

# **REPORT OF THE LITERACY CLASS ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN THE YEAR 2018 - SAINT MARK'S PARISH, ISOKA, ZAMBIA**



## **Introduction**

The initiative to help the less privileged children in our community to be literate has been very beneficial since its inception. At the beginning of the year the literacy class registered a considerable number of children. Evidently, a number of activities were conducted during the reporting period. These activities include assistance and encouragement to the needy children at the literacy class who are primarily drawn from streets and those that are unable to go to school or have stopped school for various reasons. The report will also highlight the successes and limitations that were encountered during the reporting period.

## **Overall Goal**

The overall goal of the literacy class is to provide support to the underprivileged children in the community of Isoka through moral and educational support in order to improve their well-being.

## **Literacy Class**

Basically, the idea of literacy classes was to cater for needy children in our community. These classes enable the children to develop their skills and confidence in reading and writing. Offering classes to these children so that they are able to read and write is a great opportunity which is beneficial to them as well as the society as a whole since most of these children just roam in the streets. Apparently, a knowledgeable society is the key to national development. The children get educated on various issues, which include mathematical ability, reading ability, good health, morals and so on. In essence, teachers follow the school curriculum arranged by the Ministry of Education. Actually, this literacy programme provides a basis for them to join government schools after the fourth grade.

Schools reopened on January 22, 2018 instead of 15<sup>th</sup> January for term one activities. This was due to the cholera outbreak in some parts of the country. Apparently, the literacy class registered 62 pupils (39 girls and 23 boys) in 2018. Among the registered children, 15 girls and 11 boys were orphaned while the rest were vulnerable. The children were being managed by two teachers. Typically, in the first week of reopening, children did the general cleaning of the school environment. It was during this period that the old toilets were demolished as they were found not fit for use anymore after inspection by the Ministry of Health during the cholera outbreak.

Temporarily, children were instructed to use the church lavatories as resources to have new toilets constructed were being organized. This was in order to maintain sanitary conditions at the school. Additionally, beginning of the year 2018 recorded twenty-one (11 boys, 10 girls) children from the literacy who joined government schools. These children were earlier assessed and passed the tests. Further, they were provided with necessities for school such as uniforms, shoes and stationery. Equally, provision of necessities like washing soap, clothing, and stationery for literacy pupils was done, including teaching materials for teachers.

Pupils who were in secondary schools also report to the offices with their progress reports. They bring their academic progress reports every term so that we monitor their performance at school. Most of them did fairly well in the end of term tests. Further, we encouraged them to work extra hard and focus on school in order to have a better future. Besides, school fees were paid termly after they reported to the offices.

Visiting the homes where the children come from was another activity that was undertaken. The findings were that many were disadvantaged. Surely, the majority of these children are

very vulnerable and live under poor conditions. Their guardians mainly depend on selling firewood, wild fruits and mushrooms for their livelihood. Thus, the opportunity for these children to have literacy classes truly makes a difference in their lives.

At the end of the term, pupils were assessed through class tests. This was done to see how pupils had understood the topics covered during the school term. Overall, the results were good. However, some challenges were noted in the pupils who had just joined the literacy classes as they could not accurately read and write yet. The children had their usual end of term celebration when schools closed. Despite having this party once in a while, it motivates them to come to learn.

Gradually, improvement in most of the new pupils was noted during the second school term as their reading and writing ability got better. School requirements for the second term were also provided in order to inspire the learners. During the middle of the term most pupils were affected by flu due to the cold season. However, this did not affect the learning programme. Additionally, in order to maintain hygienic conditions at the school, construction of new toilets was started with support from our well-wishers.



### ***Construction process of the toilets for literacy classes***

Furthermore, in the second term, we were really privileged to receive some visitors; the family of our all-weather well-wishers from Netherlands visited Zambia. It was a great opportunity as they had time to interact with the children at the literacy class together with



their teachers. It was really encouraging; the children were very delighted and had chance to even express their hopes or what they wished to be in future. This occasion will always be cherished. Subsequently, stationery that was brought for them was also distributed to them accordingly.

As usual, the end of term two saw pupils being assessed through class tests. Actually, there was significant improvement as most pupils did well in their tests. Besides, distribution of clothes and some blankets took place on closing day of the term instead of the routine party.



