

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

Mother Teresa



Justice
Truth
Solidarity
Dignity
Subsidiarity
Human
Person
Love
Freedom
Common
Good



SILVEIRA HOUSE

2019

ANNUAL REPORT



SILVEIRA HOUSE

Jesuit

Social Justice

&

Development Center

"In the wilderness I shall plant cedar trees" (Isiah 41:19)



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EDITORIAL:

THE OPTION FOR THE POOR IS NOT A POOR OPTION

By Munyaradzi Mushuku

From a pragmatic perspective, the notion that an option for the poor is not a poor option is indefensible. The reason being that once one, or an organisation, dedicates themselves to the service of the less privileged members of our society, the end result is the leeching of your resources and, *in ultima*, one ends up in the very same predicament from which one attempts to pull the other. It is quite like trying to pull an elephant out from a deep hole using a length of rope that you tie around its neck.

And I suppose that this is why many of us choose to give to the poor that which is in excess to us instead of simply sharing what we have regardless of quantities or stocks. Such behaviour has the effect of limitation on our activity towards the blight of poverty yet gives a sense of accomplishment where we pat ourselves on the back for having done something to satiate our moral depravity. This, in my view, is in fact extreme poverty. I say so because financial poverty is far less of a vice than moral poverty.

By virtue of sharing a common life – tied together by humanity, by a common dwelling place we call earth, and by an agreed common stewardship of natural resources – catering for the poor and the lowly amongst us should not be seen as an extra-curricular activity. The fight against poverty is one in which we all are called to participate. It is a matter of duty, not of choice.

Poverty is caused by a number of factors but key among them are the avarice of greed and the villainy of injustice. These are not external



factors that hail from the Heavens or from the depths of Hades, but are bred, nurtured and sometimes even glorified from within the human race itself. So strong are these elements that many of us just choose to be agnostic toward them and, in Zimbabwe for example, when one is given the chance, join the bandwagon. It is not always the fault of the poor that they are in poverty. In this sense, an adequate address of poverty should start and be guided by the element of sustainability.

Sustainability refers to where one is not only given food or money, but also the means to ensure that they have food, always. How do we do this? An example is found here at Silveira House where poor communities are assisted by being trained in certain skills that improve their productivity and they are aided in accessing markets for their products.

Sustainability also entails accountability and transparency. This, by extension, necessitates community engagement, participatory leadership and lobbying. We do this by engaging the companies in communities that are extracting and exploiting natural resources to share their proceeds with the communities surrounding them. And by speaking to and training local leaders to be accountable to the people, especially those leaders who were voted into office to keep their campaign promises and stand firm in favour of their communities and advocate the development of their environs. Accountable leadership ensures growth and development in Zimbabwe. Apart from being a legal requirement in Zimbabwe, the sharing with the communities of those resources that

extractive companies benefit from, ensures poverty alleviation and a better standard of living for the people in these locales. Here, at SH, we opt for this.

Sustainability means giving poor communities a chance to better themselves. It means affording them room to generally grow beyond what they think is their lot in life. Some areas are rife with violence, this can be ended. One simply needs to have a paradigm shift in their mentality, a “eureka” moment of sorts, an opening of the eyes, a changing of mentality. For this to happen wholesale, the starting point is the leadership. Here we help leaders see a different perspective to leadership and understand what it means to be servant leaders of the people.

Yet, an option for the poor concerns itself with giving a helping hand to those that are in dire need. It means giving water to those without, providing sanitation for those whose own was decimated by natural disasters, providing social structures to safeguard and distribute resources and commodities equitably and regularly. This is an inextricable characteristic of the option for the poor and here, we do not hesitate in doing so.

In this case, the option for the poor is far from being a poor one, neither is it an impoverishing one for the instigator: but it is an option in which we participate fully, selflessly, in extricating this evil from among our people. And this is not for self-aggrandisement, but for the creation of a commonwealth in which the prosperity of one person, one community, is the prosperity of the whole nation.

There is a story that is told by many a preacher that highlights the importance of small efforts to bring about the betterment that we all seek. I will re-tell it here.

An elderly man was once walking on a beach. He was enjoying the sunset and taking time to observe the people who were on that stretch of sand. He noticed a young man who

was picking up star fish that had been beached by the high tide in multitudes, and casting them into the sea one at a time. The elderly gentleman saw the dedication that this boy had but realised the futility of the exercise for, surely, there was no way in which he could save them all. He thought it prudent to highlight this futility to the youth. He asked the young man, “what are you doing?” Unmoved, the young man responded, “I am trying to save them from dying”. The elderly gentleman said, “Son, you will never be able to make a difference, there are so many of them!” The young man simply picked one up, and hurled it at the waters, turned to the old man and said, “For that one, I made a difference!”

Though the battle against poverty is always an uphill climb, we strongly believe that by intervening in one life at a time, one community at a time, one leader at a time, one Community Share Ownership Trust at a time, one neighbour at a time, one friend in need at a time, using one dollar at a time, one minute at a time, we can all fight, we can all participate, we can all assist in the fight against poverty. And, as being a collective action that starts with the transformation of our own mind-set, there can be no circumstance where the option for the poor is a poor one at all.

I hope that by reading this Annual Report, you, dear reader, will come to understand how we, at Silveira House, are working to assist the less privileged of our nation by doing the little that we can with the little that we have. And by so doing, that you may be inspired to partner with us, in whatever way, even in your own community, to kick poverty out of our country and help bring about real transformation that will auger well and bode good tidings for the future generations of our great nation.

May God richly bless you.



From the Director's Desk

Fr. A. Moyo looks back on 2019

In February of 2019, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) promulgated the four Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs), which are meant to provide a guideline for the apostolic work of the Jesuits in the next 10 years. These UAPs are as follows:

Exercises of St Ignatius. It involves engaging ourselves in spiritual conversation with those whom we encounter and draw each other to a life of deeper discernment. To walk with the excluded and those on the margins of society requires that we be close to the poor and work to address the economic, political and social



SH Director Fr. A. Moyo with His Holiness, Pope Francis, Rome, 2019

1. To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment.
2. To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.
3. To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future.
4. To collaborate in the care of our common home.

Showing the way to God entails leading people to a deeper encounter with God within their specific context, using the techniques of the Spiritual

causes of their poverty. It calls us to a better understanding of the processes that generate injustice and help develop better alternative models. In journeying with the youth, we together attempt to create a hope-filled future in the midst of enormous challenges faced by young people throughout the world, such as reduced employment opportunities, violence and identity crises. In the process, we allow young people, through their perspective, to help us understand better the epochal change that we are living in and its hope-filled newness. Lastly, we are called to a consciousness of our moral responsibility to care for creation; to an ecological conversion that should

“SHARE YOUR HOPE WHEREVER YOU ARE, ENCOURAGE, CONSOLE, COMFORT AND INVIGORATE. OPEN WIDE THE FUTURE, CREATE POSSIBILITIES AND IMAGINE ALTERNATIVES”.

POPE FRANCIS

impel us to behaviours and socio-economic relationships that respect, preserve, and heal the environment and the whole of creation.

To Jesuits and their collaborators, these four UAPs are not mere strategic objectives as is the norm in development programming. Rather, they provide a spiritual path for our engagement in the transformation of our world: they are orientations that create for us a vision and a horizon that helps us in re-ordering our work and ministries. They are not just about doing, but are more importantly about being: they involve our entire life. We are called upon to personal, communal, and institutional conversion, called upon to be the change that we desire to see and are working towards.

Silveira House, as a Jesuit institution, participates integrally in the living out of these UAPs. Through our projects in leadership development and governance, we attempt to ground leaders and situate them in the reality of the lives lived by the poor, with the objective of awakening in them a sense of moral obligation towards working for the common good. We provide theoretical and technical capacitation that enables the leaders not only to make well-

discerned decisions about the development path of their communities, but that enable them to effectively implement these decisions concretely through sound policy and diligent practice. As well as working for the economic empowerment of young people by providing them with technical, vocational and entrepreneurship skills, we build their social agency and promote their participation in local development processes through leadership training and mentorship. We encourage communities to adopt life and livelihood practices that preserve the health of their environment, and we also respond to the natural disasters that affect them, such as the 2019 Cyclone Idai that affected Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi.

It would not be possible to engage in all these projects if it were not for the support of our various partners. We thus would like to express our deepest gratitude to our funding partners, implementing partners and beneficiaries of our projects, without whom, our sense of purpose would be in disarray. In the same vain, Silveira House would not manage to register its successes in the absence of its dedicated and competent staff. I



S.J.ES International Congress, Rome, 2019



Professor J. Sachs delivers the Key Note Address

personally would like to thank them for being a part of this challenging mission of promoting social justice, especially within an incredibly challenging economic and political context as Zimbabwe's.

The work of Silveira House is part of the larger work of the Jesuits and their collaborators in promoting social justice throughout the world. Last year, the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES) of the Society of Jesus – the office overseeing the global social justice ministry of the Jesuits - celebrated 50 years of its establishment in 1969. An international congress took place in Rome to celebrate the anniversary. The five-day event was attended by 210 Jesuits, their collaborators and experts from 62 countries, including Zimbabwe. The event was a kairos moment in which the Society of Jesus renewed its commitment to the mission of a Faith that does justice and seeks reconciliation. A key moment in the programme was the audience that the participants had with Pope Francis in his Apostolic Palace in the Vatican. His address to the group ended with a challenge to “Share your hope wherever you are, encourage, console, comfort and invigorate. Open wide the

future, create possibilities and imagine alternatives”. Silveira House endeavours to remain ever responsive to this challenge.

Towards the end of 2019, Silveira House embarked on a strategic planning exercise that culminated in the identification of four strategic priorities for 2020-2025, which are:

- I. Governance and Inclusive Political Participation
- II. Peace, Security and Sustainable Development
- III. Domestic Resource Mobilisation and Utilisation
- IV. Climate Justice and Food Security

These strategic priorities will guide us in focusing our attention and resources on structures, processes, mechanisms and social relationships that are at the heart of the malaise besetting Zimbabwe. These four strategic priorities are the key focal areas of



Fr. A. Moyo responds to Prof. Sachs

transformation which are vital for progress on the global development agenda and will play a significant role in reducing poverty in the nation and in ensuring an ecologically regenerative and sustainable Zimbabwe. We entreat all our partners to join us in realising this vision.

A Beast by Any Other Name:

2019 The Year a Cyclone Landed

The year 2019 was challenging in a number of aspects for the people of Zimbabwe. One of the major catastrophes of 2019, if not the worst that we have ever experienced, was the infamous Cyclone Idai. Being a land-locked country, the devastation of cyclones is something with which the nation is not intimately familiar. But this year, we faced a beast for which we were least prepared. The devastation witnessed in the Chimanimani and Chipinge areas to the east of Zimbabwe brought with it a slew of social developmental challenges. These challenges included the availability of potable water for the people in Chipinge as water infrastructure was damaged. Added to this was the peril faced by rural communities whose ablution facilities, private and public, were made desolate in the wake of the cyclone. These threats to the communities of Chipinge prompted us into action.

