



Swanmissions
MERCY, JUSTICE, HUMILITY

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From the DIRECTOR

Well what another great year for the Kantolomba Project. God continues to amaze me with bringing the right people along at the right time. It really is the combined effort of many individuals that makes the project a success.

I am excited to report that we currently have over 165 children enrolled in the Light Up Ahead School at Kantolomba and each is being blessed with a daily meal and solid education. This year has seen many new sponsors come on board and on behalf of the Kantolomba committee I want to thank all of you for kind generosity to the children of Kantolomba.

The opening of the Light Up Ahead school was a real highlight for the year with a massive turn out and overwhelming support from the Zambian community for the event, including from our guest of honour, Dr Charlotte Scott, wife of the Vice President of Zambia.

The year also witnessed a number of successful fundraisers which all gained enthusiastic support. Over \$1200 was raised through the inaugural Push-ups for Poverty event. Hundreds also turned out for Arts for Africa which was a great

night, and the students rallied their support on the Casual Dress day and Kantolomba Sausage Sizzle.

A defining chapter in the Kantolomba projects history is the work done by our committee member Miss Stephanie Hewson, a 19 year old ex-student from Swan Christian College who served at the Light Up Ahead school for five weeks. During this time Stephanie was able to visit the homes of almost all of the sponsor children and collect valuable data for us to pass on to the sponsors.

The future is also looking very positive for the Kantolomba project with a number of big fundraisers planned for the remainder of this year including Cycle 4 Change, Buy a Brick and the Second Hand Uniform and Book sale. I have also had a number of requests for individuals from Australia to serve at the project during 2014. In April these Aussie volunteers, along with team of 20 staff and students from Swan Christian College, will add vital stimulus to the project and help to reinforce the relationship we have with our Zambian partners.



I look forward to the next 12 months as we complete 3 further classrooms and hopefully see the remaining 30 children on our waiting list find sponsors so they too can benefit from this life changing program.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or to find out other ways that you can get involved.

My email is raymondh@scea.wa.edu.au and phone 9374 8300.

Eye Witness Account

19 year old Perth Uni Student, Stephanie Hewson, spent five weeks in Kantolomba earlier this year visiting the homes of children who are enrolled in the Light Up Ahead School. Below is the account of some of the things she witnessed during this time:

Kantolomba is a beautiful place. Its beauty is in ramshackle mud brick houses dotted between green shrubs. It is in women calling out to each other and cooking nshima in brightly coloured clothes and children playing in the streets.

Below the surface of this beauty, however, is pain and poverty. Many of these mud brick houses are slowly falling down because their owners can't afford to repair them. Everywhere you walk there is litter and animal droppings. Most women are widows or abandoned mothers who are cooking food they have literally earned from the sweat of their brow. Their clothes are likely the only ones they own and will be worn until they are unusable. Inside the homes are sick children and elderly with no access to medical aid. The children are hungry and dirty. None of them wear shoes and many of the girls carry younger siblings on their backs or water on their heads. They are not in school because their parents cannot afford the fees to send them. They spend their days working alongside their mother or wandering aimlessly through the streets.

This is the reality for too many in Kantolomba, and it is the only future that has been available to them for many generations; the vicious cycle of poverty. Parents have not received a proper education so have limited employment opportunities. Their parents could not afford to send them

to school and their only option was to marry and start families of their own. As their families grew, they struggled to provide food, let alone send them to school. And so another generation is raised without education or the hope for a better future.

I was touched during my time in Kantolomba by the gratitude of the parents for the school and to their sponsors. For the first time their children have a chance for a different life. They have opportunities their parents never had. They can attend school, be part of a feeding program and be propelled into a life different from the one they were born into. It won't be an overnight change for Kantolomba but this generation is the first step towards freedom from poverty.

The Light Up Ahead School is like a haven from the hopelessness facing these children. From a place of poverty and depression they can come to a place of promise. For these children, Light Up Ahead is the promise of education, ease from hunger, friendship with other children and the love of teachers and staff. Most of all, it is a place where they can see how much God loves them.

I was reminded of how amazing God is when the PTA Chairman shared in a PTA meeting, "Zambia is a big place, and even in Ndola there are many compounds besides Kantolomba, but the Lord has chosen us to receive this school."

Most of the first intake of children from 2009 graduated into Grade 1 at the end of last year. They have grasped basic numeracy and literacy and can now build on that foundation while the younger children continue in Middle, Reception and Baby Classes. Beyond this education however, and more importantly I believe, the children are being shown daily how much God loves them. They see that God has answered the prayers of their parents for a better future. They see His provision as buildings are raised before their eyes with money He has led people to give. They are taught to trust in a God who loves them and can provide for them no matter how impossible it may seem. God promises that He will do over and above all we dare hope, ask and imagine and the children at Light Up Ahead are living in the fruit of this promise.

