

# Southern Africa Fresh from the Field

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## Hopeful Transitions



By Steve Sywulka  
Team Leader  
Southern Africa Team

"The loud sounds of fighting started just after the kids had gotten to school on Monday," explained the woman in the refugee camp in western Africa. "Bullets were flying everywhere. So we all fled, each a separate way. We had to spend that night in the bush, fearing for our lives. On Tuesday some of us met up at the river. My husband drowned trying to get across. Now I'm left to care for my four children and my mother alone." What an extraordinarily difficult transition!

Our family is going through transition too, albeit not nearly as traumatic as the camp dwellers in western Africa. For ten years we have been blessed with being able to see change happening in communities in western Africa. In the midst of much negative change, we have also witnessed positive changes as people learn to dream, plan, and work together. We have met some wonderful people. We have worked to improve access to food, water, learning, income, and health. We have shared about Jesus with people who knew very little about him. And now we are leaving this place we love, and moving 7,000 kilometers across the continent to southern Africa, a completely different context.

The landscape there is very different from the Sahel, the region of western Africa in which we now live. So is the food, and the language, and the clothing. We'll have to learn to drive on the other side of the road, and where to buy the things our family needs. We'll learn about new cultures and their history. We'll learn the art of border crossings. We'll meet a lot more people. At times it seems daunting. Yet we remain hopeful.

There is so much to do in our last few weeks in western Africa! As we downsize our personal belongings, we are grateful for all God has given us. We think of people in the refugee camps, like the woman who shared, "We left everything behind! All we had left was what we



December 2016

*Southern Africa is a unique field, with only 3 countries. As such, we've chosen to combine the three country fields into one newsletter for your reading enjoyment.*



were wearing." Unlike this woman, we'll be able to say good-bye to friends before we leave. On January 7, 2017, Lord willing, we will get to board airplanes instead having to walk, or having to run into the bush. God has provided a house

for us to rent, exactly what we were praying for. Instead of complaining about how much clutter we have in our lives, I can be grateful that we are able to take luggage with us!

But it's still hard to choose what to take, and it's hard to leave. We are grieving the people, things, and dreams we'll leave behind. Perhaps God needs to remove those things so that we can more fully surrender to him?

Transition is not easy, especially when it comes unexpectedly, as it has for many refugees. And yet World Renew's work in trauma healing is helping to restore hope. Pray for refugees around the world!

Farmers in southern Africa are needing to change too, as they face the consequences of the worst drought in 35 years. World Renew, with support from the Canadian Food-grains Bank (CFGB), is helping 4,500 households in Zambia, as well as 1,000 in Malawi, a total of 5,500 households. Pray that these responses will increase their hope!

Some people get excited by change. Others dread it, or strongly oppose it. In the communities where World Renew works we see both excitement and opposition. But we also see those things in ourselves. We have both excitement and some dread about beginning anew in an unfamiliar context. Pray with us! It won't be easy. Yet we are humbled for this unique opportunity to be involved in God's work, as he is touching lives. He is changing the story from suffering to Hope (with a capital H). Hope eases transitions and is changing our story too.





# Thirty Minutes Away

## A Story of Transformation



**Faye Yu**  
Program Consultant  
Malawi Team

We recently conducted a year-end evaluation of our HIV Innovation project to learn more about the impact of our project working with young girls engaged in transactional sex. These girls, between the ages of 14 and 21, begin engaging in sex to earn money for their family's survival. During our interviews the girls shared stories of how they got started in transactional sex. Here's one story, shared by M.T.:

*I made losses in sales one day. I made a few big doughnuts and charged the usual price of MK50 (USD\$0.07) each. I wanted to sell my goods fast and go home to play with friends. After selling all the doughnuts, I realized there was a loss of MK400.00 (USD\$0.55). I need to bring home at least MK2,500 (USD\$3.43), but I only made MK2,100 (USD\$2.88). I knew that my mother would be angry. She depended on me to bring home enough money so that she could buy food to cook. I shared my story with a friend, who told me not to worry because she had a solution. She arranged for a man who promised her money for sex to sleep with me instead of her. We went to a rest house in the market where he had sex with me and gave me MK1,000 (USD\$1.37). My friend encouraged me to accept men for sex each time I needed money.*