**...WE FACED A BEAST FOR WHICH WE WERE
LEAST PREPARED...**

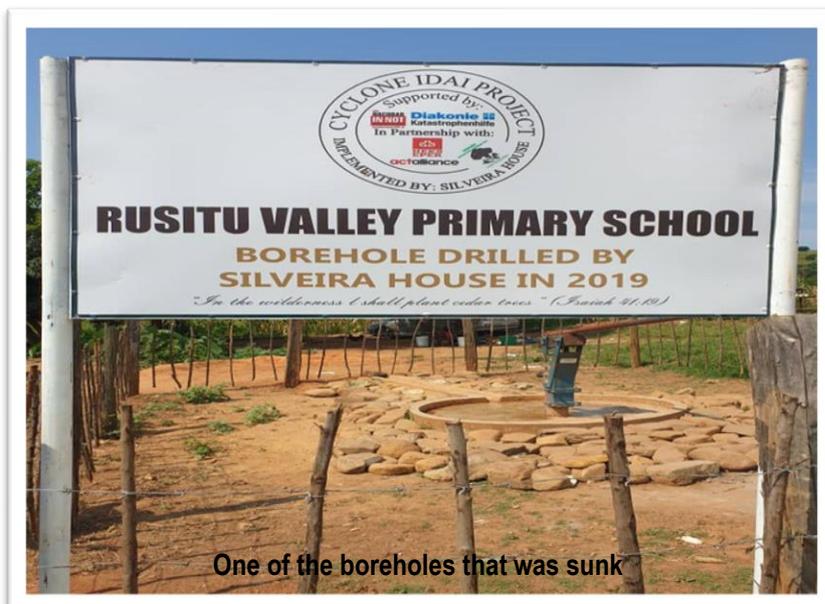
SH launched the Humanitarian Aid Support to Cyclone Idai Affected Population in Chipinge District of Zimbabwe Project which commenced in May 2019 and will run into 2020. The geographical focus of the project was the communities in Chipinge wards 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10. The main focus was to bring to the communities solutions to the unavailability of potable water and averting a potential diarrheal crisis by helping in setting up toilets in the targeted

communities. For this project to succeed, we needed to partner up with the communities themselves and a number of government and local government departments which included the Rural District Councils (RDCs), the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC), the District Development Fund (DDF) and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Recreation (MoYSR).

With the assistance of the DDF, boreholes were cited, surveyed, tested for capacity and sunk in Mooiplaats, Christina, Maundwa, Chivhunze Primary and Secondary schools and sections 7, 8 and 10 of Tongogara Refugee Camp. In total, 8 new boreholes, out of an envisaged 7, were sunk. In addition to the new boreholes, the Project managed to

rehabilitate 26 boreholes that had been affected by the cyclone. This move went a long way in alleviating the water situation in the district. As a

safety and international standards compliance measure, 34 samples were obtained and tested from these boreholes. Only 3 samples of these were found to be unsafe for human consumption as they contained coliforms (cholera causing bacteria). The three boreholes were treated with chlorine and re-tested. This secondary testing showed that the water was then safe for consumption and thus we had 34 safe, functioning water sources. The impact is enormous: over 15



One of the boreholes that was sunk

management committees. The pump caretakers were equipped with the tools and grease that they needed to repair and maintain the pumps ensuring the longevity of these devices. This would ensure that the pumps are safe from vandalism and that every individual in the targeted wards and constituencies has adequate access to this precious resource.

000 people in the targeted wards now have access to nontoxic, clean and bountiful water. With the coming of 2020, the future for these communities is much brighter than it was in the aftermath of Idai.

Apart from the physical rehabilitation of infrastructure, individuals were identified in the communities with assistance from the Ministry of Youth, Sport & Recreation and from the RDCs to serve as water management committee members and pump caretakers. A total of 34 people were trained in water management by the SH and Ministry of Health & Child Care teams. Another 34 were trained in pump maintenance by the DDF. The water management committees were charged with ensuring the security of the boreholes by erecting fences around them; this was done for the majority of sites. There was also need to set up effective run-off drainage canals and stone platforms for people; this too was done by the

Mutema clinic in Ward 3, Mabuyaye village, Chipinge, played host to a 6 day training course for builders that benefitted 32 builders equipping them with skills and knowhow of Blair Ventilated Improved Pit-latrines (BVIP) construction as well as the rehabilitation of Upgradeable Blair Ventilated Improved Pit-latrines (UBVIP). This course was conducted by experts in the field of Environmental Health. Thus empowered, and with the help of most of the targeted communities and project partners, this team of builders went on to construct a total of 355 new toilets for



The Disability Friendly BVIP

household and community use in wards 1, 3 and 5. They also succeeded in



Raring to go: Builders after training

rehabilitating 131 toilets in ward 3. Among the new structures was a novelty in the area: a disabled-person accessible pit-latrine. This differs from the rest in that it has a ramp, handrails and a chamber pot to assist the beneficiary with access and full utilisation of the facility. The team effort in this endeavour has positively impacted thousands of people in Chipinge from the builders, who themselves were earning a stipend for their work, work-kits and protective clothing, to the beneficiaries of the project and has potentially saved the lives of thousands more.

The Project conducted, in tandem with the construction and rehabilitation of toilets, 3 refresher training courses for 42 Village Health Workers (VHWs) on Participatory Health and Hygiene Education (PHHE) at ward level. Upon completion of the refresher trainings the VHWs went on to conduct PHHE sessions at village level and distributed Information Education Communication (IEC) materials. Furthermore, 600 households benefited

from the distribution of Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) kits consisting of 1 bucket with a tap, 2 bars of soap, a pack of 10 baby diapers, a pack of 10 sanitary pads and water purification tablets (Aqua tablets).

In the spirit of inclusion and gender sensitivity, the project, in all its aspects, afforded equal opportunities to both men and women, young and elderly people and the vulnerable in society i.e. orphans and the disabled. The level of participation of women and youth in the water committees and borehole caretaker teams was encouraging. However, women shied away from the opportunities accorded to builders as they perceived this to be a male only field.

While we are happy with the results of the projects, elated over the number of lives that were impacted and grateful that we managed to play a small part in this national disaster, there are challenges that were faced. These were emanating mostly from the community themselves.

The toilet construction and rehabilitation project required that communities assist with bricks and labour to dig the pits, one community in ward 5 failed, due to them being classified as an illegal settlement, to deliver in any of these aspects. This meant that resources were reallocated to other communities at the detriment of this particular village. By any standard, one such drawback is unacceptable. Financial challenges that were faced were largely due to the broader economic challenges facing the country. This saw the project suffer delays as the availability of goods needed was not always guaranteed; the payment for such goods was somewhat impeded by the scrapping of the Multi-Currency system and imposition of a

diminutive exchange rate which made materials cost more than they had been previously. Insurmountable as this seemed, the project still managed to surpass its targets.

Some of the targeted participants for the PHHE workshop were residents at the Tongogara refugee camp. These failed to attend the workshops as a result of unspecified reasons.

The humanitarian project implemented by



A beneficiary using a tipy-tap

SH in Chipinge had an intension of improving people's lives through drilling boreholes, construction of household latrines, distribution of WASH Kits and equipping communities with knowledge on PHHE, standard latrine construction, water source care, repair and maintenance. Training of water management committees resulted in improved knowledge on borehole maintenance. After the training, the water point committees erected fences and paved the ground around the boreholes, this indicated the gain in knowledge from the training workshops. Borehole drilling at Tongogara Refugee Camp resulted in communities fetching water at any given time compared to the previous 2-hour water supply per day. This initiative improved the household utilisation of

water and up-scaled hygiene standards. In schools, the drilling of boreholes reduced the walking distances to the water sources and improved the quality of drinking water as these institutions were previously collecting water from open sources. This shaved the time lost by both teachers and pupils. School children are now consuming water at any given time without any restrictions as they are now fetching water within a radius of 500 meters. Following the construction of household

latrines the communities are realising a decrease in open defecation, which translates into improved human dignity and reduction in the possibility of spreading diseases.

The future, as we envisage it, holds nothing less of great prospects. The foundations of good working relationships with relevant government departments, and the communities themselves, have been laid. This bodes well for progress. The challenges that were faced are nothing short of lessons that have been learnt which, as experience has taught, will always be invaluable as we move forward. Those that had lagged behind, having seen the benefit to others, are itching to work hard and reach or even surpass the standard that has been set. SH and our benevolent partners, will continue to work towards the betterment of these affected communities. We hope and pray that this work will go on and that lives may continue to be transformed for the better;

For the Greater Glory of God

Empowering Leaders: Marondera RDC Workshop

It is more of a commonality that with each general election, a new crop of local leaders finds themselves in roles for which their normal academic education and social conditioning do not sufficiently prepare them. Many a time, problems that arise in local authorities are largely due to this fact and the suffering is felt by the electorate and made apparent in some aspects of service delivery. In light of this, elected officials are in need of capacity building to assist them in their new roles. As such, on the 16th and 17th of December, Silveira House, in conjunction with the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Ministry of Local Government,

Leading the attendance roster was the CEO of Marondera RDC, Mr. Gundo, and the District Development Coordinator (DDC) for Marondera, Mr. Masawi. A total of 30 participants, including 5 women, were at the 2 day workshop. 23 of these were elected councillors with the rest being functionaries at the RDC and the DDCs office in the capital of Mashonaland East Province.

The workshop had three facilitators, experts in their fields, drawn from government i.e. Mr. Shumba from the Public Service Commission, Mr. Chikomo from the Ministry of Local Government and



Hitting Home: A facilitator Stresses a Point at the Workshop

held a capacity building workshop for councillors and council secretariat members for the Marondera Rural District Council (RDC) at Chibhanguza Hotel in Murehwa.

civil society i.e. Mr. Medhekeni from Silveira House. These three touched on a number of topics, encouraging interaction of the participants and also employed the use of ICT in their presentations. Both their content and methods of

presentations made the workshop a resounding success, as highlighted in the evaluations that followed.

Mr. Shumba, who was first to make presentations, exposed the participants to the broader vision of the current government, the government's Results Based Management Framework, the broad mandate of local authorities, and Marondera RDC's strategic plan. These are important elements that need to be grasped by public and elected officials to assist them in aligning their duties and policies with the general thrust of the Second Republic. He also assisted participants with an appreciation of leadership qualities including team building, peace building, customer care and general self-care and presentation. Participants were helped to broaden their worldview to understand that their actions no longer have limited repercussions but have a global impact; one that will also resound in the future.

The next facilitator was Mr. Chikomo. His presentations centred on governance matters, taking the participants through their strategic and executive leadership responsibilities ranging from policy formulation to the management of meetings at district, ward and village levels. He underlined the democratic nature of the governance processes, stressing the need for accountability and transparency. This was a departure from the practices of the past wherein councillors viewed themselves not as facilitators or servant leaders but as bosses (*maShefu*) to be revered and have their every word regarded as inscrutable truth. Such a manner of leadership exposed councillors to corruption as there was no transparency in their operation.

Service delivery is a critical component to public local authority office. This was the thrust that Mr. Madhekeni's presentation

pursued. He explained that council leaders must realise that service delivery issues are no longer simple activities that local authorities can provide within their interests and resource capacity but, are now international and constitutional obligations as most of them are now classified as fundamental human rights. He illustrated his point by using the delivery of water of and sanitation. Water and sanitation are a constitutionally protected right and a leadership mandate exists for these to be availed to the people in their wards. Dispensing ones duties is not just a matter of favour for the people, but rather servicing of the rights of the constituents is a privilege bestowed upon the leader by the electorate. There can be no compromises or any greater self-serving priorities in this regard.

