

Newsletter
January 25, 2017

Harry and Greta Harsevoort
International Relief Managers
On assignment in Zambia

Our house is very comfortable with modern amenities.

Harry and I arrived in Livingstone, Zambia on January 11th, where we were warmly met by IRMs Frank and Brenda Folkema and WR Program Consultant Ruairidh Waddell.

As we drove to our home base in Mwandi, we discovered our first project challenge: making the 2 ½ hour trip between Livingstone and Mwandi. Traffic is constantly weaving from one side of the road to the other, or sometimes driving along the shoulder. We call it pothole road, and it's known to be the worst road in all of Zambia.



Harry and Greta with Frank, Brenda and Ruairidh.



Our house overlooks the Zambezi River. We enjoy sitting on the porch in the evenings to watch the sunset.

After 2 days of intense orientation, the Folkema's handed the project over to us and left. Fortunately we have a very capable implementing partner – the United Church of Zambia (UCZ). We have found the team as well as the church very welcoming and supportive.



Project officer Kabuku addresses beneficiaries at a food distribution.

Our current assignment is a WR/CFGB response to drought and hunger in Mwandu District, in the south-western part of Zambia, where we are distributing food to 4,500 households (over 31,500 people).

Each HH gets 50 kg maize meal, 5 kg beans, 2.5 L vegetable oil and 0.5 kg salt monthly.



Each 50 kg bag of beans is shared by 10 households

The January round of food distributions started last Friday. We enjoy visiting the various communities and talking to and listening to the beneficiaries tell their stories. Communication is fairly easy, as most people can understand or speak at least some English.



All set up and ready for distribution to begin.

Today we attended the distribution for Adonsi, a remote community in the eastern part of Mwandu district. Since heavy rains had made the road to Adonsi impassable, we had to move the distribution site to Mabumba, the nearest community accessible by the transport trucks.

This meant beneficiaries had to walk 8 hours or more, to get their food, sometimes through water waist high. They had all travelled to the distribution site the day before, most with carts pulled by donkeys or oxen.



They came well prepared to spend the night, taking along food, cooking utensils and bedding.

When we arrived at 8:30 am, we found the people waiting for us in a joyful mood. Some of them even started singing and dancing. They had obviously enjoyed their campout the night before.



One of the beneficiaries I talked to was 53 year old Freemont Makwasha, a farmer living in Adonsi, a remote rural community in Mwandizi district. He and his wife Mangala Njekwa, have 5 children, all girls, ranging in age from 5 to 28 years. Their 3 youngest daughters still live at home.



During the 3 year drought, life has been very difficult for Freemont and his family. Failed crops meant they have insufficient food to eat, and he had no opportunity to earn an income, as everyone is in the same situation.

Freemont has a farm with 5 hectares of land. Last November, when the rains started, he planted beans and sorghum and maize with seed provided by the WR/CFGB program. The crops had been growing well, but recent heavy rains have flooded his fields. He believes that if they get no more rain in his area over the next few weeks, and the land has opportunity to dry, the crops will survive. Otherwise, the plants will die and this will be another year of crop failure, only this time because of too much rain, instead of not enough.

He asked me to tell the people in Canada that he is very happy and grateful for the food his community has been receiving from WR/CFGB. The monthly food distributions started just in time. They had no food and were starving. Without this food, they would have died from hunger. May God bless you and please don't change. Please keep helping hungry people like us, so that they won't starve.



Prayer requests:

- For the right amount of rain so that the crops will grow well.
- That the army worm infestation will not spread to the extent that the maize crops are destroyed.
- For our continued safety and good health.

Harry and Greta