In Australia, it is easy to forget what my \$30 represents. It represents a child God loves; a child whose future He



wants to fill with hope and whom He has given me the opportunity to bless. I never want to forget again the privilege it is to be involved in this project and I encourage each sponsor to remember also.

The parents may not have a chance to change their realities but they can see the future changing for their children. For many in Kantolomba, the pain and suffering of poverty are still with them daily but they see that God is good and He provides for His children as they continue to trust and serve Him.

Do not ever doubt that your \$30 is making a difference. As the PTA Chairman shared, "Education is the greatest investment one can make, though it is a long investment." We may not see the full impact of Light Up Ahead right away, but in years to come I believe education and the grace of our God, will transform Kantolomba beyond its current poverty.

School Opening

On 23 May, The Kantolomba Education and Feeding program reached a major milestone. Over 500 people turned out for an event that will be etched in our memories for a long time to come. Principal Mark Lewis, Reverend Stephen Lee (CEO of SCEA) and myself attended the official opening of the Light Up Ahead School in Kantolomba. The school was established by Swan Christian College in conjunction with a local mission agency Immanuel Mercy Ministries after an Impact Trip in 2008. Now 5 years later, Light Up Ahead School provides food and education for over 160 vulnerable children.

The event caught a lot of media attention with the Guest of Honour being the Vice President of Zambia's wife Dr Charlotte Scott who was called upon to cut the ribbon and unveil the plaque dedicated in her name. The event also hosted a string of other dignitaries from the Lord Mayor to the District Education Minister. Zambia National Broadcasting network featured the event as part of their main evening news bulletin.

The event started with cultural dancing, singing performances and dramatisations. One of the skits was performed by the ladies in the village and demonstrated the plight they go through as a result of having no medical clinic facility in the compound.

Further speeches by the Director of Immanuel Mercy ministries, Veronica Sikwangala and primary school aged girl Jamilla Chama highlighted other issues that the community faces, such as the water supply having been terminated for the past 6 months and the lack of police presence in the village to protect vulnerable children.

The second lady, Dr Scott, was extremely supportive of the establishment of the Light up Ahead School agreeing that education for vulnerable children would provide a gateway out of poverty. She also stressed that for young children, the importance of accessing schooling that is close to home is why this project is so valuable.

During the event local companies were thanked for their involvement such as Afrox Gas Company who provided school shoes for each child in the school. And other companies were also encouraged to come on board and show their support. Dr Scott made a special point of thanking Swan Christian College for our commitment to this program and emphasised the

importance of maintaining partnerships such as the one that has resulted in this school.

The event concluded with a tour of the facilities and photographs with key stakeholders.

The Kantolomba Project

Vision

The Kantolomba Project is an initiative of Swan Christian College in partnership with Global Development Group of Australia and Immanuel Mercy Ministries of Zambia.

The vision of the Kantolomba Project is to empower the children of Kantolomba community to rise out of poverty through the provision of free education and regular nutritional meals.

In response to witnessing the great poverty within the Kantolomba community in 2008, Swan Christian College decided to work with a local agency, Immanuel Mercy Ministries, to establish a K-7 school which will potentially provide food and education for over 500 children.

Progress and Future Goals

Since the project commenced in 2009, four classrooms have been established, two offices, two storerooms, a kitchen dining area, two ablution blocks, connection to water and electricity, and a 470 metre long wall around the perimeter of the school. Currently another three classrooms are being constructed, with the goal of a further two classrooms, library and teacher staff room.



13 local Zambian staff are currently employed and a board of Zambian representatives meet to oversee the running of the school. Currently 160 children attend the school with many more still waiting for sponsors. The families in the community are extremely grateful for the support their children have received. There has already been a dramatic improvement in the health and wellbeing of the children as a result of the regular nutritional meals they receive and the sense of belonging they experience at the school.

We thank our sponsors for getting involved and helping us to achieve this vision.

The continuing success of The Kantolomba Project depends on the support of volunteers and financial donors.

If others are interested in supporting the project through assisting in one of our many fundraisers they can contact Swan Christian College on 08 9374 8300.

To make a tax deductible financial contribution to the Kantolomba School building fund go to www.gdg.org.au/give to J698N.

Or if you would like to sponsor a child to be a part of this project (\$30 per month) please contact Sponsorship Coordinator, Mr Murray Guy. Email murrayg@scea.wa.edu.au or phone 08 9374 8300. You can go the Global Development secure site now to set up your monthly payment.