The workshop managed to live up to the expectations set for it by the CEO of the RDC in his keynote address at the beginning. He had stressed the need of such a workshop for the district officials and created hype among them that they are not wasting their time by having an erstwhile friend, Silveira House, providing this platform. The participants attested to the usefulness of such events and went on to request that they are made more frequent to assist them in being the best that they can be.

There was one key disappointment however, and this had to do with gender parity. Of the 30 participants, and 3 facilitators, only 5 individuals were female. These 5 ladies did not participate at all in the interactive sessions. This highlighted the general nature of the patriarchal society in which we live. Despite there being legislation to ensure gender parity, our nation and local leadership still faces this predicament. It was unanimously agreed that both the coordinators of these workshops and the participating

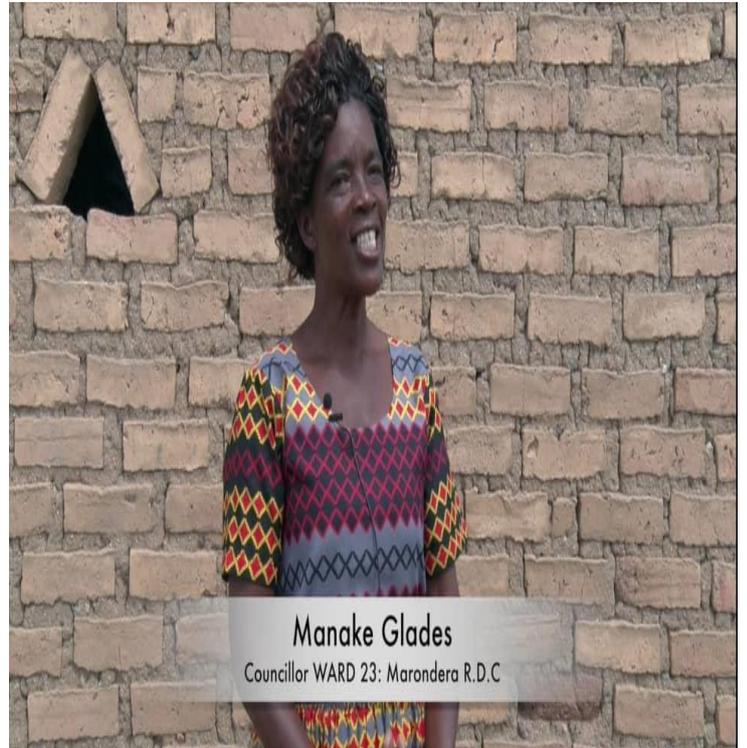
authorities need to ensure that more women and youth are brought in to participate as leadership is not, cannot, should not, be the preserve of the men in society.

Overall, the leadership of Marondera RDC and the Marondera DDC were satisfied with the content, knowledge and delivery of the facilitators and have strongly urged Silveira House to make this training workshop more frequent and more inclusive even to incorporate individuals in the lower echelons of local authority leadership. There is, thus, a lot more work to be done. The harvest is great.

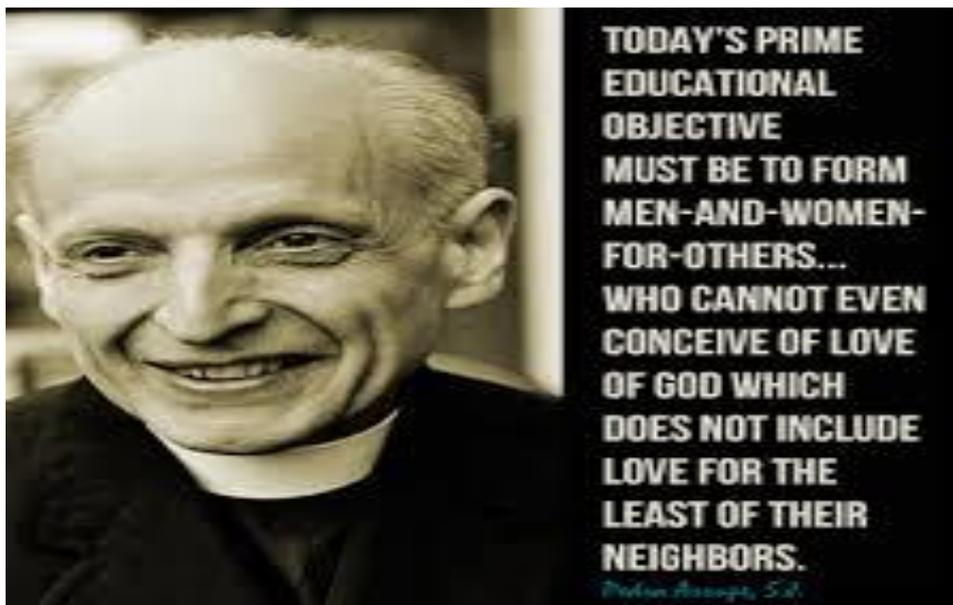


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“Without SH training and empowerment, I would not be a councillor”



MOULDING YOUNG MINDS: THE YOUTH CONFIDENCE AND ESTEEM BUILDING WORKSHOP

Zimbabwe is largely a patriarchal society. This socialisation aspect is more apparent in the rural communities of the country as well as among the less affluent communities in urban areas. Being thus patriarchal, it is the status quo that most leadership positions, from the national

affected the youth with regards to leadership positions and roles?

It has left many disenfranchised all the way to total disinterest.

Such a situation does not bode well for a nation where over half the population is below the age of 40 and 43.5% of registered voters as at 2018 are below 35.



Participants at the Workshop

In an effort to reorient the mentality of the young people, Silveira House initiated capacity building fora with youth from various parts of the country. And in 2019 the focus groups were drawn from Mt Darwin and Hopley communities. Mt Darwin is a rural area in the northern part of Mashonaland Central Province and Hopley is a new high density settlement in Harare South Constituency.

structure right down to local village leadership, are occupied by men. Emphasis being on “men”: not boys, men. Currently, in many local and village communities, youth are considered to be those aged 40 and below, whether one is married or not. The nature of our socialisation has left a dent on the confidence and self-esteem of the youth in the country who, by and large, do not view themselves as eligible, or even capable, of holding any kind of office or positions of leadership in the community structures: the young cannot be in such positions as they know nothing of the matters of the world. Zimbabwe, according to our constitution (Ch. 5 S91 ss1 (b)), will never have a 35 year old president. How has this

These youth were hosted at Silveira House from the 9th to the 11th of July 2019 for a confidence and self-esteem building workshop. This workshop was attended by youth from Hopley and Mt Darwin who are part of the groups in the Silveira House Youth, Governance and Leadership project, as well as youth mentors from Mt Darwin and Hopley, youth representatives from ROOTS Africa, University of Zimbabwe press club and Shingirirai Youth Ministry. These latter individuals served as panellists during the panel session. In total, there were 72 participants, 66 of which were youth and 32 of these were female.

Empowering the young minds encompassed a number of topics that journeyed the youth from being introverted

to being objective, opinionated and able to lobby and express ideas for themselves to institute the changes and solutions that would meet their needs. The topics covered a vast array of issues including, but not limited to, the awareness of self that helps one be a responsible, observant, growing, discerning and decisive individual; heroic leadership where a leader is led by the principles of selflessness, love, and seeking to be a positive influence among ones' peers; the dichotomy between a good and a bad leader wherein a good leader is a listening leader, a learning leader (from elders, tradition and history), a proactive leader who accommodates those with whom s/he leads and those who lead them; assertiveness and steadfastness to decisions so as to implement strategies and plans in the community together with the tenets of advocacy and lobbying which

transformation in their communities. Over the course of the three day event, the young people were also encouraged to familiarise themselves with national and international guiding statutes on the rights of the youth with particular reference to the Zimbabwe National Youth Charter and the African Youth Charter.

Beyond the intellectual formation, the youth were also exhorted to constantly challenge themselves. Being stagnant and complacent makes innovation and ingenuity a tall and unimportant order and yet these are the bases upon which the future is built. As such, a self-aware youth, who constantly strives to be more, and better, than they were yesterday, is not only a panacea for the community but an invaluable asset and positive influencer among his/her peers. Only then, as the facilitators put it, can the young of Mt



Inside Parliament Building

assist the youth in both bringing to the fore their issues and addressing them to the relevant authorities so as to institute real

Darwin and Hopley be agents of tangible and lasting transformation in their homes and surroundings.

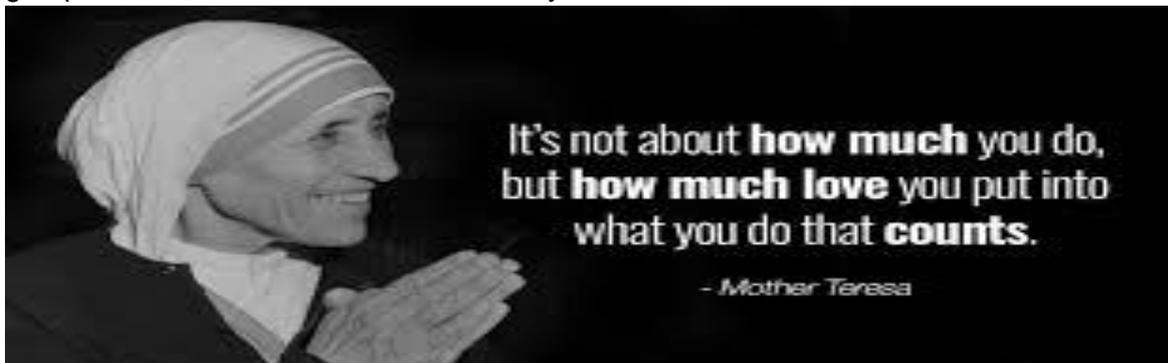
The icing on the cake at the course was the scheduled visit to Parliament. Many, if not all of the young people from these two diverse areas, different as they were, had never been to Parliament. To say that this visit was an eye opener is an understatement. They had the opportunity to see and be at the place where the elected national leaders made decisions that affected and shaped the daily lives of all Zimbabwean citizens. The elation and the aura of euphoria were almost tangible as attested to by the beaming smiles on the faces of many of them. They had the chance to ask questions of the guide at parliament but only a few came from them as they were too star-struck by the experience. Many were shocked to realise that the requirements for becoming a Member of Parliament were not prohibitive at all. Any Zimbabwean citizen, being a registered voter and is above the age of 21 can ordinarily become a legislative representative. This was something unknown to this group and it gave quite a few of them the impetus to become leaders in their own communities. The tour guide explained the bi-cameral system of Parliament that we have in Zimbabwe, the thematic Parliamentary Portfolio Committees and their constitution and taught the group about the leadership of Parliament personified in the Speaker of Parliament, Adv. Jacob Mudhenda and Senate President Mrs. Mabel Chinomona. These were names the majority of the group had never heard of neither had they

even dreamt of seeing their pictures, let alone standing in the halls of power: Parliament and Senate main galleries.

This was the game changer.