*Literacy children during the distribution of clothes and blankets*



The third and last term of the year started on September 10<sup>th</sup> when schools reopened. Typically, necessary requirements were prepared and lessons resumed as usual. During the term selection of pupils to join government primary schools and continue with upper grades was conducted. The selection criteria looked at the performance of the pupils. Pupils selected were those who could accurately read, write and calculate numbers. This was to help them be at the same level with pupils who are already in government schools. Accordingly, twenty-two were selected; nine (9) boys and thirteen (13) girls.

Normally, pupils join government primary schools in the fifth grade. However, during the 2018 selection, a good number of boys and girls were ready to do the sixth grade in 2019 because of good preparation they received in terms of school work in their initial grades.

To further assess the learners in what they had covered during the year, the end of year tests were conducted a week before schools closed on December 7<sup>th</sup> 2018. Apparently, the results were very good as only minimal areas needed attention. Accordingly, schools closed with children celebrating end of term and year with joy. They had fun during the party.

### **Achievements**

Essentially, a number of successes were realised during the period under review. Particularly, this year, we recorded two (2) girls who started their education at the literacy class qualifying to grade 8 (secondary education). All along we have been having just boys making it to secondary school. Additionally, two boys made it to grade eight and another boy passed to grade ten. During this period under review we had eleven pupils in secondary schools. Generally, we still have a considerable number of children in primary schools. Furthermore, at the end of the year we recorded a number of pupils to join government primary schools in the sixth grade in 2019. This is because they did exceptionally well after being assessed. It is also clear that many children have benefited from the literacy class and are now able to read and write.

Clearly, this literacy activity has really been very beneficial to the underprivileged families in our community. It has accorded them chance to receive some education; thereby contributing positively to the literacy levels in the nation. Moreover, the moral conduct of the children had been really inspiring.

### **Challenges**

Despite recording a number of accomplishments, the year was not without difficulties. Some of the challenges encountered were children's lessons being disturbed whenever some church

gatherings took place. Classes had to be suspended depending on the number of days the church events occurred. This is because the church buildings children occupy are also used to accommodate people from distant places when they come for gatherings.

Another challenge was inadequate school desks for the children. Some have been damaged although some maintenance works was done to desks that could be repaired.

The other concern is teachers' allowances. They receive a monthly allowance of K400. Though it helps them in a way, it is rather inadequate, considering the amount of effort they are putting in to help the children. So there was a request for increment from them, although we explained to them the issue of limited funds.

Besides, pupils who complete their secondary education are unable to access tertiary education as they do not have the means. Consequently, they usually come to ask how they could be assisted. Nevertheless, we usually encourage them not to despair and possibly if they could find some ways to raise some resources.

## **Conclusion**

All in all, the literacy class activity has significantly contributed to the children's right to education in the community. Many vulnerable children have benefited from this initiative. Some of the pupils who started this program are now in secondary schools and others have completed secondary education. Essentially, this is desirable for the welfare of our community as it has contributed to the reduction of illiteracy levels in the community of Isoka and the entire country. Accordingly, when families are knowledgeable, they contribute to national development. Indeed, the continued support from our well-wishers who have enabled us to realise all that we have achieved is greatly appreciated.

**LIST OF PUPILS SELECTED TO JOIN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN  
2019**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SEX</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
1	Kaonga Vera	F	Chiwanda Primary	6
2	Nyirongo Precious	F	Chiwanda	5
3	Nawila Rose	F	Chiwanda	5
4	Nyirongo Charity	F	Chiwanda	5
5	Bwalya Catherine	F	Chiwanda	6
6	Simpamba Risbon	M	Chiwanda	6
7	Sikazwe Davy	M	Chiwanda	6
8	Mukuka Grinos	M	Chiwanda	5
9	Sinyinza Clever	M	Chiwanda	5
10	Simposya Solomon	M	Chiwanda	5
11	Kalolo Friday	M	Chiwanda	5
12	Nakamba Elise	F	Masi Primary	6
13	Ngosa Marvelous	M	Masi	6
14	Namonje Monica	F	Masi	6
15	Nambeye Maria	F	Masi	6
16	Namonje Justina	F	Masi	5
17	Nambela Gertrude	F	Masi	5
18	Mulenga Miniva	F	Malango Primary	5
19	Siluonde Moses	M	Malango	5
20	Simwinga James	M	Malango	5
21	Namumba Sylvia	F	Malango	5
22	Malunga Gloria	F	Mwenya Primary	6

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