the mentor; since the children do not have homes suitable for a large group, this is where they meet every week.

Secretary of the group Talent Madewo 18 yrs :

“We meet every Sunday for the group and each week we each contribute \$2 and we buy what we need, sugar, cooking oil etc. At the end of every month they

contribute \$20 each for every child and they bank that in their group bank account. For these groceries (that are here today) we have saved since the end of July, and they bought these groceries. From July up to now we have managed to buy all these groceries.”

As the mentor read off names, the group members came up and collected their groceries. If they had not contributed the required \$2 each month then their allotment was less. One young boy who had not contributed the full amount asked if the other members would want to give him extra groceries since the Bible teaches we should share. He said this with as a joke with a smile, knowing it was his responsibility to contribute the money, and all the group members laughed. However, repeatedly we do hear accounts of children who have faced a hardship and their group has contributed from their personal amounts to help the family in need.



Chairperson: Tatenda Razunguzwa, 18 yrs (black jacket). “We distribute groceries on a pro-rata basis, what you contribute is what you get; but you do not get what you did not contribute to. “

Mentor: Praise Majoka, 29 yrs, pictured here as she reads off the family names to come and collect their stuff



Since the formation of their working groups, the members of the Kupfumaishungu, Shingirirai, and United Family Working Groups have attended several initial trainings covering the basic aspects of the empowerment program. Because these three working groups are based in urban areas of Mutare, emphasis is placed on quickly beginning small businesses or income generating activities. The groups by now would have received training in how to develop these businesses and manage the money they receive as grants and earn from their work.

The following report reviews the Dream process that all ZOE working groups complete and then briefly relates the challenges and Dreams of selected families from your working groups.

Focus on: The Dream



Most orphans and vulnerable children entering the ZOE empowerment program face a daily struggle to survive. With their energy consumed by the need to find food for themselves and their siblings, there is neither time to think about the future nor reason to hope for something better. But through ZOE and your partnership, the children learn to imagine a new life and prepare to make it a reality.

During one of the early working group meetings, the ZOE social worker leads members through an exercise called the Dream process where they explore their current situation and then consider what they want and how to get it. After discussing hopes and goals with their siblings, the family leader creates a poster of responses to a standard set of questions from the social worker. To the left is an example of the Dream document.

The head of each family presents their Dream to the rest of the working group members who express support and give feedback. These Dream documents help the social worker better understand the conditions of the children's lives so they can address specific needs or traumas suffered. The family keeps a copy of their Dream, often displaying it in their home to provide daily motivation as they strive to create their new life.

Kupfumaishungu "getting requires determination" Working Group

Head of Household: Ngoni, 16 **Siblings/Dependents:** none

Challenges: Perhaps the greatest challenge for Ngoni is isolation and having no one to show him how to create a better life. He has managed to survive the many years since his father left and his mother died by cultivating some land, working odd jobs and getting help from the local church. He has relatives, but they do not visit or offer help, and he does not know why. He is able to feed himself and has a home that he rents out so that he has money to stay in school. However, Ngoni lacks the skills, guidance and knowledge necessary for true self-sufficiency. As member of the Kupfumaishungu Working Group, Ngoni now has a community and a chance to build his future.



Ngoni's Dream

1. What makes you feel sad? *Having to live alone because both parents passed on.*
2. What makes you happy? *Playing soccer.*
3. What happens in the community that you do not like? *Being insulted and having parents called names.*
4. What is your dream for the future? *Being a famous soccer star.*
5. What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *Remaining faithful to the Lord.*

Shingirirai "Soldiering on" Working Group

Head of Household: Reginice, 20 (The infant in Reginice's arms was not identified)

Dependents: Bashira, 19; Anderson, 12 (both are cousins)

Challenges: Both Reginice's mother and father died when she was a young child. Fortunately, she had a grandmother who was willing to take her in, but the living conditions are poor and the house is falling apart. Reginice has relied on a combination of low paying jobs, growing some food, community assistance and begging in order to keep the family fed. The support of your partnership will enable Reginice to develop better, more secure ways to provide for her family.

Reginice's Dream for herself and her family

1. What makes you feel sad? *Growing up without parents.*
2. What makes you happy? *Listening to music.*
3. What happens in the community that you do not like?
Violence, being looked down upon, drugs
4. What is your dream for the future? *To get a good job and take care of my grandmother; to start a buying and selling business.*
5. What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *Working hard.*



United Family Working Group



Head of Household: Pardington, 16

Brothers: Pias, 13; Perfect, 9

Challenges: At a very young age Pardington and his brothers experienced the sharp pain of rejection – twice. First, their father abandoned the young family and their mother had to leave the boys when she remarried. Occasionally she visits and brings food, but in general, the boys have had to provide for themselves and it has not been easy. Because of their precarious position, the ZOE staff and the group's mentor

have made an extra effort to visit the boys and provide adult support and counseling

Although the boy stated in their Dream document that they wanted someone to pay for their school fees, through ZOE's empowerment approach they have already learned that they can take on that responsibility themselves. With a micro grant, from the working group funds that your partnership provides, they have started a small business of buying and selling second hand shoes. Now they are paying their own school related expenses and even have money available to buy bread; something so simple, but previously beyond their reach.