The impact of this workshop, the manner in which it poised the young people to become more proactive in their communities, was witnessed upon follow up visits to their home constituencies. One young man was made a village head in his home village after displaying to the headman his capabilities and his desire to be an agent of community transformation in Mt Darwin. Further, 2 young women became occupants of leadership positions in their wards: one as a Community Gender champion and the other as a Justice for Children ward coordinator.

Set a child in the right path and s/he will not depart from it. This statement from the Book of Proverbs, paraphrased here, aptly captures the endeavours of the Confidence and Esteem Building workshop and the ensuing results that were witnessed as the year progressed. This will remain a great achievement on the part of the institution as the team was able to impart a transformation seeking dynamic in the lives of these young people. God be praised for all His goodness to us. We also extend thanks to all who partnered and participated with Silveira House to make this workshop the success that it was.



Catch Them Young: Mt. Darwin Youth take part in Local Leadership

The Advocacy and Peace Building Program worked with the youth in Mt. Darwin in the north west of Mashonaland Central Province and Hopley in the South East of Harare Province to enhance their involvement and participation in decision making within the governance structures in their communities.

These governance structures include the Village Assemblies (VA), Village Development Committees (VIDCO), Ward Development Committees (WADCO) and Ward Assemblies (WA).

This youth empowerment project ran for a five-month period from May to September 2019. It was aimed at transforming the mindset of the targeted youth groups and constituencies and helped to create more space for the youth within the community local governance structures.



The Mt Darwin District Development Coordinator, Mr. Maburo, addresses youth at the Stakeholders' Meeting

Following the Youth Confidence and Esteem Building Workshop held at Silveira House from the 9th to the 11th July 2019, an all stakeholders' meeting was held in Mt Darwin to discuss and highlight issues to

do with the participation of youth in leadership structures and the prevalence of early marriage of young girls. This was attended by 110 individuals from wards 9 and 36 of the district.

A snap survey was conducted to ascertain youth participation in leadership structures in the area. The survey revealed that around 25.4% of village structures have active youth participation, with only 2 young men appointed as acting village heads. Reasons for this, as seen in the three day leadership workshop that followed, included the general ignorance of the requirements by the Constitution of Zimbabwe section 20 and Statutory Instrument 15 of 2000 which speak of the active participation and involvement of the youth. Also highlighted by the elders was

the propensity of the youth to seek financial gain and stave from voluntary participation in leadership. This search for money has rendered many youth in the area itinerant and thus, having little

grounding, thus it would be short of irresponsible to thrust them into leadership. In response, the young people quipped that they were left out, especially

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others

Martin Luther King Jr.

of the national devolution of power program that has been manned almost exclusively by the elderly and senior members of society.

However, in the aftermath of this workshop, by the end of August 2019, 46 VIDCOs of 59, representing 78%, in wards 9 and 36, had incorporated youth in their leadership structures. These included a young village head who was appointed after the headman hailed the Community Dialogue as an eye opener. For the first time in 2 years, ward 36 made a Development Levy contribution of ZWD80 owing to the youth participation in the leadership of the ward. More positivity was shown when two young women courageously volunteered to take up new leadership positions: one as a Community Gender champion and the other as a Justice for Children ward coordinator. The community as a whole started to become more open to youth initiatives so much so that a netball tournament was organised and hosted in ward 36 between the Mt Darwin and Hopley youth groups. The community witnessed the success of this even without the previous hindrances brought up by endless protocol and procedure.

To aid the Mt Darwin and Hopley youth communities in continued discussion around their participation in local governance and policy making, the project connected these communities with some community radio stations. This relationship will assist in the dissemination of information and encourage further dialogue on new developments in

governance and help keep the youth abreast with issues arising and affecting their communities. Information, after all, is power.

It is our hope and ardent desire that this trend of youth participation in leadership is continued in these two communities as the immediate results have been very promising. Despite the reservations that had been raised by the stakeholders' meeting that included youth apathy and geriatric stoicism, the initial inception of the young in the VIDCOs of Mt Darwin has been a breath of fresh air in the community and has shown promise of positivity. This is but one of the usually untapped and unexplored benefits of youth empowerment and inclusion in community dialogue and decision making.



A Junior Parliamentarian addresses the Mt Darwin Stakeholders' meeting

In their own words:



Youth on Community Leadership



Sustainable Development: The Key to Human Development

Reflections on Silveira House in 2019

By Ignatius T. Makumborenga

During my community outreach programs with the department of Community Development at Silveira House, I have come across people who attest to having been trained by Silveira House in life skills like farming, carpentry, or dress making at one point or another in their lives. They remain beneficiaries of the same skills set offered by the organization, many years down the line. However, in some cases, despite the trainings they underwent through the years, they have remained economically the same. This got me thinking: was there a deficiency in what Silveira House offered then? Why has the training not empowered or taken the recipients to the next level on the socio-economic ladder? More than a decade later, they have still not been financially 'transformed'. What is the missing link? Has the word that came out of Silveira House's 'mouth' returned empty handed (cf Isaiah 55:11)?

Conversely, I have met people who have heaped mountains of praises on Silveira House for having transformed them to be whom and what they are now. This, for

example, is the case for one primary school headmaster, who started off as a carpenter/brick layer in the days of the then Br Fidelis Mukonori SJ (now a priest) and the late Br Ladislaus Bvukumbgwe SJ. He has since upgraded himself, having trained as a teacher and having risen through the ranks to become a substantive school head.



I have likened the paradox to the biblical seed in Luke's Gospel, some of which fell on rocky ground, some among thorns, and others on

good soil (Lk 8:4-15?)

After going through Silveira House trainings, some have transformed while others have remained where they were before Silveira House's training. My question is why?

In the final year of the Sustainable Peace and Development project, I was delighted to participate in the end of project internal evaluation exercise, retracing the path of social justice and community development initiatives between 2017 and 2019. It struck me that the project was not just about peace and development, but rather about **sustainable** peace and development. Was sustainability the missing link or was the missing link the adaptability of the same?

This short personal reflection may not unravel the paradox of the unequal transformation of communities and individuals. It will, nonetheless, surely provoke further inquiry into the Centre's programming methodologies. If the previous, 'passive' approaches to programming created perpetual dependency among communities, participatory approaches seem to fare better. This is one aspect I have come to appreciate about Silveira House's approach to livelihoods today.



Fr. Mukonori

For the just ended project, after training for transformation and basic business management workshops, beneficiaries were asked to generate their own business ideas in groups. They had to show a commitment to the project or business idea by contributing something to it. For example, those that chose to do poultry farming had to construct a fowl run using their own resources. Such a commitment laid the foundation upon which livelihood projects were built. Therein lay the sustainability element: group members would not let the project die since they had invested personal resources to a project of their choice. This brings to mind what the late former Jesuit Superior General once said, that "the problems of the poor are not addressed by charity, but through demands that justice

be done."¹ Indeed, seemingly content with the status quo, charity cases seldom rise above who and what they are. Justice demands that they be rocked out of their comfort zone to work for their own livelihood and with minimal support. This has become the *modus operandi* for Silveira House to transform communities.

The training for transformation workshops empowered the groups to adapt to and make the best out of the changing socio-economic and political environment and have a positive attitude even in the face of hopelessness. For, as William Arthur Ward says, while the pessimist complains about the wind, the optimist expects it to change, while the realist adjusts the sails.

A beneficiary of the apiary project in ward 23 Marondera rural district council, remarked that Silveira house had taught them how to 'fish' and had not simply given them the proverbial fish. He boldly asserted that even if the organization were to move on, they would not be found wanting, as they had mastered the rules of the game and that those among the beneficiaries of the development projects that 'cried for fish', instead of being 'taught how to fish', fizzled out of business. They were like the biblical foolish virgins that did not take with them enough oil as they waited for the coming of the groom (Mt 25:1-13). This is further testimony that the 'gospel of sustainability' had taken root in the communities that Silveira House had worked with.

Alive to the *See, Judge and Act* philosophy, Silveira House has, through the years, sought to contribute to the continuous development of communities and individuals through multi-faceted programs. We have shifted focus many times to keep up with changing times and

¹ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, "The service of faith and the promotion of justice", in: *Promotio Iustitiae*, 2007/3, no. 96, p.10.



Trained in cloth-making, these women display their wares

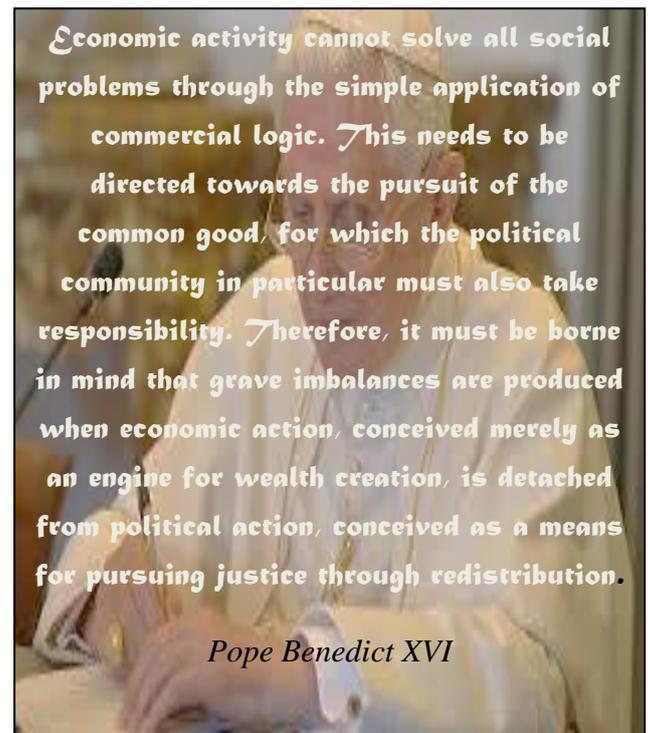
avoid stagnation. It is like a breath of fresh air to see the Centre moving away from only seeking to protect the vulnerable from the ravages of poor leadership and bad governance, to influencing the policy makers. There is a triangulation of bottom-up and top-down approaches to social justice and community development.

To expect the poor to transcend the poverty bar without putting pressure on those that keep on shifting the bar would be tantamount to only treating the symptoms of a deep-seated cancer. The preferential option for the poor is not a poor option. Using the words of the Psalmist (Ps: 119), it 'comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comforted'—those in positions of authority and who make decisions that affect the poor.

I believe that the sustained advocacy trajectory aimed at policy makers and political leaders is a worthy cause in the struggle for social justice and solidarity with the poor.

Focusing on the country's leadership in the fight against the socio-economic malaise may have been the missing link in the jigsaw puzzle of human and community development and social justice in the early days of Silveira House. The option to focus on policy makers is in the

same vein as the preferential option for the poor, not a poor option. Does the social teaching of the Church not remind us of our moral duty to contribute to the creation of socio-economic, political, and cultural institutions, systems and processes that facilitate integral growth and fulfillment of the human person? I guess this is what motivated the founding fathers of Silveira House, who, moved by human suffering, sought to advance the cause for social justice, sharing in their joy and hope, grief, and anguish². In these times of rapid transformation and great aspirations such a vision is undoubtedly a priority service to the Church and to the World.³



² Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, & December 1965.