1 child (\$30): www.gdg.org.au/CS1J698N

2 children (\$60): www.gdg.org.au/CS2J698N

Afternoon Tea

Last Tuesday over 30 people gathered in the Conference Room for a thankyou afternoon held for the sponsors of the Kantolomba Project. The afternoon also involved hearing updates about the project from Missions Director Ray Hockley, CEO of SCEA Reverend Stephen Lee and Kantolomba Project committee member Miss Stephanie Hewson.

Ray Hockley shared about how we need to find a middle ground between ignoring the problem of poverty and feeling so overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem that we feel

helpless to do anything about it. We need to take solace in the fact that we can help some and be advocates for those who are unable to help themselves.

Rev Lee shared about the impact of witnessing the poverty in Kantolomba for the first time when he attended the official school opening earlier this year. He said it was the most impacting experience that he has had for the past 20 – 30 years.

Stephanie Hewson finished by relating of her recent experience spending five weeks working at the Kantolomba school. Stephanie witnessed firsthand the harsh reality of the families we are seeking to help. Below is an excerpt from Stephanie's speech.

"The first thing that caught my attention about Kantolomba was that it was made up mostly of women. It was quite rare to see a man. I later discovered in most cases this is because the men had died or had abandoned their families when the pressure to provide became too much.

One of the first families we visited was a grandmother terminally ill with cancer who was responsible for her five grandchildren. She was asking me if there is medication in Australia that could cure her so she can continue caring for the children. I tried not to think what would happen to the children when their grandmother passed away.

I met a widow who welcomed me into her home though all she had was the clothes on her back and a few blankets to sleep on. I still can't figure it out in my head that women like this actually survive when they have no food and no income to get food.

I sat with a grandmother and grandfather who had lost their son the week before and were now responsible for his children. I had no words to ease the obvious pain in their eyes or answer their question of how they would provide for their grandchildren since neither were able to work."

She finished by saying: "There is so much need in Kantolomba that the school cannot touch. And while it is easy to become discouraged, it is profound to see the impact Light Up Ahead School has on those who are in the program. They have a hope for the future that was not possible before. These children who would have never attended school now have a hope of completing their education and getting

jobs that will lift them from the poverty cycle. Where once life was simply the struggle to survive, these children have had restored to them a future filled with the hope and potential that every child deserves.”

If you would like to get involved in supporting the work of the Kantolomba project through child sponsorship or supporting our building project, go to <http://www.swan.wa.edu.au/swan-missions/the-kantolomba-project/>.

Coming Events

Cycle 4 Change

Over the past three years, a group of students and experienced adult riders have cycled over 2750 kilometres and through the generous support of the community have raised over \$120 000 in support of disadvantaged children in Zambia and Cambodia.

This year, with your prayers and support, these committed riders will again cycle 1100 kilometres to Albany

and back with the aim of raising a further \$50 000. This will ensure the continued provision of food and education to children through the Kantolomba, Hagar International and Awareness Cambodia projects.

For more information or to donate, go to <http://C4C13.gofundraise.com.au/>

Buy a Brick and Build a School

In 2012 enough bricks were sold in the Buy a Brick fundraiser to establish a complete 2x1 classroom block inclusive of storerooms and a teacher's office at the Light Up Ahead School in Kantolomba. In 2013 the objective is to sell enough bricks to establish a further three classrooms. The goal of Swan Christian College is to complete a school that will cater for over 500 students from Kindergarten to Year 7. This year we aim to sell 15 000 bricks. Each brick costs one Australian dollar.

The Kantolomba Project is a registered charity under the Global Development Group. Tax deductible donations can be made to the Buy a Brick Fundraiser by going to www.gdg.org.au/GiveToJ698N If you pay online please write "Buy a Brick" in the comment box.

Prayer Points

Pray for the families of Kantolomba who are really suffering and struggling to make ends meet. That our Lord might raise up support and help them find a way out of their poverty.

Pray for those officials and businesses who attended the opening of the Light up Ahead School. That they might follow through on their pledge of support for Kantolomba and the Light Up Ahead School.

Pray for the staff of the program: teachers, aides, guards, cooks, administrators etc. That they would be strengthened and encouraged as they fulfil this vital work of the Lord.

For the children attending the school that they might stay healthy, and grow in knowledge of the subjects being taught and an understanding of God's love for them.

Pray for Veronica our coordinator who has been experiencing ill health over the past year. That the Lord might lay His healing hand on her.

Pray for the committee in Perth as we seek God about the future of the project: fundraising ideas, recruiting new sponsors, sending Aussie volunteers and how to expand other services into the Kantolomba community.