Pardington's Dream

1. What makes you feel sad? *Lack of food, lack of adult caregiver.*
 2. What makes you happy? *Being alive and realizing that there are people who care for orphans.*
 3. What happens in the community that you do not like? *Stealing, hurting others.*
 4. What is your dream for the future? *Getting someone who can pay for their fees.*
 5. What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *Being prayerful.*
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"Motivated by the Biblical verse Proverbs 21 vs 13: "If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered" and also Proverbs 11 vs 25: "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." The Kupfumaishungu Group contributed \$15 to support Fortunate, 20. Fortunate stays in Sakubva and is disabled. She was born disabled and cannot walk. She uses her knees and palms to move from one place to the other. She was happy to receive the support." (From a June 2014 report)



Fortunate

Lessons learnt – report from Zimbabwe, April 2014

- For the urban groups, immediately after being identified to join the empowerment programme, some mentors encouraged children to save money. Of special mention is the Mutare urban group, Kupfumaishungu. After the first meeting as a group, the mentor mobilised the group to start contributing a dollar a week from the money they get from their caregivers either as tokens or pocket money. The saving started with three individuals who had access to the money out of the seventeen members. With time, all the children joined as they all were encouraged to borrow from the saved money and start even a small business to generate some income. At the end of March they had saved \$204, which they bought groceries in bulk and then shared equally among all group members. The children were excited to receive groceries in 'large' quantities which they could not afford on their own. That first cycle of savings ended and they have started another savings and lending scheme using profits generated from the IGAs they have already started. Most of the children are into buying and selling of different items.



Caption A1: Cathrine Magumezano taking out the groceries from their mentor's house before distribution to all group members



Caption A2: Mutare urban Kupfumaishungu Group displaying grocery items they bought after three months of saving and lending

The following is taken directly from the Zimbabwe staff report – January 2014



Many issues arose from the children's stories during identification in Mutare urban, Sakubva high density suburb. The most common challenge among the children is the issue of poverty and overcrowding in families. Most children complained that due to poverty, they find themselves working for their survival and that of their siblings at the expense of their right to education. As a result there are a number of drop out cases where the children do not proceed with their education whilst they do jobs such as fruit and vegetable vending so that they can be able to raise money for rentals and food.

In Sakubva, there are government owned flats and houses where families occupy a very small single room about three square metres each and some even share a room. Such a scenario is very common among most of the children who have been enrolled into the programme for 2014. It is our hope that a significant percentage of the children that have dropped from school might be able to go back on the bench again.

Home Visits and Food Security Assessment

After identifying the most vulnerable children in both Mutare urban and Mutare rural, officers have been visiting the homes of the children. Such home visits are important for building relationships, love and trust with children and their whole family. One common scenario within most of the families is that of poverty. Children are so impoverished such that they have gone to the extent of even losing their self-esteem, some have lost hope and they have a blurred vision of their future. Most children were encouraged to be positive about everything in life and work towards improving their lifestyles. Jeremiah 29 vs 11, *"For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord; plans to prosper you and not to harm you; plans to give you hope and a future"*, was the scripture that was being used to assure the children that God has great plans of prosperity for them. Seeing smiles on the children's faces after reading out of this verse, was a significant milestone in demystifying the alleged perpetual poverty prophesied about their future.

United Family Working Group

29 Heads of Household



Kupfumaishungu Working Group

(Translation: Getting Requires Determination)

18 Heads of Household



Shingirirai Working Group
(Translation: Soldiering On)
14 Heads of Household



Focus On: Working Group Formation

Poverty often means a life lived in isolation, unconnected even from those who share the same struggles and challenges. A ZOE working group provides orphans and vulnerable children a community where they experience understanding, compassion and acceptance. Together, they begin their journey towards a better life.

To form a working group, ZOE social workers first contact community leaders and local officials to educate them about the empowerment approach and to ask for their help in identifying children. During the first meeting, the children and their young caregivers learn how they will change and improve their lives within three years. Then ZOE takes a step back.

Working group members elect their own leadership, make rules to guide their meetings, choose a group name and decide where to hold weekly gatherings. These once-marginalized children learn from ZOE staff that their community and their Hope Companion partner have faith in their ability to succeed.

The eldest child from each family attends weekly meetings to discuss their activities, both achievements and challenges, and to share in prayer and reflection with each other. Additionally, ZOE's staff and selected community members host regional training sessions covering food security, health and disease prevention, business management and child rights.

Below is the list of names recorded by our ZOE social worker during group formation; **among all three working groups there are 60 households and a total of 191 members.** The first name in bold is the head of the household, followed by their siblings. ZOE works with orphaned and vulnerable children ages infant through college age. In a number of the families below an older person lives with the family, but is unable to provide for them due to age or chronic illness. These individuals, indicated by italics, are usually dependent on the child head of household, but are not counted as members of the working group. Although ZOE's original name lists include both first and last names, ZOE uses first names only in public lists to preserve the privacy of children in the program.