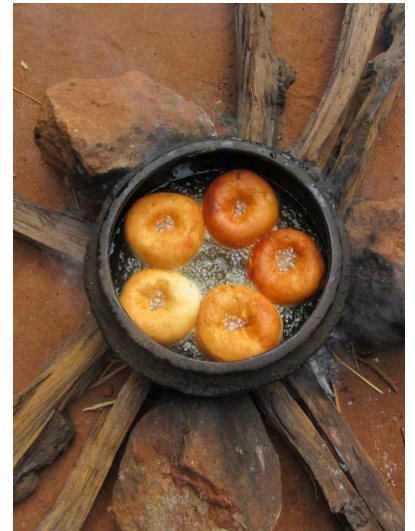
All the girls that we talked with said they started to engage in transactional sex because they needed money. Most of them were the primary breadwinners in their families, and their families depended on their income for food and other supplies. There were many external circumstances that influenced the girls to be involved in transactional sex. Many of the girls were not aware of the risks associated with transactional sex. Through girls groups and discussions with older mentors and peer educators, the girls are now more informed, and many want to return to school and not engage in transactional sex. However, because of the drought last year and the lack of casual labor available, many girls could not find a way to stop engaging in transactional sex because their family situations were even more desperate than before.



A few months ago, a group of older women and female pastors from Word Alive Church decided to volunteer with this project. They went into the community to teach baking and cooking to 25 girls. The women not only shared their skills but also encouraged the girls. The girls not only learned about new things they could bake and sell, but they also enjoyed interacting with the older women.

The girls learned new skills; now they can make delicious food to sell in the market. However, it is also encouraging to know that the older women learned of a need that is only a 30-minute drive away from their own community, and they found a way to support the girls who are struggling. These women are using their talents and skills to care for vulnerable girls.

Please pray that caring people can build more of these "bridges" and that the church can continue to think of creative ways to be in relationship with and to serve people who are vulnerable. Pray that the church can use their skills, talents, and time to build Christ's kingdom.



## Pray for the Sywulkas

### Praise items:

- We bought plane tickets at a good price.
- We found the house we prayed for.
- The team we are joining is great.

### Prayer concerns:

- Health, stamina, and wisdom to finish well and start well
- Refugees worldwide
- Disaster responses in Malawi and Zambia



# Treadle Pumps: A Viable Option for Irrigation in Northern Mozambique – Niassa Province

## A Story of Transformation



**Juvêncio Mataria**  
Program Advisor  
Mozambique Team

Mozambique's population is growing at an annual rate of 2.5 percent (as of 2013). This has put pressure on the country's food resources, which currently cannot meet the increase in demand. Unless prompt strategic measures are taken to increase production rapidly, food aid or commercial food imports on a large scale will be inevitable. In view of the need to stabilize year-to-year food production, World Renew, with the support of the Canadian government, started implementing in 2012 a five-year program in five countries—Mozambique, Tanzania, Mali, Bangladesh, and Honduras. Titled "Sustainable Livelihood Development through Supporting Food Security and Economic Growth Initiative," this program seeks to achieve results in three major development sectors: (1) enhancing food security; (2) stimulating sustainable economic growth; and (3) building community capacity to set development priorities and to implement community initiated programs.

Some parts of Mozambique have faced food deficits for more than a decade, primarily as a result of recurring floods, which destroyed crops, and droughts, which affected rain-fed farming. Researchers mentioned that there are about one million small-scale farmers in Mozambique who depend on rain-fed farming and who contribute about 80 percent of the total food production in the country.



Our food security program in Mozambique started in October 2012 and has been primarily aimed at disseminating existing proven and appropriate agricultural technologies to support increased food production. The program has also promoted improved water use by introducing farmers to treadle pumps, regarded as an affordable and manageable alternative to the laborious method of watering by hand-carried buckets. Technically this form of pumping is well suited to Mozambique, where small-scale farmers use surface water such as rivers and low-lying swamps or shallow groundwater.

In the communities we targeted so far, treadle pumps are mostly used for irrigation of community vegetable gardens producing cabbage, onion, carrots, tomatoes, lettuce, and green beans.



Sofia Zoconi (33 years old, married), from Magachi community (Cobue) – Niassa Province:

*"We started the community garden in August 2016 with 10 members—six men and four women. Our main motivation was to see how much we could achieve working together as a group sharing experience and knowledge."*

*"Now we are able to work bigger fields in less time, increasing the amount of time we can use to take care of our families and improve our family nutrition. We are also making some economic gains, which are used mostly to invest in the savings groups and start other small businesses."*

*"This project has made our work as women much easier, since crop irrigating is considered a women's activity. With the treadle pumps we managed to increase the land area under irrigation; we reduced work time (as well as work strain) in comparison with bucket irrigation; and our fully irrigated fields yielded improved crop quality."*

*"Once again would like to thank Diocese of Niassa and World Renew for this opportunity, and I pray they may keep improving people's lives in the various communities they are working in."*

The current community garden projects will also increase in their number of growing cycles, as crops are able to grow faster with full irrigation.