³³ Cf. Letter of Father General on "Network collaboration on social issues", Rome January 15, 2003

MY 2019: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS OF A DEVELOPMENT AGENT

By Isaac Mumpande

2019 was yet another year in which positive change, due to our development interventions, continued to be visible among the communities with whom we work. Development has always been a slow process which requires patience from both the agents (catalysts) of development and the beneficiaries of development interventions. One step at a time in the right direction makes a world of difference.

The year 2019 was when the winding up the first phase of the CSOT (Community Share Ownership Trust) project and the realisation of the fruits of a three-year project was made manifest among the CSOTs and community

leaders. It was fascinating to see the Community Share Ownership Trusts transforming into transparent and accountable entities to the communities, taking ownership of the developmental variables that the project had championed over the three years.

When I reflect on the personal and institutional changes that happened within the Zvishavane CSOT - among CSOTs board members and staff - to enable them to have financial and administrative systems and practices that warranted them to achieve a clean

audit report, I am reminded of how the development process starts: from the mind-set changes within an individual to the mind-set changes in society. Since its establishment in 2012, the Zvishavane CSOT had been grappling with qualified audited financial reports due to lack of proper institutional systems and bad practices by board members. The Zvishavane CSOT case is just one of the many similar cases

among CSOT where transformation has been seen.

Depending on the approach adopted by a project, development beneficiaries sometimes tend to take developmental

interventions as once off interventions meant to please the donor. Yet for development to be sustainable the project must identify with the people, hold the hand of the community and move with it at its pace.

The Project Completion Survey conducted between January and March 2019 was a landmark experience in my community development career. I had time to carefully listen to the narratives, views, observations, and experiences of community members. Stories about how they have transformed as individuals and communities. These

"When Silveira House came to work with our CSOTs in 2016, we brushed it aside as one of those usual critics of the CSOTs. However, it did not take long before we realised that this organisation was different from others. It came and held our hand and slowly together we moved forward towards where we are today in 2019. I am happy that, for the first time since 2012, our audit report has come out clean."

Chief Masunda. Zvishavane CSOT Chairman



were not stage-managed narrations meant to please us, but were backed by visible evidence.

I realised that most of the transformation alluded to by the communities centred on individual mind-set change among the community leaders and ordinary community members. Thus, the relationship of dependence that was built over years with community and district stakeholders became a bond we could easily loosen. It grew into a bond that was far beyond the catalysts and development beneficiary relationship: a bond of partners in the development of their communities and society.

The CSOTs realised that they were stewards of resources that belonged to the people in their communities. And that these resources were earmarked to transform the lives of many current and future generations through social development and infrastructural projects. They also realised that they are part of the community they serve, and that transparency and accountability were values that would bring them closer to these communities.

Wherever there is money and limited transparency, relations are greatly strained because of suspicions. As such, a number of communities harboured serious misgivings about the CSOTs: most of which were later proven to be unfounded. As the program progressed, it became clear

that lack of transparency, to the communities, on the part of the CSOT fed the rumour mills on the perceived abuse of Trust funds and when transparency was restored, communities started supporting and cooperating with the COSTs.

In the same year I was also exposed to the generational struggle between the old and the young in Mt. Darwin district of Mashonaland Central province. This struggle was premised on the composition of community governance structures such as the Village Development Committees and Ward Development Committees. For a long time, these structures have been largely dominated by the old generation whose development priorities are glaringly different from the younger generation. Efforts to bridge the differences between generations have been some of the most challenging development interventions that I have ever experienced. The main challenge was how to reconcile these seemingly divergent generational perspectives. The older generation has not only been conservative but also expected the younger generation to be equally conservative. Yet the younger generation, exposed to Western education and imbued with mantras of democracy, is liberal in nature and willing to explore the world cultures



My greatest testimony in 2019 has been to manage to build bridges on this almost impossible generational gap through mind-set change.

despite the perceived dangers they pose to the local culture. Thus, the community development structures were devoid of the younger generations who should have been included in the structures to facilitate smooth transitional processes from the older generation to the younger generation when the time does come.

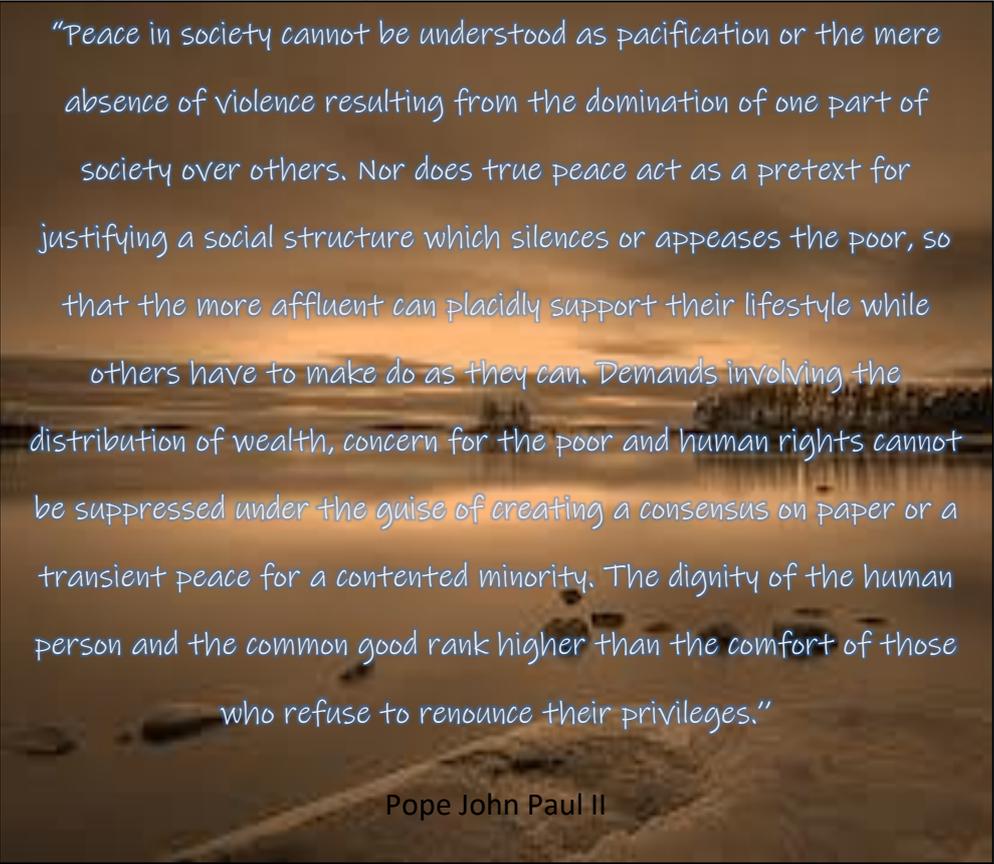
With the two schools of thought at loggerheads, creating a long-lasting bridge between the generations was both challenging and fascinating. The only opportunity available was that both camps were prepared to listen to an outsider. This was an opportunity every development agent would exploit.

My greatest testimony in 2019 has been to manage to build bridges on this almost impossible generational gap through mind-set change.

It was refreshing to see the generational gap slowly closing and

community members appreciating their differences of opinions for development. This was revolutionary! Especially the inclusion of young people into the communities' governance structures to ensure that development plans from the village to ward and then the district are all-inclusive in nature. With the young as part of the community governance structures, the transitional process is guaranteed to succeed.

2019 will go down as an eventful year: a year in which many people had personal paradigm shifts in their mentality and have been left all the better off for it. The year also changed my perception of community dynamics. I am now a development agent who is not only patient with development processes but also values small changes and steps towards the right direction in the development of the communities.



"Peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from the domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle while others have to make do as they can. Demands involving the distribution of wealth, concern for the poor and human rights cannot be suppressed under the guise of creating a consensus on paper or a transient peace for a contented minority. The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges."

Pope John Paul II



OF FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISHES: HOW A LITTLE GOES A **LONG** WAY

In 2019, the Silveira House Youth Project that was active in Mt Darwin and Hopley awarded to the participating youth groups a small incentive into their projects to either boost or aid them to kick off their projected plans. This grant was not a large amount of money, but has been used by the various groups to drastically transform their lives, revitalise their projects and set them upon the path of many more achievements to come in 2020.

These are their stories

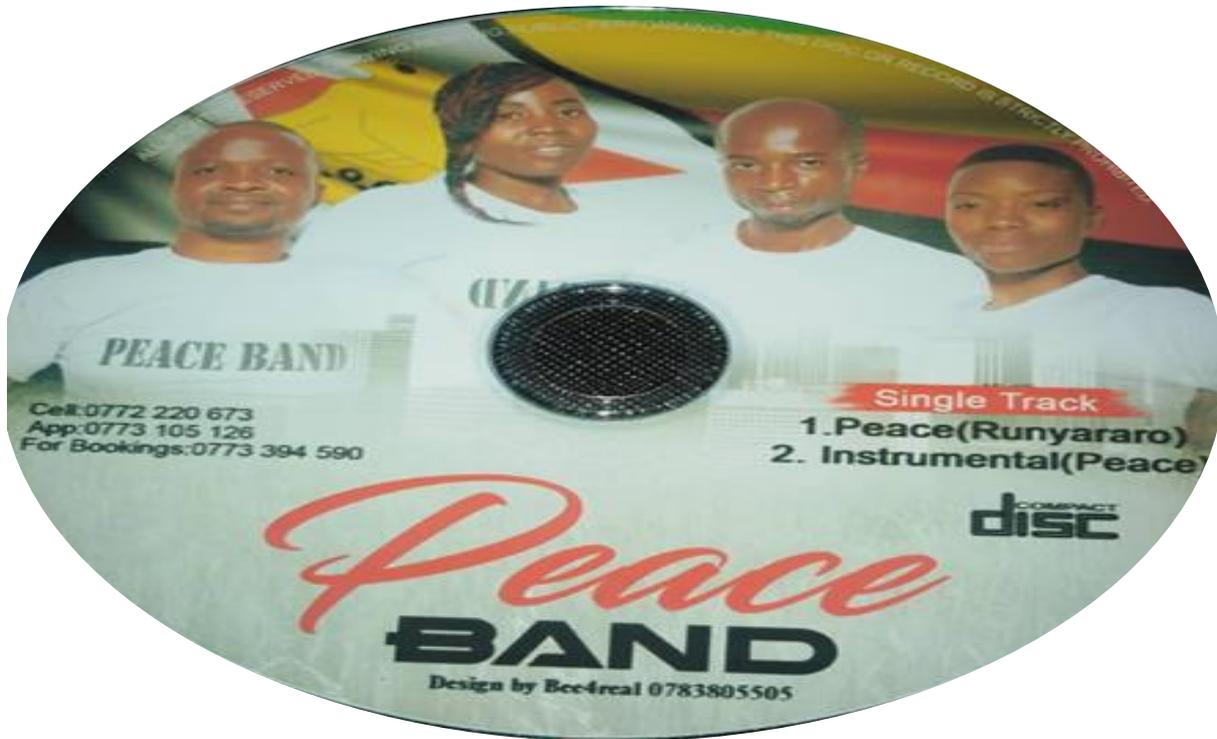
BY THE DOTITO FOOTBALL SOCIAL LEAGUE BOARD

Our group is called the Dotito Football Social League Board. It is based in Mt Darwin District, Dotito ward 9 under Chief Dotito. We recently received a small grant of USD\$150 from Silveira House to expand the youth activities within our project. We held a refresher course training for coaches, club captains and referees. From the training we achieved the following:

- Referees can now effectively manage matches right from the kick-off until fulltime (90mins). Before the refresher course, it was rare to effectively manage full matches due to incompetence, inability to give decisions and even lack of discipline from the referees themselves.
- Coaches can now teach players many soccer skills which now create stiff competition amongst the football clubs.
- Coaches can now preach discipline to the players since violence was sometimes one of the obstacles to these matches. Our community is now more peaceful as a result.
- Supporters are now also taught by the coaches on how to peacefully encourage, support and motivate players.
- Captains now politely engage referees if there are any misunderstandings during matches.
- Captains now have knowledge on all their roles, during trainings and during matches.

