



Friends of Matthew Rusike Children's Home

June 2023

We give mainly financial support directly to the Home

News from the Home

May Greetings from Zimbabwe. Generally all is well at MRCH, the children are in school and we have basic food stocks to last for 3 months. We are planning the annual Matthew Rusike Day when circuits and churches visit for various workshops over a week and bring donations of food, clothing as well as money.

There are 2 young people still needing educational sponsorship. We hope that the church will sponsor a boy wanting to study A level and another boy would like sponsoring for university. A girl has been sponsored to attend university.

The Home is bubbling with joy following the solarisation of all the children's houses including the staff houses occupied by the Chaplain, Social Worker, Health Sister, the Finance and Admin officer and the National Director. At Donga, Lloyd and the General Hand and their families are also very happy that the Donga home is now lit. This brings huge relief for both centres as we have been experiencing excessive power cuts and we remain thankful to the Friends for their donations. We shall assess the savings we have made in terms of the electricity bill.



The solar panels give us light and refrigeration but not cooking facilities so we are assessing the possibility of a biodigester to help families with energy for cooking.



We hope to use the waste from the piggery and poultry projects

We received expert advice for solarisation of the borehole at Donga. Water engineers said powering the current bush pump may not be possible as the existing system may not be compatible due to different types of casing, the amount of water and the depth so we are planning to fundraise and top up the money you sent us so that we can drill a new borehole.

We are looking into upgrading or replacing the geysers on each building so that warm water will be available. Each one will have it's own solar power and be independent of the main supply. There has been no hot water for about 6 years.

There is still a lot of disruption in the schools so plans are underway to open a primary school on the MRCH site offering places to local children as well. Some present buildings can be used and new ones will be built ready for opening in January 2024. This will fill the gap between the Early Childcare Development centre (ECD pre 6 year olds)) and the college (for 12-18 years) This means we shall be able to monitor the quality of the education by hiring our own teachers, support the children and provide good continuous education.

Discussions with the Ministry of Education are currently underway. The intention is for the school to be registered through the Ministry of Education but run by the Methodist church like other Methodist Boarding schools. The primary school, once running, should be able to sustain itself with the fees covering the costs, including teacher salaries and all running expenses. The MRCH college now contributes 6% of income to the Home.

As fuel is so expensive the generator is used sparingly, It is switched on during critical times (eg during rain) and then switched off again. So it is still useful as a back up in emergencies.

We are 3months behind in paying staff salaries.

We are very busy preparing for the Matthew Rusike Big Day due on 10 June. We are expecting an improved crowd this year and hope for more donations in cash and kind.

Our garden is flourishing and the poultry is also doing very well. We are selling about 20 crates of produce per week and raising some funds to support our childcare work.



Chickens and eggs

Healthy cabbages and tomato plants



A good yield to eat and sell



We have new officers in the National Board committee. Lameck Tapuruwa, whose term of office has come to an end, was replaced by Moses Maunganidze. Other new board members are Rev Obert Shatai, Mr Reginald Chihota and Engineer Gloria Magombo. Rev Dr Kudakwashe Paradza is the new Mission Director for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Rev Linny Mudzingo, National Director

Donga Outreach centre

Solarisation of the 2 residential buildings has transformed the centre with lighting and refrigeration but not cooking.



This vehicle was donated by the UK Zimbabwe Methodist Fellowship 7 years ago but hasn't been running for at least 2 years. Four generous donors provided money for the vehicle to become roadworthy again so Lloyd didn't have to walk 15k to distribute stationery and sanitary wear to the 83 identified vulnerable children in 5 different rural schools.



The children love to have their own school equipment and be like the other children in their class.



All items are donated –



pens,
pencils,
rulers
and exercise
books
and a
box of baby



wear from the Masvingo Methodist circuit and boxes of filled knitted pencil cases from supporters in Northern Ireland



Volunteers at a childcare workshop held in Bulawayo



Half of the maize crop has been harvested in Donga and here it is being spread out to dry in the sun.

Carrying pig feed across to the pigs.



Entertainment and celebration in Donga.

There is still great need at Donga Centre
However the Project has great potential if
resources are allocated on time. We thank
whole heartedly all those who have contributed
towards its success. Ed

Malcolm Payne

We heard recently that Malcolm Payne has died
after quite a long illness. Malcolm was the first
secretary of FoMRCH in 1997 and he and Fay
remained supporters ever since. Malcolm and
Fay went to MRCH as working volunteers with
Paddy (our first treasurer) and Jenny Coles.
They were part of our inaugural meeting in 1996
of other working volunteers when the decision
was made to start a Friends group to support the
childcare at the Home. We send our
condolences to Fay and the family.

From our treasurer

We have updated our Privacy Policy and this
can be found on our
website https://www.friendsofmatthewrusike.org/?page_id=1260.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletters
or for us to hold your personal data, please
contact the Chairman
on carol2021@banham.net

Since funding the solarisation of the rural
outreach project at Donga and residential
houses 7&8 housing residential children at
Epworth, including staff houses under the same
roof, as reported in our March newsletter, we
have now also funded the digging and
solarisation of a new borehole at Donga and the
National Director's house at Epworth.

Our Gift Aid catch up project has now been
completed, resulting in additional funds from
HMRC totalling over £25,000, from which we
have been able to fund all of the above
solarisation at MRCH to the tune of nearly
£20,000. Thank you to everyone who has
responded to gift aid queries from our Treasurer
during this exercise. Niki Phillips

We still urgently need a minute secretary.
Our meetings are still online so there is no
travelling involved. It involves taking and
distributing minutes by email for 4 meetings
a year. **Please can you help us?**

To feed and clothe a child for 1 month **£34.53**
Monthly medication for a diabetic child **£30.69**
and an epileptic child **£15.34.**

The government provides free HIV medication.

Primary school uniform **£57.54**
Secondary uniform **£92.07**

Skills training for a young person for one month
£153.44. MRCH can only afford to pay for one
person at a time. So someone must wait their
turn for the training.

I'm sure you will appreciate that the cost of
caring for the children at MRCH continues to rise
due to inflation, challenges brought by covid and
the unique socio-economic environment in
Zimbabwe. So we invite our donors to review
their standing orders and increase the amount,
where possible. Maybe tell your friends and
family about charitable giving when they shop
online. We are registered with **Pay Pal** and **Give
as You Live** so they can choose FoMRCH
without any extra cost to themselves and it
provides a small but steady cash flow into our
general fund.

Thank you for your support.

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