**Sofia Zoconi**  
on treadle pump





# The Power of Partnership



**Ruairidh Waddell**  
Country Consultant  
Zambia Team

*Talking cattle with a  
rancher in Montana.*

For the past month my family and I have been on our connections tour in the United States and Canada, visiting supporting churches, foundations, institutions, and of course many friends. This has given me lots of time to reflect on the special way World Renew works and the incredible and special partnerships we build and facilitate between ourselves and supporters, ourselves and communities in Zambia, and, most important, the lasting partnerships formed between Zambian communities and communities and congregations across North America.

As I have crisscrossed North America, I have learned much, including two main things. First, I have grown to appreciate the diversity of support we have, from financial planners in Charlotte, N.C.; to cattle ranchers and potato farmers in Montana; to a special young lady in Edmonton, Alta., who donated the money she received for her eighth birthday to the El Nino response; to grieving families tithing an estate; and to the many congregations from different denominations across the region—all of them giving, serving, and engaging in acts of faith and service by supporting our work and building relationships.

The second thing that has struck me, as I share the stories of our work, is the diversity of what we and our partners do to support the development of the communities we serve. Our programming in Zambia is diverse and multi-sectoral but properly focused to meet the differing needs and contexts identified and faced by communities across the country. All of this, however, revolves around the common themes of partnership, service, and deeds-based ministry. To give you some idea of the extent of this, here are some of the ways in which communities are partnering with us in Zambia.

As Mwandi district enters the most critical period of this El Nino-inflicted drought, we give thanks for our partnerships with many churches who have supported the relief efforts, school production units, and construction of boreholes. As the drought has worsened and the impacts have intensified, the work they have supported has brought huge relief to Mwandi families.



*A visiting vet in  
Mwandi, teaching  
farmers with the  
help of partner staff*

We also have had long-lasting support for the community of Madzimoyo in eastern Zambia, where there has been a direct church-to-church partnership between this community and a congregation in Edmonton. This partnership has allowed two communities to walk side by side as equal partners, to share and rejoice in success but also to come together in strength at times of hardship and loss. Farmers in Montana provided a 50 percent matching fund to a livestock cooperative in Zambia to enable them to buy a mobile spray unit that is shared around the district, keeping animals healthy and communities resilient. We have had nurses and doctors, financial gurus and farmers all give of their time, skills, and hearts to the service and the



building of partnerships with communities across Zambia—and if you feel called to contribute, you can too!

I know a wise man who is much wiser than I, is a mentor to me, and is the person I call upon to help me process, gain perspective, and rely on my faith; he is a partner to me, one of constant support and encouragement. In a time of trial for me he wrote to me, and I have carried these words with me ever since; they are constant and timeless, and they provide me a constant focus when I need it:

*"It's all about relationships . . . dummy!!!!"*

*"With our relationships we are changing the world one small act a time. Every time we invest something of ourselves into someone else's life, a transfer takes place. It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Once the transfer takes place the world is now different. The person who has received the gift given is richer. But here is the surprise. The donor does not have less; they have more too. The "more" is different... better, unexpected yet welcome. The sum of the whole is always, always, always greater than the individual parts. When we give ourselves and our "stuff" away, the pie gets bigger, not smaller; the world expands and is changed.*

*"The people we go to serve in places like Zambia enjoy an amazing freedom. They do not hold on to things or each other the way we do. My guess is that this is one of the outcomes produced from extreme hardship and suffering. I want to know this freedom.*

*"Every time we come, we take more home with us than we gave, in quantity and in quality. We learn so much from our relationships. I return a very wealthy man!*

*"Yes, the world is in a mess. The USA is a mess. But within each one of us exists the power to make a difference, the power to change things as they currently are. I witness that power in action every day. Mother Teresa's single aim was to do 'small things with GREAT LOVE.' We can all do that. Cynicism robs us of that power and makes us less.*

*"Some men see things as they are and ask why; I dream of things that never were and ask, Why not?" (he stole that from Robert Kennedy!)*

I hope you find this as powerful and as motivational a tool as I have.

To God be the glory!

Merry Christmas!