Violence used to mar the soccer matches. After the refresher course, whenever there is a football match there is peace, and these are positive changes since most leaders are now equipped and knowledgeable. Some of the disengaged youth in our community have also begun showing interest in soccer. This is positive, as there is a potential that they will no longer spend time engaging in social ills such as drugs as some are now. Furthermore, due to the peaceful nature of the soccer matches, more youth are now participating. The small youth grant has positively affected people's lives in such a way that trained people could be taken to higher levels as professional coaches and referees if they upgrade themselves.





IF MUSIC BE THE FRUIT OF LOVE...

By the Hopley Peace Band

We are the Hopley Peace band. Our band is a small outfit that is trying to bring a difference, especially in the area of peace advocacy and peace building in our community using Music as the main medium. We have been together for a while now but have been unable to make any recordings. This year, 2019, we received a Youth Small Prize Money award from Silveira House that has helped realise one of our main goals which has been to record a song in an actual music studio. We managed. We recorded our song entitled Peace. Our hope is to influence the community in which we live to strive for peace: - peace in the homes, peace at workplaces, peace in public areas and especially peace in the hearts of people.

We live in a community that is plagued by poverty and unemployment and this is breeding ground for violent crime, gangs, drug abuse, domestic violence and sexual abuse, among other vices. With our partnership with Silveira House, and now our new link to Community Radio Harare (through SH), we are spreading the word through music, the food of love.

In September, we managed to host a tree planting peace ceremony at the Youth Centre in our area.

Our message is spreading, our community is changing, our lives have been set on a better path and our God-given talents are receiving the exposure that we lacked before. With the help of God, and partners like SH, we will go far, beyond our wildest dreams.

Thank you to the SH team, to the director, Fr. Moyo, to the Jesuits, for giving us this chance to turn our lives around, and to be light in an otherwise dark world. God bless you.

DANCE TO CHANGE THE WORLD!!!



Traditional Dance Group in Action

Zimbabwean art and dance has long been known and marketed around the world. Our traditional music and dance expressions have also changed the lives of performers for ages. We speak of Tumbuka dance group, Mbira dzeNharira, Stella Chiweshe, Mokoomba and many more. These have been an inspiration to us so much so that on the 6th of August 2019, we came together in Dotito to form the Dotito Performing Arts and Theatre Group. The aim of the group is to engage the community by invoking discussion over issues that affect young people in our community especially early childhood marriages, STIs, HIV, drug abuse, sexual abuse, domestic and gender based violence, education, youth participation in community development.

With the aid from the SH Youth Small Prize Money, we have started a chicken rearing business focusing on free range chickens, as a means of raising funds to acquire props, kits and instruments for our acts. This has been a positive

development as our project is doing well and we will continue to grow.

We also engage young people in our activities, school children, in a drive that we call “Catch them young”. This is because community issues affect everyone of us and the little ones must not be left behind.

Our dream is to put Dotito on the map as a hub for arts and artistic development.

Thank you SH for having faith in us and for giving us hope of a brighter and growing future. May God bless your work.



Hopley thunder queens



THUNDEROUS QUEENS

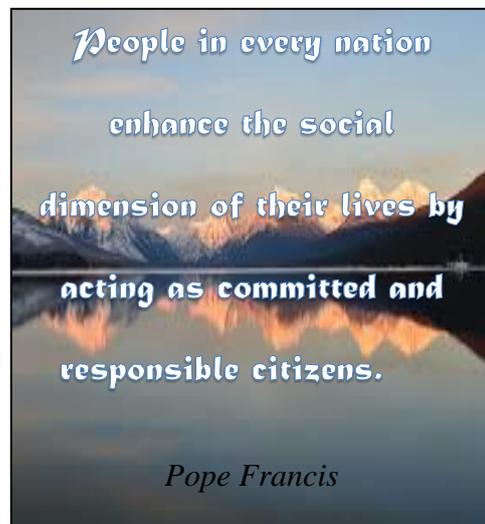
The Hopley Queens is a youth netball team from Hopley in Harare South Constituency. We try as much as possible to participate in sporting events so that we gain experience and knowledge of our sport. All in all, this group benefits up to 20 young women at any given time and we work hard to keep our hopes of going into the national leagues alive.

However, our biggest challenge over the years has been a sport kit, and some other equipment like nets, goal posts for our community field and medical aid kits (medicines and bandages).

In 2019 though, with the help of the Silveira House Youth Small Prize award, we have managed this and more. We have rebranded to the HOPLEY THUNDER QUEENS!!! And we look the part. Our kit is yellow and blue and stands out wherever we go. Soon we shall be recognised and perhaps participate in bigger tournaments on a provincial or national level. We also managed to purchase a first aid kit for anytime a player gets injured which has medicines and bandages. This saves us from embarrassment as we previously only

used water. In addition, we went to Dotito to play against the youth team there in a tournament that was facilitated by us together with SH and the Dotito group. This was an eye opener as we also visited some of the youth income generating projects there. We saw a vegetable garden and chicken projects. Soon we shall start our own.

All this would not have been possible had it not been for SH working in our community. You are life savers. God bless you richly. We look forward to a long relationship with you SH.





CHICKEN BUSINESS: FOR THE LOVE OF IT!

instead of resorting to prostitution, drugs, environmental degradation in gold panning and other such dangerous and illegal activities. Our families and siblings are also benefiting from our work.

With our Youth Small Prize Money, Rujeko (Light) Poultry group, here in Mt Darwin, have managed to increase our production of broiler chickens by almost 100 %. We used to have a 6 week slaughter cycle, now we have a three week cycle.

We have even managed to provide chickens for the Mt Darwin Community workshop at which we catered for the Acting Chief Nhowedza of Mt Darwin, a Junior Parliamentarian, the District Development Coordinator, the Rural District Council head, several headmen, village heads and guests and facilitators from Silveira House in Harare. They all witnessed the progress of our project and the Acting Chief commended and encouraged our efforts.

This project benefits a number of otherwise idle and disenfranchised young women in our community. It has also become a beacon of light for many others who now see that self-employment is also a means of living

All this would not have been possible had it not been for the help that we receive regularly from Silveira House in the form of training for business, empowerment workshops, and the 2019 Small Youth Prize Money. Our gratitude cannot be put to words, it is too great. Thank you SH.

Thank you so, so much.



Chief Nhowedza (Centre) Stresses A Point

Town *Kumusha*

Youth Initiatives bringing development to the Rural Areas

For generations, living in the cities has been regarded by Zimbabweans as the epitome of financial and economic empowerment. Rural communities are not only looked down upon, but have largely been left out of the development matrix. This has left a vast number of young people without any useful skills, exposure and knowledge of any means to make the most of their lives save to migrate to the urban centres. It has thus been speculated that being *kumusha* (in the rural areas) is a clear sign of backwardness. However, the Silveira House Community Development Department, with the help of our program partners, has gone out in defiance of this standpoint. Our goal is to ensure that the rural youth, using that which is in abundance to them, can make a living in their communities and bring about remarkable community transformation. And what is it that they have in abundance? Dreams. Dreams and a strong work ethic. The harnessing of these aspects has reaped reward in Mutoko and Mudzi.

Mutoko and Mudzi districts are in Mashonaland east province. The province largely relies on the agricultural sector and has for decades been the centre of most agricultural activity in the country. However, being in the lowlands where rainfall is scarce and scanty, Mutoko and

Mudzi have been left behind in this move. It is apparent, then, that there can be devised other means to bring prosperity to these districts and this has been the drive behind the Building Resilience through improving the Absorptive and Adaptive Capacity for Transformation (BRACT) Program.

In 2019, we set out to ensure that young people in Mutoko wards 4, 7, 8, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 18 and Mudzi wards 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 14 and 15 receive training in various industrial enterprises and capacity building to run businesses with success and set up a monitoring system that is recognised by the national authority for small business, the Ministry of Women affairs, Community development and Small to Medium



Planning Starts Here: Group Constitution Making

Enterprises Development. A classic case of teaching them how to fish; so goes the adage.

Capitalising on their desire to raise their living standard, we set out to bring to a targeted 585 young people, skills development training in baking, welding,

leather work, food processing, carpentry, dress making and detergent production. Over the course of the year, the Community Development Department ran a series of skills training workshops. These were dichotomised into Level 1 and Level 2 so as to allow the beneficiaries a chance to implement what they had learnt during the preceding stage before embarking on the next one. The young people were brought together into 30 groups depending on geographical location and skills orientation and these later developed into small scale companies. In 2019, all the groups were accorded the chance to receive their Level 1 training in the various set disciplines. 24 of them went on to Level 2. The remaining 6 will receive their Level 2 training and accreditation in the first quarter of 2020, God willing.

In addition to the training, all the groups were equipped with materials and tools that they needed to get their projects off the ground and running. By the time some of the participants had completed the first level of training, they had already been employed! 2 of our young new builders were part of a team that built a school ablution block: they were head-hunted by the construction company itself! This did a lot of confidence boosting among the youth and brought our team a sense of accomplishment and affirmation that we were doing something positive for this community.

Business, however, falters because of, among other reasons, the failure to plan. There is after all a saying that goes “the



A Solar Drier on Display at the Mudzi Fair

failure to plan is planning to fail’. Realising this and partnering with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community Development and SME Development, Silveira House organised a series of training sessions in business management and strategic planning. Some of the groups that had been set up in the previous years also benefitted from these courses as they served as refresher courses for them. This was a timely intervention in these projects as some of them were suffering from impropriety and bad decision making. After these workshops had been done, mostly by the end of the year, the youth projects took on a new trajectory: that of professionalism.

One of the biggest challenges that these small enterprises faced was of marketing their products. Mudzi and Mutoko are not densely populated and the population there is not uniformly affluent. There was a need to identify markets and to bring visibility to these projects. In this regard, we seem to have done beyond even our own expectations.