Please note, children joining the ZOE program are living in extreme poverty situations. Often they have no parents or birth documentation and have suffered multiple traumas in their young lives. Occasionally the children give conflicting information on their names and ages. Additional orphans are frequently adopted by the group, and a small percentage of children will leave the group due to family reunification or other reasons. ZOE strives to keep the list as up-to-date as possible. All the names on this list represent real children in need of your prayers.

Shingirirai Working Group, 17 Household, 49 Orphaned and Vulnerable Children

Reginice 20	Shernon 16	Clotilda 15	Pamela 11
Bashira 19	Shaine 19	Adonis 14	Kevin 11
Anderson 12	<i>Tackler</i> 45	Nyasha 21	Rose 17
<i>Kerina</i> 81			<i>Hellen</i> 66
	Caswell 21	Blessing 17	
Rutendo 14		Rosemary 14	James 20
Hellington 17	Sharleen 17	Janet 12	Joyline 17
Quinton 18		Viola 10	Juliet 15
Melod 21	Wendy 19	Arnold 9	David 16
<i>Miriam</i>	Tatenda 11	Adiola 3	<i>Fortune</i>
	Munyaradzi 19	Vitalis 6	
Charity 12	Tafadzwa 17	<i>Aniva</i> 54	Faith 13
Victor 10	Ideology 9		Zacharia 7
Vincent 4	<i>Lawe</i> 76	Andrew 15	Tabeth 6
			Trish 4
Happygirl 17	Rumbidzai 15	Samantha 14	<i>Florence</i> 33
<i>Winnet</i> 67	Munashe 12	Blessing 18	
	<i>Tredah</i> 71	Vanness 8	
		<i>John</i> 66	
	Moline 16		

United Family Working Group, 27 Household, 97 Orphaned and Vulnerable Children

Nyasha 15 Naomi 12 Mitchell 11 Anna 9 Sophia 9 Thelma 9 Patrick 13	Mellisa 15 Tinotenda 14 Tafadzwa 8 Godknows 5 Tichaona 12 <i>Karota 25</i>	Monalisa 11 Lione 12 Sharon 17 <i>Sekai 32</i> Pardington 16 Pius 13 Perfect 9 Thulani 13 Freedom 19 Clever Mutandazo 10 Amos 9 Anesu 8 <i>Stella 68</i> Lorraine 15 <i>Margret</i> Tawanda 17 Tatenda 15 Blessmore 9 Brenda 14 <i>Witness 47</i> Tatenda 18	Ruby 17 Tambudzai 15 Tanaka 12 Lisa 12 Shingirai 9 Natawe 5 Tapiwa 15 Eugenia 21 Winnet 21 Malvin 10 Tawanda 13 Tops 15 Tadiwa 7 Takudzwa 4 Zvikomborero 5 Kelly 5 <i>Sheilla 56</i> Clara 16 Talent 5 Caroline 18 Tafadzwa 2 <i>Janet</i> Priscilla 15	Obey 18 Mercy 18 Wailer 7 Previous 19 Previous 2 <i>Margateth 61</i> Kowanayi 19 <i>Rosemary 62</i> Brenda 15 Priviledge 11 Faith 8 Noctula 14 Carlton 6 Nadia 7 <i>Eunice 24</i> Winnet 15 Blessing 21 Ashley 5 Kadino 5 Panashe 9
Hectar 20	Bongani 12 Tamara 7 Takunda 6 <i>Beven</i>			
Remember 19				
Winfield 14 Dylan 6 Anesu 3 Clemence 2 Kelvin 1 <i>Yevonia 38</i>	Michelle 14 Felix 12 Chantell 6 Irene 36 Pardon 12 Faith 6 Shallom 3 Karota 88 Linda 15 Erica 20 Ashley 7 Vimbai 3 Vanessa 12			
Takudzwa 14 Jamaine 7 Clint 3 Praise 41				
Talent 16 Trinity 11 Tadiwa 14 Mitchell 13				

Kupfumaishungu Working Groups 16 Households, 44 Orphans or Vulnerable Children

Ngoni 16	<i>Joyce 82</i> Tinotenda 13 William 18 Blessing 20 <i>Charles 61</i> Patricia 13 Blessing 21 Belinda 21 Rutendo 14 Dephine 20 <i>Tambudzai 80</i> Tanatswa 13 Tadiwa 11 <i>Anatoria 71</i> Tatenda 14	Tanyaradzwa Ashton 18 Tapiwa 18 David 11 Winstone 13 <i>Vena 73</i> Tinotenda 16 Rukudzo 6 Rufaro 3 <i>Chipa 41</i> Kundai 14 Rufaro 11 <i>Annastencia 31</i> Tafadzwa 14 <i>Steven 80</i>	Quennele 14 Byron 12 Tapiwa 7 Tendai 10 <i>Alice 43</i> Tendai 14 Tinotenda 15 Tanaka 17 Gamuchirai 16 Shelly 11 Mitchell 6
Cathrine 15 Adelide 8 Audry 2 <i>Granny 77</i>			
Diana 17 Prisca, 19 <i>Reby 78</i>			
Ryan 21 Mercy 18 Nunurai 16 Vimbai 9 Makanaka 6 Mitchell 4 Ashton 4			



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