We held 2 market fairs in the districts that saw most of the enterprises making headway in sales of their wares despite the harsh economic climate in the country. The groups in Mutoko were part of the

market fare held at Rukawo BC on the 10th of December and exhibited footwear, baked goods, processed foods, metal and wood fabrications, clothing and more. The sale of some of these items (shoes and food stuffs) was very encouraging.

connections and started building partnerships with similar and bigger enterprises. They realised the need for having business cards to pass around – something they had never imagined as a need for their normal lives. Needless to



Going international: BRACT exhibit at the HICC in Harare

In Mudzi, there was a market fare held at Kotwa BC which was graced by the District Development Co-ordinator as the honoured guest. This fare was a resounding success that put our youth on the map. There were a number of presentations at this fare from the national tax authority ZIMRA, insurance companies, the Ministry for SMEs Development and other speakers. The benefit of such fares proved a shot in the arm for these upcoming entrepreneurs.

say, but reckless not to, this expo put the youth enterprises of Mutoko and Mudzi districts in the limelight on a global scale. This is a placing that many, even in the urban areas, never achieve. A very big

The ace in the deck was the internationally organised SME Expo held in the capital, Harare, from the 23rd to the 25th of September 2019. At this fare, Silveira House managed to secure a prime stall that gave exposure to our youth groups. We selected three groups that specialised in leather wear, to represent the project. In the midst of the fair, they made crucial



Participants at the District SME Association Formation and Capacitation Workshop

fishing rod indeed!!

To ensure the longevity of these projects, it was necessary to put in place District SME associations. These associations serve as a regulatory authority for the SMEs and assist them in the areas of their enterprise they otherwise find inaccessible.

These include as lobbying for policy formulation, participation in local leadership, access to events and market opportunities even the application for local and national tenders to better move their products, setting up industrial hubs in their areas and expanding the capacity building program to incorporate more young people in their home areas. These associations were hosted by Silveira House for a 3 day training workshop in November 2019. The workshop was heavily subscribed and proved successful.

There are challenges that were faced in this program. Chief among them was the poor participation of some wards. The youth in Mutoko and Mudzi are slow to warm up to the idea of skills training even though it ensures a better future. This is

primarily because many of them find easy money in gold-panning activities. Some do not realise the temporary nature of this enterprise given the policy climate of the country that already views gold-panning as illegal nor do they see the physical danger (due to violence) it poses to them or the health risks associated with gold-panning (emanating from the use of dangerous chemicals, unsafe structures, inadequate equipment and immoral behaviour). Another set-back was the disregard of their own constitutions and impropriety by some groups. This was satisfactorily addressed by the management workshops as they were reminded to adhere to their constitutions: considering that these came as a fruit of their own ingenuity and thought processes.

In this project, we brought to life the motto of SH: "In the wilderness, I shall plant cedar trees". Prosperity and emancipation now is no-longer the preserve of the urbanites, if anything, very soon, as we soldier on, as one young man in Kotwa curtly and rightly said, **"WE SHALL BRING THE TOWN HERE!!!"**



Bringing Town Kumusha: A carpentry group shows off their product as the Mudzi District Development Co-ordinator (black suit) looks on

Transforming the Nation, One Community at a Time!!

The Advocacy and Peace Building Program focuses on empowering the marginalized sectors of society in engaging authorities and leaders on issues that affect them with a bid to improve their situations and livelihood. The more common challenges affecting the marginalized sections of Zimbabwean society are related to policy issues, legislation, and socio-economic and cultural practices which negate the value and status of their lives.

CSOTs

In 2019, the Advocacy and Peace Building Program (APBP) worked with the Community Share Ownership Trusts (CSOTs) in Mutoko, Goromonzi, Mberengwa, Zvishavane, Umzingwane, Gwanda, Umguza and Mhondoro-Ngezi and communities around the mining areas of Mutoko, Goromonzi, Mberengwa, Zvishavane and Umzingwane. The central issue was to assist these communities and CSOTs to enhance their level of benefit from the minerals around them through policy and legislative changes in their favour.

The Community Share Ownership Trusts were set up by the Government of Zimbabwe with the hope of ensuring that communities benefit from the extraction and exploitation of the natural resources that are found in their areas. This was an expansion on the Campfire project that was incepted to assist communities near or inside game reserves to benefit from hunting revenues and the culling of animals to provide them with sources of meat. To date, CSOTs have been rather

struggling to get substantive financial aid from those corporates operating in their areas. Nationally, the statistics show that not many of all the instituted CSOTs have had adequate or meaningful benefit from the exploitation of the mineral or other wealth in their vicinity. This assistance is exclusive of employment opportunities.

The Silveira House CSOT program was started in 2016 and was eventually wound up in 2019. The thrust was to teach the communities with regards their accorded legal rights as enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe. These include the disbursement of funds to communities for the uplifting of their living standards. We realized that there are many areas in the country where people have no visible community structure that lobbies and administers such monies if they were to come. In light of this, SH began with capacity building workshops where individuals were informed of the need to be organized into committees for community development. They were also taught how to handle and manage finances that were for the benefit of everyone and trained in tenets of servant leadership. These workshops, in all the areas in which we worked, proved to be beneficial and a success in the lives of many of the participants.

As for the year 2019, the CSOT program was ideated towards ensuring that the funds that came to the communities were utilized to generate more income as opposed to waiting for the next grant from the mining or such companies in their locality. We witnessed successes in this aspect and they have been attributed to the groundwork set up since 2016 which saw a shift in the mindset of the



communities from being consumers of grants to becoming producers from the grants. 2019 saw several of the communities and CSOTs start projects aimed at benefiting their society from the remuneration that came from the mining activities in their areas.

Of note in 2019, was the Gwanda CSOT. This community, having benefitted from mining activities in their area, started a cattle fattening project. Cattle fattening and cattle ranching are two of the major agricultural activities of that area which sits on the low rainfall belt of the country. Cattle pen fattening requires little land, less water than open grazing of cattle and is much easier to monitor. This project is expected to bring much growth to the community as the markets for beef, even on the global market, are very lucrative. Their long term goal is to be a community that can develop their own area without waiting for Government grants or corporate handouts for the provision of basic necessities. This project has indeed set them on the right path.

It is also worth mentioning that the Zvishavane CSOT has embarked on a massive chicken rearing business from the proceeds of their grants. Zvishavane is a town that lies on the Great Dyke⁴ and has long been famed for asbestos and emerald mining. In the last decade, however, a diamond deposit of significant proportions was discovered there and the mining company has been working closely with the community ensuring that they get some share of the resources. The CSOT, now organized, has decided to reinvest their returns to generate more income hence the massive poultry project. This project looks set to prosper given the

⁴ This is an expanse of rock extrusion that cuts across the country from the south in Masvingo right up to Mashonaland Central Provinces. A gold belt of sorts.

proliferation of a ready market in and around the town: the Midlands State University opened a campus in the town which means more clients; there is a lot of gold panning in the area translating into more clientele; Zvishavane lies equidistant from the big cities of Gweru and Masvingo making the penetration of these markets within their reach, not to mention the entire area itself. We wait to hear great strides that they will make as the years go on and we can only be grateful at having been part of this sterling journey of success and productivity from rent-seeking mindsets.

As the CSOT program comes to a close in 2019, we would be remiss not to mention, even in passing, the successes of yesteryear: an ECD block was constructed in Mutoko at Nyamakope Village with the aid of the granite mining firm in the area; a women's bakery named "Kuzekulunga" was set up in Umzingwane ward 14. These projects have gone to cement livelihoods, create employment and secure a better future for the younger generations.

These stories would not even be dreams had we not had the partners that we have for these projects. We are eternally grateful to you all and look forward to working with you to bring much more, readily needed, transformation to the lives of many Zimbabwean citizens. May God richly bless you. It is also our hope that this work will inspire others to take up the mantle and help raise the living standards of our nation, especially after seeing that we have so much available to us.



On the Front Lines: Conference and Income Generating Department in 2019

In a fast moving world, where there is more chaos than calm, it is important to have a place, a zone, a space, where one can take a step back from it all and reorient, become ready to go back and face the world with renewed zeal and focus: Silveira House boasts of such a facility. Situated outside Harare, on a vast piece of land, on the scenic crest of Chishawasha valley, Silveira House Conference centre is the place to go for an out of town, serene, quiet, calming and relaxing experience. Add to the mix delectable meals cooked professionally with ingredients from our very own gardens and farm where we rear pigs and chickens, this is indeed a slice of Heaven on earth.

Our accommodation facilities can hold up to 84 guests in well groomed chalets that are available for a reasonable premium. Above this, we also offer external catering with which we can feed comfortably over 1000 people with our outside catering team and equipment. Our internal dining hall houses a little more than 200 people at any one given time. This makes us a prime choice for wedding venues. The tag of wedding venue of choice is cemented by our state of the art Public Address system, splendid décor, branded ornaments and water bottles for functions, safe and secure parking and child friendly environment in which professionalism is not an event but a way of life.

Such a facility serves the institution as another leg upon which to stand in the face of financial difficulty. By making our own produce, we manage to cut costs that would have otherwise gone towards purchasing food for conference participants. The food that we produce, we also sell. This brings in an added revenue stream that would normally be missing from our coffers.

For the Conference and Income generating department, the year 2019 was a mixed bag of scenarios.

Agriculture

Our agriculture department performed rather well given the prevailing challenges in the economy in 2019. There was general price instability and the cost of animal feeds and horticultural chemicals kept skyrocketing. However, we managed to slaughter a total of 49 porkers in the year that catered for the needs of the centre in as much as staff and conference meals were concerned.

We also successfully raised and supplied 9 batches of 100 chickens each throughout the year. These were more



than enough for our needs even when we hosted funerals (as we lost some of our priests during the year). Our garden managed to provide a steady, daily supply of fresh vegetables for our catering teams and for resale to other institutions such as Arrupe Jesuit University and St. Ignatius College.

Catering and Functions

In 2019, we managed to host 3 weddings successfully. Two of these enjoyed the full SH package that includes décor, catering and the PA system. There were a number of day long workshops that

were made available to the SH community at reasonable, un-inflated prices.

Achievements

Due to the income that was raised by the department in our various activities, we managed to give the institution a facelift by way of repainting the entire complex. In addition, renovations were made to the Chakaipa hall and all the toilets at SH.

Challenges

The escalating prices and unavailability of essential goods such as fuel, stock feed and agro-chemicals, made our work a constant uphill struggle. This status quo made the erratic power supply an even greater challenge as the cost of fuel for the generator sometimes outweighed the benefit of some functions. We also had a problem of stray goats that destroyed a large portion of our vegetable garden in one go. There was a decrease in the activities of Church organisations that usually use our facilities on an annual basis. This was due to the instability in the national economy and proved a big dent on our revenue.

However, with the support of our Director, the various departments at SH, and our SH community and customers, we stayed afloat and exceeded our expectations. We wish to thank you all in a special way and pray that you may be richly blessed. Our home is also yours to enjoy and be refreshed.

were hosted by various SH departments and we catered for these without a hitch. So too did the longer workshops turn out well. Credit has to be given to our department staff (5 people) for their hard work and candour.

Tuck-shop

The department also has a tuck-shop that proved essential in the lives of the community here at Silveira House in a year when basic commodities became scarce and expensive. The tuck-shop, throughout the year, had the good fortune of acquiring essential basic food stuffs that



Looking ahead into 2020, we hope to embark on a massive advertising campaign building upon our social media entry that we have begun. Our focus is also on improving our facilities to become worthy of receiving Michellin accreditation!!! Watch this space.



Silveira House is a Catholic Church Social Centre located 20km from Harare City Centre along Arcturus Road, which branches from Enterprise Road.

Welcome to an out of town simple, quiet and peaceful place ideal for personal or group prayer, retreats, meetings and workshops: with affordable accommodation, conference facilities and meals



For more information and bookings contact:

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NO PAIN: NO GAIN

In the year 2019, Silveira House programs and projects enjoyed remarkable successes. Many of these have been highlighted in a number of articles in this years' Annual Report and I shall not move to repeat them here. However, where success thrives, strife and failure are just around the corner. As they say, it's a thin blue line between success and falling flat on your face. And for a number of programs, SH found itself teetering on the brim of that very, very thin line.

Politics

On the political front, 2019 was a momentous year for Zimbabwe. Fresh out of an election that ushered in a new President and government that dubbed itself the "Second Republic" following the deposing of R. G. Mugabe in a court sanitised and SADC sanctioned military intervention. There were obvious tensions and chaos in the halls of authority as new policies were being set. The security situation was one of tension and some measures in the security sector were proving to be hindrances to the programs that SH had planned, especially at the beginning of the year and those that involved local authorities and elected officials. Political correctness was, and still remains, imperative and a kind of pre-requisite, a *sine qua non* of sorts, for the hosting of events that can easily be deemed political. Even in the actual structure of workshop material, being PC is crucial. For instance, youth leadership initiatives are a stone throw away from being seen as a campaign for a certain political party or faction of another political party.

Policy

National policy in the year 2019 has also seen some challenges filter down to SH programs. Of particular note is the Statutory Instrument (SI) 142 of 2019 which removed the multi-currency system of transaction. Before the SI, accessing funds from donor and partner agencies was easy as banks allowed withdrawals and transfers in foreign currency. With the coming of this and ensuing complimentary policy positions, bank balances were changed overnight to Zimbabwean dollars from US\$ balances at a ratio of 1:1. The result: balances were eroded instantly. This meant that the funds that we had available to us were no longer capable to suffice for the adjusted budgets: materials, fuel, salaries, stipends, fares, fees, food, groceries, tools ... everything, experienced a meteoric rise in prices to beyond the norm even in US\$ terms. To compound this even further, was the restriction in accessing funds from foreign agencies and individuals as banks halted the disbursement of foreign currency. This scenario moved to delay and misalign some project timelines and targets.

Communities

Working with people has never been the easiest of endeavours. This is primarily because many of us have ulterior and often self-centred motives when we operate. This is made even worse when a country has an ailing economy and where sources of income are far and few in-between. As such, many people take advantage of NGOs and donor agencies and, using their authority in places, either extort or divert resources. This was the norm across many organisations especially with the Cyclone Idai programs that were in place. There were even some arrests made in that area of the country. We had similar issues with people who thought that our activities could be milked for money or materials such as cement, work tools, overalls, gumboots and protective hats. They soon realised, much to their chagrin, that



our modus operandi left no room for such acts to be possible. This left one too many a disgruntled community leader where some began de-campaigning our work in their communities. Some who listened to them missed opportunities to benefit from the Idai project and were to later rue those decisions. We plan to return and continue helping as many people as we can especially in the Chipinge District.

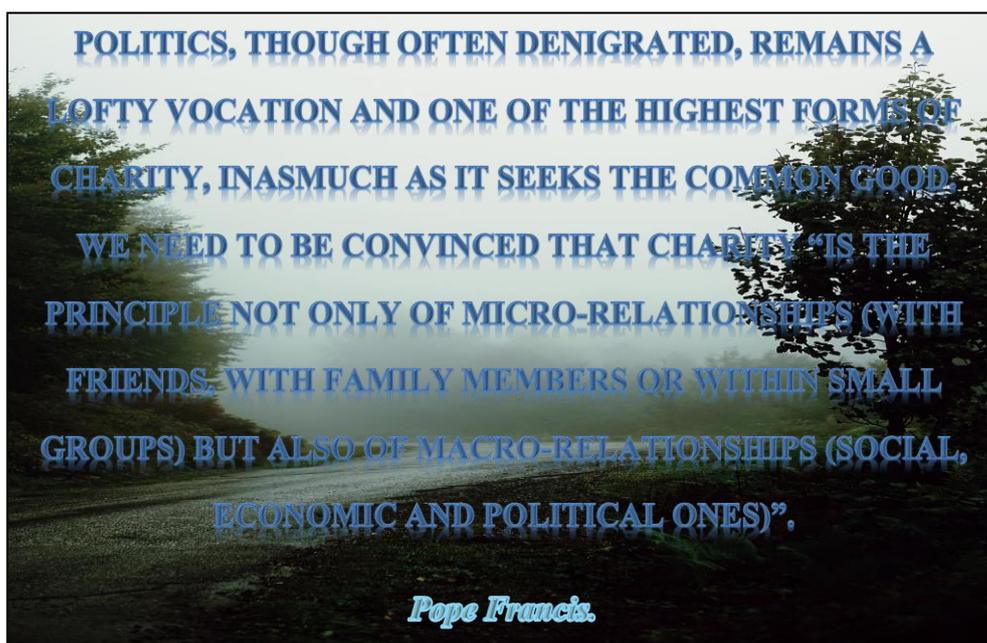
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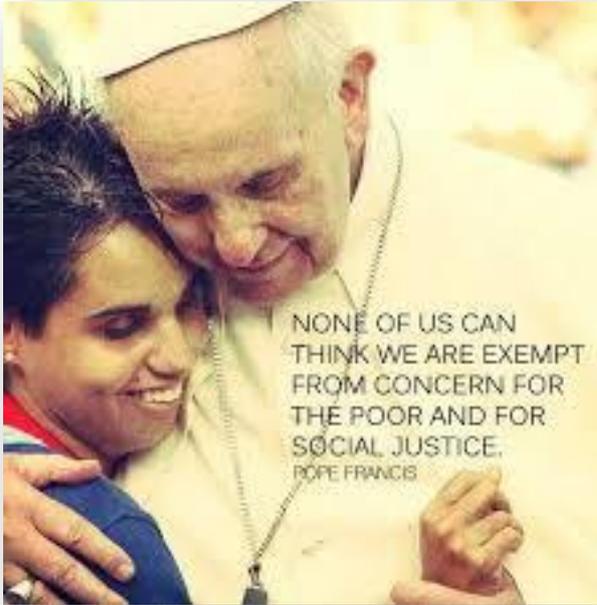
Our major challenges in implementing SH programs for 2019 were of a global nature that found their way into localised translation. Sadly, the interpretation thereof was the greatest impediment. We suffered delays, missed targets, and a number of do-overs in our work as the nation was in transition, but, with resilience and good friendships across the board, most of our work was done and done well. In some areas we even managed to surpass our own targets.

Summation

What challenges we faced were neither debilitating nor spirit breaking: they were opportunities for growth and reorientation. Adaptability is an asset that we managed to cultivate even further than before and we came out of it, as says the Psalmist, “with much joy and ululation”. Those that stood in our way for lack of selfish gain realised that their losses were much more compounded in the end and olive branches were extended. There is a Shona saying that goes “*Mvura mvongani ndidzo garani*” which means turbulent waters settle well and clearly. To us, on a human level, it means that whatever challenges we had with each other were meant to help us understand each other and work better to build a brighter future.

With resolution and expectation, we look forward to 2020. May it be a year of triumph made sweeter by the trials that we shall overcome!





Final word: We can all do something

and have a normal day. The fire would remain lit for the remainder of the day till night time when we had to put it out for fear of suffocation as my sisters and I slept in the kitchen.

What I managed to learn from this experience has been a driving force in my work here at Silveira House. I learnt that no matter how many times I asked for fire from my neighbours, they always gave me. They never complained, they never chided me or judged me or degraded me and my family for being unable to purchase matches of our own or even keep the fire burning till morning. They gave. They gave me because they knew that the few embers they spared would never extinguish their fire, in-fact, they would free up space for a bigger blaze to grow. Their giving was beneficial to them. They gave me because they knew that if they failed, I could be exposed to more sinister people in the area who could take advantage of my situation and commit unthinkable deeds to justify sharing their fire. Their kindness was a protective blanket on my dignity. They gave me embers because I had become a part of their daily routine; one of the first faces they saw in the morning and a barometer to see whether their neighbours were well that morning and vice versa. It had become second nature to them.

Year later, as I work with poor communities, where young women and girls like I was in my time, are exposed to

As a young girl growing up in rural Zimbabwe, I was exposed to many of our cultural and societal norms. Needless to say these all made a mark on me. As I grew older, I began to be more reflective of what I learnt in order that I might pass on the good lessons from my childhood experiences to my children and also help them understand why I regarded certain practices as bad. I would like to share one such reflection here which I feel can round off my thoughts of the year in one veldt swoop.

Many a time we had no matches to light a fire in our home, especially in the mornings. My normal day as 9 year old started at 4am. I would be up to help sweep the yard, feed the chickens and start preparing food and hot water for my father and brothers. They would also be up and tending to the cattle and crops. Starting a fire, as I said, was impossible without a match and so I would go to our neighbour to borrow embers to start our own. These ambers i would carry on a metal plate which eventually became hot to handle! But I always made it home, started our own fire from these embers

many dangers and horrors, one among them being economically vulnerable and voiceless in community leadership and decision making, I have come to see in them that little girl, who knocks daily at your door, innocently asking for embers to start their fire. They all have dreams, passions, desires, and hopes for a better and brighter future: all they need are a few embers. Giving to them of my time, expertise and sometimes as little as a smile, does not diminish that which I have, but opens me up to learn more, to be more enflamed, to share even more with those that otherwise do not have of their own.

My interaction with the lower echelons of our community helps me keep a finger on the pulse of the nation and thus keeps me informed. Information and understanding those with whom I work helps me remain relevant and direct my team in the paths that bring us the best results: the most rewarding results. We are also capable of being the voice of the voiceless in our work as we know what they are going through.

Because I know the young and their situations, because I understand the plight of women who are stricken by poverty and the hopelessness that I see in men who have no trust in the advent of a brighter future, I am capable to help formulate trainings and programs that will benefit them and protect them from developing a toxic rent-seeking mentality.

In 2019, we saw a lot of progress with the Community Share Ownership Trust program where communities nationwide have begun to monetise their remittances and grow from there. We have seen young people, women included, incorporated into community leadership in rural Mt. Darwin. We have witnessed community transformation with our BRAC program in Mutoko and Mudzi communal areas where

village industries are being established and grown. We have managed to change mind sets of local leaders in Bundura and Marondera who now are beginning to realise what it means to be a servant leader. With little amounts of money, young people have started projects in poultry, music and revitalised community sport in their areas, giving them not just a past-time, but a platform on which to shine and possibly better their lives going forward. We went into the eye of the storm in Chipinge and helped bring back sanitation and water to thousands of people who had been affected by Cyclone Idai.

All this has happened because we share. We share our embers, the little that we have, with those who want to start a fire. St Ignatius of Loyola charged his Jesuits to be light that sets the world on fire. The light that shares its glow does not die: it becomes brighter and multiplies in giving.

We have not done this alone. All our efforts have been made possible by the benevolence of our funding and facilitating partners throughout the year and I would like to that this opportunity to convey my personal heartfelt gratitude and that of my team here at SH.

Our 2020 looks bright. There is a lot that we have on the cards and we can only pray that we manage to work, with little hindrance, to continue bringing light, embers, into the homes and lives of as many people of this beautiful country as we can. Let us all, in our capacities and competencies, work together for the "Greater Glory of God".

